

The new year is already a month old, and whilst January is traditionally a quieter month in the parish, much has still been happening. Welcome back to those who have managed a break, and thanks to those who ministered in so many ways at our Christmas services, and throughout January. Prayers continue for those in the community either sick, or going through transitions – moving house, or entering care.

Thanks also to Fr. Matthew and Rev. Graham who covered the Sunday morning services to allow me to have a holiday with the family down at Point Lonsdale. It was a relaxing time away. I was sorry to have missed the festivities of the Australia Day celebration, and was so pleased to hear good reports of it. Thanks to those who through their generosity allowed guests to come, or who made donations if they could not come themselves.

Executive have hit the ground running already, with a couple of meetings already, and much work being done around the parish. I wanted to share with you just a couple of things which are a focus at present.

Firstly, as foreshadowed in my annual report to the parish last year, work has begun on a new Mission Action Plan (MAP) for the parish. We met with Ven. Ray McInnes, our outgoing Archdeacon, and enjoyed his wisdom and experience in this regard. Ray explained that the MAP is very similar to the strategic or business plan of a secular organisation. He also noted that a successful MAP involves engaging the people of the parish, beyond the Parish Council – and this will be a priority in whatever process we use for the formation of the plan. We have begun by looking back over some past plans, as we prepare.

Finally, Ray noted that a good MAP would answer the question “What is the one thing that St Martin’s could do which would make this parish stand out from the 220 Anglican parishes in Melbourne?”

The other important issue is much more practical. Following a lengthy discussion with Melissa Campbell, the founder of Anamaya Yoga (a long-term client of the Crypt), it has been agreed by Parish Council that the Crypt is to be upgraded in the coming months. The upgrade will include re-painting the walls of the Crypt, kitchen, and downstairs toilet areas, installation of more efficient heating and cooling (most likely in the form of a split system reverse cycle air conditioner), and an upgrade of the lighting. There will also be some cabinetry placed in the room, although this will be moveable if required. It is hope that, along with the relatively recent upgrade of the floor, that the Crypt (to be known forthwith as *St Martin’s Community Space*) will become a more functional, comfortable space, which will also be more attractive for potential hire. Please feel free to discuss any aspects of this with myself, or a Warden, or member of Parish Council.

May all the Saints walk with you this week...

Sam