

WELCOME TO

ST BRENDAN'S CATHOLIC PARISH



St Brendan's Parish is a Child Safe community. We promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all and a zero tolerance to child abuse.

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

10 September 2023

First Reading Ez 33:7-9

If you have not warned the wicked man, then I will hold you responsible for his death.

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows, 'Son of man, I have appointed you as sentry to the House of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, warn them in my name. If I say to a wicked man: Wicked wretch, you are to die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked man to renounce his ways, then he shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, however, you do warn a wicked man to renounce his ways and repent, and he does not repent, then he shall die for his sin, but you yourself will have saved your life.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 94:1-2.6-9. R. v.8

*(R.) O that today you would listen to his voice!
Harden not your hearts.*

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord. (R.)
2. Come in; let us bow and bend low;
let us kneel before the God who made us
for he is our God and we
the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. (R.)
3. O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.' (R.)

Second Reading Rom 13:8-10

Love is the fulfillment of the Law.

Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love. If you love your

fellow men you have carried out your obligations. All the commandments: You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and so on, are summed up in this single command: You must love your neighbour as yourself. Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments.

Gospel Acclamation 2 Cor 5:19

Alleluia, alleluia!

God was in Christ, to reconcile the world to himself;

and the Good News of reconciliation he has entrusted to us.

Alleluia!

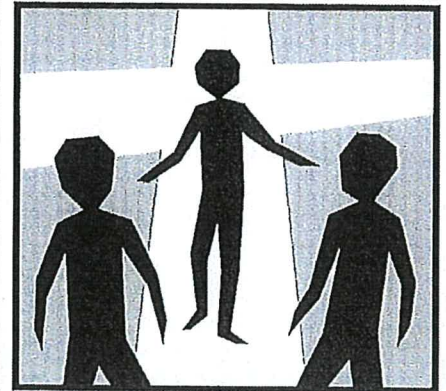
Gospel Mt 18:15-20

If your brother or sister listens to you, you will have won that person back.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others with you: the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain any charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a pagan or a tax collector.

'I tell you solemnly, whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.

'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'



Reflection by Greg Sunter

This week's gospel provides us with a lesson that could be well heeded in our contemporary world. Matthew relates a discourse on dealing with a grievance or sin between two "brothers"—community members; fellow disciples. Matthew advises his audience that the first step is to try to resolve the matter privately between the offender and the one offended. This is a practice that seems to have almost disappeared today. When one person feels offended or hurt by another, it seems the last thing they do is to go and speak to the person, confront them with the hurt and try to resolve it. Soap operas and TV sitcoms promote avoidance of issues. The sub-text of so many TV shows is about lying to cover up a mistake; seeking revenge for some perceived (usually incorrect) insult; or working through others to try to deal with some hurt. If characters on these TV shows were to confront one another with a perceived hurt and seek to resolve the difference between them, then there would be no "drama" to play out in the show. Admittedly, it doesn't make for great television, but it does make for much better relationships!

Matthew advises his community that only after a failed attempt to address an issue face to face should other members of the community become involved to further confront the offender through witnessing to their fault. The third step is to bring the person before the church community to be confronted with their actions and only after these three attempts to challenge the person fail should they be shunned. There is a very strong message of reconciliation that comes through this process. The person is given every chance to face their error and to seek amends with the one they have hurt. The whole process works towards bringing the community back together in harmony, not to seek revenge and punishment.

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ST BRENDAN'S PARISH NEWS



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 Website: sheppartoncatholic.org.au
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 Parish Priest: Fr Joe Taylor
 Priest in Residence: Fr Joseph Kunnackattu
 Associate Priest: Fr Jackson Saunders
 Deacon: Francois Baguma
 Office Manager: Diane Teitzel
 Child Safe Officer: Jason Giuliani Ph: 5821 2633
 Office Hours: Mon to Fri 9am - 2pm



*Christ in community ...
 the heart of our faith*

Recently Deceased: Jesse Michel, Brendon John Lincoln.

Anniversary: John De Lai, Carmela Sepe, Rocco Mammone, Anthony Clifford Lopez.

Readers & Commentators September 16 & 17, 2023

6pm	A. Kilmartin	D. Sullivan
8am	B. Sullivan	F. Smullen
11am	E. Christy	R. Aitken

This weekend, September 9 & 10: St Brendan's Church. A **Blessing of Married Couples** will be held at all Masses.



MARIAN FESTIVAL, BENDIGO
Sunday October 15, 2023

At this stage, we are ascertaining whether booking a Coach to travel across to Bendigo for the Marian Festival will be feasible or not. To do this we please ask (first) that you contact Maureen on 0403 876 578 by September 15.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We turn our hearts and minds to the people of the Yorta Yorta nation, who have occupied this country for thousands of years. We pay respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and commit to walking alongside Aboriginal Australians in truth and justice.

