

ST PAT'S MATTERS

A magazine for parishioners and friends of St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta



In 2018
let's gift
our lives
in service
to God,
building up
His Kingdom

Editorial

Although the Season of Lent is knocking at our doors, our first issue for 2018 opens with a review of activities at the Cathedral during the Season of Christmas just past.

Apart from the traditional Carols event, a thread of giving is woven through the review, featuring how parishioners rallied to the Jesuit Appeal bringing gifts for the refugees and asylum seekers they assist. Then be impressed by the charitable work of parishioners, Andy & Carmen Cutajar and Shirley Wehbe. And the volunteer efforts of parishioners at another St Patrick's in Victoria to restore their beloved place of worship.

Paul Mousley shares the experience of his first pilgrimage abroad; while Mark Slee's story about 'coming home' will draw you into his very long journey reaching there.

Reading about the Mass on All Souls' Day held at the Chapel in St Patrick's Cemetery might encourage you to attend next year.

Gatherings galore that happened since we last went to print. They are well documented in this issue: a High Tea Fundraiser, initiated by Fr John Paul Escarlan, (with an off-shoot article by Gemma Herrera on High Tea Etiquette); a Luncheon honouring retirees and the elderly of the parish; one in appreciation for all in ministry; and another arranged by the Hospitality Team members as an annual catch-up; and a morning tea on Gaudete Sunday to farewell Fr George Azhakath.

Be delighted by Fr Sean Bradley's article, written at our request, as his last day at St Pat's, February 2nd, draws nigh; and be amazed by Olivia Lee's treatise, *Cleansing A Permanent Marker*.

You can view brief updates on RCIA, the Sacramental Programme, the Legion of Mary, Live Christ Share Christ Formation and the Catenians.

In all that takes place in our parish, let us never forget that celebration of Sunday Mass should be at the core of all our activities: it is the time when we come together as a faith community to give glory and praise to God, and thanks to Jesus for His Redeeming Sacrifice on the Cross for love of us.

M. Polizzi

Christmas Matters

On Saturday, 2nd December, the Master Weather Coordinator was in control, unfortunately thwarting Plan A: to present this year's *Carols at the Cathedral* in the Forecourt. No balmy evening as for Carols 2016, but rather pelting rain, which meant initiating Plan B: relocating the event's venue to the Cathedral Hall.

This was a disappointment, both for organisers and performers, because it meant foregoing the ambience of the Forecourt's setting with the backdrop of the Cathedral's impressive entrance gates, the angel, nativity and wise men outlined in coloured lights on the upstairs verandah of Murphy House, plus the addition of four words, made up of letters 1.2 metres high, painted white and etched in lights: those four words, ever evocative of the Christmas message:— JOY, LOVE, PEACE, HOPE. (These stands thankfully remained on display during the Season to catch people's attention as they arrived at the Cathedral for the Christmas liturgies.)



The inclement weather also meant cancellation of the Jumping Castle, always generously provided by parishioner Nitesh Lal to delight and exercise the children. Instead, when the rain did ease later in the evening, youngsters entertained themselves simply running around the Cloister waving their candles like pretend Light Sabres of *Star Wars* fame.

The Carols had a two-fold purpose: to enjoy listening to and joining in the singing of beloved carols and hymns pertaining to the Christmas Story and to raise money for Arrupe House, the Jesuit-run mission, opposite the Cathedral, that assists refugees. This was achieved through the BBQ, and candle sales. (more about Arrupe House, page 4.)

HOW DID 'THE SHOW' UNFOLD?



Matt Bretania, a leader of Junior Credo did a fine job as opening singer, while Kirrily Aguilera as MC welcomed people, sharing her life-long involvement as a St Pat's Parishioner, now with 3 sons at St Pat's Primary!



John Paul Choir Members
Mili, Jan, Kaori, Cathy, Iona, Julie, Bev, Edward, Greg, Chris, Martin



Credo Youth & others

HELPING MATTERS



Giving hope

Before the stable was used to provide shelter for Joseph, Mary and Baby Jesus in the Nativity Scene, it was put to good use: people were invited to pre-empt the Magi and bring gifts for families who, like the Holy Family, have experienced the need to seek refuge, too.

The Jesuit-run refugee service in Arrupe House across the road from the Cathedral, made an appeal for donations to brighten Christmas for people they help.

See their thank you message below.



Thank you for giving a brighter Christmas



Jesuit Refugee Service Australia would like to thank the St Patrick's Cathedral Parish community in Parramatta.

Because of your commitment and support, refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia will have a brighter Christmas this year.

Your generosity brought more than 350 Christmas gifts and 80 gift cards. Your fundraising Carols Night raised nearly \$1000. And we are grateful for your kindness in making the Cathedral hall available for our Christmas celebrations.

The hearts of the people we serve, accompany and advocate for, and the hearts of all JRS staff, are filled with the glow of your giving. Thank you.

We wish you a peaceful and joyous Christmas.

Your continued support is vital.

Find us at www.jrs.org.au

Contact us on (02) 9356 3888

Donate at <http://www.jrs.org.au/donate-now/>

or info@jrs.org.au

*The joy of discovery,
that moment
when hope and expectation were gloriously met
by the illumination of one bright star.
We cannot imagine what words were spoken by visitors
or if first impressions left them somewhat confused.
Messiah, Saviour, a King
born in the barest of palaces.
Yet they saw and fell down
on their knees in adoration.
Lord, they saw you and knew whom they had met.
As we meet around crib, candle or advent wreath
draw us into that stable in our imagination.
In the quiet moments of prayer this Christmas,
that brief oasis from the bustle of the world
bring alive to us the smell of the hay,
the sound of the animals,
the cry of a baby.
Draw us close to our Saviour, Messiah and King
as we bring not Gold, Myrrh or Frankincense,
but the gift of our lives,
the only offering we can bring.*

By now, thoughts of Christmas may well be stored away in our memory banks. However, this beautiful reflection on the Coming of the Messiah, penned by Mili Lee, as a foreword for the Carols booklet, deserves to be revisited and dwelt upon.



helping the lonely matters



Giving them joy at Christmas

For Shirley Wehbe and her family, this is a cause close to their hearts, especially at Christmas. That's why the *Making a Difference* Charity was born.

As well as good works in the wider community, Shirley is heavily involved in the Maronite Community and here at St Patrick's parish, where she has been a parishioner for 48 years and a Catechist for around 38 of those years. So, commitment to the Maronites, St Pat's, charity work and family, (Shirley and husband Ray have 4 children and 12 grandchildren), makes Shirley an extremely busy lady, indeed.

Consequently, convincing her to write about the *Christmas Lunch for the Lonely* was difficult. Finally, she agreed to doing an 'interview' in a question/answer format.



THE 'INTERVIEW' WITH SHIRLEY

1. Did you initiate the idea of the Christmas Lunch at Parramatta Town Hall? And if so, why?

Yes, I came up with the idea. Christmas is a very special time of year and personally I have always wanted everyone to enjoy the excitement and love of Christmas, just as I have had the privilege of doing.



Shirley & volunteers in full-on preparation mode.

2. What year did the first Christmas Luncheon take place?

The first year it was held was in 2001.

3. How do your family feel about having the luncheon happen on Christmas Day?

My family understands the importance of giving back to the community, especially during the Christmas season. We all celebrate together the night before.

4. What is involved in planning, preparation of food and set up of venue?

The set up for the day is completed by Council caretakers and we send out letters of request for food donations. On Christmas Eve we make up all the salads and prepare the food for the next day. Our volunteers help us in food preparation and in serving the food to our guests during the luncheon, which helps us to give people the Christmas feast they deserve. The food is set up in a large buffet for the guests, prior to their arrival.



Christmas Luncheon in full swing .

5. Who are your helpers? Do family members get involved?

Our helpers are family friends and many people from the community
(cont'd next page)

Shirley, husband Ray, some of their family and some volunteers who gave time at the luncheon to bring joy to those spending Christmas Day 2017 alone.



THE CUTAJARS ARE AT IT AGAIN! A LIGHT SHOW FOR CHARITY

Andy Cutajar's love affair with lighting up his house for Christmas began 24 years ago. But it has only been in the last 12 years that it has become a major part of his life, when, influenced by a friend of wife Carmen, the couple decided to use the event to raise money for charity. Ronald Macdonald House was the lucky recipient of their good will.

