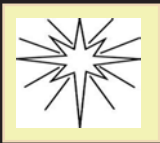




Augustine & Monica

Jesus, Be Our Light



Christmas Mass Times

*Christmas Eve
Tuesday 24 Dec.*

*St Monica's Tugun
6.00pm
(Carols before Mass)*

*St Augustine's
Coolangatta 9.00pm
(with the feel of
midnight)
(Carols before Mass)*

*Christmas Day
Wednesday 25 Dec.*

*St Monica's Tugun
6.45am
(Carols before Mass)*

*St Augustine's
Coolangatta 8am
(Carols before Mass)*

*St Monica's Tugun
9.30am
(Carols before Mass)*

~~~~ Individual Reconciliation ~~~~

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is available every SATURDAY at 11.00am at St Monica's Tugun.

In preparation for Christmas, individual reconciliation will be available at:

- St Monica's Tuesday 17 December 5.30pm after 5.00pm Mass*
- St Monica's Thursday 19 December 9.30am after 9.00am Mass*
- St Augustine's Friday 20 December 7.30am after 7.00am Mass*



Fr John comments

Fifty years have now passed since the Second Vatican Council issued its 'Pastoral Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy'. The intent of the Council was to ensure the 'full, active and conscious participation' of all the faithful in the celebration of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. This document was revolutionary. It underpinned all that the Council was to achieve in the issue of sixteen documents in the next two years. It encouraged all Catholics to take their rightful place as baptised Christians in the life of the Church and the world. It told us that 'we are the Church'.

Many Catholics are still happy to sit back and let the 'professionals' in the Church do all the running. By this they mean the priests and religious. But the nature of the Church has changed. Previously we could describe the Church as a triangle with the laity at the base and then the religious, clergy, bishops with the Pope at the top of the triangle.

On the 6th August 1964, Paul VI issued his first encyclical "Ecclesiam Suam" on the Church. He described the Church as a system of concentric circles all focussed on Christ at the centre. Rather than a top down description, he stated that all the baptised have Christ at the centre of their life. Each has a different responsibility according to their calling but each is called by Christ.

As we remember this anniversary we are all challenged to accept the responsibility we all share in as members of the Body of Christ. So many of you are already heavily involved in the many ministries of our community. Others are involved in the many unheralded and unannounced ministries such as being a carer for a family member, of being a parent, raising your children in a Christian atmosphere. There are so many unspoken ways of being involved in our baptismal calling. God notices them all.

Pope Francis is showing us the way in living out our call as servants of all, especially the poor. He demonstrates that each of us, no matter our station in life, is there for others, especially the most disadvantaged. I encourage you to be actively involved in the local community, addressing issues that touch each of us. For that is where we find Christ.

As we approach this Christmas season, we all need to be mindful of the greatest love shown us by God. He gave us his own Son as one of us, 'who gave up all things except his equality with God'.



May your life be blessed in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Parish Picnic



Another clean blue August day,
Monica and Augustine blessing us again.
Green parklands framed in majestic trees;
The embrace of peace and calm
with a chorus of birds to greet us.

Then increasing numbers of parishioners
Descending from parked cars with
chairs, tables, ice boxes, children.



Much
greeting,
laughter,
claiming
friends,
Introducing
others
with name-
tags,



Settling into groups, merging and
discovering connections.

Food is shared,
wine and coffee drunk,
Children bouncing in
delight in jumping castles,
Faces painted with flowers,
stars and patterns.
Then the cricket begins.



No disappointing Australian-side here.
Three-legged races, balls bounce everyway.
A tug-of-war, a quest to match
our birthdays.

The sneaky cool breezes of
late afternoon drift in.
People begin to collapse
and pack their chairs.
Children are growing tired,
But do not want to go.

The cleaning-up
begins and each of us
commends the
Council on another
Great Parish Picnic.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.....NB

"News from Pope Francis".
The Pope recently dedicated the world
to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.



Parish Catering Group

