

# Newtbec

NEW WAY OF BEING CHURCH

3rd Sunday of Lent

SALT OF THE EARTH AND LIGHT OF THE WORLD: COMMUNION, PARTICIPATION AND MISSION

MONTHLY FOCUS:  
WORLD WATER DAY  
(22<sup>nd</sup> March)

**BE OPEN**  
*to be Pruned*

The archetypal conversion stories from our community revealed the many facets of Christ working amongst us, as **these individuals allowed themselves to be instruments of God**. During days of darkness and gloom, they reflect a beacon of hope and strength reminding us constantly that God is within us. With the world in such a state of flux lately, we could do with these constant reminders like the doxology sung by the celebrant at every mass, inspiring us with a sense of awe, knowing that at every point of our communal life, our Christian mission is sanctioned, strengthened, and accompanied by God.

## SCRIPTURE QUOTE TO MEMORISE:

...leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it, it may bear fruit next year.

(Luke 13: 8-9)

There's always an air of despair whenever we discuss participation in parish missionary activities, or the lack of it, up to a point where we can consistently project participation rate of less than 10% of parish population or the fact that female parishioners outnumbered the male by an expected ratio of 5:1 in any formation activity. It appears that parishioners may have forgotten the missionary nature of the Church or perhaps this is due to our modern lifestyle that promotes and typifies a more self-indulgent perspective that consumes more of our time meeting work or corporate needs, sacrificing everything else that matters, especially family life.

Unless we recognize the above, it does not add up also to the fact that we belong to a community if we continue to be indifferent to each other, prioritising self over others, and basically behaving as though that God is absent in our lives. Walking insipid Christians makes us not a true witness of the good news, when we do not allow ourselves to be instruments of God. Jesus Christ was present with Israel in the wilderness, providing for their needs miraculously. Despite all these blessings and spiritual privileges, the Israelites in the wilderness did not please God. More often we convinced ourselves we still have time, or our preoccupation with work was justified for the ones we love, but perhaps we forgot "who is my neighbour"? Conveniently or not, we should also take heed that only Joshua and Caleb from the first generation of Israelites made it to the promised land (Num 14:30)!

God is with us, within us now – how many doxologies does it take to heed, and more importantly for us to be converted inwardly to the mould of Christ, to be that Christ for others? We should pray then that the Lord is still in the process of pruning us, and that we have an open heart to be pruned, and like the trees, it takes time, and by the end of it all, we are fruitful to His glory. ✚

## SCRIPTURE of the DAY

Ex 3:1-8, 13-15;

Psalms 102: 1-4, 6-8,11;

1st Cor 10: 1-6, 10-12;

Luke 13:1-9.