So each year the 'show' gets bigger, better and brighter! This means that life for Andy, now a spritely 77 years young, follows a six months on, six months off ritual. The 'on' ritual starts around July with tackling the complicated process of planning the layout and setting up the spectacular month-long light show at their Northmead home to dazzle visitors during the Christmas Season.

This year's display sported five million lights and he's already planning to add another 10 000 for 2018! Plus Carmen confides he's also bought three more BIGGER reindeer, — "because they were on special." is Andy's excuse.

One wonders where is all the equipment stored in the off season? And what about the electricity bill??

How does Carmen cope? She admits to many anxious moments seeing Andy climbing ladders and clambering perilously over the rooftop. It's also wearying for the month the light show runs. She commented that some nights it has been 1am before they turn the lights off. Andy explains, "People just keep coming and I don't like to disappoint them!"



Carmen is kept busy selling raffle tickets, drinks and craft items, chatting with people, keeping an eye on the Donation Barrel, as well as helping with the BBQs held on two nights,. She was disappointed that they only raised \$7000 this year, \$2000 less than last year.

Nevertheless, Christmas 2018 will again see this irrepressible, generous duo, who St Pat's is blessed to have as parishioners, take up the charity challenge. After all, despite the time and effort involved, they love it!

Shirley's 'Interview' cont'd

who volunteer their time and effort to bring joy to those spending Christmas alone. My family gets involved whenever they have the chance. They assist the volunteers on the day as well as helping by bringing everything needed for the function to the hall in the days leading up to the luncheon.

6. How many people do you cater for? Are numbers attending diminishing or increasing?

Around 500 people. That number can vary from year to year. However, there has been a slight increase over the years. In recent years we have had to have two sittings in order to cater for everyone who accepts the invitation.

7. Have you ever run out of food?

Every year we continue to feed our guests until food runs out. But despite preparing more food each year, we still run out!

8. Any comments of appreciation from the guests?

Our guests are always extremely grateful for the luncheon. Many have no family with whom to experience Christmas. That is one of the many gifts our luncheon offers — a chance to experience a family Christmas.

9. Any comments you'd like to add.

I am extremely grateful to everyone who has helped me in putting on the luncheon over the years, as well as for the many special experiences and opportunities it has brought to my life.

10. Finally, I'd like to mention your Biggest Morning Tea Fundraisers for the Cancer Foundation. How many years now have you been organizing/hosting this annual event at your home?

The Biggest Morning Tea has been taking place for approximately 18 years now.

Making A Difference is sponsored by



**CITY OF
PARRAMATTA**

Connecting Matters

especially at Christmas

The Editor revisits ANOTHER ST PAT'S

In the December 2016, issue of *St Pat's Matters*, I featured another St Pat's, in Dunkeld, in the Grampians, Victoria. During our drive around the tiny township, my husband and I happened upon a "sister" St Pat's, where a parishioner, Andy Gordon was engaged in repair work in the church's interior. He invited us in, chatted about the church's history, his years growing up in Dunkeld and talked at length about the much-needed renovation and restoration work, all being undertaken by dedicated, hardworking volunteers.

We were impressed by this St Pat's community's unswerving love and devotion to the ongoing process of maintaining and improving their place of worship, that twins our church's name. This unexpected encounter also brought home how the Catholic Faith is a treasured link, a blessing binding and guiding our disparate lives.

Since our meeting in September 2016, contact with the Gordons has been sparse. Nevertheless, I'd like to share with you a couple of email extracts and photos sent by Andy's wife, Keryn over time, reporting on what's been happening re worship and work at their St Pat's.

4th Dec., 2016

How exciting to hear from you. Today we celebrated our annual CWL Christmas Luncheon. It was the first Mass on our new Altar, one that matches our beautiful font, .All the cracks in the church have been filled by our volunteers and our garden is looking beautiful after lots of rain ,and so our work and commitment goes on. The stone has been laid and the plaque will be on before Christmas.

29th Dec., 2016.

We were excited to get the newsletter, [St Pat's Matters] thank you. We all loved the bit how you didn't want to be rude, as we could see Andy gathering you in.....[to view the church interior]

We had a beautiful Mass on Christmas Eve and our little church was full, unlike previous years. The sound of children was beautiful. Our new Altar was blessed. It matches the Christening font and was also donated and made out of red gum and crafted by our local men

20th Nov., 2017

We have thought of you often in the past year as we tell the story of Andy gathering you in. The year has seen many exciting changes in our church. The sanctuary section will be painted soon. All the back section was removed, and the step, which makes it so much safer for our aging priests.



Fr John entering for Christmas Mass in 2017

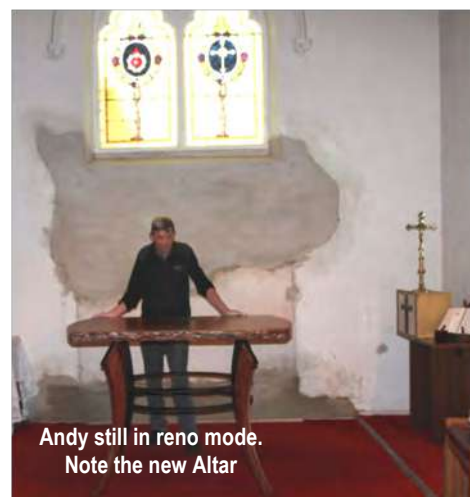
Jan 2nd 2018

Dear Marion

Hope you and Baldo and all your family had a wonderful Christmas and New Year celebration, Ours was quiet but lovely.Attaching a couple of photos from our Christmas Mass. St Pat's had lots of welcome visitors and of course, our regulars. It was a lovely Mass celebrated by Father John McKinnon (who just celebrated 60 years in the Priesthood in Dec) He did a wonderful Mass considering we also had two Baptisms.

We still have a few things to do, — the Tabernacle will be cleaned and placed on a shelf, a new lectern and Easter Candle hopefully down the track. Also we have set aside a special area for Our Lady, left of the Altar, and will see if this will be a lovely quiet area, or if we need to think again.

*Blessings to you and those you love.
Regards
Keryn*



Andy still in reno mode. Note the new Altar

I look forward to receiving further updates and photos from Keryn as the improvements progress. I'm still hoping for a photo of the commemorative garden and plaque honouring all the parishioners who have gone beforehand.



What a difference! The painted Sanctuary is a perfect foil for the Altar and Font, beautifully crafted from red gum.

Pilgrimage Matters

Last September, Paul Mark Mousley, Saint Patrick's Bellman, notched up a couple of firsts....his first trip to Europe and his first pilgrimage.



In the months since his return, as he continues his role as resident campanologist (at 11am Sunday Masses and for the Angelus before weekday Masses,) his thoughts must often slip back to visiting those holy sites.

Here, he gives a brief overview of his experience on this special journey.

Hello there Fellow Parishioners of Saint Patrick's!

Just recently I left Australia for my first overseas trip. I had been planning this pilgrimage to Rome and Medjugorje for a long time. I doubt that anyone around me would have not heard of my 'Dream' to go to those two places.

I wanted to go on 'Pilgrimage', not on a 'Holiday'.

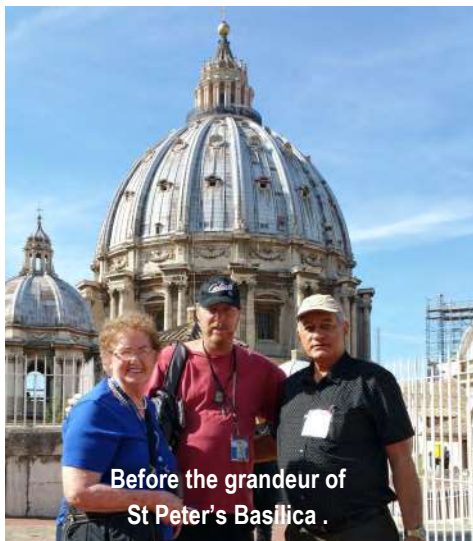
How I would be on the flight from Sydney to Rome was unknown to me. I was, in fact, very nervous about it beforehand. The plane would be in the air for twenty-two hours!....But, I was fine.

On the flight I was relaxed and comfortable. I didn't actually fall asleep on the plane, whereas my travel companion, Frank did. During the flight I entertained myself with music composed by Saint Hildegard (Canticles of Ecstasy).

When I landed in Rome I didn't even feel jetlagged but I did get a very good night's sleep.

There I met up with the group of pilgrims from Australia — there were thirty-five of us and as I got to know them I found that they were a fantastic bunch of people.

