

## **View from the Rectory window October 25**

October church magazine articles traditionally take the theme of Harvest as their subject matter. I will continue that tradition, as Harvesting is an activity that is central to not only the agricultural way of life but also the essence of the Christian way of life.

Harvesting is defined as a process of gathering in or collecting. While farmers are concerned with gathering the harvest of the land, there are many other human activities of gathering in or collecting which we perform as a natural part of the rhythm of human life. From the pursuit of education to plant the seeds of possible job or career paths, to the lifestyle choices in earlier life which hopefully plant the seeds of good health in later life, we are always sowing seeds in the hope and expectation that they will repay us in some shape or form in later years.

However, the key difference in a farming harvest compared to a human activity of harvesting, is that we as human beings have a direct and determining influence over the whole process of growth, maturation, and cultivation. We are not passive vessels or bearers of the spiritual seeds of love, kindness, peace, and healing that are planted in us at our creation. Unlike the land and earth, we are more than repositories of nature's store, we are participants and active partners in the whole journey; from hearing the Word, knowing the inner voice of the Holy Spirit, and being touched by other people's love. All of us can smother, strangle, or simply ignore the divine calling in our lives and therefore allow the seeds of faith, hope and trust to wither and perish in our lives. Farming is a way of life precisely because it is caught up in the essence of life, lived as the way our heavenly father intended. A union of heaven and earth realised and lived out on earth, through all the storms and weathers of life that we like the ground itself must bear. As St Luke tells us in chapter 14,

**11** "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.<sup>e</sup> **12** Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. **13** Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.<sup>f</sup> **14** The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches<sup>g</sup> and pleasures, and they do not mature. **15** But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Rev. Richard Higgins