

# St Luke's in the City

## **Celebrating at the Crossroads** **13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, 26 August 2007**

Dear Friends,

Another break in the Sundays-after-Pentecost reflections on 'liturgy, theology, church and mission' - that's what I was thinking as I set out to write this week's letter. Rather than run the piece I had already written on 'mission', things happening close at hand require some comment...

We have had a couple of very demanding weeks, with not one but two requiem masses for 'family members'. Not surprisingly, a requiem mass for a family member is rather more demanding than for a stranger - we are connected in ways that run very deep, we have known each other, travelled together, stood by each other, lamented with and celebrated with each other. Their dying and death affect us more deeply. The final eucharist we make so intentionally and lovingly in the presence of their physical remains is cause for both joy and grief. We have shared the banquet of Christ at this Table with Solomon Alexander and Joy McClimont on countless occasions, now this is the very last - and this one has already moved us into a more evident eschatological relationship with them. This reminds us that every time we make eucharist together we are participating in the eschatological banquet. 'Eschaton' means 'last', and in Christian tradition this word refers to the fact that the eucharist is not merely a memorial of a past event, nor indeed merely a meal shared with Christ's followers in the present. Rather, what we have in eucharist is both declaration and embodiment of the future fulfilment of God's Kingdom coming to us in the here and now. The celebration of these great banquets requires a great deal of time, attention, and careful preparation. Two within a week stretches our resources! I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all who worked so hard and so lovingly as hosts at the banquet Table - particularly Deacon Jim and Sacristan Barbara, without whom these great feasts would be meagre affairs.

This weekend we have been privileged to enjoy the company of Brothers Wayne and Geoffrey, Little Brothers of Francis from Tabulam in NSW. We have been anticipating their coming among us for the last year, and now this weekend have been ministered to by them, for which we are so thankful. I am sure that we all have been moved by their devotion and their humility. Weekends such as this don't just happen! The Brothers themselves have been praying for us and preparing themselves. Locally, a small group has been hard at work planning every aspect of the weekend, to ensure that all has gone so smoothly, so that this has been an opportunity for the deepening of our faith and of encouragement in our baptismal calling. I would like to express my thanks to the members of that group: Deacon Jim, Jenny Drury, Janice Robb & Winifred Scown - and from St Michael's, Fr Peter Williams, Clare Anstice & John Fowler.

Perhaps I should not be surprised that these remarks turn out to be reflections on 'liturgy, theology, church and mission' after all!

With my love,  
David