

Dear People of St. Michael's

I write this letter in faith that God will place the words on my heart to express my cry for more folk to make their time, talents and skills available to grow the ministries within St. Michael's.

As many of you know a church is not a building. St. Michael and All Angels church is you and I. The building is the place where we meet in the name of Jesus to give God all the glory. For us to do this the building must be setup and prepared, and many things are done in the background to make this possible.

Before I joined St. Michael's I had not given the word "Ministries" much thought, nor did I ever wonder what made it possible for a person to walk into a church on a Sunday morning to partake in all the aspects of a Eucharist service. It was not until I got involved and became part of a ministry that I fully understood what it took to have a service on a Sunday morning, including Sunday School and all the wonderful ministries on offer at St. Michael's.

My Testimony

I joined St. Michael's as a pretty quiet person not wanting to be pushed into anything. My wife Marya and I were invited to a pudding evening at a Home Cell to which we accepted. We went there feeling that we didn't know anyone and it could be awkward; but we went and felt most welcomed by everybody. Before we knew it we became part of the home cell and still are today. I would probably not have joined a home cell, but I am so glad I did because that was where God opened the door for me to offer my time, talents and skills to His glory. It also started an accelerated growth in my spiritual walk.

At home cell one night there was a call for people with trailers to assist with moving some rubble from the Rectory. Having a trailer and some time on the particular Saturday morning I went to offer my help. The Rectory was empty and being prepared for a new priest. While loading my trailer that Saturday, I heard the Wardens talking about having the Rectory's kitchen cupboards re-done. Because these wardens were in my home cell it was easy to approach them and offer my skills. From there I was asked to be on the PCC performing maintenance duties. Until then I saw it as an opportunity to do voluntary work saving the church money. I then learnt that no matter how small or big the task you do within the church, it is classified as a ministry.

I tell you this because I know how difficult it can be to get involved even if you are willing. Sometimes you don't know where your talents can best be used, and if there is even a need for them. My ministry journey started with joining a home cell, where one gets to hear about the activities and needs of the church that you might otherwise miss sitting in the pews.

Ministries

Some ministries save the church money, some spiritually grow people, some help people in need, and some minister to people. There are many types of ministries the church can offer to grow God's kingdom which I like to call Phase 2 ministries. I would like to suggest that Phase 1 ministries are the ones that make it possible to have a service on a Sunday e.g: those that prepare and set up the church, flower arrangers, sacristans (people that set up the altar), sides people (welcoming team), media, sound, music, Lay ministers, readers etc.

Both phase 1 and 2 ministries need more committed people to lighten the load for those people who have faithfully served for years. New blood is also needed to free up people to move on to new ministries, as well as to grow existing ministries and start new ones.

No one ministry is more important than another but Phase 2 ministries would find it difficult to exist or be truly effective without fully functioning Phase 1 ministries. The reason being that it is important for us all to meet on a Sunday morning to worship together. Being present every Sunday bonds us closer with our brothers and sisters in the name of the Lord, where we support each other spiritually. Those constantly on duty miss out this vital part of a Sunday service. At the moment we have a small percentage of members attending every Sunday and an even smaller percentage serving in ministries. Our calling as Christians is to grow the church, and to do this we need committed people to attract more people who in turn commit to growing the church.

If you want to grow a business, you employ people with the right skills to do the job. In our church only two people get paid, Fr. David and Taynà, our secretary. It is impossible for two people to do all the work necessary to have a fully functional church, hence we have ministries where people can offer their time, talents and skills voluntarily to help to do God's work. The church depends on tithes for income with which to operate the ministries, but we are also called to bring our time, talents and skills. As the church grows, the income increases making it possible to employ, for example a youth pastor or professional musicians who in turn make it possible to grow God's kingdom.

I write this letter to invite people involved in ministries to maybe expand more on their ministries to encourage more people to offer their time, talents and skills to grow their respective ministries. I also write this letter to encourage more people to join ministries that I have personally been part of in the past - ministries I have insight in and can perhaps help others realise where they might belong.

The music ministry consists of singers, musicians, sound controllers and media (the person operating the PC to project the songs etc. on to the screen). I would be delighted if people who can sing or play musical instruments come forward and re-start this part of the music ministry. For years we have had to rely on the media team to fill this gap by projecting video songs with words to substitute for musicians and singers. The music ministry urgently needs people to join the media and sound team. At present there are only 3 people on media and 1 on sound who work very hard behind the scenes to bring music and other projected material to the service. I urge committed people to come forward if you can operate a PC and can quickly adapt to making the material projected on the screen run as smoothly as possible during a service. Full training will be provided.

From experience, no ministry is sustainable if there are not enough hands on board. It is not good for one's spiritual walk if one is on duty virtually every week. This has been happening in the media and many other ministries for a very a long time. The key to anything becoming successful is commitment. The more people that commit to helping, the more successful St Michael's will be. Successful in growing the ministries and therefore fulfilling our calling in doing God's work to grow His church.

I thank all those who are already committed in ministries to bring St. Michael's to where it is today and I pray for a greater percentage of our members to commit their time, talents and skills to a ministry.

Yours in Christ

Sean Cuff.