

MUSTARD SEED

CHRISTMAS 2010
KENNINGTON CATHOLIC PARISH

WELCOME TO KENNINGTON CATHOLIC PARISH

COME ALONG AND JOIN THE COMMUNITY IN PRAYER!

Parish Priest	Father Joe Taylor
Assistant Priest	Father Peter-John Neivandt
Pastoral Associates	Mrs Angela Stark and Mrs Torie Waight
Zone Coordinator	Mrs Anne Hubbard
St. Therese's School Principal	Mr Matthew Mann (5443 3200)
St. Francis of the Fields Principal	Mr Tim Moloney (5439 3191)
Hall Bookings & Caretaker	Mr Geoff Thompson (0407 840 346)

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

St Therese's Kennington	Saturday (vigil)	6.00 pm
	Sunday	10.30 am
Poor Clares' Monastery	Sunday	7.30 am
St Joseph's, Axe Creek	Sunday	9.00 am
St Mary's, Axedale	Sunday	10.30 am

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

Poor Clares'	Monday-Saturday	8.00 am
St. Therese's	Tuesday-Thursday	9.00 am
	Friday	9.15 am

ROSARY

Our Lady's Chapel, St. Therese's	Thursday	1.30 pm
	Saturday	9.00 am
Poor Clares' (Benediction at 5.30 PM)	Sunday	5.00 pm

The Mustard Seed was edited by Joe Edmonds, designed by Daniel Giles and printed at the Parish Office. Many thanks to Anne Hubbard and the team who prepared and delivered it.

Many thanks also to all contributors for their time, wisdom and willingness to share.

Future contributions can be made at therese@iinet.net.au.

Visit the Parish Website (www.kenningtoncatholicparish.com) for the Mustard Seed online and extended versions of readers' contributions.

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioner,

I was visiting my mother in St John of God hospital recently when the communion minister arrived with communion for my mum. Once again it was a great inspiration to see my mother in prayer.

It reminded me of the great joy that parents have when they teach their children to pray. To be able to connect children to the living God is awesome; it gives them the greatest foundation for their lives. It is not just a joy but is also the God-given responsibility that parents take on when they present their children for Baptism.

Parents also have the role of making sure that their children celebrate their other sacraments of initiation: Confirmation and First Eucharist. We are so blessed in our parish to have such committed people who help you, the parents, to prepare your children for sacraments.

It has been a big year for the Australian church with the people of Australia presenting a saint to the world. It was a sacred moment for me to be there in Rome in St Peter's square (in the third row) to hear Pope Benedict XVI proclaim her a saint.

On the local front, a special thanks to all those who made or renewed their financial commitment to the parish via our Thanksgiving Program this year. It is always a sacrifice, but one which gives life to our parish.

Have a Peace-filled Christmas.

Fr. Joseph Taylor
Parish Priest

FROM THE PASTORAL COUNCIL



Above: Fr. Joe celebrating his 60th Birthday with Rob Galea, now Fr. Rob Galea

What an exciting time in our diocese! Celebrations are already underway leading up to the historic canonisation of Australia's first Saint, Blessed Mary McKillop, beginning with a re-enactment at St. Francis of The Fields school led by Sr Geraldine Larkins. Thanks to the tireless efforts of one of our Pastoral Associates, Angela, a pilgrimage led by Bishop Joe Grech is about to leave for Rome to be present at this significant event on October 17th. Around 80 people will attend Robert Galea's ordination to the Priesthood in Malta on November 5th.

The year has seen Torie lead us in the Sacramental Program where 110 students made their Confirmation and First Eucharist in a beautiful ceremony at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. As a parent I experienced first-hand the depth and range of our talented Parishioners who so graciously shared their gifts in such a beautiful way as they led the formation. Thank you to all involved.

Earlier this year, Br Loughlan Sofield S.T. led the Parish Pastoral Councils from across our diocese with emphasis on the importance of each recognising our talents and offering these back to God. Rightly, he emphasised the vital link between the Parish and the schools.

We are working through a series of initiatives to foster this significant link. Did you know, for example, that it is the Parish which purchases land for Capital Works in our schools? Similarly, the Parish will finance the renovation of the Hall at St Therese's. We have already developed extra parking for our less mobile Parishioners.

We are in an enviable period of rapid growth with many young families entering our Parish particularly at Axe Creek. This has necessitated the development and extension of the Church. The Parish is contributing \$600,000 towards this project which of course will be borrowed and repaid over time. The Parish, under the leadership of Mrs. Kerri Bowman, has the daunting task of raising \$150,000 to support this project.

We have discussed and initiated the recommendations of the *Towards Healing* document outlining a pathway should concerns be raised. I encourage all Parishioners to read this document. In short, the document outlines the "Principles and procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia".

We have also celebrated the 60th birthday of our beloved Fr Joe Taylor in what seemed like a week of celebrations.

This is your Parish, wherever you connect in your faith journey. God calls each of us to recognise our gifts. Indeed, everything that we have and everything we are is a gift from God. We are truly blessed with our two wonderful Priests and the passionate vision of Bishop Joe. They cannot do it alone. We are all called to serve and to make a difference.

We should, as a Parish, be proud of our many achievements. In doing so, we recognise our individual gifts and offer them, forming and enhancing our warm, generous and welcoming community.

I humbly thank the incredibly generous team that make up our Council. We ask for your prayers and welcome any input you may have. Equally so, I thank all who minister so passionately and tirelessly. Your efforts do not go unnoticed.