Mens Group will be gathering for breakfast at the Degani restaurant in the RiverSide Plaza, South Shepparton, **Saturday September 16 at 8.00am.** A little different than our normal meetings in the Parish centre. There is a great buzz of conversations at our fortnightly meetings along with our reflection topic. We hope you can make the breakfast. For any questions please call Anthony, Tuesdays or Thursdays 5821 2633.



TAP-N-GO
 Thank you to all who contributed to the \$1090 collected during August.



Our **Sacramental** children are heading into week 4 of their preparation for the Sacrament of Eucharist. Group Sessions will be held this Sunday & Monday. The Children have chosen their Saint Name in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. We pray that they use their Saint as inspiration to live their lives in their faith.



St Brendan's Parish **FRIENDSHIP GROUP**



will meet again for lunch: 12.30pm, Sunday September 17 at the Goulburn Valley Hotel, 233 High Street, Shepparton. Everyone is welcome! Enquiries to Pat on 0423 343 711 (leave a message).



Due to power interruptions, our **Garabandal Prayer Group** WILL NOT be held on Monday September 18. All are welcome to join us on Monday October 16 from 1.30pm in the Mary Mackillop room of the Parish office.



St. Brendan's
 Catholic Church

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults

Are you looking to join the Catholic faith? St Brendan's Parish has a vibrant RCIA team and is a Parish that is welcoming and supportive.

The RCIA process opens up this journey. We encourage questions and what it could mean to your life to join the Catholic faith.

We are beginning a period of inquiry for RCIA on **Thursday October 5, 2023 at 7.30pm**, in the Parish centre behind St Brendan's Church. There will be two more inquiry nights at 7.30pm: Thursday, October 12, and Thursday, October 19.

For any questions regarding the RCIA process, please call Anthony on 5821 2633 Tuesdays or Thursdays, or e-mail anthonypastoral@bigpond.com

Weekend Mass Times

Saturday Vigil 6pm

Sunday 8am & **11am** **PRAYING WITH CHILDREN**
SUNDAY LITURGY

Syro Malabar Rite: Wednesday 6.00pm, Saturday 8.30am, Sunday 5.30pm

Rosary— The Rosary is prayed in the Marian Chapel after weekday Masses and after the 8am Mass on Sunday.

Holy Hour with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament: Thursdays 7pm to 8pm and Fridays 5pm to 6pm

Weekday Mass Times

Tuesday to Friday 9.15am

Reconciliation Saturday 9.45am to 10.30am (in the Church)

100th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday September 23, All parishioners and friends are invited to join us to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the laying of the Chapel foundation stone.

We will begin with a Mass in the Chapel at **11am**, followed by lunch in the Monsignor Peter Jeffrey Centre.

At lunch Dom Segafredo will give a brief history of the Church and Chapel, followed by one of the Mercy sisters giving a brief history of the Mercy sisters in Shepparton. There will be a display of photos and memorabilia available to view at the lunch and after each Mass on this weekend.

If you would have any memorabilia to share, or would like to join us for lunch at **12pm on Saturday September 23**, please RSVP to Kathy Hunt on 0416058431, by Friday September 15.



catholic.au/s/article/safeguardingsunday2023

Supporting Safe Communities

SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY 2023
10 SEPTEMBER

The Parish of St Brendan's and the Diocese of Sandhurst are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and people at risk in our community. Mindful of the theme for National Child Protection Week, may we work to build and support safe communities for all people.

You can find out more about the Church's work at: www.catholic.au/s/article/safeguardingsunday2023

Last Thursday week we celebrated the requiem Mass for Fr Steve Bohan at Yarrowonga. He was a class mate of Fr Joe's and spent 8 months with us here last year. We give thanks to God for his many years of ministry among us.

2024 Columban Calendar \$10 each.

Now available in the Piety Store.

Every Thursday after 9.15 morning Mass, join us in the MPJC for a cuppa and a chat.



Winter Night Shelter



During our very cold and wet 3 months of winter this year, the amazing 7 night a week team of Winter Night Shelter volunteers provided 196 meals and hundreds of conversations to some of Shepparton's homeless community.

Each Wednesday for the months of June, July and August, the wider St. Brendan's community provided our guests with hot soup, a hearty main course and delicious muffins, slices and cupcakes.

Numbers were lower this year than last year, which meant guests could take away extra food.

