

# CATHOLIC LIFE

*Diocese of Lismore*

**Tweed Coast to the Camden Haven**

**March 2003 Vol.6 No.1**



## *A Lasting Sermon*

*“The Shrine is a sermon that will go on long after I have left the parish.” These are the summary words of Father John Casey, the artist and craftsman of the reflective garden in the Parish of Camden Haven. Reflecting on the lasting significance of what has been achieved as a ‘team-effort’ with his parishioners, Father John comments that the great benefit to the parish “is the number of visitors, believers and non-believers, who get a sense of peace from their visit. They come with problems of every kind and after some time just strolling, reflecting and praying, they seem to leave with a great sense of peace.”*

*“It is interesting that the word ‘paradise’ comes from the word ‘garden’. In the calmness of this place people wander around, go into the shrine, sit down and say a prayer. Seeing that happen has made all the effort worthwhile.”*

**See pages 18 & 19 for more**

# THINK ANEW ON GOD'S MERCY

## Bishop Jarrett's Lenten Letter

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One of the big impressions made on Australian pilgrims to World Youth Day in Toronto last July was the talk by the Nigerian Cardinal, Francis Arinze, on the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The audience of thousands of English-speaking young people sat on the concrete floor of a vast exhibition hall in hour-long silent attention as the Cardinal gave a factual, straight-down-the-line, unvarnished catechesis of the Church's teaching about Penance and Reconciliation and the practice of confession. The Cardinal fielded questions for a long time afterwards, while on the fringes of the crowd priests in make-shift confessionals were celebrating the Sacrament for lengthy queues of young people. Reconciliation was a key part of the World Youth Day experience; each day that week at all the main venues over a thousand priest-confessors were available to provide for the huge demand. Many of the penitents made no secret of the fact that their hearts had been touched in such a way that they were making up for a long-time neglect of the Sacrament, even many years. Once cleansed of their sins and forgiven, many of the young people spent time in front of the World Youth Day Cross before beginning the act of penance assigned to them by their confessor according to the nature of their confessed sins. Contributing alms to the poor, performing good deeds, fasting and prayer were among the prescribed penances.

The spring-time of grace so evident in Toronto took place in a city which suffers, like so many others of the western world, from all the social and moral ills of today's post-modern culture. But there as elsewhere a Christian spring-time germinates from the Gospel of Jesus Christ and is bringing forth the beautiful fruits of faith, hope and love pointing young and old alike to the new world of the Kingdom. To enter by that door we all have to stoop, make ourselves small, and be very humble. It means, among other things, getting down on our knees and saying, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner."

## Christmas to Pentecost



**Bishop Jarrett meets parishioners at St Carthage's Cathedral.**

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Not long ago, as we prepared for Christmas, we heard that the Child to be born must be named Jesus, "because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins." In the weeks now ahead it will be made clear to us that He whom we call our "Saviour" achieved that title by the work of His suffering and death for our sakes. Then, the great mission completed with His founding of His Church to carry its effects forward till the end of time, we will see Him breathing on the Apostles and hear Him saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained." As the Catechism states, "Reconciliation with the Church is inseparable from reconciliation with God."

## ***Lent is a special time of grace***

During this Lenten season of 2003 I call our community of the Diocese together to think anew on the wonder of God's mercy shown us in Christ our Redeemer and Reconciler. He challenges us to repentance, to face the evils within our own hearts as the necessary foundation for our effectiveness in facing the evils of the world around us. I pray that many hearts will be touched in the same way as those tens of thousands of young people in Toronto last year, and that during these forty days the confessionals of our

churches will be just as busy. The Lord awaits in this time of grace with outstretched arms of welcome, no matter how long we have neglected the Sacrament of Reconciliation, no matter how difficult it might seem to return to confession. The adage "Just do it!" can perhaps be applied to help overcome the hesitation.

## ***Four points***

To get the full benefit from the Sacrament of Reconciliation, concentrate on the four things that are necessary. First, stir up a heartfelt sorrow (contrition) for the sins which you identify as weighing on your conscience, the ones that niggle away and disturb your peace no matter perhaps how much you try to put them aside or excuse yourself. Secondly, confess your sins to a priest, calling them by their proper names and in the case of those that are serious, give your best recollection of the number of times. Be brief and be blunt. Thirdly, resolve firmly that the future is going to be different from the past – there is every reason for trusting that with the grace of sacramental absolution and God's ongoing help you can be free of the sins confessed. Lastly, in fulfilling the penance assigned, include the resolution to make good to the best of your

*continued next page*

ability any harm or damage or loss sustained by another by reason of your sins.

### **Two Rites**

Reconciliation in the Sacrament of Penance is brought about through two Rites, one individual, and the other communal, though both require individual and private confession and absolution to take place. The First Rite is the most common, usually available at several advertised times each week in your parish church. Everyone has the right to be anonymous, and there is always a screen separating the priest from the penitent, for the identity of a penitent is of no concern to the priest. However, some may wish to confess without anonymity, and that is an available option in most places if the penitent so chooses to use it.

The Second or Communal Rite has become common in recent times, especially before Christmas and Easter. The celebration draws a congregation of people together with a sufficient number of priests to hear all the individual confessions and give absolution to each penitent. Its form is laid down by the Church, and consists of an opening prayer, a Liturgy of the Word with at least one scripture reading, and a homily which "should lead the penitents to examine their consciences and renew their lives." Next, a period of conducted examination of conscience takes place and then the Rite of Reconciliation commences with a communal request for forgiveness such as the "I confess" as said at Mass, leading to a prayer litany and the Our Father said by all. This introduces the Sacrament itself, when the penitents go to the priests arranged in the confessionals and other places to confess their sins privately as in the individual rite. Following this confession, a penance and the individual absolution is given, and the penitent returns to the congregation to await the concluding prayer of thanksgiving and the blessing and dismissal. This Second Rite is not limited to preparation for the major feasts, but depending on the availability of priests to hear confessions can be celebrated at any time of the year. It brings home to us that while we must bear individual accountability for our

**The Second or Communal Rite has become common in recent times, especially before Christmas and Easter. The celebration draws a congregation of people together with a sufficient number of priests to hear all the individual confessions and give absolution to each penitent**

sins, our reconciliation comes about through the work of the Church, and by this Sacrament we are once more restored to the fulness of communion with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **Parents and Children**

The delicate work of moral education and forming the consciences of children falls first and foremost on parents, and to them likewise is entrusted the task of catechesis and good example in regard to the Sacraments and the practice of the faith. This is specially true of Penance. A Catholic parent who is a regular penitent will lead their children by their good example to experience the joy of forgiveness and the gradual conquest of selfishness. Families turning up as a group at regular parish reconciliation times are families in which the grace of God is alive and active, with great promise for the future Christian lives of the children.

### **Launch into the deep**

Regular sacramental confession and reconciliation is a part of our ongoing determination to follow Christ and to win our place in the company of His saints. It's a way of launching ourselves into the deep of the Lord's mercy, and participating in the work of the new evangelisation by which the Church today continues her engagement with the world to win hearts and minds for

Christ.

May the grace and peace of Christ our Lord bless your Lenten observance, and bring you to the fulness of joy in his Resurrection, reconciled, forgiven and ready to meet Him in the Easter Sacraments.

**Most Reverend Geoffrey Jarrett  
Bishop of Lismore**

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**Email to : [media@lismorediocese.org](mailto:media@lismorediocese.org)**  
**Deadline for the next edition is June 3, 2003.**

# A Sure Compass

Since we last went to press a momentous anniversary and coincidence occurred.

The Second Vatican Council opened in Rome on October 11, forty years ago.

The Pope who planned and opened the Council, Pope John XXIII, has been beatified.

In his letter “Novo Millennio Ineunte”, written at the close of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000, Pope John Paul II wrote: “What a treasure there is, dear brothers and sisters, in the guidelines offered us by the Second Vatican Council...With the passing of the years, the Council documents have lost nothing of their value or brilliance...Now that the Jubilee has ended, I feel more than ever in duty bound to point to the Council as the great grace bestowed on the Church in the twentieth century: there we find a sure compass by which to take our bearings in the century now beginning.” (paragraph 25)

For those of us who remember what life in the Church was like before the Second Vatican Council, we know what a transformation took place. The Second Vatican Council marked the end of a certain way of being Church. From a rigid, authoritative body, the Church became very different...open, engaging and courageous in moving through a world that seemed determined to hem the church into a no-go position.

Pope John XXIII inaugurated a new era for the Church. His prayer was for a “New Pentecost”, and as one theologian and commentator the Rev. Gerald S. Twomey observed recently, “he heralded a dramatic shift from a law-centred Church to a life-centered Church, from defensiveness to dialogue and from static ideas to historical development.”

In those forty years from the day when two thousand five hundred Bishops processed down the Scala Regia to the entrance of St. Peter’s Basilica, the Church throughout the world has been celebrated, ostracised, afflicted, accused, denigrated, revered and embraced. It has flowed past reactionaries and prophets of doom to confront, teach and embrace a humanity that has been so often convulsed by fear, confusion and tragic ideologies.

In this turmoil of society, the Church...true to the teaching of Vatican II, has established an acknowledged universality. In the many nationalities, cultures and political systems, the Church has identified itself as a Global Church. Vernacular is now its language. Its Pope is a world traveller, wanting to be with every people on earth. Its outreach is non-restrictive.

To engage many “national” religions, the Council set up the Secretariat for Christian Unity to launch the Church into ecumenical waters. The World Council of Churches welcomed the initiative. The ecumenical movement has, in forty years, waxed strong in effective dialogue.

Before Vatican II, the Church was regarded as a two class system...the Hierarchy and the Laity. That was the way it was, particularly in the European Church. There were those who governed and those who obeyed. The Council Document “Lumen Gentium” demanded that there be changes to this model. The change was to a “circular” model intended to break down barriers,

to bring all together as the Body of Christ, into one communion.

Among the many teaching declarations of the Council, one of these has a timely relevance in society to-day. The declaration was contained in the document “Nostra Aetate” which states that the Church “rejects nothing of what is true and holy” in other religions, and emphasises the need for dialogue to break down the barriers of enmity and blatant hatred.