God bless,

Michael Black
Chair of the Parish Pastoral Council

PASTORAL ASSOCIATE'S REPORT

I have just completed my first 12 months in the position as a Pastoral Associate for Kennington Catholic Parish. I have certainly had a varied role in this position. I have met some truly fantastic people who have all been so willing to assist me. I can attribute the success of my work to the parishioners who have been so keen to assist in reaching out to families in our community and hence making the Parish stronger.

I have worked with a number of school families through the Sacramental program which I thoroughly enjoyed. I look forward to sharing this journey with a new group of children early next year. The children will be celebrating their sacraments in their parish communities next year. The young children will welcome your prayers, thoughts and interest in their spiritual development.

In the coming weeks I will be meeting several of the elderly parishioners attending the Anointing Mass and celebrating Christmas lunch with St Therese's students. I enjoy planning events such as this Mass/lunch with the help of Hillary Bottcher, (Catholic Identity Co-coordinator at St. Therese's P.S.) and ladies who assist with the catering. The partnership between the school and the Parish is very active and healthy.

The two Godstart Masses are taking place on the last two Sundays of November at St Therese's and St Joseph's. I have written to 195 families who have had one or more children baptized in our parish over the past four years. The aim of the program is to make God important in their lives. The families will be given a number of activities that will support them in enriching their faith and developing the faith of their children. The babies/toddlers/preschoolers will renew their baptismal promises and participate in some Godly play during Children's Liturgy.

My position has enabled me to work with many different groups within the parish and utilise a number of parishioners' areas of expertise. I still marvel at the way Father Joe always has someone for the job. I have asked him on various occasions for a contact to assist with moving chairs, making lunch or someone to coordinate the music and within minutes I have several names and numbers to call.

Thank you to all the parishioners and office staff who have assisted me through my first year. You have all been very kind and have shown considerable patience to me and my gorgeous children. I have learnt a great deal and know next year will be easier as I improve upon 2010. Merry Christmas and I look forward to working with you all in 2011.

Regards,

Torie Waight
Pastoral Associate

ANAGRAM CROSSWORD

Instead of clues to solve this crossword, you are given anagrams of the answers. Find a 9-letter word from the letters of the two or three shorter words each time.

1				2				3
4								
5								

ACROSS

1. Tram Canes
4. Magi Fined
5. Seedy Tray

DOWN

1. Money List
2. Agio Brine
3. My Red Taxi

SOLUTION

V	A	D	R	E	T	S	E	V
M			N					T
R			I					I
E			G					N
D	E	I	F	I	N	G	G	M
I			R					E
X			O					L
A			B					O
T	N	E	M	A	R	A	C	S

A REFLECTION ON THE CRIB

Sometimes, I think, we are so familiar with the liturgical seasons of the Church that they become little more than an annual round of events to mark off on a calendar. It's not that we don't participate properly in the rituals attending them, or do not have some sense of their importance. Rather, the astounding nature of the claims that they make seems to become just a bit 'old hat'. The Crib, the Cross, the Easter Fire – all of them stand in danger of becoming just part of an annual round. Worse still, they tend to get a bit mixed up with Santa Claus, Christmas trees, Easter bunnies and Easter eggs.

From time to time I find myself needing to stand off in some imagined 'outside', as it were, and take stock of what I believe.

The tiny infant in that crib represents an actual child born two thousand years ago. At the same time as being a helpless infant, he is also the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity and, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, the author of all that exists. Not just all that exists to our minds but all **possible** existence – every manifestation of being. Think about that! This all-powerful, eternal and limitless God, in the person of Jesus Christ, also became a mortal human and suffered the most horrific and ignominious death ENTIRELY FOR US. Three days later, he arose from the dead and appeared to his disciples not as some sort of tenuous spirit but fully embodied.

WHAT IS 'GLORY' AND WHY IS IT UNIQUELY APPLICABLE TO THAT INFANT IN THE CRIB?

Above most crib scenes, it is customary to have a sort of banner, usually held up by a brace of angels, on which are printed the words *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* or *Glory to God in the Highest*. Again, it's easy for me to read these familiar words without grasping the full import of their meaning. The words come from St. Luke's account of the Nativity where

they are the words of praise spoken or sung by the angels. What is 'glory' and why is it uniquely applicable to that infant in the crib? The more I reflect upon the word, or delve into dictionary definitions, the more difficult it is to explain. It is one of those words which we all think we know until we are forced to give an account to someone else. How does glory differ from splendour, beauty or magnificence? It seems to involve all of those terms but, in addition, it connotes a sense of awe before some power quite beyond our grasp.

That glory, of which the angels sang at Christ's birth, is the source of all that is good, true, and beautiful – what the theologians call the 'transcendentals of Being'. It is the closest we can come to giving an account of the manifestation of God's presence to us. One of the twentieth century's greatest Catholic theologians, Hans Urs von Balthasar, attempted to describe this glory in what was to become his *magnum opus* [*The Glory of the Lord*]. It took him seven large volumes and ranged over the entire history of Western culture, from Homeric Greece to our own age. Even so, he was forced to admit that 'glory' is a word whose meaning we cannot fully grasp.

The hymn of praise given by the angels at Christ's birth has, of course, given us the *Gloria* in the Mass. This and other great hymns or prayers of praise are sometimes called doxologies. The word doxology has a very interesting history. *Doxa* is a Greek word originally meaning 'belief' but some two hundred years before Christ's birth it was used in the first Greek translation of the Old Testament (the Septuagint) to represent the Hebrew word for 'glory'. Hence our use of the term 'doxology'.

