

## **CHANGE-some realities!**

In my time as a Catholic priest I have been fortunate enough to lead 4 very different parish communities. Whenever I go to a new community for a few weeks I watch to see how things are before I propose any changes. Often the reaction from some people is *“But we have always done it this way”* and then (with a gentle smile) I say, *“That might be the case, but experience has shown me that this now is the better way to go.”*

The principle of accepting change will always be a constant challenge not just for a church community but for any community. In the beginnings of the Church the big challenge especially in the community around Jerusalem was in how best to accept the Christian message without also cheapening the existing Jewish heritage. The main issue here was the continued imposition of male circumcision.

In Australia the issue that I have noticed in accepting change is in the integration of national Catholic Church communities within the wider Church. Of course certain national heritages and traditions should not be eliminated yet a willingness to also become part of a new nation is vital. There always needs to be some *give* and *take* here from people both inside and outside of an ethnic community.

Jesus of Nazareth had something to say about the reality of change in these words; *“new wine needs to be poured into new skins.”* (Matthew Ch. 2 verse 22) *Fr Martin R Maunsell*