

All Souls church needs **you**. Hopefully you've all received one of those flyers asking for your help. All Souls' church needs you, yes you, in order to survive and grow. In reality, of course, it is so much more than just survival.

It's about becoming the community God wants us to be. It's about being a community where people really love each other and express that love in concrete ways. It's about being a spirit-filled community, a community rooted in prayer, in contemplation and in worship. It's about being a community at the service of others, especially the poor and oppressed.

God's grace has...taught us that what we have to do is to give up **everything** that does not lead us to God, **and** all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and **religious** lives. It sounds as if God wants us all to be like monks and nuns, to give up everything in order to devote ourselves totally to the work of the church. That, of course, is totally unrealistic.

Most of us have families. Most of us have to earn a living.

But what is required is a change of mindset. Although our families and our work take up the bulk of our time, in our hearts, our first loyalty, our first love, should always be for Jesus and for the community that He is building. Indeed our families are part of that community, part of the Church.

Instead of simply coming to Mass and then going away again. We have to become part of the Mass; we have to live the Mass; we have to feel that sense of communion throughout our lives. The church doesn't stop at the church door. You take it with you wherever you go.

Renewal in the Church is sometimes associated with signs and wonders, prophesying, speaking in tongues and all the razamataz of Pentecostalism and the charismatic movement, which is great. But I believe renewal often comes in much quieter, less spectacular sorts of ways. *I baptise you with water but someone is coming, the someone who is more powerful than I am* has already come. In the water of this, and every font, we are baptised with the Holy Spirit and with fire. The Holy Spirit descends on us like a dove. The sacraments of the Church are not just empty rituals. They are spirit-filled events, moments of encounter with the living God, a sharing with Jesus and His Church.

In many ways, as of course is often the case, I am preaching to the converted, like that *joyful messenger to Jerusalem*, shouting, "*Here is your God*". But All Souls' church does indeed need you. Please respond to the fliers as best you can.

God bless you all.