When the Council closed with that stirring and solemn ecumenical service in St. Peter’s Basilica on December 7, 1965, the agenda had been released, the challenging words of renewal had been spoken and the commission to preach to all nations reaffirmed.

The challenge had only just begun.

Forty years have passed since the Blessed Pope John opened the Council. The “Caretaker Pope” has been acknowledged as wise, courageous and saintly.

In these anxious times, I am sure that he calls us to revisit his Second Vatican Council, to pray its prayer, to ponder again what it teaches and to relive its spirit.

# Making a Good Confession in the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Long ago in the Old Testament Scriptures the prophet Micah said what is required of us is “to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with [our] God.” (Micah 6:8).

God has shown us what is right, and we need to seek His forgiveness for the times we have failed to seek justice, to act with kindness and to walk humbly with Him. We can take comfort from the truth that when we confess our sins honestly and with a humble heart, He will freely pardon us. The absolution received from God through the priest is the means God has established to lift the burden from our shoulders, and to assure us that not only are our sins forgiven, but that God remembers them no more.

A good preparation for the Sacrament centres on reviewing our consciences to see the patterns of sin, not just the individual acts, which separate us from God. As we identify these sin patterns, we can seek healing and change, especially in the areas of our lives which most distance us from God.

The following questions are based on the Ten Commandments. Under the light of the Holy Spirit they are intended to reveal to us the thoughts, words and actions by which we have sinned against God and neighbour. They should not be seen as a mere checklist, but as an invitation to search our hearts in the areas indicated, so that we can receive the Sacrament with increased benefit.

## **1. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods besides me.**

Do I worship God in spirit and truth, and give God the praise due to Him?

Am I angry with God or resentful towards Him because of illness or other misfortunes?

Do I make a God out of my work, my possessions, or my image in the eyes of others so that these rule my life instead of God?

Have I tried to grow in the knowledge of God through daily prayer and scripture reading? Have I fulfilled my duty of penance on Fridays and in Lent?

Have I dabbled in the occult or given

credence to horoscopes, ouija boards, channelling, tarot cards, or fortune telling?

Have I taken time to teach my family about the ways of God and to pray with them?

## **2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.**

Have I been hypocritical by adhering to ritualistic observance while my heart has been far from God?

Have I resorted to profane language by cursing and swearing?

In conversation, have I passively acceded to slander and jokes aimed at demeaning religion, the Church, or God’s authority?

Have I received Holy Communion while in a state of unrepented serious sin, or without fasting and due reverence. Have I made a confession that was not honest?

## **3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**

Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work or chores that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family activities?

Have I attended Mass every Sunday?

In my prayer and attendance at the liturgy, am I content with a passive observance rather than devoting myself to genuine worship of the Lord?

## **4. Honour your father and your mother.**

As a young person in the family home, do I listen to, respect and obey my parents when they instruct me?

As an adult, do I visit and care for my parents in their old age?

Do I harbour short-term or long-standing resentments towards my parents? Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings?

## **5. You shall not kill.**

Have I struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person?

Have I ever had an abortion, or advocated abortion, either through my opinions

in conversation or by actively assisting someone in procuring an abortion?

Have I endangered myself or the life of another person through the taking of drugs or the abuse of alcohol?

## **6. You shall not commit adultery.**

Have I engaged in sexual activity outside of marriage?

Have I engaged in homosexual actions?

A surgical sterilisation, or used artificial contraception?

Have I given my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies?

Have I read pornography or watched indecent movies or television shows?

In conversation, have I told or enjoyed lewd or obscene jokes and stories?

## **7. You shall not steal.**

Have I taken anything that did not belong to me, or deliberately cheated to gain an advantage?

Have I been dishonest in the payment of my taxes or in the submission of expense accounts in my business?

Have I wasted time and cheated my employer by not doing a full day’s work for my wages?

Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of the poor at home or abroad?

Have I been irresponsible and neglected the needs of my family by wasting money on gambling or betting?

## **8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.**

Have I told lies to deceive or injure, or to commit perjury?

Have I defamed the good name of another person by taking part in uncharitable gossip and slander?

Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins, with little desire or intention to help them?

Have I condoned prejudice and hatred toward people of other nationalities, races or religions?

## **9. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife.**

Have I sought the affections of another person’s husband or wife?

Have I contemplated infidelity to my spouse?

Have I upheld the dignity of my spouse in all circumstances?

Have I rejected my family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them?

## **10. You shall not covet your neighbour’s goods.**

Do I have and express concern for those who are suffering by giving generously to the poor or serving, as I am able, those who are in need?

Do I habitually compare myself with others in terms of wealth, status, and financial security?

Am I jealous of the personal qualities of



others, or envious of their possessions and success?

Do I keep my finances in order and exercise proper stewardship over what is mine?

Do support my Church realistically in proportion to what God has given me?

#### **Four Steps for a good Confession:**

1. Renew your sorrow for your sins (contrition), and determination to leave behind all that offends God. Ask God's help as you recall your sins (examination of conscience).
2. Confess your sins to a priest.
3. Resolve to amend your life for the future.
4. After your confession, do the penance the priest assigns, resolve to make good any harm caused by your sins (satisfaction), and thank God for His mercy towards you.

#### **Procedure in the Confessional:**

The priest may begin with the Sign of the Cross (and a Scripture Reading). When he finishes, say:

Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been (state length of time)— since my last confession. I accuse myself of these sins:

Confess any serious sins and the number of times committed. If you have no mortal sins to confess, then mention two or three venial sins committed since your last confession. Indicate you have finished by saying, e.g.:

For these and all the sins of my past life (especially for my sins of . . .) I am truly sorry.

*The priest may say a few words of advice*

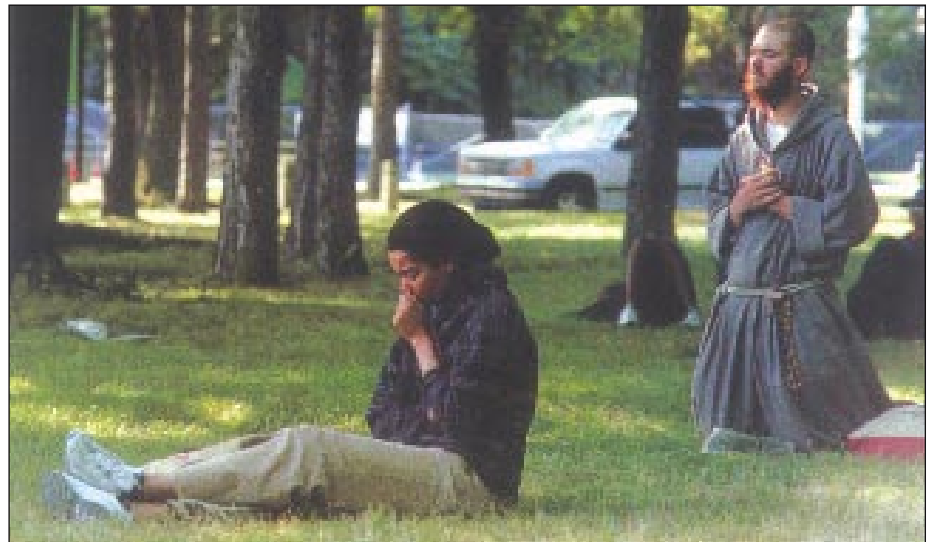
*and encouragement, and then assigns your penance.*

*Then say an Act of Contrition, in your own words if you wish or such as the following:*

“O my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, because you are so good, and with your help I will not sin again.”

Listen as the priest says the words of Absolution; thank the priest as you leave, and perform the penance assigned as soon as possible.

**Most Reverend Geoffrey Jarrett  
Bishop of Lismore**



*Photos from World Youth Day 2002 Souvenir Album, published by NOVALIS and distributed in Australia by John Garrett Bookroom. Phone 03 9545 3111*

## **NEWS FROM THE ABORIGINAL CATHOLIC MINISTRY**

**T**he Koori Catholic Community within Lismore Diocese continues to develop in various ways. In the last six months of 2002 a new milestone was reached when, with the support of Bishop Jarrett, representatives from the Koori community were welcomed to attend the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Because of the special circumstances of the Koori populations in Lismore Diocese where three major nations are present, the Bundjalung, the Gumbaynggir, and the Dunghutti, the Aboriginal community will be allowed to have up to three representatives at the Diocesan Pastoral Council meetings. The reps at any DPC meeting will be nominated by the Elders' Council of the diocese.

Representation of Aboriginal Catholics on the DPC should certainly help to build bridges between the mainstream Catholic community of the diocese and Koori Catholics. A small step that we hope is part of a long and fruitful journey.

Elections of a new Diocesan Elders' Council at the Elders Gathering at Yarrowarra Aboriginal Conference Centre at the end of October 2002 brought some new faces

— although on older bodies! — to the Elders' Council. Steadily the Elders Council of the diocese, a pioneer among the dioceses of New South Wales, assumes more and more leadership and responsibility for the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry within the diocese.

Last year saw a large turnover among the team of religious and priests attached to the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry. In mid-year Fr Anthony Reilly, sm, was replaced by Fr Bob Barber, sm. At the end of the year Sr Colleen Rhodes, rsm, moved out of Jibannnga, a house of Koori spirituality, in Bowraville, and the Koori ministry team and has been appointed to work at Star of the Sea Retreat and Conference Centre, Yamba.

Br Kevin Redmond, sm, left the Marist Community at Macksville in December to return to his studies for the priesthood in New Zealand. Kevin has been replaced by Br Michael Cilicewa, sm, from Fiji, who is at present undergoing a programme of orientation into the diocese.

**Submitted by: Fr. R. Barber sm  
Aboriginal Catholic Ministry Diocese of  
Lismore**



**Aunty Gloria Phillips and Uncle Martin Ballangarry, the two most recently inducted Eucharistic Ministers, assist Fr Peter McDermott, sm, in preparing for the Distribution of Communion.**

# CELEBRATION OF PAST ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEW BEGINNINGS

**O**n Thursday, 6th February the Trinity Catholic College community gathered to celebrate the outstanding individual results achieved by students in the 2002 Higher School Certificate Examinations. The special Assembly began with prayers and readings by the Student Leaders and Members of Staff, which highlighted the importance of looking for opportunities to utilise the gifts and talents given individually to all people by our God.

