



from **CENTRE**
to

CHURCH



We hold in our hearts many memories of Pope John XXIII Centre at Petit Saconnex. As we move to our new Parish home at St. Nicolas de Flue on Montbrillant, there will be differences that we will need to be aware of and adapt to, not least in our liturgical celebrations.

• Our main building at Petit Saconnex is named Pope John XXIII Centre. *Centre*, because it is not a consecrated church. So, over our many years here, we were able to hold our various social activities such as Kermesses in this building, as well as using it as a place of worship.

Because of this dual-purpose arrangement, we became accustomed to a much more casual attitude in our use of the building - with loud conversations often taking place before Mass, and high noise levels, making it difficult sometimes for those wishing to pray. Since the tabernacle was hidden from view, it was easy to forget that we were in the presence of the Lord.

• St. Nicolas de Flue, on the other hand, is a *consecrated Church*. It is a building dedicated *solely* to worship and prayer.

The tabernacle at St. Nicolas de Flue has a central location in the Church, and is visible when we enter. It is customary, therefore, as a sign of reverence and assuming we are able to, that we genuflect (kneel on one knee) when entering the Church, before leaving, or when passing the tabernacle. To maintain a prayerful atmosphere in the Church, it would be considerate to refrain from unnecessary conversation to enable our fellow parishioners to pray and meditate without distraction.

• The Centre has served as a dual-purpose building, so even our liturgies were adapted accordingly. The absence of kneelers, for example, has made us accustomed to sitting during parts of the Mass when it is appropriate to either stand or kneel.

• St. Nicolas de Flue is furnished with kneelers, and we will, therefore, be able to worship in ways customary to other churches in our Diocese. This may take a bit of getting used to, so the priest will guide us with prompts during worship times. Remember that, in our bodily responses, whether we sit or kneel, the focus is on unity - not uniformity.

The renovation works in the Church relating to the heating, sound system, lighting, and electricity could not progress while our sister parish was still occupying the church. Therefore a little patience is needed, as these works proceed. In the meantime, come to Church early enough to find a seat where the acoustics suit your needs!

We thank the parish priest and parishioners of our sister parish for their patience and forbearance during the long year they have been without their parish house, to enable the building work there to be completed.

About St. Nicolas de Flue

Born in the canton of Unterwalden on the 21st of March 1417, Nicolas became a distinguished soldier of the Confederation. He was a married man and a father of ten children. In 1467, with his wife's consent, he became a hermit, and devoted himself to the contemplative life. His feast day in Switzerland is celebrated on September 25. He composed the following prayer:

"My Lord and my God, take from me everything that distances me from you. My Lord and my God, give me everything that brings me closer to you. My Lord and my God, detach me from myself to give my all to you."