Most of the men who attended had been living down by the river when it flooded in 2022, losing everything. What little they had collected since, was then washed away again by the rapid rise of the river at the beginning of winter, so donations of clothes, sleeping bags, shoes and backpacks were gratefully received.

Over the three months, many of our guests shared the excitement of having secured housing and were supported to find furniture. Some still joined us for a meal, as the cost of rent, utilities etc often meant there was no money left over for food.

On the last night, our regular guests expressed their gratitude to all involved in the provision of not just food and clothing, but of friendly faces and conversation.

It can sometimes feel like we're "running on empty" in the spiritual life. Ignatian spirituality offers a plethora of ways for us to re fill our cups.

Laughter "Humor helps enlarge one aspect of a person's life so that it becomes to some extent laughable. But that said, humor would never do any harm. Humor is, moreover, important for a healthy spiritual life." (Mark Rotsaert, SJ, in the foreword to *Jesuits Telling Jokes*) Laugh at yourself, laugh with others, and let the God of surprises lighten your load.



Upcoming Calendar of Events

Saturday, September 23:

We will celebrate 100 years since the major renovations were made to the Sanctuary and the inclusion of the Nuns Chapel.

Wednesday, October 4: Anointing Mass, 11.00am


Sunday, October 8: Sacramental Mass, 11.00am
Blessing of Animals, 4.00pm

Friday, Saturday & Sunday October 13-15:
Sacramental Masses, 6.30pm, 6.00pm and 11.00am

Saturday, October 14:
Public Rosary in the Church gardens.

Wednesday, October 18: MPJC, Liturgical Conference, 5.30—8.30pm.



 Ruth Lawlor has tendered her resignation from the position of Sandhurst Youth Ministry Coordinator.

In this role Ruth has shown dedication and commitment to young people and a desire to grow the Church's ministry among them.

This was clearly demonstrated in her leadership of the recent Sandhurst pilgrimage to World Youth Day in Lisbon.

The Chancery will acknowledge Ruth's contribution to the diocese in the coming weeks with her last day in the office being Thursday September 27.

Appointment of Executive Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd.



We are very pleased to announce the appointment of Ms. Kate Fogarty as the new Executive Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd, effective from January 2024.

Kate is currently the Principal of Assumption College, Kilmore. Previously serving as Principal of St Joseph's College Echuca.

Kate's deep connections with this Diocese, her strong vision for Catholic education, and her capacity to articulate that vision with clarity and conviction give us great confidence that she will be a passionate advocate and leader for Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd.

We warmly welcome her to this position. *+Shane Mackinlay*






Locally owned business servicing Shepparton for 35 years. For all your eye care needs, you can contact Ashley and Vanessa Madeira at The Eye Shop.

Phone 5821 0311


enquiries@eyeshopshiepparton.com.au



Colouring Pages There are colouring pages for children located in the Narthex. You will need to provide your own pencils or crayons.

Fr. Frank Brennan Parish Viewing



Come and listen to Fr Frank Brennan SJ' recent webinar about the forthcoming referendum. Fr Frank will speak from his extensive experience on how the Church has engaged with First Nations Peoples over time and what particular work is required now. He will unpack how Catholic Social Teaching might be applied to the questions before us in 2023 regarding the Voice referendum, and reconciliation more broadly. He will also share how First Nations spirituality has contributed to the Church thus far and how it might enrich all Australians, Church liturgy and ways of being in the world. Fr Frank will also discuss how the Voice (if successful) may enhance this further.

Date - Tuesday 12 September
Time - 6:45 for a 7pm start
Location - St. Brendan's Parish, Mons. Peter Jeffrey Centre
Tea, Coffee and nibbles provided.

Annual Public Rosary - Advance Notice

Please mark the date on your calendar.

All are welcome to attend.

Prayerful and social gathering.

10.30am Saturday October 14, 2023.

St Brendan's Parish Church Gardens.

(If wet weather: we will move to the Church)

Followed by a cuppa in the Noel Daly Centre.

To help with seating, please

RSVP by October 4, 2023

Centre will be open prior to Rosary, please bring a plate to share while socialising.

PETITIONS: For prayers and thanksgivings to Our

Lady, will be forwarded by

ANF (Australia needs Fatima)

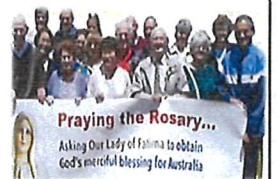
in Portugal. **BYO:** Chair/

Rug/Cushion/Hat and

Spectacles for your comfort.

All enquiries to Maureen

0403 876 578. Thank You.



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

PRAYING *With* CHILDREN

SUNDAY LITURGY



23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

10 September 2023 - Year A

"If your brother or sister listens to you, you will have won that person back."