And so, the next time you hear someone say, 'it's nice to have a Crib Scene for the children', you might reflect that, before its stupendous significance, all of us are but little children. And the next time someone says to you 'isn't that a glorious sunset', you might respond by noting that it is only glorious insofar as it is an image of God's glory.

Brian Coman

SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP

Calling all those who want to *make a difference* in the lives of others, particularly the least fortunate in our world! If you think it is important that everyone receives a fair go, whether in Bendigo, Australia, or in other countries around the world, regardless of their financial standing, cultural background or religion, then **this is the group for you!**

After helping Fr Joe lead the Social Justice Group in and around our Parish for the past few years, it is time for me to move into the background and let someone else take the lead. I will still be involved in the group but we are **looking for a new leader** to take us forward to infinity and beyond! It is a rewarding and fulfilling role that requires compassion for those in need, motivation and a few organisational skills. It may even be a role that **two people** would like to tackle together. If there just happens to be more people who want to join the Social Justice Group, but not lead it, then that would also be great. Here is a brief role description of what the new leader would be in for:

- Working closely with Kerry Stone (CARITAS representative for the Sandhurst Diocese) – Kerry gives you all the good ideas!
- Attending a Parish Reps' CARITAS meeting 3 times a year (to collect ideas and materials for Project Compassion, Mission Sunday, etc) – run by Kerry and Fr. Rom at St Kilian's.
- Coordinating with Fr Joe on bulletin notices, noticeboard displays and emergency appeals.

There are a number of other smaller assignments but the idea is to spread the jobs around and share the fun.

We have been involved in fantastic work this year and, once again, this Parish has done itself proud. An enormous \$8,300 was raised for Project Compassion; we were part of the incredible Millenium Development

Goals interactive exhibition in the Town Hall and people have responded generously to the Pakistan emergency and other appeals. We have a very compassionate community and I'd like to say thanks for your support on behalf of the people for whom we aim to help build better lives.

So, if you feel called to help, then jump on board! Please feel free to call the Parish Centre or me (**0409 436 888**) to further discuss any details. It is a great thing to be involved in!

Helen McCarthy

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE

St. Therese's Conference would like to thank parishioners from St. Kennington Catholic Parish for the generous assistance given over the past year in the way of cash and food donations *via* St. Therese's and St. Francis of the Fields Schools. This assistance helps the local Conference meet ever-increasing calls for assistance.

The Parish has also assisted in the past with Children's Christmas gifts to put with Christmas Hampers for the needy in our area and will again appeal to parishioners for Children's Gifts this Christmas.

The Giving Tree will be in the welcoming area from the **29th of November** to the **14th of December**. We will have a number of tags seeking gifts for Children of various ages. If you are able to assist by taking a tag and returning that tag with a present to put under the tree, the Society would be most grateful.

Many thanks,

St. Vincent De Paul Society,
St. Therese's Conference

THE PISCATORS FROM COBRAM

For the last fifteen years, the Knights of the Southern Cross have held an annual spiritual retreat on the Murray – a Piscatorial Retreat led by Brother Len Fitzgerald. Under the inspiration of their current spiritual director and pastor, our fearless Piscators have provided this account of one of their more memorable encounters with the unknown.

There was movement on the river for the word had passed around

That the famous cod from Yarrawonga had got away
And had joined the bloody European carp –
he weighed three hundred pounds, or was it four!!!
So all the cracks had gathered to the fray; all the tried
and noted piscators from the rivers near and far
Had gathered at Bourke's Beach over night
For the piscators love a fishing challenge
And their outboard motors rumble with delight.

**There was Fitzgerald, who made his pile when the Maggies
won the premiership,**

The old man with his hair as white as snow
But few could fish beside him when his fire was fairly up –
He would fish wherever man and boat could go.
And Fr Joe of The Overflow came down to lend a hand
No better fisherman ever held the rod;
For never cod could beat him while the rod and reel would stand,
He learnt to fish on Murray River paddle steamers down Echuca way.

And one was there, a stripling – Ian Bell, by name,

with a smart and snazzy boat
Three parts tinnie at least – with a touch of hovercraft thrown in,
The type that are by river piscators admired.
But oh so slight! One could doubt its power to stay,
And the old man said "That boat will never do
for a river challenge such as this.
Mate, you better stay away."
So he waited sad and wistful: only Frankie Graham stood his friend –

"Both he and boat are river wise – he hails from Cobram -
Where the river current is twice as fast and the rapids twice as fierce,
I'll warrant he'll be with us when he's wanted at the end."

So he went. Excited his outboard motor throttled up!

They found the fish near a sandbank by the northern shore –
And startled, they raced away downstream!
The old man gave his orders: "Boys, go for them from the jump –
no use for fancy driving now –
And Fr Joe, you must wheel them, try and wheel them to the left,
Drive boldly man and never fear the river snags
For no one will head them if they near the Yarrawonga weir!"

So Fr Joe drove to wheel them – on the wing –

Where the best and boldest drivers take their place –
But beneath his skimming boat they dived and to the weir they raced.
With fast the tinnies roaring in feverish pursuit.
But all in vain.

For the old man said "We may bid the cod good day".

