



CORPUS CHRISTI CHURCH

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An open letter to
St Mary Magdalen Church Mortlake and
St Mary Magdalen's Catholic Primary School
from Fr. Adrian McKenna-Whyte



I was humbled and honoured to learn from Archbishop Peter Smith that he has appointed me as Parish Priest of St Mary Magdalen's from 2nd September. It is with a sense of trust and hope in the Lord's will for us all that a new stage in our parish life will begin, following the untimely death of Fr. Francis Moran. Although I am sad to leave Corpus Christi, I am blessed to be able to follow in the footsteps of Fr Francis, and to join you after the graceful stewardship of Fr Graziano de Palma. I look forward to joining you soon, to learning from you as we serve the Lord together and to becoming involved in the life of St Mary Magdalen's school.

To tell you something about me, my family background is Scots/Irish, and I have been serving in the Archdiocese of Southwark for over thirty years: as a layman when I first came to London, then as a Seminarian, and for the last sixteen years as a Priest of the Diocese. I have spent over eleven years in Lambeth, the last six of which have been spent as Parish Priest in Brixton Hill. During my time with Southwark I have worked in a number of Parishes, including Tunbridge Wells and Canterbury in Kent, St. Leonard's on Sea, Sussex and in a variety of London Boroughs, all with a vibrant mix of cultures, economic challenges and health and social needs.

Prior to being ordained I spent twelve years working in the NHS, specialising in community care issues and have graduate and postgraduate degrees in health and social welfare, as well as theology. As a Priest, I maintain a 'whole-person' approach to my ministry, especially advocating the needs of people with different abilities. I see my role as a Priest as a witness for Christ in the Gospel values, traditions and beliefs of the Catholic Church in a community of people from all faiths and none. Over the last twelve years, in addition to being Parish Priest, I have been involved in the following ministries within the diocese, serving the Lord in the local community as:

- ♦ Chaplain to the Metropolitan Police for Lambeth Borough and member of the Brixton Multi-Faith Community Engagement Group and Borough ward panel for policing and community issues
- ♦ Chair of the Lambeth Multi-Faith Action Group and Member of Faiths Together in Lambeth and London Citizens
- ♦ Director of London Catalyst, a charity that provides health, social and faith-based financial grants to alleviate the effects of poverty in Greater London
- ♦ Co-ordinator of the Retreat & Spiritual Care Programme for the Archdiocese of Southwark and a member of the On Going Formation of Priests Committee
- ♦ Member of the Spirituality & Psychiatry Special Interest Group of the Royal College of Psychiatrists
- ♦ Foundation Governor of the Salesian Academy St Joseph's College Beulah Hill and Foundation Governor of Corpus Christi, our Parish Primary School
- ♦ Trustee of the Hillside Gardens Park and Palace Road Nature Reserve Charity

For twenty-five years my last Parish came under the care of the Society of Jesus and I believe wholeheartedly in the Jesuit motto that all that we do should be '*for the greater glory of God*'. In that spirit I look forward to working together as we serve the Lord, using the time, talents and treasures he has given us to help build our parish, school and community so that, in the words of St. Ignatius of Loyola, we act as if everything depended on us and "*trust as if everything depended on God*"

Fr Adrian McKenna