College Principal, Brother Peter, acknowledged the 77 placements received by students on the Board of Studies Distinguished Achievers' List, presenting a framed certificate to each of the outstanding students from Year 12, 2002 who had gathered with their families to experience their last College Assembly. Brother Peter also paid tribute to the three students, Meg Richardson, Mitra Oliver-Anderson and Lilian Cameron who received the Premier's Award for All-Round Academic Excellence. College Dux was awarded to Lilian Cameron who addressed the community, pointing out that while academic excellence is certainly admirable, students can only be



**Br Peter presents the College Dux for 2002, Lilian Cameron, with the College Trophy at the Academic Assembly on 6th February.**

truly successful when they acknowledge the importance of developing the whole person. Lilian spoke with passion about her years at Trinity and the many opportunities that existed for the sharing of a rich community life.

The celebration concluded with a special morning tea for last year's Year 12 students and their

the realisation that their school years were finally behind them.

Only days after this celebration in the Academic life of the College, another important event took place for the Trinity community with the Commencement Mass celebrated by Bishop Jarrett on Tuesday, 11th February. The Mass provided an opportunity for the College community to begin another year-long spiritual journey together and to reflect upon the fact that each member of the Community is called by God to make a unique contribution to College life. The College leaders for 2003 were inducted as part of this celebration, with Members of the Student Council, the College House Captains, Vice Captains and Captains all receiving their badge of Office and committing their year to Christian leadership of the College in its Catholic tradition.

And so, within days at Trinity, the community had said "congratulations and farewell" to last year's achievements and welcomed the opportunities that lay ahead in 2003 – not just in terms of academic successes but opportunities to reach out to others in need, to make a difference in our community, as the College motto says, not only through words, but through deeds.



families. Although it was a very happy occasion, there was a sense of impending change within the group, with many of those present preparing for university studies in the coming weeks with

**Above: Aunty Gloria Phillips and Uncle Martin Ballangarry with Fr Peter McDermott, sm, after their induction as Eucharistic Ministers.**

**Left: Uncle Martin Ballangarry and Aunty Emily Walker, newly elected member of the Diocesan Elders' Council, in a jovial mood at the Elders' Gathering in October 2002.**

**Top Left: Three new members of the Diocesan Elders Council, Aunty Robyne Bancroft, Aunty Emily Walker and Aunty Winnie Kelly.**

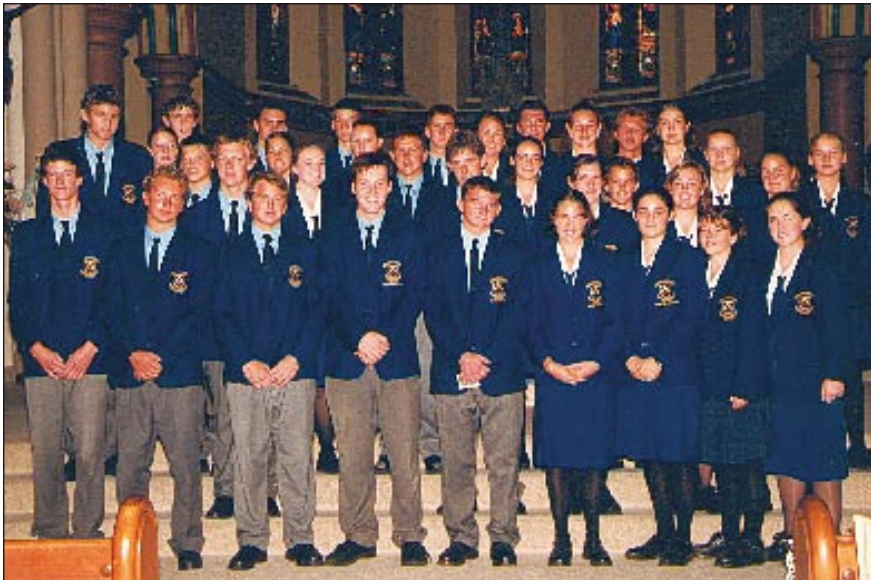
# Trinity welcomes students into the Catholic faith community

**D**uring the past six months a number of students from every year group in the College have been preparing for the Sacrament of Initiation into the Catholic Church. Brother Mark Murphy and College Chaplain Father Michael Alcock have been guiding students along this spiritual journey. A twilight

Retreat on the 13th March provided an opportunity for reflection on their journey thus far and to share their experience with their families who joined the group for an evening meal.

The students will be received into the Catholic Church at a Reception Mass to be held on the morning of Friday, 4th April where they will receive the sacraments of

Confirmation and Eucharist. Trinity students from each year group will attend the Mass so that they can share and support the newly initiated students as a community of faith. Following Mass, a special morning tea will be held for students and their families to celebrate this important event in their spiritual life.



Student leaders for 2003 inducted at the College Commencement Mass on the 11th February.



Cobi Vanderwerff reads a Prayer of Intercession at the College Commencement Mass.

## AS IT WAS...

St Carthage's Cathedral Choir - Christmas 1929



Back Row: J. Briggs, T. Walsh, J. Cochran, O. Darragh, T. Kelly, W. Duffy, J. Alvos, T. Dent, T. Rummery, C. Spillane, F. McNamara, C. Higgins.

Second Row: L. Trefle, M. Kelly, A. Riley, J. Walters, S. Walters, A. Howard, J. Davis, N. Harley, L. Jones, V. O'Connor, M. Breen, M. Myles, D. Fitzgerald, F. McLean, R. Stevens

Third Row: J. Connah, J. Navin, Mrs. Phelan, A. Davis, Father McGrath, G. Riley, M. Kelly, M. Stuart, Mrs. Lohan

Holy Name Society Rally at St Carthage's Cathedral Lismore 1950



Seated in centre of front row from left; Chaplain Father Claude Bradley, Bishop Patrick Farrelly, and a Priest of the Dominican Order who preached during the Mass.

If you have any photos of historical interest please send them to P.O. Box 3, Lismore NSW 2480., addressed to The Editor. With your permission to scan, they will be returned to you promptly.

# Vocations News

Fr Paul Gooley, Vocations Director

## Students

I would ask your continued prayers for our two students studying for the priesthood at Good Shepherd Seminary in Sydney. Joseph Guinea enters his third year this year and Nicolas Maurice enters his second year. Both students have recently finished a pastoral placement during their holidays. Joseph spent some time in the Port Macquarie Parish and Nicolas spent some time in the Tweed Heads parish. This valuable time enables the students to get an idea of what priestly and parish life is all about. I am very grateful to Fr. Donnelly & Fr. Nilon and the parish communities of Port Macquarie and Tweed Heads for the hospitality and generosity that was shown to our two students during this time.

## New Vocations Promotion

A new promotion for vocations will be distributed to schools and parishes shortly. This promotion is aimed at school aged children and young adults. The central theme of the promotion is – Is God calling you to Priesthood? It asks questions like – Is this (Priesthood) your call? Are you searching for meaning? Do you want to make a difference with your life? Do you long for an awesome experience of God? Are people important to you? So keep a look out at your church or your school for this promotion. More importantly mention the promotion to people who you think would make a good priest!!

## Vocations Celebrations

Two important dates to remember and celebrate this year are:-

May 11, 2003: this day is a World Day of Prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life.

August 3-10, 2003: this is National Vocations Awareness Week.

## A Call to all Prayer Groups in the Diocese

If you belong to a prayer group in the Diocese then I ask that some time be set aside in your prayer to pray for vocations to the Priesthood and Consecrated Life. Pray that the “Lord of the harvest will send more laborer’s to his harvest.” I would especially ask that the two mentioned celebrations of prayer are celebrated in the parish in which you belong. Thank you.

## Websites

Our own vocations website (found at [www.lismore-diocese.org](http://www.lismore-diocese.org)) is currently in development. However there are some other useful websites to look at or refer people to. They are:

[www.ozvocations.catholic.org.au](http://www.ozvocations.catholic.org.au) - this is the website of

CVMA which is Catholic Vocations Ministry Australia which has been set up and funded by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to promote vocations.

[www.vocations.com/vocfaq.html](http://www.vocations.com/vocfaq.html) - this is a website that has answers to some of the common questions that people ask with regard to vocations in the Catholic Church.



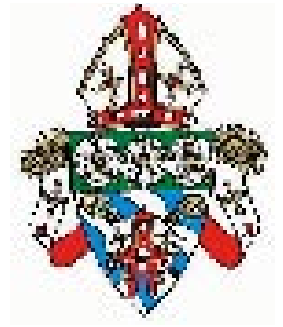
## Further Enquiries

**Remember that if you want to make further enquiries about a vocation to the priesthood then you are most welcome to contact either Bishop Jarrett or myself.**

**Most Rev'd Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett  
Bishop's Office, P.O. Box 1, Lismore NSW 2480**

**Fr. Paul Gooley  
Catholic Presbytery, P.O. Box 63, Wauchope NSW 2446  
Ph: (02) 6585 1464**

# NEW DIOCESAN EDUCATION BOARD



**B**ishop of the Diocese, Most Reverend Geoffrey H. Jarrett, has announced the appointment of Father Francis Devoy, PP, as the Episcopal Vicar for Education.

He has also appointed Father Devoy as Chairman of a new Diocesan Education Board.

In announcing these appointments Bishop Jarrett expressed his gratitude to the outgoing members of the Board, and “the quite exceptional contributions made by Father Leo Donnelly and Mrs Carol Briscoe over many years”.

## ***Members of the newly appointed Board are:***

**Tony BOYLE**, B.Ed is the Principal of St Joseph’s Primary School, Tweed Heads. Tony has held school leadership positions within the Diocese, and has served on a variety of Board committees. He is a joint author of internationally-acclaimed teaching material for primary schools.

**Phil CULLEN**, AM, B.Ed, M.Ed. Admin (Hons)(UNE),FACE,FACEA,FQUEA. After a distinguished career in education, including Director of Primary Education for the Queensland Government, Phil has maintained an active interest in education. He resides at Tweed Heads.

**Father Francis DEVOY**, MA, M.Ed, Ed.D, MACE, is the Episcopal Vicar for Education, and Chairman of the Diocesan Education

Board. He has previously been the Director of Schools for the Diocese and is currently Parish Priest of Holy Spirit Parish, Bangalow/ Byron Bay.

