

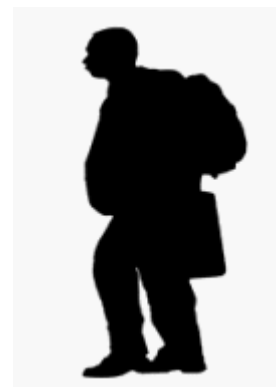
# Thoughts on a Journey

It is now just over a year since I took up my appointment as Priest-in-charge here at Holy Trinity. In many ways it has been a very interesting and challenging experience.

Alongside the more obvious, though essential, aspects of parish ministry such as visiting parishioners, leading worship, chairing meetings etc. there is that more subtle and quieter task of discerning the signs of God's presence among his people. This, for the sake of explanation, can be seen as having a three-fold nature to it.



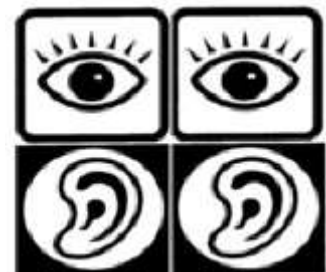
There is firstly the task of understanding what God has done in the past. Discovering the path that Holy Trinity has taken to arrive at the present necessitates a great deal of listening. By this I mean attentive listening to pick up where God has been leading and prompting. It involves hearing people's stories, both individually and



collectively, and sifting through it to hear that often quiet voice of God. Like much of the past, the story of Holy Trinity is an intricate mixture of things that were good and of God and that need to be treasured and nurtured. An example would be the genuine warmth and support and exists among our congregation. There are though those aspects of our story that, though right and good for their time, need to be viewed as important parts of our story that now require to be reverently laid to rest. Many of us at times yearn for the church to once more be what it was at some significant point in the past: the church when it had lots of children and a Sunday School; the church with a choir, the era of LCM dare I say. We all have our cherished memories in this regard. It is though regrettable but true that when on a journey many things have to be left behind otherwise you can never travel forward.

What though is God doing among us now?

This is the second part of the three-fold process of discerning. This requires that the eyes and ears of our hearts and minds are open, alert and attentive. Where is the evidence of God's blessing for us today? The continuing hunger among many in the congregation to explore the mystery of prayer and faith as evidenced in the monthly Prayer Workshops, more regular attendance at Sunday worship and Advent and Lent courses, all of this speaks of a congregation eager to explore their spiritual life and to find new ways of experiencing and expressing their faith. The on-going generosity of the congregation in its support for the Starfish Project, The Food Cupboard at St. Salvador's, the Angus Food Bank etc. speak to me of hearts and lives that have been touched and are being transformed by God's love. It is like an outpouring of grace. Wow!! The newly formed toddler group is just one other sign of God's gentle activity among us. These are



all things that deserve our attention and support.

The third aspect of this process you will have guessed by now. What of the future, where is *God* leading us at Holy Trinity? In this regard none of us has a crystal ball with which to see the future. What we can do is to follow *God's* lead by asking where are the opportunities among us and around us for compassion and love to flow? You would have to be deaf not to hear the cries of pain and suffering all around us and within our congregation. Many of us still need to be loved into the future that *God* has for us. Hurts and wounds, physical, emotional and spiritual, cry out for healing and restoration. Perhaps as a church we need to take more seriously the call to be place of healing and peace. Is *God* calling us to be more intention in praying for one another and the community in which we are set? The church is called to be more than a



place full of nice folk who are nice to each other, we are called to be community that sets before the world an alternative way of living and being that undercuts and challenges the prevailing cultural world-view around us. How are we to do this? That is why the third part of this trinity is open ended. The future is not fixed or simply laid out before us to follow. God invites us to a work of co-creation as we prayerfully and faithfully work together to venture down the road as we are caught up in that yet and still yet to be place called the kingdom of God.

Anyway, it is time to stop pondering for today and go and do something else. Look out for more of the same sometime soon.

Revd. Ken