Even Fr Joe cut his motor's revs

But the Piscador from Cobram gunned the turbo charger to the boards
And o'er the weir he sailed
Downwards - steeply at first - but he never shifted in his seat.
And then the hovercraft motor fired
And his tinnie gently met the surging, raging water
at the bottom of that terrible descent.

Then he glimpsed the cod ahead and the watchers on the weir saw him

Flick a mighty cast and the cod rose to greet the writhing bogong moths.
They lost him for moment where the river gently bends
But a final glimpse revealed a mighty battle –
The cod jerking forward, then left and right as the piscador's seat
swivelled with delight – until cowed and beaten, the cod was netted,
and to the bank was drawn.

And at Bourke's Beach where the reed beds sweep and sway

And the camp fire gleams as the river ambles by,
And amid the flowing reds and whites at Barney's Picnic site
The Piscador from Cobram is a household name today
And the piscators tell the story of that daring drive.

Len Fitzgerald with apologies to Banjo Patterson

BENDIGO YOUTH MINISTRY



Above: A life night held after a youth mass

Young people have their own unique association with the Church in Bendigo. They meet for worship or to share in faith, friendship and fun together in the following activities:

- Youth Masses and Life Nights
- Retreats
- Beni's
- Easter Liturgies
- Planning for World Youth Day 2011 in Madrid

"The emphasis is on building community and strengthening our faith to meet the challenges young people face today. There's loads of fun and social gatherings all aimed at greater faith understanding, social interaction and zeal for the gospel message."

Check out the parish website for details of these activities and information about World Youth Day 2011 Madrid.

(www.kenningtoncatholicparish.com).

Better still contact our Youth Ministers (Volunteers) Richard Murphy (0418 511 791) or Joan Freeman (0409 434 369).

EXTENDED VERSION OF ARTICLE AVAILABLE ON PARISH WEBSITE
(WWW.KENNINGTONCATHOLICPARISH.COM)

BY THE CREEK

HAPPENINGS AT ST. JOSEPH'S, AXE CREEK

The Building Committee has again made giant strides over the last twelve months in preparation for the proposed extensions to St. Joseph's. They have appointed e+architecture as consulting architects; met regularly to discuss and adjust plans; welcomed new members to the committee; visited recently-renovated churches for ideas; kept the community fully informed with updates at Mass; conducted soil testing; started the planning application process and established a fundraising committee.

The Fundraising Committee, which meets regularly, is made up of people each with their own gifts and sense of fun. So far this year there's been a trivia night, regular cuppa 'n' coffee/bazaars, raffles, stalls and cabarets. They've sold wine, knitted jumpers and made jams, jellies and muffins. People have spent time sewing and selling raffle tickets, lucky numbers and much more. A Strathfieldsaye Community Enterprise grant of \$4,444 was used to furnish the portable. The Monster Auction, Election Day stall and Christmas Raffle are well in hand.

Roger Barbetti, the Chairperson of the Building Committee, reports that there is more planning and fundraising to come prior to the projected construction start date, some time in 2011. "Thank you again for the continued and anticipated support from the greater Parish as we continue on with this exciting and challenging project."

Kerri Bowman, the Chairperson of the Fundraising Committee, says that they have raised \$25,000 so far of the target amount which they have set of \$150,000. She is full of praise for the efforts of her committee and the generosity of parishioners and donors. "We also recognize the amazing support of the priests of our Parish who have attended and promoted our cause tirelessly. It has been a busy year and our efforts have been rewarded."

FROM THE TOP OF THE HILL

HAPPENINGS AT ST. MARY'S, AXEDALE

How often we say, "How fast time goes." Once again we are approaching the Christmas season. We have had drought, fires, floods, grasshoppers, yet the constant is hope and trust. We can be so low, lost and despairing but always, that glimmer of hope is just under the surface. We look to our neighbours – New Zealand, Pakistan, China and the Philippines with earthquakes, floods and famine. So we thank God that we are not suffering as they are.

We continue to hope that things will improve, that we as people of faith will respond to needs as they are many. We pray and hope their circumstances will improve. Each day of our lives as we greet the morning we hope for the things we need and trust that somehow we will achieve something good this day. What do we hope for? What do we trust in?

Jesus trusted his friends; he hoped they would be loyal. Do we trust our friends? And are we loyal? As we approach this joyful season I hope for many things such as health for family, friends and strangers and that those who hunger will be given hope by way of food and clean water. I hope we see all the possible good in each other and not look for the weaknesses. I hope we learn to share and not count the cost – for in giving we truly receive. I trust my God to take care of all these wishes. I know He will if I do my part.

I thank God at this special time for new parishioners to Axedale. We are rather small in numbers but I trust God will help us grow in numbers and in faith. We trust that Daniel Coman who received the sacraments this year will grow in faith.

I hope that all the young trees and plants recently planted will grow strong and give shelter to the birds of the air and beauty to our place of worship.

We thank God for Molly and Leo who recently turned 90. We have so much to thank God for. May God bless our parish and may we all truly be people of goodwill and peace.

I hope Frs. Joe and Peter-John will have good health and continue to share their love and life with us all. I hope Axe Creek will see their extensions come to life as we hear the chorus, "How time flies". It seems like only yesterday that we started all this work. I trust all this comes to pass and I believe it will if we trust God and do our part.

Joan Purcell



Clockwise from left: Facade of St. Mary's, Axedale; Stained glass window at St. Mary's; Rear of St. Mary's

'FROM LITTLE THINGS, BIG THINGS GROW'

ST. FRANCIS OF THE FIELDS P.S.

