

Response from Parish Representatives to Provincial's Announcement

Good morning / evening everyone

I / We have been asked to say a few words in response to Fr Brian's announcement at today's Mass.

Firstly, we'd like to thank Fr Brian for being with us at this Mass. It is never easy to be the bearer of bad news, and we appreciate your time and your visit, Fr Brian, in order to let us know about this decision at your earliest opportunity.

Although this news today may not be unexpected in the time following Fr Peter's death and the declining numbers of Jesuits in this country, this announcement is still difficult for many of us.

In this time of grief and shock it is important for us to remember all the blessings and gifts we have been given by the Jesuits over a century. It is a time for changes and challenges and we need to be as courageous as the Jesuits are, and put our spirituality into practice by helping and supporting one another.

As members of St Ignatius Parish and the "extended Ignatian family", we gather each weekend for Eucharist and we pray in our Mission Statement, to "live out our Christian vocation **in the spirit of St Ignatius**". Ignatian spirituality is a precious gift that the Jesuits have shared with us during their time in Toowong, each priest in his own unique way.

However, Ignatian Spirituality is broader than the Jesuit spirituality embodied in the Society of Jesus, and in particular in the Jesuits we have known and loved.

So, while we mourn the loss of the Jesuits who have nourished and served us for over 100 yrs, we are now invited to personally embrace this heritage of Ignatian spirituality and to share it with one another and the wider community – to be an Ignatian light for the people of Brisbane. We are like the disciples who grieved the loss of Jesus, who waited fearfully, but who then experienced his Spirit, consoling them, enflaming their hearts and empowering them for mission.

We are the Parish of St Ignatius at Toowong and Auchenflower. We are the greetings at the door, the smiles across the aisle, the altar servers who take the hand of any priest during the Our Father, the choirs, the handshake when peace is offered. We are not leaving, we will remain. And we that remain can choose to come together and decide how our community will grow into the future.

We need to follow the example of Fr. Peter Quin and the other pastors who have ministered to us so faithfully as we pick up the staff, look forward and make the best of the opportunities that this change though painful, offers us. May St Ignatius continue to Bless Us.