**Deidre J. DUNCAN**, Ph.D is an Associate Professor and Head of the School of Educational Leadership at the Australian Catholic University. She has held a wide range of leadership positions in Catholic Schools and currently enjoys an international reputation for her research and writing.

**Beverley KELSO**, B.Ed, Cert. RE (ACU) is recently retired principal of St Joseph’s Primary School, Tweed Heads. Beverley has served as Principal and supervisor of Schools throughout New South Wales.

**Josephine LONERGAN**, LL.B (Syd.), Dip. Lab. Relns. & the Law (Syd.) Cert R.E. (CMI).

Josephine, after a distinguished career in the legal profession became the Executive Director of the Australian Parents’ Council. She has ongoing involvement with both Commonwealth and State Governments in regard to parent views on educational matters, and is currently the chair of several Catholic School Boards.

**Stephanie PEARCE** is the Chair of the Diocesan Parent Assembly and is employed in the parish of Coffs Harbour. She has longstanding experience and commitment to youth retreats, parental partnership and the goals of Catholic education. Her children currently attend

Catholic schools in the diocese.

**Father Colin REINHARD**, Dip. Rel. Ed. has been a priest of the Diocese of Lismore for twenty-six years and is currently Parish Priest of Murwillumbah. He served as a Chaplain in the Australian Army, rising to the rank of Major. Father Reinhard has shown strong leadership in adult faith formation and is strongly committed to the Catholic school as a place of evangelisation.

**Jim SUTHERLAND** has had an extensive career in the insurance industry. Since 1977 he has been employed by Catholic Church Insurances and recently retired as Assistant General Manager with responsibility for New South Wales, ACT and Queensland. Jim has been a member of many boards in the fields of Catholic Education, Catholic Health Care, and many civic organisations.

**Andrew YOUNG**, B.Bus, is a former manager with Westpac Banking Corporation. He is a member of the St Vincent’s Hospital Board and presently holds the position of Executive Officer for Mayne Investments, Lismore. He currently has a child in a parish school of the Diocese.

# WHAT'S IN A NAME

By John Rixon

## *What does Catholic Mission mean to you?*

**D**oes it encompass the meaning of fulfilling the mission given to all Catholics at their Baptism – to go out and preach the Good News – to promote God's Love throughout the world?

Does it say to you that here is an arm of the church that is truly caring in its efforts to embrace our overseas neighbours who are in desperate need?

Does it support those who are supporting those in need, our missionaries? In the attached photo you see Fr Donatus Onyeke a Holy Spirit Father from Nigeria. Fr Donatus tells the story of how he was taken in as a youngster by the Holy Ghost Fathers during the Biafran war. He later became a missionary and is now stationed in Aitepe, New Guinea where a huge tidal wave caused death and destruction a few years ago.

The name Catholic Mission says a lot for me and it was one of the reasons I so willingly accepted the role of Director of Catholic Mission in the Lismore Diocese. It really clarified my direction in the Church and the way I should be developing my faith.

Of course much of the groundwork had been done in my previous years with the St Vincent de Paul Society and the ongoing influence of the Cursillo Movement. Catholic Mission has now opened new doorways of prayer, study and action. The three ingredients for balancing my faith.

And furthermore it was an indication that the Church was opening itself to trust and hope in layperson involvement in areas previously well represented by the clergy.

Now, the opportunity has been given to me to expand on some of my own experience particularly from a family persons perspective.

I am well aware of the time constraints of priests, teachers and volunteers. And I am also aware of the tremendous potential for people to go beyond their own expectations especially in caring for others.

Forearmed with this knowledge I realise that it is essential to promote Catholic Mission in the quickest and simplest way.

The message needs to be short and sweet "care for people and share God's Love with them".

Our Missionaries are doing just that - and you are sharing in just that - when you support those missionaries through Catholic Mission appeals. –The Propagation of the Faith (May 25th) -World Mission (October 18/19th) and Children's Mission.

In defining these three appeals we need to view their objectives. The things that make Catholic Mission more than a welfare



**John Rixon with Fr Donatus Onyeke from Nigeria.**

agency.

The Propagation of the Faith supports the Church it's priests, teachers, and its missionary infrastructure of presbyteries, schools, convents, orphanages, hospitals, and health clinics. This enables a visible witness of the sharing of God's Love.

World Mission Day supports community projects such as clean water bores, nutritional programs, school and medical supplies, training for nurses and lay teachers, community support projects such as farming, machinery, building and technical programs.

Children Mission involves children helping children in developing countries. This is usually done in the Schools throughout the diocese who contribute by running fundraising activities for Catholic Mission projects. Schools are also supplied with educational material explaining "mission" with its prayer/action content. Adults support the efforts of children through Children's Mission Partners, a program supporting projects involving children (not one but many). Regular sponsors receive quarterly reports and photos of the children involved.

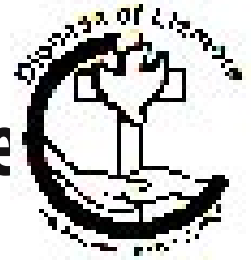
St Peter Apostle supports the training of young men and women in their own country and culture to serve their people as religious sisters brothers and priests

In all of these appeals and projects there are the important elements of caring for others and sharing of God's Love - our mission as Catholics.

When you are called to "dig deep" into your pockets during these appeals please don't forget to dig deep into your heart as well, for it is from there you will find the power in prayer. Prayer for the relief of poverty, pain, suffering and yes, even the injustices that cause much of the hurt.

**For more information on resources such as Children's Mission Partners, Wills or other CM resources, please contact John Rixon, Diocesan Office of Catholic Mission,  
PO Box 729 Alstonville, 2477. Phone 02 6628 7307.**

# The Catholic Education Office Serving Parish School Communities



By John Graham

Significant changes have been occurring at the Catholic Education Office in Lismore this year. The appointment by Bishop Jarrett of an experienced and competent female educator, Dianne Marshall, to the position of Director of Catholic Schools for the Diocese has met with widespread approval.

Dianne is warm, open and supportive with everyone she meets, putting them at ease and encouraging open discussion. She has relatives throughout the North Coast and considers the Diocese of Lismore her home. She will have responsibility for leading the Catholic Education Office staff in serving the 44 Catholic parish schools and 17,000 students from Tweed Heads to Port Macquarie.

Dianne grew up in Sydney and has just returned to New South Wales after an extended period in the Western Australian Catholic education system. Dianne is a secondary school teacher at heart and has never lost her love for educating young people. In more recent years she has been a senior administrator in the Western Australia Catholic Education Office, which prepared her well to be our new Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools.

There is a fundamental similarity between the Western Australia Catholic Education Office and the Lismore Catholic Education Office in that they both serve highly decentralised parish schools. In the decentralised model the decision making authority of the local Parish Priest, Principal and school community is highly respected. Dianne is at home with this way of working between the Catholic Education Office and the parish school community. The Catholic Education Office in Lismore is primarily a service organization to parish schools and is accountable to the Bishop and Diocesan Education Board for the quality of its service.

Educational and administrative expertise is not all that Dianne brings to her new position. Dianne is passionately committed to supporting the Catholic faith and practise



**John Graham, Assistant Director,  
Diocesan Religious Education  
Coordinator.**

in parish schools. She speaks strongly of the privileged opportunity with which she has been entrusted to serve the Bishop, priests and parish school leaders, as they work cooperatively in the apostolic work of Catholic education. Parish schools can be sure that they will receive every support from the Catholic Education Office as they seek to enable students to grow in Christian faith despite the many challenges to faith from the world they live in. The love of God through Jesus is central to the culture of our parish schools.

As Dianne Marshall takes up her new position there is much that she and Catholic educators in the Diocese have to rejoice in. The parish schools of the Lismore diocese are very successful in achieving their goals. Whether it is HSC results, employment of graduates, government testing or the many students actively practising their faith in parish communities. The teachings and canon law of the Catholic church provide a clear mission and values base for all who are in Catholic education. Educational research has consistently shown that when school communities are built on shared core beliefs and values students do better in every way especially educationally, spiritually, and emotionally. The Catholic Education Office offers every level of support to parish

schools so that they can remain strong faith and learning communities built on shared core beliefs and values.

International educational consultant, Dr. Ross Keane, has described the work of the Catholic Education Office, Lismore, in implementing genuine partnership with parents as a national lighthouse project. The model for this partnership was founded on the teaching of the Church and the best educational research. The Catholic Education Office offers support to parents in two major ways. There is the Diocesan Catholic Schools Parent Assembly and there are the many parent and school community initiatives directly served from the Office.

Positive comments are constantly received from parents concerning the value of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Parent Assembly (or as it is commonly known, the "Parent Assembly"). As one parent shared recently:

"This has been one of the most informative and supportive years as a Catholic school parent. I feel like thanking the Catholic Church for finally offering the ordinary parent good programs on how to lead their family closer to each other and God."

The Parent Assembly listens to parents across the parish schools of the Diocese in regard to what they need so that they be worthy partners in the great work of Catholic education and able to work in unity with the educational leaders. The Parent Assembly leadership group consists of three parents from each Region. These parents come from each of the four Regional Assemblies, whose membership in turn comes from two parent representatives in each school. Parent Field Officers serve the work of the Parent Assembly in each Region of the Diocese.

# REFLECTIVE GARDEN

## *St Peter the Fisherman Church, Laurieton NSW*

This reflective garden commenced in January 1995 when the first bricks were laid for the curved wall. The wall was constructed by voluntary labour and the bricks were donated. The foundations were paid for by cash donations.

Parish Priest, Father John Casey, whilst on holiday in Italy in 1994, took latex molds of the fragments found in this first wall. These are actual facsimilies of pieces of marble which were dug up whilst the "Church Of St Laurence Outside The Walls" was being constructed to honour this saint and martyr. These fragments were then included in the cloister of the monastery. Some pieces are from Roman and Greek tombs, whilst others are from first century catacombs and have ancient Christian symbols. These historical items have not been seen outside of Rome.

### *THE CELTIC MILLENIUM CROSS*

Situated on the entrance to the Church grounds, this four metre high Cross is cast in the style of one of the Great Crosses of Ireland and houses twenty six sculptures. Nineteen of these are Scripture based, whilst the remainder record part of the history of the Lismore Diocese, of which Laurieton is a part.