When I was first appointed principal of St. Francis of the Fields Primary School I took time one weekend to walk around the school and try to feel the “soul” of the place.

I went into each classroom, “The Shed”, along the walking tracks and around the paddocks. I marvelled at the Kennington Parish and Catholic Education Sandhurst (C.E.O.) for having people with the foresight and courage to create these beautiful facilities.

I also admired the work (still do) of my predecessor, Mr. John Hermans, who truly gave of himself to create a Catholic School community. The legacy he created with the Strathfieldsaye community will live on for hundreds of years (more, I hope).

It was during this walk that I noticed an “honour stone” stating, “from little things, big things grow...”. I immediately thought of the parable of the mustard seed (Mark 4:30-32) and also Paul Kelly’s famous song about Vincent Lingiari’s struggle for land rights and reconciliation. From the site of the stone (near the front door of the school) I could see the statue of St. Francis of Assisi standing proudly reminding me that our school community continues to be charged with spreading his message of sustainable living.

I never imagined then that the school would grow so quickly – both in enrolments and buildings. The Building Education Revolution stimulus package along with the generosity of the Allison Estate and C.E.O. ensured that St. Francis of the Fields has been gifted with exceptional facilities which the community willingly utilises.

In this time of rapid growth, the School Board and I have been cognizant of maximising the “mighty dollar” to ensure excellent facilities. Over the past 15 years the Kennington Parish has been extraordinarily generous financially, as they have helped make the original loan repayments. Once these were completed the Parish then helped with the

repayments for the loan required to support stage one of the building development. The Kennington Parish would be one of the last, if not the last, parish in the Sandhurst Diocese to cease its financial support of its parish schools – an extraordinary achievement considering the pressures of “growing a church” for the Axe Creek community.

It is time we acknowledged that the Kennington Parish needs our school’s support. We are blessed in being part of a strong parish with wonderful priests who constantly seek to enrich our faith journeys. Fr. Joe and Fr. Peter-John regularly support our school with Masses, Reconciliation, Blessing of the Animals and pastoral care that often flies beneath the radar.

The recent Stewardship Program helped us to consider how we use our gifts and talents for the benefit of others in particular, our Parish. As the Kennington Parish vision and mission states: “We believe that **community** and worship are at the heart of Christian experience”.

As a community we are charged with responsibility for our parish. At recent School Board meetings we have learnt that the Parish is considering levying school families so that the Kennington Parish can continue to operate effectively now and into the future.

It is vital that the parish and school communities remain united and clearly communicate with each other how we can best support each other so that “from little things, big things grow.”

To aid the communication I propose that:

- Representatives of the Parish Council and School Board form a subcommittee to develop a joint proposal to bring the Parish and the schools closer together.
- The two School Boards meet with the Parish Council and the Parish Finance Team representatives twice each year to consider how we can each work for the overall benefit of our community.

I look forward to continuing to serve the Parish and School communities that I am part of.

Tim Moloney
Principal, St. Francis of the Fields P.S.

'EVERYTHING OLD IS NEW AGAIN'

ST. THERESE'S P.S.

St. Therese's School has undergone a physical transformation over the past two years thanks to government funding.

Where once the Thomas' house stood on Clarke Street there is now a modern building, amphitheatre and surrounds. Bendigo has View Street as its arts precinct, St. Therese's School now has its own Expressive Arts Centre. At present, the building is being used for general purpose classrooms, but next year, when all the works are completed, the students will be able to stimulate their aesthetic intelligence through the visual and performing arts.

After the Arts Centre was completed, work started on the refurbishment and extension of classroom blocks along Clarke Street including the Michael McCarthy Wing. This development will house modern classrooms which incorporate the latest design elements for learning in the 21st century. The students will be treated to learning spaces that are flexible and purposeful, catering for their different learning styles.

The other major change to the outlook of the school has been the McMillan Street classroom block. Most parishioners would be familiar with the building as the old cream brick classrooms next to the church, the second of the original buildings built back in 1961. Though close to fifty years old, the block is still very structurally sound and the classrooms very large. The costs of refurbishment certainly outweighs the costs involved in rebuilding. So through federal government funding, we were able to render and paint the exterior, install modern windows, replace the lino and install new cabinetry in the classrooms.

This facelift to the school and addition of modern classroom facilities has given the school new life. More importantly it means we can continue to provide the latest learning environment for the next generation to learn, live and grow in a Christ-centered community.

Matthew Mann
Principal, St. Therese's P.S.

PRIMARY SCHOOL REFLECTIONS

BY GRADE SIX STUDENTS OF ST. THERESE'S P.S.

For almost seven years now, I have been here and many things have happened. Students have left, new students have come, old buildings were knocked down and new buildings were built.

Yet the school has stayed the same. The students are still friends, teachers are still happy enough to make it through the day and the staff happily munch away at the biscuits in the staff room.

Also, during the year, there are multiple camps, outings, excursions and carnivals thanks to Mr. Mann, the staff, teachers and parents. This year the senior unit visited Harrierville for their yearly camp and had a fantastic time.

As well as all that, the grade fives and sixes are able to participate in the RACV Energy Breakthrough and Tournament of Minds. Unfortunately, this year along with many others, I must leave this school. I will miss it very much.

Tully Simpson

St. Therese's Primary School was a big step following crèche and kindergarten. We have learnt many new things that we can take on board throughout our lifetime.