Something to Think About

Today's gospel is all about community. What does the word 'community' mean to you? Can you name some different communities to which you belong? How do these communities live peacefully together? What does peace mean to you?

The Story

In today's gospel story, Jesus is giving the disciples some advice about how to live together peacefully in a community. Jesus is encouraging them to make their community more united and more harmonious and he suggests what should happen if conflicts arise. The simple message is that Jesus wants us to live together as one happy family. What does peace mean to you? What makes you feel peaceful?

The Scriptures

A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

18:15-17

Jesus said to his disciples:

"If one of my followers sins against you, go and point out what was wrong.

But do it in private, just between the two of you. If that person listens, you have won back a follower.

But if that one refuses to listen, take along one or two others.

"The Scriptures teach that every complaint must be proven true by two or more witnesses.

If the follower refuses to listen to them, report the matter to the church.

"Anyone who refuses to listen to the church must be treated like an unbeliever or a tax collector."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Video

Watch the video: [What is Peace?](#)



Group Discussion

Invite the children to share what it means for them to *belong* to a community. Is it important? Why? How does it feel? Is it always easy being part of a community? Are there certain things one needs to do when one belongs to a community?

Praying For Others

Leader: Let us pray now for the leaders of our Church, our world, for those in our community and for our own needs.

Reader 1: We pray that our leaders will work together for the good of all people. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 2: We pray that we will forgive those who hurt us. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 3: We pray that we will work for peace in our communities. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 4: We pray that we will listen to others and try to understand them. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 5: We pray for people who are searching for a sense of peace and calm. Lord, hear us.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Invite the children to pray for their own special intentions.

All: Lord hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, listen to the prayers we make in the name of Jesus.

All: Amen.

Prayer



Dear Jesus,
Help us to be people of peace who
listen calmly to others. May our
homes and our schools be places
where love and joy are found.
Amen.

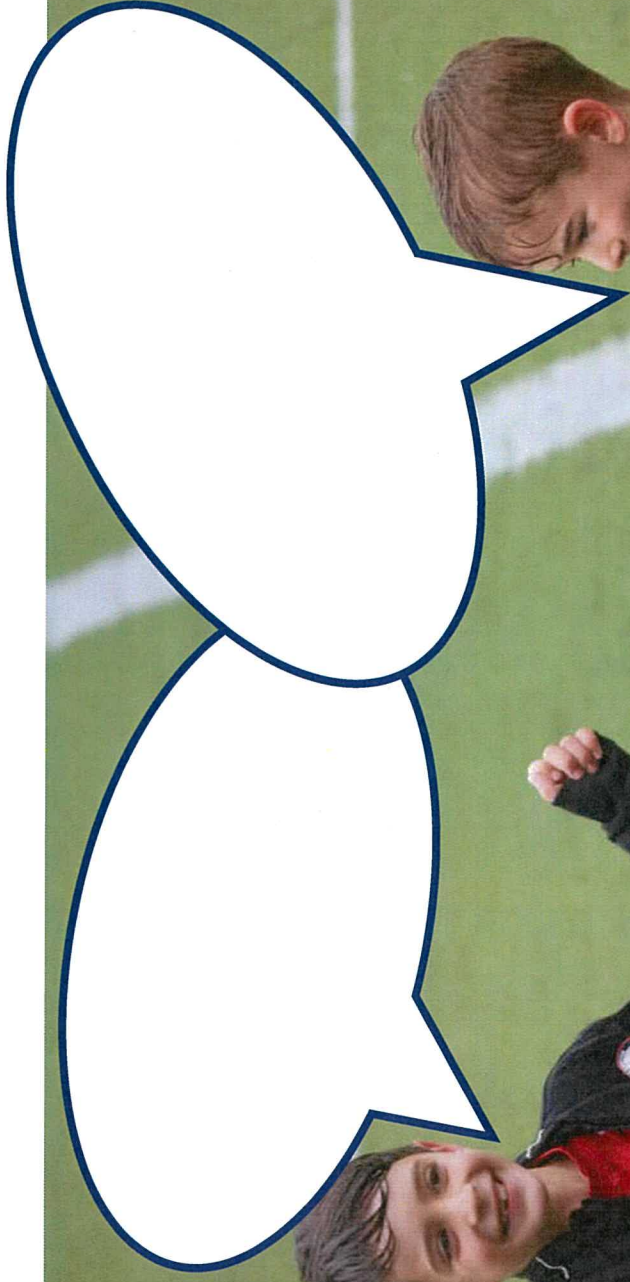
Group Activity

What does a peaceful community look like?

