

# POPE JOHN XXIII PARISH

## Profile

Officially established in 1971 as a parish within the Diocese of Lausanne, Geneva and Fribourg, Pope John XXIII is not a territorial parish but a *linguistic* one made up of some 90 different nationalities for whom English is their common tongue.

The origins of the Parish go back to 1956 when an English-speaking Catholic Chaplaincy in Geneva was established to provide for the spiritual needs of the growing English-speaking community that was drawn mainly from the international business sector, the many inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations located in the city as well as diplomatic representations to the United Nations. With the arrival of migrants from many parts of the developing world, the composition of the Parish has changed considerably in recent times.

## The Parish Centre & Parish House

The John XXIII Centre was built through the generosity of the late Leon Vermont (1890-1968), a Geneva citizen who was a great admirer of Pope John XXIII. The architectural firm of Bordigoni and Fleury designed the building and construction started in May 1981. The Centre was inaugurated on October 2, 1982 and is used for both worship and social purposes (and therefore is not a consecrated building). It holds 250 people with additional seating for 50 more in a side Chapel. The Centre incorporates a Sacristy large meeting room (which also serves as an overflow room), a separate Reconciliation Room, a kitchen and rest room facilities, including an accessible toilet.



Above and below: Pictures of the Pope John XXIII Parish Center.



In 1984 the adjoining house was acquired as the residence of the parish priests. Aside from containing two self contained priest apartments, it also houses the Parish Offices, Library and large Conference Room.

Due to rapid growth in the size of its congregation, leading to overcrowding and a severe lack of space to hold its varied pastoral, social and, above all, catechetical activities, a unanimous decision was taken by the Parish General Assembly of 2009 to move from its current premises.

A creative solution was found involving swapping premises with the larger (space-wise) francophone Parish of St Nicholas de Flue, based in Montbrillant, and plans are currently underway for the parish to move to this site in 2013.

# PARISH COMMUNITY

## **Parish Structure**

Diocesan and Swiss legal regulations require that there be three principal bodies involved in the running of the Parish: a General Assembly which normally meets annually, a pastoral council and an administrative council.

### The General Assembly

The General Assembly is the legal body which reviews and approves the budgets and accounts, elects members of the Parish Administrative Council and reviews its work. The assembly is made up of all Catholic registered members of our Parish, age 16 and above. Other parishioners may attend the General Assembly as observers.

### The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC)

The PPC is responsible for organizing and implementing pastoral activities of specific ministries within the framework of the Parish Mission Statement. Members of the PPC also assist the priests on other aspects of parish pastoral life. Members of the PPC are appointed by the Parish Priest.

### The Parish Administrative Council (PAC)

The PAC, an elected body, is responsible for the Parish's day-to-day administration and finances, the Parish Office, grounds and maintenance, and legal issues regarding the Canton and Diocese.

## **Parish Census**

Pope John XXIII Parish has been blessed with continuous growth since it began with 200 members nearly 40 years ago. Today, there are more than 1,400 currently registered households (families and single persons) in our Parish from scores of different countries unified by a common faith and language. Our vibrant Parish offers more than 30 different ministries. As well as classes for sacramental preparation, we have 7 different choirs, a 10-level religious education program, a youth group, several adult formation groups and outreach programs.

## **Our Parish Priest**

Fr. Richard de Lord was ordained in 1994 in Hackney, East London and has worked in three parishes in the London area. He has also served as a hospital chaplain and school chaplain to a number of schools including the famous Harrow School. Prior to coming to Geneva in January 2007, Fr. Richard was the parish priest of St. Anthony of Padua Church, Radlett, in the Diocese of Westminster.