Now that we are in our last year, our time at St. Therese's is coming to an end. We are glad to have been students here. From learning our 123s and ABCs in Prep to creating slideshows on the computer in Grade Six, it is amazing to think of all we have learnt and experienced. We have had many ups and downs but St. Therese's has been the best school for us.

Our time here has been an extraordinary ride. Unfortunately, it is about to come to a stop. We would like to thank all the people that have helped us on our journey.

Stephanie Mann and Chloe Smith

Our time at St. Therese's has been memorable. We started here in Prep and that was very exciting yet also frightening. But all that changed when we made new friends, met the wonderful teachers and started our school education.

There have been many great times that will be remembered for a long time. Some of our best memories are starting school, going on excursions, our first camp, athletics/swimming carnivals, making our sacraments and lots more.

The teachers have been very warm and welcoming since we first arrived. They helped us learn things that we thought we'd never be able to and helped us when we needed it.

Our time here has been incredible and we are sad to be leaving but excited for the next stage in our learning – secondary school. We may be leaving St. Therese's but we will always keep what we've learnt close to our hearts.

Hannah Showell and Olivia Marchingo

I have enjoyed my last year at St. Therese's so much. We've done so many fantastic things that I will remember for a long time. In the senior unit this year, we have explored many things like immigration, Australian history, the water cycle and different religions. We also had Tournament of Minds, the RACV Energy Breakthrough, swimming/athletics carnivals, the mini fete, gym, excursions and countless other fun things! But as this is my last year of primary school, I'm leaving and I will miss it greatly.

Miranda Livingstone

Wow! I've spent almost seven years of schooling at St. Therese's. In prep, I learnt how to read and write but now in grade six, I am getting ready for high school. Throughout my years at St. Therese's, I have enjoyed camps, excursions, sports carnivals and making new friends. I've gained a lot at St. Therese's such as academic abilities, social skills and how to make new friends! I will miss St. Therese's.

Justine Whaley

PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUPS



Above: Passionist Family Group celebrating Irish night

Photo courtesy of Peter and Margaret Harrison

Family Groups were founded by a Passionist priest, Fr Peter McGrath CP, in Sydney during 1972 and now exist in around 450 parishes in Australia, New Zealand, USA, England, Scotland and Ireland.

Their aim is for parishioners to get together and know each other, to share each others' joys and sadness and to feel that they belong.

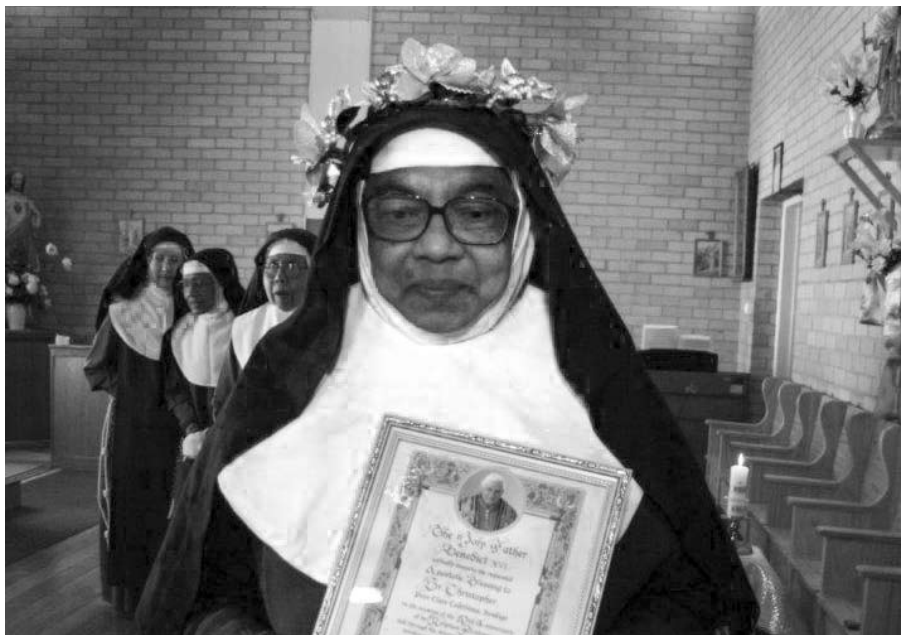
Are you a member of a Family Group?

Would you like to join a Family Group?

You would be most welcome to attend a monthly social outing and benefit personally from being in a Group.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT
PETER AND MARGARET HARRISON ON 5443 3996

OUR POOR CLARES FROM THE MONASTERY OF THE HOLY GHOST



Above: Sr. Mary Christopher on the Golden Jubilee of her Profession, August 2009
Photo courtesy of Liesbeth Van Emmerick

I am indeed humbled to be asked to submit something for the *Mustard Seed*. So I thought, what is close to my heart since being here in the parish of Kennington? And I would have to say the absolute joy and comfort in being able to offer Holy Mass for the Poor Clares at their Monastery of the Holy Ghost.

They are for me a great comfort and solace especially when things perhaps get the better of one. Their chapel, serenity and words of counsel are such a blessing. I am amazed at how little many of our parish know about our dear sisters, so I thought I would ask them to submit something. They give us much to ponder and pray about, therefore I quote 'our' dear sisters.

"Our Community arrived in Australia from the Monastery of Mary Immaculate Tewatte, Sri Lanka on June 18th 1965, for His Lordship, Bishop Bernard D Stewart. D.D., who had accepted us into this Diocese. It was the fulfilment of one of his dearest wishes: the presence of a Contemplative House of Prayer. As he puts it – 'No diocese is complete without a Cloistered Community to pray for its Bishop, Priests and people.'