You will need: pieces of blank paper in A3 or A4, coloured pencils or markers.

- 1) Talk to children about what peaceful communities look like where people work together and forgive one another.
- 2) Invite children to draw a colourful picture that represents their idea of what they would see in this place where people are happy and care for one another and the environment.
- 3) Children might like to talk to one another about what they have drawn.





**IF THERE IS A PROBLEM,
DON'T FIGHT -- TALK ABOUT IT!**

Imagine what these boys
are saying to each other

Along the track

The Changing Face of Faith

I grew up in harsh times, in the aftermath of the horrors of WWII, then the Korean War and the fear of communism, sectarianism was rife and Catholics felt under pressure – we put up the barricades and the survival of our faith was a key priority. Learning the doctrines, being faithful to Mass and devotions, mixing with other Catholics were all part of surviving. Strangely, there was a comfort in looking inwards.

It had its downside. My mother died when I was four years old, the youngest of a family of eight. There was no counselling, no one to share our grief. It was a time to get on with life. Not quite twelve months later, my eldest brother was killed. Same response. There was a stoicism about life – the war years taught us how to deal with loss. That wasn't uncommon. My wife's father died, leaving a young family of eight and a wife to fend for herself. There was no help, no visits, no casseroles or support. Just get on with life, stay faithful and pray – and we did, In the words of the prayer: *To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.* And that's how we saw it. This life, this valley of tears, was a testing ground. We interpreted the reign of God as the afterlife – that's when all these hardships would be redressed.

In recent times, tragedy struck one of our relatives, a young man with a young family who had to undergo long and, at times painful treatment with no certain outcome. That family was flooded with help from their local parish and Catholic school communities – the children each had a counsellor made available by the schools, people visited, casseroles abounded to the extent that a new freezer had to be purchased, visitors come to share the burden. That compassionate support brought comfort and hope and a renewed faith.

Faith is something that is lived, it must always have an element of outreach, it is the way we encounter Jesus and come to know him and his ways. I am not suggesting that the faith of my childhood was wrong and this way is right – both are products of their time. Faith lives in a culture, it reacts to the world in which it lives, it goes in search of what is

good, in search of how it might serve the world it lives in, how it might bring the love and joy of the Gospel. At the centre of Christianity is a story that must be told to every generation, in every place and every culture. It is the story of the relationship between God and the world, as told through Jesus Christ who asked his followers to 'come, follow me'. Today that story is told not just in words but in the way people live, in how they reach out to one another, in how they seek to bring the love of Jesus in good times and in bad.

In the words of Pope Francis, "You may know all the commandments, all the prophecies, all the truths of the faith, but if this isn't put into practice, is not translated into works, it serves nothing." "A faith without works, a faith that doesn't get you involved, isn't faith," he said. "It's words and nothing more than words." Homily Pope Francis Feb 21, 2014.

There are two churches down the road from where I live, both built in the last ten years or so. One has a large fence around it, and a big hedge. The gates are locked and the building has a few windows high up on the wall. Visitors are discouraged. It seems to be open briefly only on a Sunday, but that is happening on fewer occasions of late. It is dying.

In contrast, the other building is open seven days a week. In the foyer the vision statement says: *We are a rural community which welcomes all people in response to God's love and care for us.* It houses a kindergarten on two days a week, a play group, it offers lunch to anyone who would like to come on a Thursday, it has a men's shed, multiple meeting places, a chapel, a meditation room, a community garden and so the list goes on.

The vision statement continues: *As a Christian church, we gather to share our experiences of life with each other and to discover better ways of communicating the love of God to the community in which we live.*

It is thriving.

Regards
Jim Quillinan

Email: jquillinan@dcsi.net.au

St Marys Parish Nathalia Invites you...

Bonfire Social Night

Saturday
October
7th

7 pm onwards
271 Centre Rd Nathalia

RSVP: September 23 for
catering

Friends, Families,
Singles, ALL are
welcome!

Sausage Sizzle
provided

BYO:
Drinks/Snacks/Chairs

To RSVP and for more
information contact:

Sophie Wilson
0455270869

[nathalia@sandhurst.
catholic.org.au](mailto:nathalia@sandhurst.catholic.org.au)



Homily

Sandhurst Jubilarian Mass 2023

by
Monsignor Peter Jeffrey

It was an exciting time to be ordained – July 1963. Bishop Stewart invited Bishop Thomas to come over from Geraldton to ordain me at Sacred Heart Cathedral. My family appreciated that since my paternal grandfather was the layman who was with the then Monsignor Thomas on the Backhaus Estate.