The Cross of Scriptures of Clonmacnois, sculptured for the ancient Monastery of St Ciaran (Keiran) around the year 920 AD is a ring-headed cross with short arms slightly tilted upwards. Clonmacnois was one of the largest and longest occupied places of monastic life and prayer in all of Western Christendom. It was destroyed for the last time in 1552. The ruins have remained substantially unchanged since. The style of this cross was chosen because of its unusual aesthetic simple beauty.

Its ancient Irish nature ties us to a testament of faith and epic prayer. Its pictorial nature will be understood and appreciated by both children and adults.

The cross was blessed by Rev. Geoffrey Jarrett, then Co-adjutor Bishop of Lismore on 21 September 2001. The Gaelic inscription "oroit do Sean lasdenad inn Chros" translates "A prayer for John who built this Cross".



### *THE CURVED WALL*

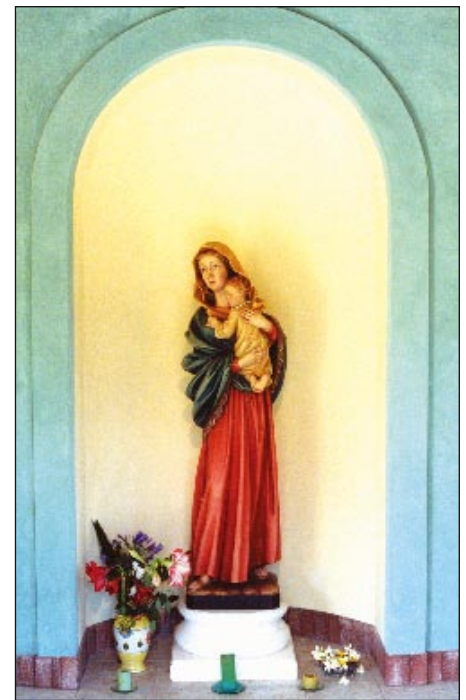
Contains many carvings, artifacts and statues including the Saints sculptured and cast by Father Casey





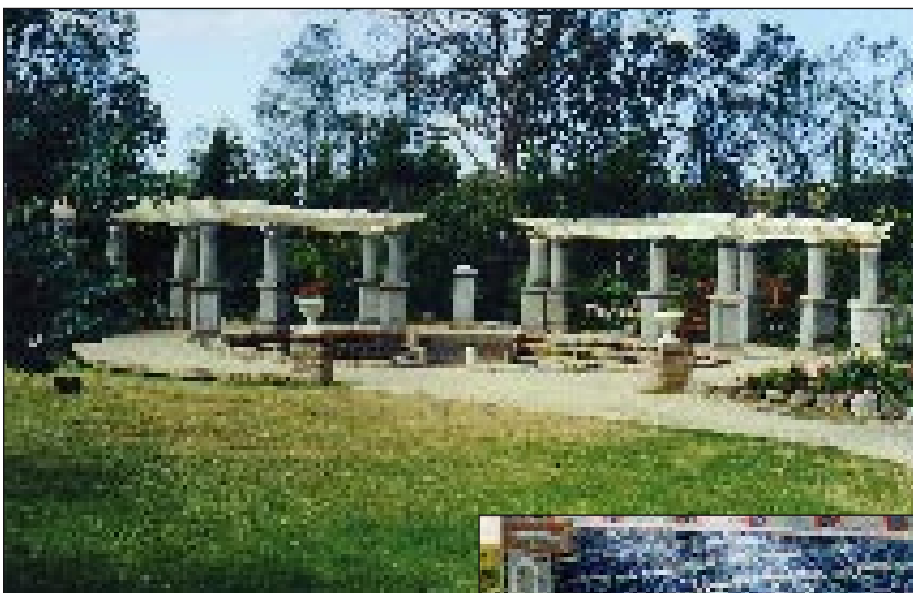
### ***THE GREEK TEMPLE***

Thirty years ago, John Patrick Casey a young seminarian in Rome had a dream of building a Greek temple in honour of Our Lady. In this lovely town of Laurieton he has completed his four columned building beside the man-made lake.



### ***OUR LADY OF THE WAY***

Inside the Greek Temple you will find a fiberglass statue of OUR LADY OF THE WAY. It was originally carved from wood. This beautiful work was imported from Italy and is the donation of many Camden Haven parishioners.



### ***THE SUNKEN GARDEN***

This garden features a fish fountain. The walkway is formed by sixteen columns on bases surmounted with wooden trellises on which wisteria will be grown to form a beautiful collanade.

### ***THE KEYHOLE GARDEN***

Inside the keyhole shaped wall there are several mosaics tirelessly constructed by volunteers.



Hundreds of cuttings, plants and trees have been donated by parishioners and others. Many helpers have worked long and hard to construct, plant and maintain the beauty you will see at St Peter the Fisherman Reflective Garden

# Back to Parish Day at South Lismore

As part of "Back to Parish Day" initiative at Trinity Catholic College Lismore, students returned to meet with their Parish Priest Fr Peter Karam and visit their Parish School at South Lismore.

The initiative is to enable students to experience and learn about the various "Service" ministries within their parish. Students are also given the opportunity to explore the possibility of being of 'service' within their local parish community. This will be followed up in Term 4 when students are encouraged to take on some Voluntary Community Service in their Senior Year.

A Prayer-Partner link between parishioners and the students is also fostered as part of the programme.

## Bishop Extends Invitation

Most Reverend Geoffrey Jarrett, Bishop of the Diocese, has extended an invitation to all Priests, Religious and Laity to join him in St. Carthage's Cathedral Lismore for the celebration of the 2003 Chrism Mass on Monday April 14 at 7.30pm.

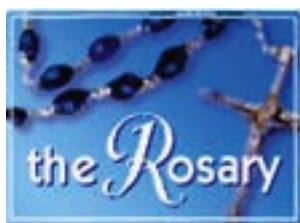
At this Mass the oil of the sick and the oil of catechumens are blessed and the oil of chrism is consecrated after the Prayer after Communion.

For the Clergy, the renewal of commitment to priestly service also takes place at this Mass.

## Pope John Paul declares October 2002 – October 2003: The Year of the Rosary

"Therefore, in continuity with my reflection in the Apostolic Letter Novo Millennio Ineunte, in which, after the experience of the Jubilee, I invited the people of God to "start afresh from Christ", I have felt drawn to offer a reflection on the Rosary, as a kind of Marian complement to that Letter and an exhortation to contemplate the face of Christ in union with, and at the school of, his Most Holy Mother. To recite the Rosary is nothing other than to contemplate with Mary the face of Christ. As a way of highlighting this invitation, prompted by the forthcoming 120th anniversary of the aforementioned Encyclical of Leo XIII, I desire that during the course of this year the Rosary should be especially emphasized and promoted in the various Christian communities. I therefore proclaim the year from October 2002 to October 2003 the Year of the Rosary.

I leave this pastoral proposal to the initiative of each ecclesial community. It is not my intention to encumber but rather to complete and consolidate pastoral programmes of the Particular Churches. I am confident that the proposal will find a ready and generous reception. The Rosary, reclaimed in its full meaning, goes to the very heart of Christian life; it offers a familiar yet fruitful spiritual and educational opportunity for personal contemplation, the formation of the People of God, and the new evangelization."



Students on "Back to Parish Day" meet with Parish Priest Fr. Peter Karam.

Students are ( from left to right) Scott Bullman, Kira Sammutt, Christo Muskens, Amanda Walmsley, Kara Baker.

## THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION - 2003

Date	Parish
<b>MAY</b>	
Thurs 22 to Fri 23 May	Tweed Heads Confirmation
Sat 24 to Sun 25 May	Mallangane Visitations & Confirmation
Sat 31 May to Mon 2 June	Alstonville Visitation & Confirmation
<b>JUNE</b>	
Thurs 5 June	Lismore Confirmation
Thurs 12 June	Coffs Harbour & Woolgoolga
Confirmation	
Fri 13 to Sun 15 June	Sawtell Visitation & Confirmation
Sat 21 to Sun 22 June	Casino Visitation & Confirmation
<b>JULY</b>	
Thurs 29 July	South Lismore Confirmation
<b>AUGUST</b>	
Wed 13 August	Nambucca Valley (at Macksville)
Confirmation	
Thurs 14 August	Bellingen Confirmation
Sat 16 to Sun 17 August	Kempsey Confirmation
Tues 19 August	Maclean Confirmation
Wed 20 August	Yamba Confirmation
Thurs 21 August	South Grafton Confirmation
Sun 24 August	Grafton Confirmation
Wed 27 August	Kyogle Confirmation
Fri 9 August	Wauchope Confirmation
Sat 30 to Sun 31 August	Camden-Haven Visitation & Confirmation
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
Fri 5 September	Ballina Confirmation
Wed 17 September	Home School Confirmation in Evans Head
Fri 19 to Sunday 21 September	Mullumbimby Visitation & Confirmation
Fri 26 September	Kingscliff Confirmation
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	
Sat 8 to Mon 10 November	Byron/Bangalow Visitation & Confirmation



# 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of St Joseph at Wauchope

Alan Madigan (Parishioner)  
Our Lady of Lourdes, Wauchope

The Eucharistic celebration at Our Lady of Lourdes Church Wauchope on 8th February honoured the arrival of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Wauchope 75 years ago and the Golden Jubilee of Sister Ann Gallagher who was professed as a Sister of St. Joseph in the Chapel at Lochinvar on the 6th January 1953. The impressive entrance procession by the forty sisters of St. Joseph was led by the sisters celebrating their Golden Jubilee's with Sister Ann Gallagher who has been Pastoral Associate at Wauchope for the last 13 years. It would take a week to write even a part of the history of the Sisters of St. Joseph at Wauchope since four of them making up the first community of the Sisters arrived on 18th January 1928. Wauchope was part of Port Macquarie Parish. Earlier Father Fillodeau Port Macquarie Parish recognised the need for a primary school with boarding facilities for boys in the Upper Hastings, and Father P. Farrelly assistant priest at Port Macquarie took up the project with the support of Mother Evangelest, Sisters of St. Joseph Lochinvar. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Carroll on 7 August 1927, and school commenced 23 January 1928, with 82 pupils. The boarding school was for boys only.