We went to the Vatican where I saw Pope Francis being driven past in the Pope mobile. He was only around twenty or twenty-five feet from where I was in the crowd. Unfortunately, he didn't see me!



Before the grandeur of St Peter's Basilica .

The churches in and around the Vatican are really breathtaking. Amazing artworks and architecture there.

I climbed up the long staircase leading up into Saint Peter Basilica's dome. The view was awesome. You can see all of Rome from up there.



The grand vista Paul viewed from atop St Peter's dome.

We spent around three days in Rome. The food there was scrumptious and the servings were generous. I actually bought a burger that was really too big and I posted it on Facebook!

From Rome our pilgrimage continued on to Medjugorje. This is where a lot of pilgrims go each year as it is believed that apparitions from the Virgin Mary take place there.

I believe it to be true, as many vocations, conversions and healings have occurred there. I have seen it for myself and I found it a very prayerful place and the faith of people visiting and praying at this holy site is very apparent.

I received a grace whilst I was there. I felt peace. There had been a few moments that I was anxious, but seeing it was my first trip overseas I was okay. It was as if there was a gentle hand resting on my shoulder.

Medjugorje has a lot of piety shops, so I bought some items for my friends and family back here in Australia.

My favourite sacramental is a stainless steel Benedictine medal. This only cost a couple of Euros. I wish that I bought more of them!

My travel companion, Frank organized a priest to pray a healing prayer

for me. This priest was sincere and prayed for six or seven minutes. This was a great comfort for me.

A highlight of my time in Medjugorje would have to be when I led the Rosary in the private chapel of Ivan — a visionary — I prayed the Fifth Sorrowful Mystery.

Being on this pilgrimage helped me overcome my shyness, and this trip will always be for me, a very special memory.

If there is anyone in the Parish who is thinking about going overseas on pilgrimage I would say GO!!! It is very worthwhile. You will see wonderful places and meet great people.



Some of the great people Paul met: his pilgrimage companions .

Thanksgiving Mass & Luncheon for our Elderly Parishioners



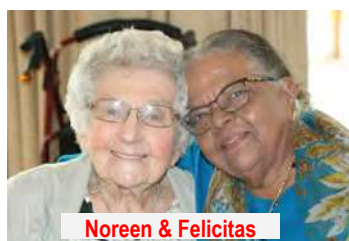
Meet St Pat's Youth:
MINDY, MATT, OLIVIA, MELISSA & STEPHANIE,
who happily served our YOUTH of YESTERYEAR.

At several meetings last year, the Parish Pastoral Council studied and discussed the Social Justice Statement 'A Place at the Table: Social Justice in an Ageing Society' which was written by our own Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM and released in 2016 on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. It called for a re-evaluation of societal values and attitudes concerning the elderly in our communities, namely to promote intentional inclusivity in our thoughts and actions.

As a result, it was decided to have a Thanksgiving Mass on Sunday 8th October, with Bishop Vincent as celebrant, to be followed by lunch in the hall afterwards. Catering was organized by parish staff member, Mili Lee (pictured at right with one of the guests). Members of Credo Youth Ministries were asked to be involved to greet, serve



Mili & Pauline



Noreen & Felicitas



Margaret & Pam



Beverley & Peter



Frank & Claire

and interact with the guests. An open invitation to retirees and elderly (and carers) was posted in the Narthex.

Here you see the people who accepted the invitation. All were appreciative of the initiative, and the smiling faces indicate they enjoyed the occasion very much.

In her welcoming address, Olivia Lee, PPC Chair (pictured above), spoke about the Social Justice Statement and the International Day for older persons just held 1st October, citing it as "a day of remembrance instituted by the United Nations, for the world to give thanks for the gift of the elders in our community, as well as to consider deeply the societal prejudices they face."

She continued, "In response to both these things, this weekend we, as a Parish community, celebrate the hard work and achievements of our own senior members. For a while now, the Church has worked to elevate and recognize the importance of the youth community: the Australian Catholic Youth Festival, World Youth Day, and the Synod of Bishops on Youth are all initiatives that are working to encourage the young people of the world to participate and lead our Church boldly into new horizons of faith."

However, we have forgotten that the ability for the youth of today to be empowered in our Church comes from the sacrifices, work and devotion of those who came before us. Our celebration of the elders in our community is in recognition and thanksgiving for all they have pioneered and all they continue to support both, in our Church, and in our greater society. It is a chance for the youth of today to give thanks for the youth of yesterday."

Ed Note: If this event has a repeat performance in 2018, hopefully more of the Elderly will take up the invitation to "Come to the Table".



Perla & Miguel



Rod & Esther



Chris & Pat



Ian & Leo



Valerie & Ian



Gail & Helen



Terry



Pat



John, Patti & Barbara



Janice



Ely



Fabian



Ruth, & her children
Racquel, Rene & Lillian

Sharing our story matters

BECOMING A CATHOLIC:

The following article is a brief account of one path of conversion (although in this particular case it might be more correctly called reversion), but nonetheless it indicates the type of circumstances that might come into play for those not born as 'cradle Catholics' and yet who are drawn to 'return home'.

The editor explains how the 'story' came to be told here: *Chance encounters matter, for they can bear good fruit!. As I was greeting people before 11am Mass on the Sunday after Christmas Day, a brief conversation with parishioner Mark Slee, (who comes all the way from Pitt Town) led to his revealing his becoming a Catholic. I suggested he share the experience in St Pat's Matters..*

Mark was formally admitted into the Catholic Communion on 29 August, 2015 at Sacred Heart Monastery, Kensington.



Well, was it worth the wait? Most decidedly 'yes'. And perhaps I can tell you why, because it is you, as the people of St Pat's, amongst

others who make it possible for me to say this daily without any doubt or hesitation.

The Journey:

I was born into a Congregational Family (non-conformist Protestant) in 1951 but became an Anglican when my parents converted shortly thereafter. I worshipped as an Anglican in both the UK and Australia until my formal confirmation into the Catholic Church in 2015. Ok, so what happened in all those soooooo many years between?

In 1968 I was studying in Taunton in Somerset, preparing to enter Hotel School in the UK for a future career in International Hotels. As it turned out this became my career. During my time, in Taunton I was drawn — for no apparent reason I could logically think of at the time (but went anyway), — to visit the presbytery of St George's Catholic Church there. From a young priest who answered the door I requested if I could simply have some information about the Catholic Church. He replied, 'yes'. He then asked me if I drank and did I smoke, to which I replied 'yes! Anyway, over a couple of hours, we discussed Catholicism, Anglicanism and lots of other 'isms' and had a great time doing so. Before I left, we visited the Catholic Church. As I write this, even to this day some 50 years later, I can still recall the sense of awesome realization and wonderment I felt then, that something special was going on in this church and

that I wanted, but more importantly needed, to be part of it. This inexplicable sense was also not something I had been aware of previously in any of my years of worshipping as a non-Catholic.

When I departed I did so totally at peace and full of expectation for the future direction of my spiritual life as a Catholic. All seemed straightforward — my parents were now reasonably 'High (read Catholic) Anglicans' and there were no prohibitive impediments of which I was aware to my soonish conversion. All of my plans were falling into place nicely.

Up to this point I had considered that my conversion from worshipping as an active Anglican to worshipping as a Roman Catholic would at most take only a few years and as a continuing student without ties this would not be problematic anyway. It never dawned on me that time actually belongs to God and that things are ordered to suit His timetable not mine. As it turned out, a further 47 years were to now elapse before that 'vision splendid' of peace and expectation I experienced in that first Catholic encounter was to be given to me as the reality He had in fact promised. I also had to learn another important truth - that God does keep the promises He makes to us but to suit His purposes in His time, not to suit our purposes and our timeline.

Well then, why did I have to wait so long?— a wait others, seeking conversion might also have experienced?

This is a fair question. I often ask myself this when reflecting on the celebration and apparent joy in the lives of so many life-long Catholics that I encounter. As converts, we can be quite envious of you.

In the end though, the answers to this and other conversion questions must necessarily remain within the domain of God. It is His world we live in, under His

plans and as you good people have lovingly shown to me already, we need to give God time and opportunity to talk to us and we must in turn listen, rather than us constantly talking ourselves up to Him, telling Him what we intend to do. Most converts from other Christian churches will probably tell you much the same — that once we have the nod that our spiritual lives are up for a change, we really have no option other than to wait for the heavenly OK to proceed. In practice, it is often not a simple process for a Protestant to convert to Catholicism. The reverse might also be true of course.

