



Regina Coeli Catholic Church
Po Box 100
Beverly Hills NSW 2209

15 June 2015

Dear Regina Coeli Parishioners & Friends

I am writing to you to let you know that I have asked Mr Michael Moore, parishioner and Financial Controller of the Archdiocese of Sydney, to conduct a planned giving appeal on the weekend of the 20/21 June.

Past and present Regina Coeli parishioners working together with my predecessors worked tirelessly to build and establish Regina Coeli Parish to glorify and serve God. Physical works such as the Church, School, Convent and Presbytery bear witness to this but more importantly the spiritual and temporal works of mercy provided by priests, deacons, religious and parishioners through Parish organisations such as Altar Society, Acolytes, Catechists, Choir, Readers, Servers, the Ladies' and Mens' Conferences of the St Vincent de Paul Society and Rosary Statue Prayer Group are testimony of the fidelity of the Church in Beverly Hills to God's Word.

The world in which we live has changed very much over the past generation. Many employers expect employees to work longer hours, often beyond the traditional 9.00am-5.00pm week day. Economic circumstances dictate that both spouses in many of our parish families are required to work. Shopping hours and organised sporting events now intrude on the Sabbath.

The effects of these societal changes have significantly impacted Regina Coeli Parish. Because of the increasing distractions and demands placed on parishioners' time, it is fair to say that the level of parishioner involvement is not as it once was. It is falling upon fewer and often ageing members of the Parish to advance the mission of the Church in Beverly Hills.

In recent years the parish of Beverly Hills has seen more young families move into the area who have decided to join our faith community. This is reflected in our very successful youth group which has about 40 members, increased school enrolment and a high participation rate for Children's Liturgy at the 10.00am Mass on Sunday.

Furthermore, each of our families have the need and right to call upon the Parish for the sacraments on important occasions during their lives eg Baptism, First Holy Communion, Marriage and funerals. As members of the Regina Coeli

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Parish Community we have a responsibility, to ourselves and future generations, to ensure that we provide the necessary support to maintain the Parish.

Jesus portrays God in the Gospel as superabundant in giving (Matt13). God is generous in love and mercy. Likewise we too desire to imitate God by sharing something of our time and talent to continue to build a place of welcome respect and support.

What can I do to share in the mission of the Church?

Parishioners can advance the mission of the Church in Regina Coeli Parish through:

1. Prayer
2. Giving their time and expertise to assist the Parish &
3. Giving financial support appropriate to their means.

1. Prayer

The word parish comes from the Greek word *paroikia* which means a ‘pilgrim house of prayer’. We are all on pilgrimage through life and through private and communal prayer we burn with zeal. As Saint John Vianney said: “Private prayer is like straw scattered here and there: If you set it on fire it makes a lot of little flames. But gather these straws into a bundle and light them, and you get a mighty fire, rising like a column into the sky; public prayer is like that.” Earlier this year I distributed a prayer intention sheet. Each day of the month at Mass I remember a different group of the parish.

2. The Gift of Your Time and Talents

God has given each of us individual talents which we should use to know, love and serve Him. I earnestly encourage Parishioners to become involved in our Parish. All of our Parish organisations would warmly welcome new members. Today more than ever the Church needs new saints; men and women who are willing to share their unique character, personality and gifts with us. Pope Francis encourages us to launch out into the deep (Luke 5:4) when he said recently “After Easter, the Church prepares to receive the Holy Spirit, to ask for the grace to receive the Spirit so that he gives us the true courage to proclaim Jesus Christ.” Let us take up this invitation and be courageous.

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3. *Financial Support*

I appreciate that the subject of finances is a delicate subject in our society. I also am aware of the financial pressures on individuals and families. However the parish relies totally on donations. It does not receive any government funding.

Much has been achieved in recent years with the rebuilding of Regina Coeli School, rebuilding the Parish Hall and continuing parish building and church maintenance. However, after consultation with the Parish Finance Committee I have accepted their advice that the parish master plan needs to be finalized, including the rebuilding of the Parish Community Centre with provision of parking and associated works.

I encourage **all** parishioners who are working, including younger single Catholics to become part of the Parish Planned Giving Programme by filling out and returning the **attached** donor form, if you are not already, to the School or Parish Office. All donations are 100% tax deductible. You may wish to make a one-off donation and this would be gratefully received. If you are an existing member of the Planned Giving program you might consider increasing your contribution by at least \$1.

Planned Giving enables the parish to budget with money we know we will receive. I commend this program to you generously.

Michael Moore and the finance committee members will be available after Mass if you have any questions.

I thank you for your generosity and support of our vibrant and wonderful faith community.

Yours sincerely in Christ



**Fr Paul A Smithers, B. Theol, MTS
Administrator**

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