At the ordination, Bishop Stewart also imposed hands and then discreetly left to travel to Wangaratta to ordain John Ryan and the late Kevin Howarth. Part of the Ordination ceremony for a Diocesan Priest is to pledge obedience to the current Bishop and his successors. So, our Priestly life and Ministry unfolds.

It is providential that John is a Priest of Sandhurst. He grew up in Mildura in the Ballarat Diocese. However, his father's employment as an Insurance Agent, meant that the family moved to Wangaratta. John has always loved Ned Kelly country.

For John and myself, it was an exciting time to be ordained. "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*" the Constitution on the Liturgy had been promulgated on 4 December 1963. I remember being quite excited on the last day of that seminary academic year, when Archbishop Guilford Young spoke with his customary vigour to the seminarians, after the Bishop's Trustees meeting about the Council – particularly about his contribution to "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*" the document on the Liturgy. When I got back to Sandhurst, I heard that Bishop Stewart got Monsignor DeCampo to pick him up at a back door of the Airport to bypass any journalists who may be looking for a comment on the Council. When he got back to "Genazzano" he said, "Nothing has changed"!

The different episcopal responses mirrored the varied reactions of the lay people to documents that came from the Second Vatican Council. It took quite some time before all were in-step journeying on our pilgrim way.

However, all of us can say as we heard in the passage from 2nd Corinthians – "*We are only the earthenware jars that hold this treasure,*" to make it clear that such an overwhelming power comes from God and not from us.

When we listen to the gentle prompting of the Spirit we do not know where we will be led. From the Cathedral Presbytery in McKenzie Street, John found himself on the way to further study in Rome and then to St. Louis, U.S.A. On his return, He was the co-ordinator of the Priests' Renewal Programme in Canberra.

In 1999 he helped establish the *Humanita Foundation* which aimed to stimulate renewal in the Church's understanding of human development and sexuality. So many of our confreres have benefitted and grown from participation in these special programmes.

As we heard in today's Gospel, "The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many". John, you can look back on the countless priests who have been challenged to change and grow in their path of discipleship, or as Pope Francis so often says, 'missionary' discipleship.

I grew up in a Catholic family in the Cathedral Parish in Bendigo. Sadly, I was knocked back when I applied for the Seminary. The reason was that one of my father's brothers suffered from epilepsy. It was thought that there was a risk that I might have an epileptic fit during the Consecration in the Eucharistic prayer!

Being 'knocked back' I began the enrolment process to do Law at university. I wasn't very excited about it. Although, as a kid in short pants I went to the Law Courts in Bendigo to hear Frank Galbally represent a man who slaughtered a man with an iron bar outside the old Post Office in Shepparton. Riding my bike home, I recall asking myself, "Was that verdict right or wrong?"

Bishop Stewart's Priest friend (Harry Jordan MSC) was a Canon Lawyer. Happily, he found a footnote in one of his books which said 'epilepsy' could now be controlled. So, the path to Corpus Christi College was now open.

I have worked in four Parishes in Sandhurst – Cohuna, Beechworth, Heathcote and Shepparton, before being asked to go to the Seminary at Clayton. I had no idea that this would lead to being Rector of three Seminaries – Melbourne, Fiji and then New Zealand.

Fr John's book "A Priesthood Imprisoned" highlights our need for on-going conversion. I have had a blessed and joyful life as a Diocesan Priest but still need to move more from the 'head' to the 'heart'!

Fr Rob Galea's special ministry shows that the journey from heart to the head is much easier than the other way round. Furthermore, as Fr John's reflection shows, our journey will always be in the direction of greater trusting love in Jesus as Lord of our life (Cf Acts 10,36).



A Toast to Diamond Jubilarians

by
Monsignor Frank Marriott

In asking you to honour our 1963 Diamond Jubilarians I would like to place the Priestly service of Peter and John initially in the context of the Decade of their Ordination, 1958 to 1965, the five years before their ordination, and five years after.

That decade began with what turned out to be a bombshell for Church and for many, the Priesthood. The aged, cuddly, and seemingly simple Cardinal Roncalli was elected as Pope. Despite continued opposition, the windows he opened have never really returned to the previous shut and fixed position.

That decade ended in 1968 with quite a bang.

The Paris student riots encouraged, it is chronicled, the Future Pope Benedict to hurry back to the Roman Sacristy, the murder of Bobby Kennedy added to the turmoil created by the ongoing Vietnam war protests, and then we in Church, were called to manage the Encyclical '*Humane Vitae*', a continuing challenge even today.

In that decade, Sandhurst ordained 28 Seminarians from Corpus Christi College and St Francis Xavier in South Australia. Six resigned active ministry, three are alive and in various states of health, and all are here today.