Having said this it is perhaps opportune and appropriate to acknowledge the part my wife Wendy has played in this journey. Whilst she has chosen to remain an Anglican, her support has nonetheless been unwavering in enabling me to return to my Catholic heritage. Quite simply, we are making it work and work well we believe.

Was I in the wilderness, then for 47 years?

No, definitely not. Father, Son and Holy Spirit remained part and parcel of my Anglican life all throughout this time. The mountain may have different sides requiring different approaches but it is still God's one mountain. From my perspective, I viewed Anglicanism in light of its catholic heritage, whereas others viewed the heritage from a non-catholic perspective. A not dissimilar scenario is true of some other denominations of Protestant faith but the lines may be more difficult to clearly delineate than is possible with Anglicanism. Traversing the paths of Protestant faith anywhere is never an easy task and it goes without saying that converts remain full of admiration for those involved in ecumenical roles. Trying to get any group of Christian denominations moving forward together as one (to next page)

WAS IT WORTH THE WAIT?

Cont'd from previous page

must sometimes seem as immovable as a mountain to those involved, but as this is God's mountain, we are called to keep trying, however hard it seems.

So where do I find myself now?

Spiritually, as a full member of the Catholic communion I can now say "I have returned Home" — but for the first time in my life. However, in saying this, I do not imply the end of a journey but rather the start of a new one, one based on expectations which can be fulfilled and

a journey full of promise, new discoveries and layers of deep learning. If I am totally candid with you as I must be, my entering into the Catholic communion is, without a doubt, proving to be one of the greatest joys and blessings of my life - perhaps another reason I had to wait time!

After 47 years I expected it to be good but I hadn't realised it would be this good! God has not only kept His promise to me but wrapped it up in gold. I don't know how to thank Him for bringing the Catholic faith into my life, but in being able to

share this journey with you may perhaps serve to remind us all of our need to constantly reflect on the greatness that is in God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and the beauty that He wishes to bestow on us who belong in Him.

Thank You for welcoming me home at St. Pat's Cathedral — a church very dear to my heart. May God bless you all,

Mark Slee.

Pitt Town (Windsor)



1



2

1. The long wait is over: Mark receives his first Eucharist as a Catholic from the Celebrant, Fr. Adrian Meaney MSC at Sacred Heart Monastery Kensington.

2. The post initiation photo marking the occasion shows l-r, Fr Adrian, Rev. Colin Watts, Mark and his wife Wendy and Br. Dan Stafford CSSR, OAM, Catholic Chaplain with the Australian Racing Christian Chaplaincy (ARCC). (Br Dan acted as Mark's Confirmation Sponsor. Mark's wife is also heavily involved with ARCC.)

In answer to further probing questions from the editor, Mark explained:

My initiation into the Catholic faith only required me to be confirmed under Chrism and to profess the Faith and my fidelity to all that the Catholic Church holds as true. I had been a full communicant member taking Holy Communion in the Anglican Church since my early teens. From my own perspective, I have always held to a belief in the Real Presence at the Eucharist - this is also quite normal practice in High Anglicanism.

I took the Confirmation names of 'Boniface-Brannoc': St. Brannoc being the Welsh Saint responsible for converting Braunton, my birth village, in County Devon, England to Christianity in the sixth century; and St. Boniface the famous English Saint (often referred to as 'the Apostle to the Germans') who was born in Crediton, a town nearby Braunton in the seventh century.

RCIA MATTERS!

DEACON WLLIE LIMJAP gives a brief update

The 2018 RCIA Program (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) is well under way, with ten people currently undergoing the formation process. Amongst this group are four enquirers and six people already baptised, who seek full acceptance into the Catholic Church.

However, at this stage, the group is urgently seeking Sponsors willing to assist those who have joined the program but do not have a sponsor to accompany them during their journey as catechumens. Anyone willing to volunteer needs to be prepared to be with them during the weekly sessions; especially during Lent and when they are to receive the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter.

Do you feel CALLED TO SERVE? Any one interested call the parish office, 8839 8400.

Leave your details with the Receptionist Donna Missio, or email me deacon@stpatscathedral.com.au





Following the Mass traditionally held at 6pm in the Chapel in St Patrick's Cemetery, (NSW's first official Catholic burial ground, on the corner of Pennant Hills Road and Church Street), on November 2nd for All Souls, Naomi Mazzitelli, the newest member of the Parish Pastoral Council, sent the email below and photos of the solemn occasion to the editor.

Hi Marian,
I took some pics last night to send to you for the next St Pat's Matters. I know a couple of other parishioners took some too so please feel free to use what you think looks best. It was my first time at this All Hallows Mass and it didn't disappoint – it was just wonderful. Father George officiated – he was, as always, a breath of fresh air and so committed to properly honouring the Souls of the Departed.

There were thirty-five of us there – was great to see some kids too, — all praying for our own personal intentions: my Mum, who has just passed and Bob Edgar's two children Elizabeth & Patrick just to name a few, and group intentions such as the Convict women and their children buried there in unmarked graves, the early St Pat's parishioners and for today, all those killed in conflicts around the world.

The weather held out, which was good, and because of daylight-saving those, like myself, who got there early, could have a wander to read some of the epitaphs on the headstones.

I will certainly be going again next year and I'm sure many from last night will, too.



There was also a 7pm Mass for All Souls in the Cathedral, at which Bishop Vincent was the celebrant.

For the past three years, a catafalque representing all the dead, has stood in a place of honour before the Altar. Red roses are placed on top of the catafalque in remembrance of all those who have been buried from the Cathedral Parish in the last 12 months.

New this year were the black candelabra on the altar and surrounding the catafalque. This harkens back to earlier tradition when the priests wore black vestments to celebrate Requiem Masses.



Ministry Matters: *meet our newest Altar Servers*



CONGRATULATIONS TO MIKAELA SALAZAR, THOMAS SOMY, AARON NEROY, ALLAN SOSO, KYLE TELLIS AND PIOUS REMIGIUS.

During 9:30am Mass on Sunday, 3rd December last year, Fr George Azhakath, commissioned these 6 young people in their new ministerial roles as Altar Servers.

Hand extended in blessing, Father said the following prayer:



*God of glory,
your beloved Son has shown us
that true worship comes
from humble and contrite hearts.*

*Bless our brothers and sisters,
who have responded to the needs of our parish
and wish to commit themselves to your service
as altar servers.*

*Grant that their ministry may be fruitful
and our worship pleasing in your sight.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Undoubtedly on this first day they are excited in



performing the different tasks of their new roles — as Thomas and Allan must feel seen here lighting the candles on the altar before Mass and processing candles to the Ambo for the reading of the Gospel.

Let's pray that these six children will be faithful to their ministry, serving at the Altar with reverence, and always turning up when rostered to fulfil their duty.

meet our newest Permanent Deacons



Belated Congratulations to

JEROME EMMANUEL & RODRIGO RUPAC

installed to the Permanent Diaconate by Bishop Vincent on 21st October, last year. Beforehand both men served for some time as acolytes at the Cathedral. They have now been assigned to new 'vineyards' in the Lord's service: Jerome to St Aidan's Parish Rooty Hill and Rodrigo (Rudy) to St John XXIII Parish, Glenwood-Stanhope Gardens, both for three years.

Fundraising Matters!

Fr John Paul Escarlan might now be stationed in Richmond Parish, having been transferred there from St Patrick's towards the end of 2016, but that hasn't stopped him from roping in our parish youth of Credo and Teen Credo — AND their parents — to join with Richmond parishioners in a Fundraising venture, held in the Cathedral Hall on Sunday, 3rd December.

Father JP's goal? To raise funds to build a church in his village back in the Philippines. (The building is probably underway as you read this, if not already completed. Jane Perez & her children went as volunteers to help. It's hoped they will share the experience in the next *St Pat's Matters*.

Towards the end of the function, we managed to round up some of the willing wonder workers, (incredibly still smiling in spite of toiling since the early hours), for a photo with the impossible-to-say-no- to "head honcho", Fr John Paul and Deacon Galbert Albino his supporter.



Really, the whole event should have been videoed. It was far better and more authentic than any reality TV show. Almost from the crack of dawn, the place was abuzz with making mountains of dainty sandwiches, decorating cup cakes, arranging flowers, setting up tables, placing out the delicate bone chinaware and tiered stands of goodies, etc. You should have been there: despite the frenzied atmosphere, the workers' enthusiasm was infectious. All this was a labour of love to support their highly-regarded former Youth Chaplain, in his church-building initiative.

