

## **Church workers – everyone is equally important - Wednesday, 09 September 2009**

The annual Mass of Thanksgiving for the work done throughout the year by volunteer church workers was concelebrated at St Patrick's Church in Dumbarton on Tuesday (September 8, 2009) by Canon Gerry Conroy, the parish priest, and retired assistant priest, Father Dan Friel. Father Frank Wilson is in Edinburgh on retreat at present.

In his homily, Canon Conroy urged workers to remember that their contribution was equally important whether they were readers, Eucharistic ministers or ministers of welcome, choir members or altar servers and did what they did in the full gaze of their fellow parishioners -- or did quietly like the church cleaners, the flower group, members of the editorial committee or Care for All groups, the parish council, the hall committee or the St Vincent De Paul Society, who reach out to elderly, sick disabled, lonely and housebound people in the parish.

The charitable work people did, said Canon Conroy, should be designed not to draw attention to themselves or attract praise from others.

The reason for participation should be to follow Christ's teachings and example. Our aim should be to improve our spiritual life and create a better, more inclusive and caring Christian community in St Patrick's, he said.

It was essential that all the groups within St Patrick's should strive to communicate with each other.

And that people should be prepared to contribute to the planning process within the church whose aims and objectives were to preserve and protect the important buildings, facilities and services that were currently in place in the parish.

They should also be prepared to plan together and work towards making those necessary improvements that would improve facilities for parishioners and secure them in perpetuity for generations to come.

Nearly 150 people attended the Thanksgiving Mass and about half of them repaired to the Church Hall afterwards where they were thanked by the clergy and entertained to a light supper.

Canon Conroy said: "I want to thank everyone who came to the Mass on what was a dreadful evening weather wise and all those others who were unable to attend but who have made such a valuable contribution to St Patrick's during the past 12 months."