Following the early 60s example of Peter Quinn, some nine of that group served with distinction in PNG, Fiji, New Zealand, the Philippines and other Pacific Areas. Many found themselves in seminaries, a number acting as Rectors or staff members. A number were active as reserve Military Chaplains, with John White leading, as the Air Force Principal Chaplain. Peter Jeffrey holds I think, the National record as being the only Priest in Australia to act as Rector of three seminaries.

Further, a number of this cohort held Positions with ACBC; Maurice Duffy heading up the rewriting "Come Alive" Catechetical team, and John Ryan as Director of St Peter's Centre for priestly renewal.

Not a bad contribution for a small country Diocese.

Peter began life in Bendigo, schooled at St Marys Convent until Grade 4, Marist Brothers and then on to St Patrick's, Ballarat, where he distinguished himself as a debater, winner of the prestigious Purton Oratory speaking prize in 1955. He was a prefect; that possibly helped his earlier roles in Seminaries.

John, recently living In Wangaratta, found Assumption as his secondary school and had a distinguish sporting career, Tennis, First XVIII, athletics and debating and also a prefect.

In between Fiji and NZ, Peter accepted roles as Parish Priest in Euroa, and Shepparton, found time to lead the Diocesan Education Board and serve on the CECV. He chaired the First Inter-Faith Council in the Diocese as well as serving as Dean and in the other standard offices.

John meanwhile, was receiving accolades for his work with the Centre for Christian Spirituality, in Sydney, followed by becoming Director, Oceanic Office, Centre for Human Development, then on to Centre for Ministry Canberra and, finally moving to Centacare, Canberra.

The Centre for Human Development raised eyebrows, Human Development was unheard of back then. The current upcoming Synod amongst other tasks is concerned with how our knowledge and teaching can be lived and applied in the changing conditions of our time. Peter often tells of his own growth in coming to realise the importance of Human Development in the task of seminaries. He found soul mates in this area during his stint at Holy Cross. John's work in this area bore fruit years later.

Whereas Peter seemed to flourish in Parish Pastoral life, John preferred office hours. This is perhaps illustrated by ... you knew who was on that phone, whereas ... I will get back to you!

For a moment reflecting on the mysterious paths that we now identify as God drawing straight paths with different materials ...

Peter and I were both born in Bendigo, went to the same schools, but never consciously met until after Ordination.

John caught up with me at Kilmore and finished a year early. Again, we did not meet until after Ordination.

I landed in Shepparton in 1971, found myself sitting at the left of Monsignor Bones with Peter on the right. One day I was ordered to sit at the Right hand ... I was a year older in ordination. Not much attention to Consultants detail that year.

On the other hand, John and I arrived at the Cathedral in 1974 full of Vatican II zeal, particularly desirous to bring in the sign of peace. In those days, the station Church was St Pius X at Long Gully. The locals were a little bemused at the antics of the young assistants and one day they told us, "You won't last here". They were right. John moved to Myrtleford and I to Heathcote on 20 July 1974.

Peter and John, two fine priests who have served the Church and People with distinction in those varied fields wherever the Spirit led them. Always Spirit lifters, not Spirit crushers. No matter where they roamed, they always called Sandhurst home.

Many of us gathered today would not have experienced these two men in full flight. Articulate, (though I did find some of John's published works a little difficult), spiritual, hardworking, and respectful of their congregations.

Each has contributed significantly to the Big Church and assisted in the development of our wonderful Diocese.

We thank them for their long years of fruitful service.

On Sixty Years of Priesthood

by
Fr John Ryan

While I was working in Wangaratta, (before going into the seminary) I met a Hungarian refugee called Bella Brestovski. He was an architect who had come to Wangaratta after being in several refugee camps in Europe and beyond. He took a shine to me and I to him and he had a considerable impact on my life. One day we were walking along Murphy Street on market day, down the road from here, when he stopped and said to me, Jorn (he always called me Jorn) look at all those people. In all of them there is a story. Some will be told. Some will be written, and some will never be told. That encounter has stayed with me, even to today.

Whichever way we look at it, whether we appreciate it or not, whether we know it or not, in faith we have a story within us and ultimately it is the story of God in our lives.

Today I want to share something of my story. I am known as John Ryan. My mother's name was Alice Johnson known as Johno by some of her friends, so I'm told. When I was born someone suggested that I be called Johnson. We were a fairly insignificant family in the desert on the edge of the Mallee, so imagine how different my life might have been if I had been called Johnson and not John! It goes without saying that my parents were not particularly imaginative. They named their three children Mary, John, and Bill, but it kind of fitted the ordinariness of our lives.