When people entered the hall there were gasps of amazement

at the beautiful scene, it could have been in any high class hotel. The abundant repast was first class; the genteel ambience was enhanced by back ground music, from performers Anthony Silvestrini, a Teen Credo Leader and a beautiful young vocalist from Richmond parish.

After the event the cleaning up and hand washing of the delicate china had to be faced. And still the tired troops smiled.

Now all we need to know is how much was raised! (over \$4000!)



The High Tea turned out to be a lavish and professionally executed affair, a credit to the amateurs who pulled it off. The women and girls admitted it was a huge learning curve, one which saw them become familiar with what was involved in organizing a High Tea, with the bonus of gaining skills in moulding flowers to decorate the cup cakes. They were thrilled with their amazing creations, and deservedly so, as this selection proves.





I WAS THERE!

GEMMA HERRERA shares her experience and educates us about High Tea Etiquette

What makes High Tea so special?

As a first timer, I panic and start to research, wondering why is it called "High Tea". It must be a tea that hangs up high ...ha ha ha. — Don't you know it's not the high end English who started "High Tea"? It was actually the working class who developed it as a filler between breakfast and late dinner. They ate scones either standing up or sitting on tall stools, hence the term "High Tea" was developed. Later they decided to dress up to impress and so a tradition began.

Anyway, I start to wonder what would be the proper way to dress up to attend this special event, organized by Father John Paul Escarlan to raise money to build a church in the Philippines. Since he was too busy with preparing to quiz him about this event called 'High Tea', I decided to research for details about the subject and what protocol was involved when attending one.

For Ladies:

- ♦ You must have matching pearl accessories such as necklace, bracelet to go with your dress which can be floral, patterned or with stripes.
- ♦ You can either wear a hat, not too large, or flowers on your hair as an accent.
- ♦ You can wear flat shoes or ones with heels but not stilettos.
- ♦ You should look relaxed, but classy. Ladies this is one occasion you can dress up to impress.

For Men

- ♦ They must wear a tuxedo and hat.
- ♦ Or wear a jacket and tie with formal shoes.
- ♦ Nowadays smart casual is acceptable, but definitely no sportswear or trainers.

Cream or Jam first?

This was a topic debated with the people at my table as to which one should go first — cream or jam. It doesn't matter. For the love of scones it's perfectly good etiquette to put cream first and then jam, or to jam and then cream.



Tea or Milk First?

Big topic during the High Tea because we already have a big pot ready for us to pour. Apparently you have to pour the milk first protecting the delicate chinaware from cracking from boiling tea. Also if you put the milk first it offers a better combination of the two liquids and allows the creaminess of the milk to filter through your hot tea in more balanced taste. If you add the milk second, the hot tea can overpower the milk and release less flavor/creaminess in your cup.

Extending your little pinkie is a myth, so never do it, (as Mrs Bouquet does in *Keeping Up Appearances*.)

How to stir your tea correctly

Never ever "clink" the spoon against the side of the cup — that's a no no! The proper way is to place your spoon in a 6 o'clock position in your cup and fold the tea gently towards the 12 o'clock position. When you have fully stirred your tea, remove the spoon from the cup and place it on the saucer to the side of the cup. (During the event when I told Father Bob, Marian and others they were laughing because we have no tea bags. it's already brewed.)

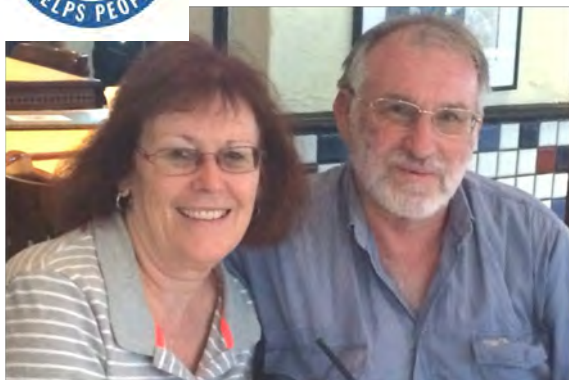
There are many more guidelines of etiquette that apply when attending formal events like "High Tea", but I have chosen just a few to mention here.

Now that I am aware of the correct etiquette, I'm confident I could arrange a High Tea.....Just let me know if you want me to organize one. Email me on dance2music2gmail.com or phone me on 0409 993 385 or 0417 485 884.



Helping people matters

greatly to **VINNIES VOLUNTEERS**
MARILYN & GRAHAM COOK.



THE COOKS still appealing

VOLUNTEERS ARE ALWAYS NEEDED
CAN YOU HELP?

Please consider whether you can assist with volunteer services at Vinnies. We would absolutely love to hear from you.

The needs are great, and our conference numbers are small. The

Parramatta Vinnies Team comprises, President Gerard Gilchrist, Terry O'Brien, Ray Love, Eugene Das and we two.

If you are in a position to help out that would be fantastic. You can contact the Parramatta President, Gerard Gilchrist on ph 0423 440693 or email gerard.gilchrist@gmail.com



Morning Tea on Gaudete Sunday *joy at the Lord's coming* *sadness at Fr George's going*

Morning Tea on Gaudete Sunday, 17th December, 2017, was the last one for the year, before St Patrick's Hospitality Team took a well-deserved break. They resume duty the first Sunday in

February, 2018.

To make rejoicing in the impending celebration of the Saviour's Birth extra special, parishioners were encouraged to bring along festive food to share at both morning teas after 9:30am and 11am Masses. The café was also decorated with a Nativity Scene, the Story of Christmas and stars sporting "Happy Christmas" written in the many languages spoken by our diverse congregation.

11am Mass on Gaudete Sunday was the last Fr George would celebrate as Assistant Priest at St Pat's. Consequently, the focus of the morning tea after that Mass was primarily to bid Father goodbye and show our appreciation for his time of ministry to the parish



community since late 2016. He is not being assigned to another parish, but has been recalled by the Superiors of his Order to return to India.

It was most affirming to see a huge crowd turn up for the occasion. The extra special lavish spread along with the decorations, put everyone in such a festive mood that when Father arrived, it was a challenge to quell the chatter.

Finally, peace prevailed, and after his words of farewell and adept cutting of the cake, Fr George mingled with parishioners, chatting and most obligingly posing for memento photos.



We managed to get a photo of the 9:30 team, but those on 11am duty were run off their feet with serving, mingling and cleaning up. Besides, there's no space to put any

more photos. So maybe when the café reopens we can put up a photo gallery for everyone to peruse as they sip tea or coffee.



9:30 Servers on Gaudete Sunday:
Front, Priya, Felicia, Denise, Cora
Back: Sesilia, John, Remi, Roland

FAST FORWARD TO MID JANUARY. Just weeks before Fr George was supposed to fly off to India, he ended up in hospital! Just goes to show, we never know what lies ahead of us.

Father had to have stents put in his arteries. Now out of intensive care, he seems to be making a good recovery.

The question now is when will he be ready to say, "I'm leaving on a jet plane,...." to which our response would still be, "Oh Father, we hate to see you go."

FROM THE CO-ORDINATOR: If you are interested in joining the Hospitality Team I'd be delighted to hear from you. We can always do with more volunteers.

For information, call me, Marian Polizzi on 9630 4019

Admittedly it is a bit back to front to be reading about Fr Sean's story when he has already left St Patrick's to continue his ministry in God's Vineyard in the domain of the Blue Mountains.

During his all-too-short tenure here at the Cathedral, this softly-spoken priest with the oh so delightful Irish lilt, endeared himself to parishioners. The subject of his short stay and departure was a common lament amongst many people.

Also, a point often discussed was the compelling reverence with which Fr Sean performs the Act of Consecration during Mass. Long after the bell has stopped ringing Father, with totally fixed gaze, continues to elevate the Host and Chalice for adoration, reinforcing for everyone The Real Presence.

So thanks Fr Sean, for sharing your story.....and we hope you'll come back to us for St Patrick's Day celebrations on March 17, if you are able.



which the idea of becoming a priest entered into my mind. But I put it to the back of my mind and proceeded with the plan of returning to California. However, that little thought of becoming a priest never went away, in fact it invaded my consciousness every single day for the following year, to the point that I decided that I had to do something about it, or I would never have any peace again.