The catering group performs a valuable and under-acknowledged work that is part of the spiritual glue that holds our parish community together. Our family has experienced the loss of two cherished members in the past five years. Kevin Nielsen died in 2008 after a protracted illness, and his youngest son, Philip, died tragically, suddenly, only two months ago. The requiem mass that was held for both Kevin and Philip gave our family hope and a sense of a way forward at an often bewildering time. Following each of these ceremonies, the catering group were in the church hall working behind the scene to welcome parishioners, extended family and friends from far and wide, to share in the love and comfort that grieving as a group can bring. The group provide cups of tea and refreshments to nourish the body and kind words and support to strengthen the soul at such a fragile time. Each sad smile and offered cup provides more than can ever be measured. This is the true meaning of community, and it has been felt most strongly when tragedy strikes, when it is needed most. The comfort that remains after this, is the reassurance of the depth of faith in our parish community

Josie, Mary, Patrick and Camille Nielsen and family.

Compassionate Friends

One of the greatest tragedies for any parent is the death of a child - no matter the age of the child or the cause of death. It is the most painful form of loss, an unimaginable plunge into a vortex of suffering and intense emotions. When a child dies, the natural order is changed. We expect to bury our parents - some day, maybe even a spouse, but never, never a child. They bury us when we are old. The shattering effect of the death of a child penetrates right through a person's world and inner being, having a deeply stressful effect on health, family, friendships, work and social activities.

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organisation offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents after the death of their child and fosters the physical and emotional health of bereaved parents and their surviving children.

The Compassionate Friends meeting is held on the 2nd Thursday of the month at Murwillumbah. For more information contact Lorraine Grennan on 0266723219 or Colleen Cutcheon 55981890.



Glasses for Sri Lanka

Well-noted was the appeal by Marge Heriot in August for unwanted spectacles to take to the 'street' people of Sri Lanka. With support from Tweed Hospital and other friends, over 400 pair of glasses were donated. Surely as Jesus promised, sight will be given to the blind!

One parishioner told why she had no old glasses to offer. She found a cane toad in her garden, had gently scooped it up and took it down to the sea to release it. Bending over in the salt water, her specs fell from her face. None of the efforts to retrieve the glasses were successful, so there could be a whale out there with enhanced vision.



Milestone for Brother Ted

In June Brother Ted Walker was invited to return to St Mary's College, Dalby (now called Our Lady of the Southern Cross College), to celebrate their Golden Jubilee. Brother Ted was the founding principal fifty years ago, and caught up with numbers of the then young students - now men over sixty years old.



Brother Ted told the celebration, "It was quite a pioneering event for me. For the six years I lived in Dalby I taught every day, never enjoying a free period; I did not enjoy the assistance of a secretary for those six years and had the College telephone in my classroom. For some of that time I kept a flock of 100 sheep to control the grass and clover on the playing fields, which I was trying to develop. That was while I was saving up to procure a tractor and grass cutting equipment.

Dean Michael Herbert, a typical Irishman, was the Parish Priest and became a good sparring partner for me - I do realise now that it was an unfair contest for I had youth on my side. I remember driving from Brisbane to visit him - this was some time after I had left Dalby - only a short time before he died. He was sitting in the sun at Lourdes Home; he had dozed off. I touched him on the shoulder and as he gazed up at this face above him, I said, "Dean, do you remember me?" His classic response was, "Good God, could I ever forget you?" He used often to drive out to see how things were going in his yellow Hillman Minx at 15 mph on the wrong side of the road".

From a fledgling school for 125 students from years 6 to 9, Our Lady of the Southern Cross College now boasts approx.800 students, a myriad of buildings, including rooms for computers, learning support, industrial technology and design, conference and music rooms, visual art studio, library and science laboratories.

Visit by Doris Zagdanski