The original ministry of the Sisters of St Joseph was primary education, boarders, music and visitation, but their depth and meaning in the Parish could not be estimated because of their dedication to Catholic Education and also of the Pastoral Care they gave to Catholic youth.

Catholic Education was regarded as paramount in those early days and when the Sisters of St Joseph departed from the classrooms of Catholic schools and era



Parish Priest Fr Paul Gooley celebrates the Anniversary Mass.

passed that will probably never occur again. To the Sisters of St Joseph who came from their Mother House at Lochinvar in the Maitland Diocese to Wauchope in 1928, the people of Wauchope say "Heartfelt thanks Sisters and we offer sincere gratitude to you all for your wonderful contribution to the Catholic Parish of Wauchope. May God Bless every one of You."

## Significant Dates

- 1930 Super Primary Classes began (Sister Joan Blake)
- 1931 Intermediate Classes held
- 1934 Super Primary Classes lapsed but revived in 1940 (Sister Borromeo)
- 1954 (15 August) New Brick School opened
- 1961 Boarding School closed
- 1962 Convent extended and renovated
- 1964 Part of School renovated to accommodate Science Block
- 1965 School Certificate Examination Year 10
- 1982 The Last Religious Principal was Sister Pauline Burgess
- 1983 The First Lay Principal was Mr Brian McKinnon

# Welcome to Father Mac's Heavenly Puddings

Our story began in 1981 when it became necessary for the Alstonville Catholic Community to form our own Parish. Prior to this time we had been a part of the Ballina Area and the Sisters of Saint Joseph were running our school.

Father Darcy McCarthy became our first Parish Priest. He came to us from Lismore Cathedral where he was Parish Administrator living with a number of other religious with all the usual household staff. Here he lived alone and so was able to indulge his passion for cooking.....

Father Mac (as he became known) inherited what he described as the "Worst buildings in the diocese." Our entire complex was in need of extensive maintenance (roofing was literally hanging off and foundations rotting badly). The children were using one of the garages as a classroom.....

We began raffles, housie, balls etc to raise the necessary funds to commence the much-needed maintenance and to build two new classrooms. At this time we also applied for a Capitol Grant to assist this programme. This application was refused and our story is still the same today despite applying again at every opportunity. It has always been necessary for us to raise our own funds.

One of the many fundraising efforts was a cake stall outside the church after each Mass. Father Mac always arrived with many goodies including an ample supply of Puddings. As the story goes there was always many more where they came from.

Sadly Father McCarthy was diagnosed with cancer he died September 5th, 1991. Parishioners decided to continue with production of Puddings and output continues to grow.

2003 -- The Father Mac's Heavenly Pudding enterprise is owned and operated by the Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, Alstonville. The "Factory" is located in one of the original classrooms of St. Joseph's School.

The Parish has direct control of the proceeds from the puddings through a limited company which consists fully of parishioners as Directors.

The Parish is a very active one with a growing population. There are currently 290 students at St. Joseph's School, many more than double the number of students when pudding production began.

The proceeds from the sale of Puddings and the generosity of parishioners have helped the Parish to fund new school buildings, without a cent of Government Capitol Grant funding, has ensured excellent education facilities have been made available for our children. (The Parish provided a full time Special Education teacher in the school for a number of years.) The Parish also has a full time Pastoral Associate who is responsible for many programmes being introduced to the Parish including an excellent Adult Education in Faith Programme; through this many outstanding speakers have been brought to our community. As well, the Parish is active in social justice through its Social Justice and Peace Committee and has made generous donations to many overseas and local charities.

As a Parish we would like to be able to do many other things, your purchase of our Puddings is vital to the continuation of Father Mac's work in the Parish and with new ventures.

As co-ordinator of the project I am often asked for the "special" ingredients. For me, that will always be the many generous volunteers who come to work with the Puddings. Without their assistance the cooked Pudding would get no further than the ovens

Perhaps we can assist your fundraising activities, wholesale

prices are available for bulk purchases.



Some of the 2002 volunteers.

For details contact Bev Crethar at the Factory:  
P.O. Box 102 (9 Perry Street) Alstonville 2477  
Phone. 02 6628 5474 - Fax 02 6628 3077  
Email: fathermc@nor.com.au

For additional information visit our web site: [www.fathermac.org.au](http://www.fathermac.org.au)

## AROUND THE PARISHES

### Port Macquarie: Some Parish Highlights in 2002

Firstly there was Fr Donnelly who was awarded the Order of Australia.

Then a number of our Catholic Care of the Aged programs were finalists in the Minister for Aged Care's awards for excellence last year.

The Vocational College was recognised for its contribution to training young people and assisting them into employment. It won the State VET in Schools Excellence Awards and was rated in the top 3 in Australia. Congratulations to all staff at the VC.

Joy Walsh, Director of Nursing, received the Rotary Club's Award for Pride of Workmanship.

St. Joseph's Family Services received recognition from both the Federal and Local Government for their commitment to employing people with a disability.

1400 children offered education and childcare through St. Joseph's Family Services this year.

#### Catholic Care of the Aged:

Bishop John Satterthwaite, retired and chose CCA, Port Macquarie as his new home where he is also Chaplain.

Building on the Emmaus Nursing Home commenced in September. Projected completion date is Mid-December 2003.

(From Team Talk)

### EUREKA - Diocesan Young Adult Weekend

The Diocesan Young Adult Weekend for those who are 18 years of age or older will be held over the weekend of Saturday 26th and Sunday 27th April 2003 at the Star of the Sea Convent, Yamba.

\$70 per person. Phone bookings on 6681 1048.

# EPISCOPAL CATHEDRA

## ST CARTHAGE'S CATHEDRAL LISMORE

I was commissioned by Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett in December 2001 to design and make an Episcopal Cathedra and side stools for St Carthage's Cathedral. A disastrous fire lit by vandals had destroyed the existing cathedra just after the Bishop had been installed. As the Bishop said "I am literally without a chair".

Bishop Geoffrey's brief suggested a cathedra in the Gothic Style standing against a cluster of columns towards the front of the sanctuary facing the congregation.

My whole life has been devoted to studying, designing and making furniture in all period styles with a specialty in Australian Colonial cedar and church furniture, especially Gothic Revival church furniture. I have made many magnificent pieces but was delighted to receive such a commission that would allow me to use my years of knowledge and acquired skills to the full.

I set about the design work by first inspecting, studying and sitting in a range of bishop's chairs, both Catholic and Anglican in Cathedrals in the three eastern states. I concluded that most were not designed for the comfort or stateliness of the bishops that used them.

Having done the research I established the following parameters.

The cathedra should have the right seat height, width and length, the arm rests and back support should be at the right position giving comfort and stateliness to a fully vested bishop.

The cathedra required elevation since it would stand against a soaring cluster column.

The cathedra needed to look aesthetically pleasing whether occupied or not because of the prominent position on the sanctuary facing the congregation.

Having seen many eclectic stools detracting from cathedras I decided it was time to design side chairs that would not only support but uplift the cathedra and form a harmonious suite.

Australian Silky Oak (*Grevillea Robusta*) was chosen for the cathedra and side chairs.

European Oak lends itself beautifully to Gothic furniture, carvings and ornament and is the principal timber used for such work throughout England, Ireland and parts of Europe. We are very fortunate that we have Silky Oak, a timber native to the region encompassed by the Diocese of Lismore which is equal to, if not superior to European Oak.

Through the years of experience I have

developed a beautiful finish which is rich, warm and durable and most suitable for church furniture.

With the above parameters established I then set about designing the Gothic ornament and was inspired by works of Augustus Charles Pugin, his son Augustus Welby Pugin, John Nash and James Duffield Harding and Sir Charles Barry, exponents of the Gothic Revival Style during the 18th century.

Full scale drawings were made of all sections including joinery details. Timber was selected and then the work of construction commenced. All up it took 800 hours to design, construct, carve and polish these pieces.

The episcopal cathedra stands 2.5 metres high. At the apex is carved a botany cross bearing the inscription IC XC NI KA Jesus Christ Victor. Below the cross is a section called the canopy which bears the bishop's personal arms. The canopy arches out in an ogee fashion, from a point known as the springing carrying on and upwards to the finial. Three large crockets are hand carved as well as the moulding on each side of the top arch and tracery foils are hand carved on each side underneath the arch moulding. The lower foils terminating with a cusp which gives a beautiful effect of encompassing and protecting the bishop's arms.

On each side of the canopy section the rear posts terminate with a fully carved pinnacle, each with 16 crockets and a finial. The whole pinnacle is carved out of a solid block. There are 64 carved faces on the 32 crockets and 8 faces carved on the finials.

At the back of the cathedra there are two carved panels, one above and one below the main back rail. These panels feature beautifully carved pointed arch tracery.

The spanrails above the arm rests flow into the rear posts each featuring a fern carving on the side faces and fluting on the carved front faces.

The arm posts are solid looking and give the cathedra a strong status. Carved round on the ends with an ogee profile. They are



**Described as the grandest in Australia, the Episcopal Cathedra and side chairs that have now become part of the heritage of the diocese of Lismore.**

tactile and assist greatly in one rising or being seated with dignity. Beautiful rosettes are carved into each side of the rolled ends.

Pierced tracing panels carved on both inside and outside faces are positioned between the seat and arm rests and were incorporated to harmonise with the very visual pierced tracery of the front panel which incorporates a central patee cross carved in deep relief with delicate tracery carved into the relief of the cross.

The two side chairs are designed stylistically in harmony with the cathedra forming a suite. They feature a pediment rail with a gallery of botany finials. The back posts have shedwater terminals and the back panels are carved in a square tracery pattern. Subdued pierced tracery rails are placed at the front and both sides below the solid timber seats.

The workmanship is totally traditional.

The size of the cathedra required special large timber which in turn required special joinery such as twin mortise and tenons, slip tongues, housed keyways and dados. Hot hide glue was used throughout. The finish consists of earth pigment stains and french polish applied with a rubber protected with wax.

*Jim Muldoon, February 2003*



Designed and made by Jim Muldoon for St. Mary's Church South Grafton is this Gothic Revival altar in silky oak timber with carved linenfold panelling and pierced carved quatrefoil tracery.