Two years previous to this my sister had decided to dedicate her life to God and become a nun, so I called her and asked her what I should do as I was pretty clueless about the whole scenario. She suggested that I go to Italy where she was currently based in her training and talk to

some of the priests from the male branch of her religious family – The Institute of the Incarnate Word (aka - The IVE which signifies the order's original Spanish name, "Instituto del Verbo Encarnado "). So that I did, and spent the next six years studying in their seminary in Italy where I was ordained a priest in June of 2016.

From there I was sent to Scotland, to the "Kingdom of Fife" – just outside of Edinburgh, — where the IVE have the care of four parishes **St Bride's** in Cowdenbeath, **St Joseph's** in Kelty, **Sts Kenneth & Bernard** in Ballingry and **St Patrick's** in Lochgelly (which means God's Golden Acre). Scotland is a truly wonderful and magical place with absolutely the loveliest people, and I enjoyed my time there very much indeed. Then one day I got a phone call and was told to pack my bags and that I was now destined for Australia where the IVE had received an invitation, and so, here I am.

This coming February myself and another IVE Priest, (Fr Carlos Walker, who is currently an assistant priest in the parish of

St. Aidan's in Rooty Hill) will take up our new assignment – the parish of St Mary McKillop in the Blue Mountains and we are both really looking forward to it. This Parish is home to three church communities: St Canice's Catholic Church, Katoomba; St Bonaventure's Catholic Church, Leura & St Francis Xavier's Catholic Church, Wentworth Falls.

My time here in St Patrick's Cathedral has been an excellent introduction in acclimatising to Australia — the country, people and culture. However, it's always the people that make a place and not the place itself. At St Pat's I have met so many nice, kind, generous and caring Catholics that I began to feel at home very quickly and will very much miss this wonderful and active parish when I leave. It has been a very enriching experience for me personally and one that I will never forget. I will always consider this parish to be my first home in Australia.

On another level, I am also excited to begin the task that God has brought me here to do, and I feel better prepared for that task having spent the last three months here at St Pat's amongst you. I couldn't have asked for a better introduction to Australia and I can understand why God placed me here and wanted me to meet you all.

But the time has come now to move forward again and to continue working in God's Vineyard. And so, I thank you all for your kindness, generosity and patience during the time I spent amongst you and I encourage you to always keep advancing in both your spiritual life and personal relationship with Jesus — for as it is said: *non progression is depression*.

Take care and God bless,

Fr Sean.

Who am I?

Well, let me begin in answering that question by telling you who I was and then who I would like to be and hopefully in there somewhere will be the answer to that most difficult of questions.

I was born the fourth of ten children to loving, kind, caring and generous parents living in a small town called Galway on the west coast of Ireland. After school I completed a 4-year apprenticeship as a toolmaker and then I emigrated to the United States for work (emigration is a very common aspect in the life of the Irish). After eight years in California I returned to Ireland and during the following ten years of both work and furthering my education I graduated as a Design Engineer, an Industrial Engineer and a Secondary School Teacher of Mathematics.

It was my intention to return to the U.S. again, so before leaving I participated in a week-long retreat, known as the "Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola" during

SACRAMENTAL MATTERS UPDATE

parishioner prayer support matters for Meg Gale.



**Dear Parishioners,
Please take a prayer card and pray
for a child as they prepare for the
Sacrament of First Communion
next year.
Thank you for your ongoing prayer
support for the children and our
ministry.**

That's why, as the Sacramental Co-ordinator at St Patrick's, she displayed this poster in the Narthex last year at the beginning of the new Sacraments of Initiation programme, (see 2018 calendar dates posted below.)



More than fifty children are preparing for the Sacrament of Eucharist in June.

Meg prepared prayer cards, for each child. The cards are appropriately fronted by images of Jesus surrounded by children; while on the reverse was the name of a child with the prayer appeal, **"Please pray for, who is preparing to receive First Eucharist this year. Your prayers for the children preparing for the Sacrament of First Eucharist in the Sacramental Process will support and strengthen them as they continue the Faith Journey they began at Baptism."**

So did you select a card from the notice board? If so, keep praying for your special child. And even if you did not take a card, you can still pray for all the children!

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME 2018 CALENDAR FOR FIRST EUCHARIST

Remembering Baptism 1	7:30 pm Tuesday 6th February
Remembering Baptism 2	7:30 pm Tuesday 20th February
Remembering Baptism 3	4:30 pm Saturday 3rd March
Ritual to Remember Baptism	4:00pm Saturday 10th March

Sacrament of Eucharist 1	7:30 pm Tuesday 10th April
Sacrament of Eucharist 2	7:30 pm Tuesday 1st May
Sacrament of Eucharist 3	4:30 pm Saturday 12th May
Practice for First Eucharist	4pm Saturday 26th May
First Eucharist	9:30 am Sunday Mass 3rd June (Feast of Corpus Christi)

Legion of Mary Matters



Members ready for action and to answer any questions asked: L-R: Daisy Neroy, Michael & Geraldine Lilley, Richard Aitkins, Cecilia d'Souza, Mary Brennan & Ely Gallardo.

Morning Tea after 11am Mass on Sunday 15th last October, was an extra special one.

Legion Leaders, Mary Brennan and Geraldine and Michael Lilley had invited Auxiliary members to come along for a catch up session as well as to help inform the people at the Cloister Café about the organization's activities. Mary even made an early morning dash to get freshly-made sandwiches and cakes from Costco for the occasion.

This was a first, with the intention of holding similar information sessions in the Cloister Café in the future, to educate and enlighten people about the work of the Legion of Mary, in the hope of encouraging more volunteers to join, especially as active members.

INTERESTED IN JOINING? WANT MORE INFORMATION? You can contact

Fr Bob Bossini: 8839 8400; Geraldine Lilley: 0403 028 096 or Michael Lilley 0415 335 368
Email: legionofmary_stpatrcathedral@outlook.com



"I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me." (Phil 4:13)

"We know that all things work for good for those who love God." (Romans 8:28)

Either one of the above two quotes from Scripture always features in emails sent by Marietta & Michael Guillema about the *Live Christ Share Christ* Formation Seminars that they organize here at St Patrick's Cathedral.

The entire programme for 2018 will be soon be made available to parishioners, now that discussions with Fr Bob about the topics to be covered, have been finalized.

Recently, an excited Marietta announced some good news: "We will commence the

"Life in Christ Lenten Seminar" at Fr Peter Lamont's Holy Name of Mary Parish, Rydalmere, to run from 17 February into March."



Fr Rizzo has a special devotion to Mary so was an obvious choice as the presenter for the topic, ***Our Lady, Necessary for our Time***, held on 4th November, 2017. It was a subject that proved to be very popular, judging by the number of people who attended his talk.

Some points made:

Father spoke about the necessity of daily praying the Hail Mary; as Mother of God, Mary, is the powerful intercessor with

Her Son for the fallen human race; he also mentioned the rewards flowing from devotion to the Rosary, citing the messages Our Lady gave at Fatima, urging people to pray for the conversion of sinners. Using quotes from the Gospels he spoke of the Annunciation, and Mary's Immaculate Conception; how, as mother and heart of the Holy Family, she is patroness of mothers and a role model for Christian families.

Father's presentation was well-prepared, delivered in an engaging matter, with just the occasional touch of humour.

Editor's Note: If, like me, you were unable to attend Father Rizzo's talk, I have a video copy, kindly done for me by Michael Guillema. Contact me on 9630 4019 if you would like to borrow it to listen to Father's talk.



The Formation Sessions for Advent 2017 were held in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

The four topics relating to the Sunday Gospels — **BE ALERT, MAKE STRAIGHT THE PATHS OF THE LORD, THERE IS ONE AMONG YOU, BEHOLD YOU WILL CONCEIVE** — were treated in the style of **LECTIO DIVINA**. This involves several re-readings of the session's gospel passage letting certain messages speak to you.

Presenters were Frs Bob Bossini, George Azhakath, Sean Bradley and John Rizzo. After the final session most of the attendees were rounded up before they left for a group photo.



A PERFECT FILLER:

This photo, retrieved from the August 2017 issue of St Pat's Matters shows Fr Rizzo practising what he preaches: devotion to praying the Holy Rosary.

Here he is amongst like minded faithful on the pilgrimage walk from Our Lady of Lebanon to St Patrick's Cathedral, in commemoration of the centenary of Our Lady's Apparitions to Lucia, Francesco and Jacinta at Fatima.