From the original eight members we are now five in number, each unique, each needed, from different backgrounds and ethnic groups, brought together in God's mysterious Providence to be members of this Community. Our daily horarium includes Holy mass, Divine Office, times of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, preparing altar breads for our diocese, making altar linen, household chores, gardening and a time for Community recreation. As in all Poor Clare Communities, prayer intentions reach us by post, phone, local, interstate and overseas, and parlour visits – 'taking the whole world in our embrace and begging for all peoples without distinction', as we pray our Sunday Prayer of Reparation. We realise we are, however insignificant, a cog in God's universal plan to draw all things to Himself. We pray, together with our 18,000 sisters spread throughout the world, that 'over the earth, our prayer and praise may never cease.' During these past 45 years in Bendigo we have much to be grateful for – for the many, many gifts of help big and small we have received from our friends and benefactors. Our eternal thanks go to one and all.

In Poor Clare terms: '*May God Reward You*'"

In closing, may I say that we in our parish should know how much the dear sisters do, so that we can support them in prayer and other ways too. May God continue to bless them now and in the future, as there is no future without prayer.

A week without prayer makes one weak!

Mother Abbess and Sisters of the Poor Clare Monastery
Prologue and postlogue by Fr. Peter-John Neivandt. Assistant Priest.

MASS AT THE POOR CLARES' IS HELD AT 8 AM (MON-SAT)
AND 7:30 AM (SUN) IN THE CHAPEL.

ROSARY IS RECITED AT THE POOR CLARES' CHAPEL AT
5.00 PM ON SUNDAYS FOLLOWED BY BENEDICTION
OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AT 5.30 PM.

ROBERT GALEA'S ORDINATION

Robert Galea was ordained to the priesthood in Malta by the Archbishop of Malta, Archbishop Mgr. Paul Cremonese OP. It was a wonderful liturgy we were privileged to share in.

The church was packed to capacity. There were four bishops and numerous clergy on the altar and a contingent of 60 to 80 pilgrims and well-wishers from Australia amongst the congregation. Robert was beaming and his parents and family were so proud of him.

The music was wonderful and included some of Robert's songs. The ceremony was in Maltese but we had no difficulty following everything.

Father Robert celebrated the great occasion of his first Mass (Prima Misse), the Mass of Thanksgiving, on Saturday evening at his Parish Church, which was celebrated in English. There were two groups of musicians, the Latin choir and members of Robert's original band who sang contemporary-style songs. It was both beautiful and enlivening. The local bishop was charming and made us feel very welcome. Bishop Joe preached a beautiful homily seemingly speaking to us individually about the greatness of God's love. The Mass lasted two hours and Robert spent another hour in giving his first blessings.

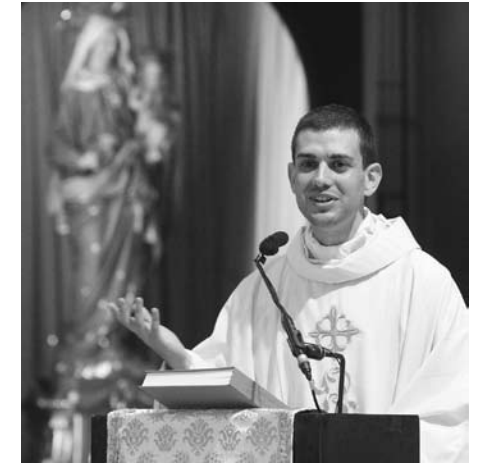
The Mass touched us all. Robert thanked us for supporting him along the way to his ordination. It was particularly beautiful the way he acknowledged the presence of those who had travelled from Sandhurst, a moment when his Maltese heritage connected with the affection of those out here who have embraced him so overwhelmingly.

What a remarkable man and gift to us all. His happiness is infectious and was evident at the reception that followed. Robert's family sought us out and expressed their gratitude for taking Robert to our hearts and coming to Malta for his ordination.

This was the crowning joy of my pilgrimage.

Angela Stark

EXTENDED VERSION OF ARTICLE AVAILABLE ON PARISH WEBSITE
(WWW.KENNINGTONCATHOLICPARISH.COM)



This page: Scenes from Robert Galea's ordination to the priesthood

Photos (top left & right) courtesy of Photocity, Valetta (official photographer for the Archdiocese of Malta)

Photo (bottom) courtesy of Liesbeth Van Emmerik

PILGRIMS' REFLECTIONS



Above: Sandhurst pilgrimage group on top of St. Paul's Cave
Photo courtesy of Liesbeth Van Emmerick

ROME

The Canonisation Mass celebrated by Pope Benedict XVI in St Peter's Square in Rome on 17 October 2010 was attended by pilgrims from this parish as part of the recent pilgrimage led by Bishop Joe from the Sandhurst Diocese. Following this momentous event, the pilgrims traced the footsteps of St. Paul through Turkey and Greece and on to Malta for the ordination of Rev Robert Galea.

On the night before the canonisation there was a Vigil Concert to celebrate the life and achievements of Mary MacKillop. It set the scene for the following day. Mary's life was told in song and performance by students from Queensland ACU. The concert auditorium was packed and the atmosphere was electric. The acting and the speakers were inspirational.