## Pre-Lenten Visitor to the Diocese

A recent visitor to the diocese was Archbishop Adrian Doyle of Hobart. Here to heighten the awareness of the work of Caritas Australia, he visited a number of parishes in the north of the Diocese, encouraging and explaining the work Caritas and the importance of the Lenten Project Compassion.

He is the Archbishop of Hobart. He is Deputy Chair of Caritas Australia, a member of the Catholic Bishops Committee for Justice, Development, Ecology and Peace, a member of the Central Commission of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Chairman of the Bishops Committee for Social Welfare and Chairman of the Board of Management of Pastoral Research Projects.

During his visit to Lismore, Archbishop Doyle was interviewed by the Editor of "Catholic Life", Father Peter Karam.

*At the moment in Australia, all news bureaus are giving us an extensive view of a very frightened world. In this atmosphere is Caritas Australia confident this Lent that our people will take this information and respond generously?*

I think there is every reason to be confident. This atmosphere was around at

the beginning of Lent last year. Bali had not occurred but November 11 had happened. And the reality is that last year Caritas received an increase of \$200,000 over the year before, going from \$5.8 million to \$6 million. I remain confident that will be the case. People know that there are still needs out there in the wider world, and they see Caritas as a viable and reliable vehicle for them to give their assistance.

*People at times are a little reluctant to give because they feel that the aid does not always get through to those who need it most.*

I think that one of the things that's unique to Caritas is that it uses a partnership model. If there are initiatives Caritas Australia wishes to fund, they fund through a sister body in an appropriate country. I went to Bangladesh a couple of years ago as a guest of Caritas Bangladesh. They are an agency that provides us with certainty in getting our contribution to projects. They verify and monitor the progress of these projects. Also the other thing is that the Bishops have made it very, very clear to Caritas to keep their own expenses below 10%. And that is what it does.

That is an extraordinary effort. People have to realize that there are expenses.

Caritas in Australia employs about 35 people who have to be paid. There are things like publicity, the envelopes, the boxes and the Directors. They are generally volunteers. Nevertheless there are some expenses. But if they keep it down to 10%, then 90% is being spent on the projects Caritas wants to sponsor. 75% goes overseas, 8% is for projects within the country, 7% is for educational type purposes. The other 10% is administration and fund raising.

*On the International level how successful is Caritas in dealing with political systems like that of Robert Mugabe to get aid through to those in need? Church authorities were recently accusing Robert Mugabe of allowing only his supporters to be fed and depriving others of foreign aid in the form of food and medicine.*

I am sure there are some obstacles in the way unfortunately, but I think the Church we've been talking about in the last few minutes is a very unique institution throughout the world. It has networks



Archbishop Doyle

# Craftsman and Designer Commits to Excellence

**T**he flip side of his business card introduces himself as a craftsman who lives for the joy of his art.

*To those who love a home  
which is more than a mere dwelling  
who appreciate the work of a craftsman  
who lives for the joy of his art*

Jim Muldoon, master craftsman, parishioner of St. Mary's Parish Grafton has carved himself into the history of the Diocese of Lismore.

His design and completion of the new Episcopal Cathedra and side chairs for St. Carthage's Cathedral Lismore is a lasting testimony to his craft and talent.

Everyone who has the opportunity to view this example of his work will come to understand something of Jim's skill as a craftsman, his historical integrity and love of Church.

It is fortunate that Jim was available and willing to undertake Bishop Jarrett's commission, as many such gifted people have been lost to metropolitan centres and work opportunities overseas. His commitment to excellence is evidenced in this Episcopal Cathedra and side chairs, his latest work.



**Jim Muldoon (pictured) carving pointed arch tracery on one of the back panels of the Episcopal Cathedra.**

**Some closeup features of wood carving included in the suite.**



# Celebrating the centenary of Holy Spirit Parish

by Mrs Janice Lang

On Sunday 10th November, 2002, under a brilliant blue sky, Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett, together with our Parish Priest, Father Frank Devoy, and former Parish Priest Father Vince Doyle, along with approximately 400 parishioners gave thanks to God for one hundred years of Parish life.

The communities of St. Kevin's Church, Bangalow, and St. Finbarr's Church, Byron Bay and our visitors, joined together in a concelebrated Mass in the beautiful surrounds of St. Finbarr's, Primary (Annex site) School on Broken Head Road, Byron Bay.

Inspirational music was provided by parishioners Richard and Shauna Boyle, ably assisted by a choir of St. Finbarr's school children. Especially moving was their rendition of the Thanksgiving Hymn "Jubilee Hymn of the Holy Spirit", which has been adopted as the parish hymn. After Mass, the parish community enjoyed a picnic lunch under the shade of the trees.

Parishioners were pleased to meet Bishop Jarrett, many of them for the first time. Acknowledging his predecessor, the Bishop carried the crozier of Bishop Jeremiah Doyle, the first Bishop of the Diocese. Bishop Doyle as 'parish priest' of Lismore established the parish in 1902, naming it St Kevin's Parish, Bangalow.

In his homily, Bishop Jarrett paid tribute to all who had contributed to the life of the Parish over the past one hundred years. He reminded those present "that the Cape Byron lighthouse was not the only light in the parish", alluding to the presence of the light of Christ in the hearts and minds of our Catholic community, but acknowledging

also the quality of Christian leadership exercised by parishioners over the years. He referred, too, to the history of our Parish with its rural roots and its influence on us here today.

The Bishop spoke of the many changes that have occurred in the district since 1902, including a major shift in 'the centre of gravity' over more recent years, marked by the rapid growth in population at the Byron Bay end. Because of these changes Bishop John Satterthwaite endorsed and officially approved a new name for the parish, 'Holy Spirit Parish', on 29th November, 2001.

Holy Spirit Parish encompasses the districts of Clunes, Bangalow, Ewingsdale, Byron Bay, Broken Head, Newrybar, Fernleigh, Tyagarah, Eureka, Federal, Coorabell and places in between. It retains two major Mass centres, namely, St Kevin's Church, Bangalow, and Finbarr's Church, Byron Bay.

The parish has been blessed with nine parish priests over the 100 years. Fathers C. Casey, M. Walshe, W. Sullivan and R. Williams spanned, respectively, the first 15 years from 1902 to 1917. Monsignor Brian Scott, by far the longest serving Pastor, served the parish for 45 years from 1917 to 1962.

Monsignor Scott was followed by Fathers A. Daley for 15 years, R. Hackett for 15 years, V. Doyle for 6 years and our present Parish Priest, Father Frank Devoy, who has been with us for 4 years. All these priests in their own unique way, have contributed significantly both to the life of the Parish and its parishioners during the term of their ministry.

In an article written for the occasion Father Frank Devoy paid tribute to these priests, as well as to the wonderful influence of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who worked in the parish from 1915 until 1995, the Presentation

Sisters in the parish's earliest days -- 1909 to 1914, and the Mercy Sisters, who have had a pastoral presence in the Parish over the past 20 or so years.

Father Devoy wrote of our specifically Catholic way of life -- its blessings, habits and customs driven by the Gospel. He commented that when we, who practise our Catholic faith today (like those thousands who have gone before us), come to acclaim the centenary of the parish we have something priceless to celebrate. We celebrate a specific language of Faith: a language that has meaning, a language with clarity of belief, a language with guiding principles, a language with an irreplaceable moral compass; the language of God -- Father, Son and Spirit -- who communicates a language for life, a language of genuine purpose and hope.

Father's statement concluded by paying tribute to those parishioners who have gone before us:

"Today we celebrate with pride a people who for one hundred years have sanctified the many industries, old and new, whether dairy farming, Norco dairy products, shipping, meat processing, whaling, beef farming, tourism and associated industries. With the guidance and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, they too have been agents of the language of Faith. All of us -- laity, religious, priests and bishops -- can be so proud and grateful today, realising all the while that we stand firmly on the shoulders of those fine people who have gone before us 'marked with the sign of faith'."



**The youngest parishioner Billie-Jaye Phillips (baptised the previous Sunday) with her mother Monique, Bishop Jarrett, and Mr Frank Scarrabelotti, the most senior parishioner, in fact five years older than the parish.**

*Photo courtesy Gary Chigwidden Byron News.*



**Concelebrated Mass with Bishop Jarrett. At left Fr Frank Devoy Parish Priest. At right of Bishop Jarrett, Fr. V. Doyle a former parish priest, Deacon Warren Jacobsen**

*Photo courtesy Gary Chigwidden Byron News.*

# Families of the world celebrate in Manila

by Mavis Pirola

The Fourth World Meeting of Families in Manila (Jan 22-26) was a powerful celebration of the Universal Church with outstanding speakers from a variety of cultures.

The city of Manila was festooned with banners welcoming overseas guests and close to a million people attended the closing Mass.

A number of features distinguished this gathering from the three previous events in Rome (1994, 2000) and in Rio de Janeiro (1997). One was the strong effort to include all members of the family. For the first time, the preceding Pastoral and Theological Congress held parallel sessions for adults, teenagers and children. Separate 'Conclusions' were presented at the end of the Congress from both the adult and the teenagers' sessions.

On giant TV screens, the Holy Father could be seen surrounded by families and young children. Despite his physical disability, he spoke with a firm voice as he urged families to "make the Gospel the guiding principle of your families, and make your families a page

of the Gospel written for our time!"

He emphasized that "the family, as the primary school in which the human person is formed, is indispensable for a true human ecology."

The Holy Father announced that the next World Meeting of Families would be in Valencia, Spain, in 2006.

The Holy Father was represented in Manila by the papal legate to the event, Alfonso Cardinal López Trujillo. He is president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, the Vatican body responsible for convening the World Meetings of Families.

There were 37 delegates from Australia, including two teenagers and seven young children. The group was led by Bishop Eugene Hurley of Port Pirie Diocese, who is Chairman of the Bishops' Committee for the Family and for Life. Also attending were Bishop Ad Abikaram, Maronite Bishop of Australia, and Msgr. Peter Elliott of Melbourne.

Two Australian couples were invited speakers at the Congress. One was Ernie and Barbara Trevaskis, an aboriginal couple



**Pope John Paul II addressing the**

from Rockhampton. They spoke sensitively and confidently on the challenges facing indigenous families, especially the difficulties in maintaining their cultural origins.