When I was ten, we moved to Yarrawonga and I still remember the surprise among the local boys when I met them and they said, "You can't be John Ryan, we already have a John Ryan." He was known as Oscar, so I became Oscar II. For the first time I was becoming aware of how problematic my name could be.

At age 13, I was launched into boarding school and there I had five years of many transforming experiences. During those years there were at least four or five John Ryans and some were in the same year! This was a problem on many fronts, not the least being laundry bags, so that's where I became John E. Ryan, the E stands for Edward which was my father's name although interestingly he was always known as Ned.

Following boarding school, I went to university with many of my friends. This came to be a time of deep questioning concerning my future, concerning becoming an engineer, or a priest. Ever since I was 11, I had known that one day I would have to test the call to the priesthood.

Eventually I went to the Seminary for the Diocese of Sandhurst. Here the name Oscar followed me because some of the guys from school were at the Seminary, too. At my first appointment as a curate at Yarrawonga, there were three or four John Ryans in the parish! Believe it or not!!

However, there was another John Ryan in the Diocese, he was John S. Ryan. He was very significant because he was, amongst other things, the Inspector of Schools. (He would never tell his confreres what the S stood for, so they decided it probably stood for Sennacherib, so he became known as Snaky. In fact, it stood for Simeon but for some reason he was reluctant to tell them that.)

While I was in Yarrawonga, I had done some work with young people on, shall we say, the wrong side of the law, and so I developed a reputation for working with troubled young people as well as alcoholics in the area.

When I was at the Cathedral in Bendigo, I happened to be in a group one day and was taken aback to hear Snaky exploding about the police knocking on his door looking for Fr John Ryan. I didn't realise my reputation has followed me. However, this did not please him at all. I received a huge amount of angst from him about the confusion of our names. So once again my name was becoming an issue.

Early on in my time in Bendigo, I came to believe I was destined to become the Bishop's driver/secretary, although the thought scared the pants off me. That was until I backed the Bishop's car into a tree on our first outing! Things changed dramatically from then on, thanks be to God!

Later, as a student in Rome, the director was keen to know what my Saints name was for my feast day. I didn't have a clue so all I could suggest was John the Apostle as my feast day.

When I came back from America it was assumed that I would take up a specific situation within the Diocese, but that situation had changed by the time I returned.

Being a part of this Diocese meant that I absorbed Bishop Bernie Stewart's, vision for the Diocese. He always had a vision for the larger church or the global church. He allowed his priests to go out when they felt called and welcomed priests who wanted to come into the Diocese.

After coming back from overseas I was appointed to Myrtleford – a great time as well as a time of personal challenges and huge upheaval. In my story, chapters came thick and fast. After a year and a bit, I was appointed to Wodonga.

After a year in Wodonga, around 1977, I was invited to go to Sydney by Cardinal Freeman via my bishop, to work with David Walker (now Bishop David Walker) to establish the Centre for Spirituality.

Then in 1980 I came to Canberra to research and establish the St Peter Centre. On each of these journeys I was commissioned by my Bishop at the time, and I always felt I went with the Bishop's blessing. Wherever I went I felt very welcome and forged relationships within those dioceses, but I always said I belonged to Sandhurst. At times there were invitations to become incardinated elsewhere, including overseas, but that was never an option for me. I never ceased to be a priest from the Diocese of Sandhurst.

1985 through to 1993 was a tumultuous time, a time when I dreamed of programs, places and people who could help assist the lives of the diocesan priests in Australia by providing resources of all kinds. At times it seemed as if we were almost there, then it seemed as if we weren't!

Firstly, there was Vince Dwyer's Centre for Human Development, during which programs were introduced into the dioceses who chose to take part, programs like the one-to-one, and support groups (many of which are still going today). This morphed into the Ministry to Priests Program. During this time Directors for Continuing Education were appointed in nearly every Diocese and they would meet regularly to discuss the issues they faced. Jim Gill SJ (an American psychiatrist) came to Australia and would talk to us about all the issues we were facing. These were heady days and it seemed as if my dreams were taking shape. Then in 1993 the Bishops took over this vibrant going concern and as often happens in such cases, it seems to me the movement has slowly died on the vine and my dreams with it. Perhaps it was inevitable, perhaps not!

Eventually I became ill and was forced to retire, but my life was prolonged way beyond what was expected. But no matter where I was, or what I was doing, my identity, my heart, was always with Sandhurst. I may have lived elsewhere much of the time, but I always was and always will be, John Ryan (if need be John E.), **a priest from the Diocese of Sandhurst.**

In the words of the great Dag Hammarskjold,

"For all that has been, Thanks. To all that shall be, Yes."