

What has been the effect of the Year of Faith and Parish Mission?

This question can only be answered by each individual. This reflection and prayer sheet is offered to help you find some answers.

Have you been challenged by the mission or the year of faith to ask yourself some searching questions like:

- What am I doing in church on a Sunday - what do I actually believe?
- Do I know just how much God loves me, and wants to help me in my everyday life?
- How can I experience more fully the hope and forgiveness and joy that Jesus brings?
- How can I share that good news with the next generation, and with other people?

In the gospel for the 21st Sunday in ordinary time (week 46 in the Year of Faith) Jesus says:

“Try your best to enter by the narrow door, because I tell you, many will try to enter and not succeed.”

What is this narrow door? In John 10:9 Jesus says:

“I am the door; if anyone enters through me, he shall be saved,”

Jesus makes it clear that each one of us needs to make every effort to enter through the narrow door, which is: to choose to have a living relationship with God through **Jesus**, the way the truth and the life. Why is it an effort? because our pride tells us we don't need to do it; the world tells us we will look foolish; and our sinful nature tells us that our temporary selfish desires are more important than eternal life.

Pope Francis says it is important for us to live an intense relationship with Jesus, recognising him as Lord and worshipping him.

And Pope Benedict made the following prayer in his introduction to the year of faith:

“May this Year of Faith make our relationship with Christ the Lord increasingly firm, since only in him is there certainty for looking to the future and a guarantee of an authentic and lasting love.”

Jesus invites you to enter through the narrow door of faith in him, and to put him at the centre of your life. We offer the following prayer, which was prayed by many people during the Mission. This is a prayer of commitment which needs to be made from the heart, and to be renewed every day:

Prayer of Surrender

Loving Father, I surrender to you today with all my heart and soul.
Please come into my heart in a deeper way. I say “yes” to you today.
I open all the secret places of my heart to you and say “come on in”.
Jesus, you are Lord of my whole life. Thank you for dying on the cross for me.
I believe in you and receive you as my Lord and Saviour. I hold nothing back.
Lord I surrender my whole life to you and place you at the centre of my being.
I surrender the past, the present and the future to you.

“Take, Lord and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will; all that I have and possess. You have given all to me. To you, O Lord, I return it. All is yours. Dispose of it wholly according to your will. Give me your love and your grace, for this is sufficient for me.” (Prayer of St Ignatius)