OLIVIA LEE, AN EXCEPTIONAL YOUNG PARISHIONER:



Olivia has just been appointed as Event Co-ordinator for the cathedral parish by the Dean, Fr Bob Bossini. The position mainly involves co-ordinating various non-liturgical events for the parish e.g. St Patrick's Day Gathering and events connecting the parish with the wider Parramatta community e.g. St Patrick's Business Breakfast and Light Up St Pat's, to name two.

Currently, Olivia works full time for the Australian Catholic University and has been active in parish ministry for some years, — as a former leader of Credo Connect Young Adults,

which eventually blossomed into three Credo Ministry groups for adults, teens and juniors; she was also the very capable Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council until her resignation in December 2017. Her expertise in this role will definitely be missed by the council team.

About four years ago, while Fr Andrew Bass was Administrator of the Cathedral, Olivia, then a student at Campion College, was invited to write a series of articles for the Sunday Bulletin. The first was about Original Sin. That one so young could pen such an illuminating article on a very complex subject is most impressive.

With Lent upon us soon, Olivia's treatise could be useful in reflecting upon 'our inclination to sin' and our need to repent and change and turn back to God, encouraged by Christ's guarantee that Olivia has quoted near the end of her treatise.

Cleansing a Permanent Marker

Have you ever been drawn on with permanent marker?

Perhaps a friend took advantage of you sleeping and thought a monobrow enhanced your appearance?

Or perhaps your children wanted to experiment with coloured markers and five minutes later, you had a wonderful new moustache to rival that of Salvador Dali?

For those of us blessed with children, this situation is probably on the placid side of *"Stains the Children Made Today"*, but no matter how many times your child stains you, did you love them any less?

A permanent stain is always difficult to remove and it involves a lot of water and a lot of scrubbing, and even then, you can still see the remnants of that stain on your skin.

But what if such a stain was marked upon your soul?

In many ways, this is how we can view the concept of 'Original Sin': a permanent stain whose traces transcend time, leaving its remnants on all of us — by Adam's disobedience, we are all tainted as sinners.

But why should we all be implicated in something we had no hand in?

Why should I take the blame for something I did not do?

I do not deserve this.

Our Lord intimates these same questions to us when he died a death he too had no hand in.

Our Lord humbly accepted the blame for something He didn't do.

Did we deserve this?

If our call as Catholics is to walk in the same way that Christ walked, then the mystery of the transmission of original sin should be first met with our humility, and acceptance in understanding that the whole human race is in Adam.

Therefore, when our first parents sinned in wanting to be like God, without God, the stain impressed upon us mirrors this same inclination to sin — let me have my cake, and eat it too, but I don't need the baker.

Such a battle is something we all encounter in our lives, and many times the urge to sweep aside our sins and forget about them, or to beat ourselves up continuously about them, overrides the hope Christ left for us to remember Him by.

The transmission of Original Sin binds us to one another and serves to remind us that the sins we commit will allow others to judge the whole Church by our actions, but in this same way, we are also comforted in knowing that the charitable acts we do in Christ's name magnify the goodness of the entire Church — nothing we ever do is in complete isolation to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Let us always remember this, especially today, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, on the feast of the Good Shepherd where we also commemorate the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, drawing on the communal effort of the Church to come together and pray for our priests and the vocations of those of everyone around the world to be united with the calling of Christ.

Christ guarantees His love and guidance, reminding us

"Whoever enters through me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture.

A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy;

I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly".

Just as Satan stole the innocence of mankind in Eden, Christ came to steal us back to Himself and through the Sacraments, offers us a stain removal system better than Domestos — sanctifying Grace.

No stain caused by His children, impressed upon Him, can make our Lord love us any less.

Olivia Lee, 22, Campion College

more matters pertaining to gathering at St Pat's...

Hospitality Team get-together 2017...



The Hospitality Team Co-Ordinator reveals WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE

That the Hospitality Team Gathering eventuated on Saturday, 4th November is thanks to the determined efforts of long time member Nestor Montesco, pictured at right with his wife, Danilita.

From June 2017, Nestor persisted in 'pestering' for a Christmas Gathering of the Team because we had failed to have one in 2016.

He volunteered to handle all the main course catering, if people were happy to pay \$10 per person for purchase of the supplies; it was agreed that members would opt to bring salad, dessert or juice for the occasion.

Nestor very much wanted it to be a Christmas Gathering, but we managed to convince him it needed to be held outside this time frame because most people would be socially booked



up with family, friends and/or work functions. Tables arranged in a U-shape allowed people to sit both sides, enabling ease of conversation. Both courses were served buffet-style. Everyone was most appreciative of the time and effort Nestor and Danilita put into the organising and cooking of the main course.

Team members were most gratified that Fr Bob joined them for the luncheon and appreciated his words of thanks and affirmation of the group's continued commitment to the ministry of hospitality.

Most likely Nestor is already dreaming about the Team having a 2018 Gathering.

ATTENDEES:

Leonard Aaron
Andy & Carmen Cutajar
Robert Edgar
Felicia Figueredo &
daughter Kayleigh
Edward Genobili
John Gabrielian
Christina Gladwin
Peter & Beverley Horne
Chona Locsin
Esther & Rod Leon
Sesilia Lotoaniu
Ursina & Bill Lelyveld
Dioscora Mintesco
Nestor & Danilita Montesco
& son Vincent
Patti Murphy
Marian & Baldo Polizzi
Helen Quigley
Remi & Priya Remigius
Cora Salvador
Juliana Saverimuttu
Jessy Sebaratnam
Margaret Smith
Liz Sobolewski
Patria & Chris Tenido
Perla & Miguel Lombardi
(retired members)

APOLOGIES

Joanne Edgar
Noemi Herrera
Sandra Hui
Denise Mendonca
Cora Mercado
Marthe Nalletamby
Romeo Saracin
Dorothy Soh



Thank-you Luncheon for People serving in Ministry 2017

WHO WAS INVITED?

Invitations were extended to all the acolytes, altar servers, readers, extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, Catechists, Counters and other volunteers to come to a catered lunch in the Cathedral Hall..

The luncheon was held to thank all those giving of their time and talent in the service of God and St Pat's Cathedral parish community.

Thankfully, our parish secretary, Pat Preca, who was helping with the luncheon, had the foresight to snap at least one photo for the record!



The Parramatta Catenians hosted a most enjoyable and inspiring evening at Old Government House on Thursday 23rd November 2017 for the presentation of Bursary Fund cheques to three students going on a gap year Jesuit-run immersion project, which involves teaching English and Maths to disadvantaged children in South-East Asia and Micronesia.

Building on the success of the Parramatta Catenians in sponsoring 8 students on the same project in 2016, these students will commence their project in 2018. Present at the presentation was Provincial President Graham Short, and Sr Louise McKeogh, representing Bishop Vincent.

During the evening, some photos of the group of 8 Bursary Fund recipients involved in the 2016 project were shown.

The above photo taken at the presentation shows (L-R):

Graham Short, Provincial President, Bursary Fund recipients Christian Cipriano, James Dunlop and Hayden McLean, with Sr Louise McKeogh (front)

At the January meeting new member, Mel Waters, was welcomed to the Parramatta Circle by President Peter Murney.



After discussion of Circle matters, members always share a meal. It's an enjoyable time: the table of relaxed, smiling brothers at right proves this.

For information about the Catenians email me at parrasecretary@yahoo.com.au



Praying

Matters



ADVANCE AUSTRALIA FAIR!

Patti Murphy has been A Woman on a Mission for

about three years, printing out cards sporting a **PRAYER FOR AUSTRALIA** and leaving them in the Narthex for people to join in her prayer campaign for our country's welfare, environmentally, politically and spiritually.

In the light of the celebration of Australia Day on 26th January, as we go to press, it is an appropriate time to publish her prayer here.

When next you espy *Prayer for Australia* cards in the Narthex, do take one and become part of Patti's Prayer Brigade.



Prayer for Australia

Lord, this is the land we live in and love.

I am part of it and part of its people.

You made this land and gave it to us.

**Rule among our people, old and new,
so that we might never misuse this gift,
through selfishness and greed.**

**Rule our leaders and guide them
in ways of Justice and Peace.**

**Make us realise that we are called
to spread the Good News,
not only to our own people,
but also throughout the whole world.**

**So let us grow in Faith, Hope and Love
to become faithful witnesses.**

Amen



Priestly Snaps matter



Priestly singing & swinging on the part of Fr Sean and Fr George as Santa made his entrance, brought smiles to faces at the Carols Night.