The pilgrims spent six days in Rome visiting the places where Mary stayed when she went to Rome for Papal approval for her Order and its Rule. Out of the midst of the history of the city and its artworks, the chaotic traffic and the friendship, fun and adventure that go with a pilgrimage, here are some of our pilgrims' thoughts:

The canonisation ceremony was fantastic and a great mix of Aussie pride and solemn liturgy. The Thanksgiving Mass the next day in the papal Basilica of St. Paul's Outside the Walls was the highlight for me – a sensational experience for us far from home but in the company of so many Aussies united in their faith and pride in the humble "Brown Joeys". Just terrific!

I found myself moved to tears at both the Vigil Concert and the celebration of the Mass for all Australians at St. Paul's Outside the Walls. We gave thanks not only for St. Mary of the Cross but also for the hundreds of like-minded women who followed her. In the words of one of the hymns we sang: "if I could tell of the love of God". The text of another reads: "I'd sing of women seen as fools because, in Joseph's hidden way, they crossed our empty land with trust". Let us endeavor to have that same trust in our God in these "enlightened times".

GREECE

Cleaner, more scenic with fabulous tour guides!

Philippi - dating four centuries BC; the city was made famous by St. Paul who was a captive here. His presence is still felt especially in the Forum and in the great basilicas which now crown the other sites where he preached. At the Baptistery Church of Lydia, Bishop Joe led us in the renewal of our baptismal promises. Bishop Joe scooped the water from the nearby Zikakis River and poured it over our heads.

Corinth – another significant site. This time we celebrated open air Mass with Bishop Joe in the ancient diggings of the old city. Another beautiful and moving moment!

The hotels in Kavala, Thessaloniki and Athens were first class, and so was the food. Fulfilled my dream to see the Acropolis and, yes, climb to the top!

Visited the island of Kos and caught the ferry from there to the island of Patmos where we stayed overnight. Bishop Joe celebrated Mass at the Cave of St John, the cave where St John is believed to have written the Book of Revelation. Visited the other sacred sites which are all cared for by Orthodox priests and nuns. Beautiful icons. Lunch at the hilltop town of Zia. Beautiful food (honey and yoghurt is a specialty) and scenery.

TURKEY

We have spent six wonderful days in Turkey. In fact, Istanbul was outstanding! You have to get used to the constant merchandising and the fact that there is no English spoken.

We visited Hagia Sophia, the landmark Orthodox basilica of "Holy Wisdom" which was converted to a mosque and the nearby Topkapi Palace on the Bosphorus which is now a museum of the oriental art and history of the Ottoman Empire, an empire that lasted for almost 700 years. Istanbul's famous Takim Square was off limits because, as we later learnt, there had been a suicide bombing that day and 32 people were injured. Safety and security became a preoccupation with us after this but this didn't stop some of us visiting the Blue Mosque.

We also visited and toured Gallipoli (very emotional) and Ephesus, the ancient city of one of St Paul's strongest communities, Troy, and then the hill top town and chapel where Our Lady is believed to have lived her last years. This is a shrine for both Christians and Muslims who also revere Mary. Then we cruised the Bosphorus which was brilliant.

MALTA

We have now arrived in Malta for the Ordination of Robert Galea. It will be lovely sleeping in a Hotel with the sound, and view from the balcony, of the ocean. Seven nights of bliss!

EXTENDED VERSION OF ARTICLE AVAILABLE ON PARISH WEBSITE
(WWW.KENNINGTONCATHOLICPARISH.COM)

MARY MACKILLOP PRAYER



Above: Icon of St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop
Commissioned for the Sandhurst Diocese
Artist - Ivan Morozoff

Ever generous God,
You inspired Saint Mary MacKillop
To live her life faithful to the
Gospel of Jesus Christ
and constant in bringing hope
and encouragement
to those who were disheartened,
lonely or needy.
With confidence in your
generous providence
and through the intercession of
Saint Mary MacKillop
we ask that you grant our
request.....
We ask that our faith and hope
be fired afresh by the Holy Spirit
so that we too, like Mary MacKillop,
may live with courage, trust
and openness.
Ever generous God hear our prayer.
We ask this through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

*Mary MacKillop Prayer, Nihil Obstat, © Sisters of St. Joseph.
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SEE ALSO THE ARTICLE 'THE OTHER MARY'
ON THE PARISH WEBSITE
(WWW.KENNINGTONCATHOLICPARISH.COM)

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

CHRISTMAS EVE - FRIDAY 24TH DECEMBER

- 6.30 pm** Children's Mass in "The Shed" at
St. Francis of the Fields School, Strathfieldsaye
- 8.00 pm** St. Therese's, Kennington
- 9.30 pm** St. Therese's, Kennington
- Midnight** Poor Clares' Monastery

CHRISTMAS DAY - SATURDAY 25TH DECEMBER

- 7.30 am** Poor Clares' Monastery
- 9.00 am** St. Therese's, Kennington
- 9.00 am** St. Joseph's, Axe Creek
- 10.30 am** St. Mary's, Axedale

BOXING DAY - SUNDAY 26TH DECEMBER

- 7.30 am** Poor Clares' Monastery
- 9.00 am** St. Joseph's, Axe Creek
- 10.30 am** St. Therese's, Kennington
- 10.30 am** St. Mary's, Axedale

COME CELEBRATE WITH US THIS CHRISTMAS.

MAY THE GIFT OF JESUS' BIRTH GRANT YOU JOY AND PEACE!

YOUR MUSTARD SEED WAS DELIVERED

BY ZONE

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