Ron and Mavis Pirola, of Sydney, are Members of the Pontifical Council for the Family. They stressed the importance of the family as a resource in evangelisation. They urged a shift in family ministry from a focus on families as 'needy' to a focus on families as powerfully gifted.

The last day of the World Meeting coincided with Australia Day. To foster a spirit of solidarity with the family gathering, parishes in Australia were sent

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and tentacles going in all directions. So this linking up of the National Caritas bodies is a powerful and successful way of ensuring that assistance will go to where it is targeted. There is even a Caritas in Iraq that got some publicity recently, with Caritas Australia supporting them. The situation there could get a lot worse for the civilian population and sadly could get a lot worse if there is a war.

*Our Australian Church has a pretty good record of generosity...do you see the same generous indicators for the future?*

I am and I mentioned earlier that last year \$6million was raised through Project Compassion, and an additional amount, much the same, comes in through the different appeals and general donations. Caritas is also a vehicle through which the Australian Government is able to channel some of its funds. So overall it has a budget of \$17million that it administers through the year. I remain confident because I think somehow it has touched a very acceptable mentality among people.. that the idea of Project Compassion linking with Lent, is not just sacrifice for the sake of it, but this money is going out in so many directions. I think it is a success story and one that we can be very proud of.



## Sisters of St Joseph Celebrate their Jubilee

**Seven Sisters of St Joseph recently celebrated their Jubilees at Corpus Christi Catholic Church in Nundah Queensland.**

**A Concelebrated Mass at the church was packed to capacity with members of the Order, family and friends.**

**Two local Sisters of St Joseph, Sr Helen Marie Boyle of Bangalow and Sister Leone Stortenbecker of Lismore celebrated their Golden Jubilee and were granted a Papal Blessing.**

**Photographed after the Ceremony left to right were Sisters Margaret Scott, Leone Stortenbecker, Margaret McGee (diamond jubilee) Martina Foley, Marie Helen Boyle and Joan Bourke.**

# St Francis Xavier School

2003 is a special year for St Francis Xavier School Woolgoolga as it is ten years since its Foundation Year. In recognition of this special event the community during the year plans celebrations for this occasion.

Since its Foundation year the school community has experienced tremendous support from our parishioners, parents and friends. This support has enabled our children to enjoy a variety of learning, social and spiritual experiences.

St Francis Xavier School is situated in an idyllic position with the ocean on its eastern side and our senior neighbors at the Woolgoolga Village on the southern and western side.

The buildings are spacious, light and beautiful for all to work and enjoy. The Casey Learning Centre (named after Father Tony Casey), which is inclusive of our wonderful Library, Resources and Computers.

Father Paul McDonald, Parish Priest of Coffs Harbour, Fr Max Gow who is Chaplain to our school community and Father John Dacey support the school community pastorally, spiritually and many other ways which is inclusive of the parish weekly Friday Liturgy celebrated in the Casey Learning Centre for parishioners, families and children.

In 1994 the school commenced with less than fifty children and during our infancy years the staff, with the support of our Catholic Education Consultants, observed and addressed "How Children Learn" and in addition with the development of the Board of Studies Curriculum into Stages 1-6 (K-12) our school community in 1996 changed the structure to Multi-aged grouping. Our staff throughout the following years have developed this concept and this year with the continued expertise, support and initiative of our staff we have enabled a K-2 Foundation Stage and a Stage 3 Transition Stage in preparation for secondary schooling.

John Paul College is our Secondary Catholic College and during the years we have had wonderful support from the College, which has enabled our students to experience and use College facilities for learning.

The performing Arts have always had a strong focus. Our students during the years have had the opportunity to participate in Choir, Orchestra, Guitar, Keyboard and Instrumental Lessons and Drama. This year in our celebration year we will be celebrating the launching of our "St Francis Xavier Music Academy".

In 2002 another aspect of St Francis Xavier School's journey occurred when our first



**The learning journey at St Francis Xavier.**

graduands completed their Higher School Certificate. In the same year in the sporting domain we had our first student Kate Brennan attend the National Swimming Titles in Darwin. Our Stage 3 students shared the first prize for the Premier's Reading Challenge in the state.

Our celebrations in 2003 is the recognition of the support, work, inspiration and dedication of our Clergy, Staff, families and parishioners for all they have contributed in striving to "nurture a strong religious and educational partnership which is centered on the Christian Gospels and Catholic Faith to provide .....a welcoming, compassionate, safe, secure and harmonious community".

*Extract from St Francis Xavier School Vision.*

## St Augustine's Parishioner Named Citizen of the Year

Stephen May was named Coffs Harbour Citizen of the Year at an Australia Day Awards ceremony on January 26. The ceremony recognises those who have made a valuable contribution to the life of the community. Dr. May is a general practitioner and also practises obstetrics and anaesthetics at both the Coffs Harbour Health Campus and Baringa Hospital.

In the awarding of the Citizen of the Year to Stephen for his involvement in the community of Coffs Harbour, special note was made of his active membership of the St. Augustine's Catholic community including the provision of pre-marriage education. Stephen and his wife Mary have been members of the St. Augustine's Parish Marriage Preparation team since its inception in this Parish in 1991. At that time under the guidance of Father Paul Mc Donald, a group of St. Augustine's parishioners with assistance from John and Anne Graham founded this team and prepared a program to assist young couples in their preparation for the Sacrament of Marriage.

For the past seven years, Stephen and Mary May have been the Co-ordinators of the Marriage preparation team. Three marriage preparation courses are held each year under the leadership of Stephen and Mary and in the twelve years of the courses many young couples have benefited from the wisdom, faith and guidance of this team. Every second year the Coffs Harbour and Port Macquarie teams organise a Marriage Educators' Conference for the Diocese of Lismore.

The May family of Stephen and Mary and their five sons Damian, Brendan, Austin, Julian and Dominic, contribute much to the life of the St. Augustine's Parish. The five boys are or have been students at St. Augustine's Catholic School and John Paul



College, where both Stephen and Mary have been willing parent helpers. Austin was a member of the Diocesan group of young people who attended the World Youth Day in Canada last year. The boys have all been Altar servers with the exception of the youngest Dominic, who is still too young. Brendan and Julian are Violinists and are part of the music group that enhances the celebration of the Sunday evening Liturgy of the Eucharist. Mary May is a member of the Parish Finance Committee.

Stephen May lives his life respecting the dignity of each person and living his faith in his family and daily life. It is very pleasing to see a person of his calibre being awarded the Coffs Harbour Citizen of the Year.

**Submitted by Rosemary Doherty,  
St. Augustine's Parish Coffs Harbour**

# Now more than ever the world needs a commitment to compassion

By Margaret Rice

These are the thoughts of Mr Graeme Davis, Diocesan Director of Caritas Australia in Lismore, who has both the joy and the challenge of making the 'giving' agenda of Caritas Australia a high priority for the people of the Lismore Diocese - at a time when the world faces many challenges in the drive for peace.

"The Lismore Diocese stretches from Camden Haven at its southern end to Tweed Heads at the northern end, so there's plenty of territory to cover and logistically it's ambitious to try to get everyone tuned in to Caritas' message," said Mr Davis.

But it's an ambition he's determined to turn into a reality.

Caritas Australia is the Catholic agency for overseas aid and development. One of the cornerstones of its fundraising effort is Project Compassion, which runs during the six weeks of Lent.

"Caritas Australia calls on the Australian community to respond compassionately during Lent to the needs of impoverished communities worldwide," said Mr Davis.

"If we succeed in gaining generous donations during the six weeks of Lent, then we will have achieved enough to take the pressure off for the rest of the year."

In 2002 Project Compassion raised more than \$6 million making it one of Australia's largest public fundraising campaigns for overseas aid.

\$145,753 of this was raised in the Lismore diocese.

"That's a terrific figure - and it was a 26% increase on the previous year but I'd like to see that figure go up even further. I know the people of Lismore Diocese are generous and they have big hearts.

"We've faced plenty of challenges this year - drought and bushfires are prime examples. Even if we haven't been directly affected, our hearts have gone out to those who have and we've put our hands in our pockets to help.

"But in a world where the boundaries shrink so much every day because of developments in technology and mass communication, we can't set the boundary of our generosity at our country's shoreline.

"The Christian ideals embodied in Lent guide us to share with people around the world regardless of race, political beliefs, religion or gender," Mr Davis said.

Project Compassion provides Australians with an opportunity to support development programs throughout the world and enables Caritas Australia to continue to respond to poor countries in times of disaster, through relief aid.

Caritas is a Latin word, meaning love and compassion.

When the team at Caritas sat down to plan the Project Compassion theme for 2003, they began by thinking about their partners in developing communities and the people they work with in grassroots communities all around the world, and asked the question: 'What is it that they most want?'

To find the answer, Caritas turned to that profound scripture quote in the Gospel of Luke that embodies the work of Caritas:

He has sent me to proclaim release to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free. (Luke 4:18)

This year Project Compassion will focus on the countless millions of people around the world who are slaves to poverty and oppression. Caritas has therefore decided to devote this year's Project Compassion campaign to 'Freedom from Slavery.'

In the book of Exodus in the Old Testament, God tells us that he wants us to be free. We are all in need of liberation - liberation from fear, from pain and sorrow, from greed, from economic rationalism.

Many people are systematically excluded from even a claim to the basics of life. It is hard for most of us to imagine what it is like not to have enough food to feed our families. It is hard for us to imagine what it is like for almost 250 million children around the world to be forced into child labour - and miss out on their most basic right to education.

As Christians we are called to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and empower people to help themselves.

With hope and belief that things can change, we continue to challenge the unjust structures that bind people to a life of poverty.

The money that is raised during this Lent will help free men, women and children all around the world from the chains of slavery that bind them, so that they will truly know the peace that is freedom.

"To sum up, I'd like to share with you the words of the Bishop of Lismore, the Most Reverend Geoffrey Jarrett. He reminds us that:

Almsgiving is a word of deep Christian association, denoting a practice which has been characteristic of Christ's followers from the beginning. Today it continues to be one of those three practices, together with prayer and fasting, which are meant to form the heart of our Lenten devotion...

"I urge the people of the Lismore diocese to follow our Bishop's suggestion and give generously to Project Compassion - and to continue to keep Caritas Australia in your minds as a priority for financial donations for the rest of the year," said Mr Davis.