Although both priests were on countdown to leaving the parish, they were determined to make the most of enjoying the days they had left.

Don't you just love Fr Sean's impish expression as he waves his candle in time to the music?

SHARING PHOTOS MATTERS:

- You are urged to fossick through all your photo albums for 'priestly' photos of any clergy who ministered to St Patrick's Parish (even from the earliest days).
- We'd love to publish them. Accompanying anecdotes would be a bonus!
- Email any photos unearthed in your treasure hunt to M. Polizzi at balmap5@bigpond.com
- Older photos can be scanned at the parish office without causing any damage.

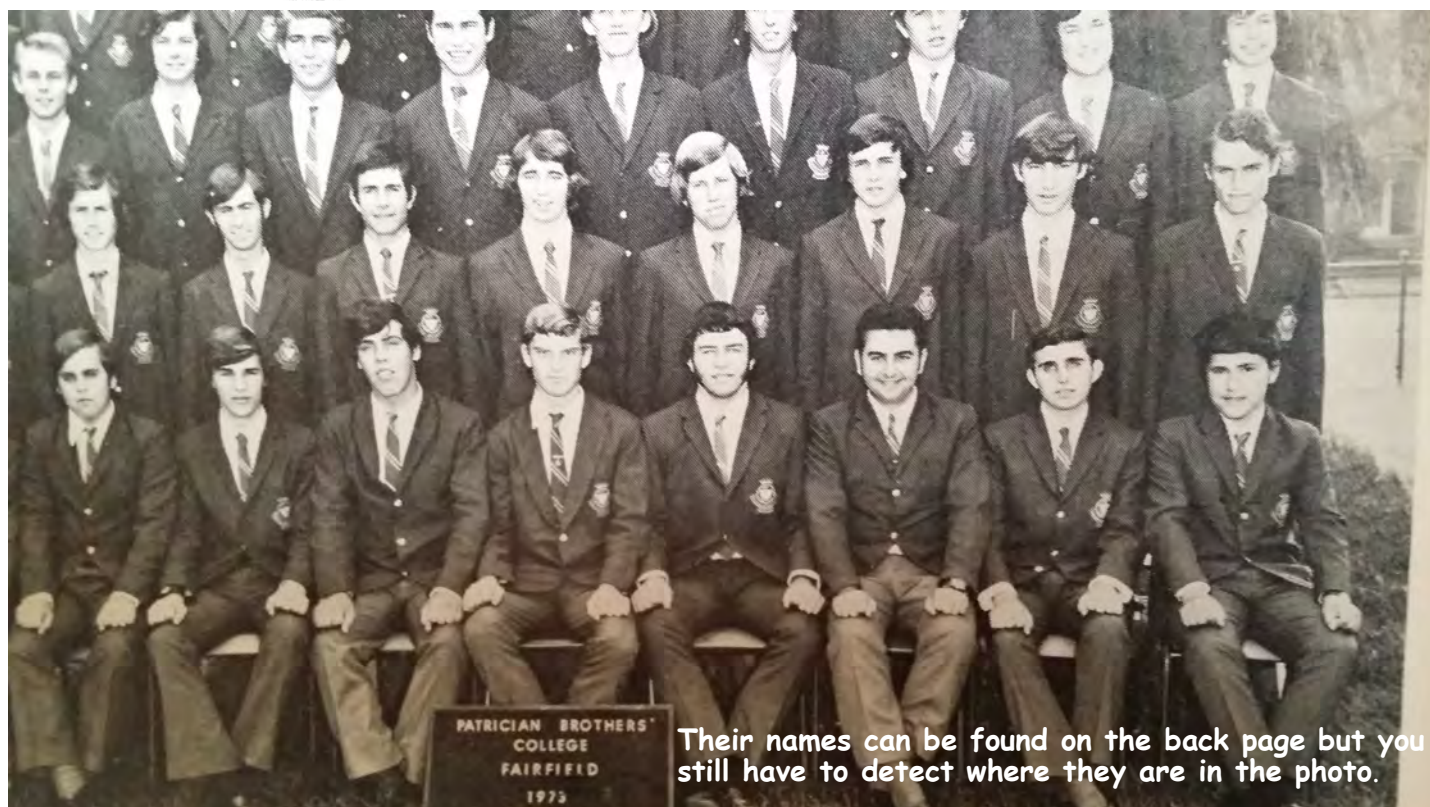
A Matter of Detection:



guessing who?

Study this photo (supplied by Marietta Guillemma) of the 1973 Form 6 students of Patrician Brothers College, Fairfield.

Amongst them are two young men destined for priesthood. Some clues to help you in your detective work—one was to become Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, the other is currently ministering to Rydalmere Parish.



Their names can be found on the back page but you still have to detect where they are in the photo.

A matter of anticipation



Well, the long wait is finally over.

On the first Sunday in February, the empty choir stalls will once more be a sea of red robes when members of the Cathedral choir return to their music ministry, hopefully fully-refreshed after a month's hiatus.

One can appreciate the break was well deserved, especially in the light of the choir's commitments during the liturgical celebrations over the Christmas period: intense practice sessions to conquer complicated musical scores and to perfect their performance. And spare a thought for the choir on Christmas Eve — a practice session would have pre-empted the Carol Service, which was followed immediately by more glorious singing during Midnight Mass; then members getting home around 2am, — maybe even later, (after having a wee festive gathering in Murphy House to wind down), — only to front up again around 9am for another practice period before singing at the Solemn Mass at 11am! Now that's true devotion, deserving of the parish community's commendation and appreciation.

That sense of anticipation will continue each Sunday as we wonder what spiritually uplifting, soul-stirring musical compositions, Bernard Kirkpatrick our Director of Music will choose to elevate Sunday's liturgical celebration.

All Glory be to God for the musical talent He has gifted to each member of the choir and their exceptionally talented Director.

A PARISHIONER'S APPEAL TO PRIESTS.

My name is Sidney Rodricks and my wife's name is Fatima. I am the one who brings my wife in the wheelchair for the 11am Mass on Sundays.

I have always been a regular church-goer in my home town in Bombay, India, and then in Auckland, New Zealand, and now in Sydney, Australia. The many changes that have taken place through all these years in the celebration of the Eucharist haven't affected me as much as these two changes which I mention below.

The singing/chanting of The Lord's Prayer: As far as I can recall, and have been taught, Jesus gave us one prayer — The Our Father, The Lord's Prayer.

Why is it that we have to chant/sing the Lord's Prayer during Solemn Mass? I have been to many churches and so many of them have a different tune to this Prayer. I just stand still and listen but am saddened that so many of us do not participate in it as we do not know the tune or are quite happy to listen to the tune for its catchy overtures. So the only prayer that Jesus taught us goes a-begging. I would like the Lord's Prayer to be said without any chanting/singing because everyone in the congregation should take part as our belief in this important part of the Eucharist celebration.

The other thing that I do not agree with during Holy Mass is that the choir and sometimes the celebrant, use the Latin version of the Gloria and the Lord have mercy (Gloria in Excelsis Deo, & Kyrie Eleison). For lay people, especially teenagers and young children, to actively participate and understand what we are say-

ing and to make the Holy Mass more meaningful to them, why can't we just use the language spoken in that country, so that we all understand and not show off with some foreign language?

It reminds me of when I lived in New Zealand, I used to participate in the community Rosary. Once a particular island community insisted on saying the Rosary in Latin. I approached the parish priest and requested that that community understand the meaning of full participation of the Rosary where everyone could recite the complete Rosary and not just look in bewilderment at such recitation in Latin and wonder at other people's superior knowledge of a foreign language.

I therefore ask our celebrants to please consider giving these matters some serious thought so as to make the Eucharist celebration more meaningful for everyone present.

Thank you

Sidney Rodricks

If anyone would like to put forward their views on the subject of Sidney's article, we would be happy to post your comments in the next issue of St Pat's Matters

*Send them to M. Polizzi . Email_balmap5@bigpond.com
Or leave them at the Parish Office marked 'For St Pat's Matters'.*

A MATTER OF DETECTION:

The priests are the Dean, Fr Bob Bossini and Fr Peter Lamont, a former assistant priest at St Pat's many years ago. Can you pick them in the photo on the previous page?

We reserve the right to edit, omit or censor any article submitted for publication.