On 1st October, to a large crowd, grief counsellor Doris Zagdanski gave a spirited lecture on how to offer comfort and support to those who have lost their loved ones. She spoke of the many areas, other than dying, in which we all grieve, inspiring us all with her own story of breast cancer. All details on Doris' website: 'All About Grief'. Thank-you Doris!

To the Editor of A.M. magazine:

I am a casual visitor to Tugun and attended Mass at St Monica's at 6.00pm on Saturday 13th July last. I enjoyed the service and I was very impressed with the beautiful flower arrangements on the altar. The style and layered combination of greenery and colouring choices of flowers was exceptional.

Having owned and operated a florist business in Brisbane for 12 years, it was a joyful experience to attend Mass and behold your gorgeous altar adorned by such splendour and magnificent flowers.

Yours sincerely, Maree Tierney

(Read a tribute to our flower ladies on page 5 . Ed)



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Ph: 5534 5414



Art and Scripture Speaks to Us

by Pat Mullins

At Christmas we celebrate the incarnation – our God becoming an infant, fully human, in Jesus. We are all familiar with the Christmas crib image: Mary and Joseph on either side of the manger, in which lies the baby Jesus. The couple look adoringly at the baby and the scene is bathed in light. This image is reportedly a vision of the birth of Jesus seen by Bridget of Sweden in the 14th century. With the invention of the printing press at that time, this is the nativity as we usually see the event today.

On the left is a damaged surviving image portraying the birth of Jesus from the 8th century showing the infant coming from on high, perhaps from an image of the Trinitarian God. Mary lies exhausted after birthing, while Joseph sits pondering, waiting for the baby to be laid in his lap, as was the Jewish custom. Only in the 19th century, following the invention of the microscope, was it proved that women made a physical contribution to new life. Prior to that time the baby was believed to be the gestation of the seed of the father. The mother carried *his* child.

In a second early image of the nativity, in the left-hand corner the new-born human Jesus is washed by the Jewish midwives. There are angels and shepherds, below cameos of the saints of old, while one wonders whether to the left of the thoughtful Joseph the figure beside the tree represents those who have passed away who rise from their tombs. Again, Mary is shown resting after the labour – stressing that the birth of Jesus was typically human.

The imagery of birth is common in the Bible. In the Old Testament God is described as a woman giving birth, gasping and panting in the final stages of labour, delivering Israel out of captivity in Babylon (Is.42:5-17). In the gospel of John (16:21), Jesus at the Last Supper tells the disciples their experience will be like that of a woman in labour whose great pain in giving birth is transformed into joy when her baby is born. The disciples will know great pain, but then much joy. God is also described in Scripture as a midwife in Psalm 22. In *What name shall I tell them?* Sr Verna Holyhead writes, "Like the physically helpless and bloody new-born child, so is Jesus on the cross. Yet like the midwife, God reaches into the womb of the grave and draws forth his Son to glorious risen life. And so he will do for us."(p.75)



Vale - Terry Flanagan

On 16th August our much loved parishioner and former detective inspector, Terry Flanagan entered the fullness of life to be with the God he loved and served so well.

Terry was a great character who loved his wife Jackie. They were married by Father Brady 62 years ago and had 7 wonderful children. Terry loved people and it was a great

honour and privilege for him to take Holy Communion to the sick and frail. He would spend quality time with each person.



The Word Made Flesh Today: In Me and You

Christmas celebrates the human presence of God in the life of our every-day world. If the Christ presence is to survive in our world, we are called upon to follow the same pattern that Mary did in giving birth to Jesus.

The Oblate author, Fr Ronald Rolheiser, looks at the four steps of bringing a human person to life –

- becoming pregnant,
- the process of gestation in the womb,
- giving birth and
- the nurturing of the infant to adulthood.

He says we are told Mary pondered the Word of God until she became pregnant with Jesus. He had no human father and physically Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit in that she so immersed herself in the gifts of the Spirit (in charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, faith, mildness, fidelity and chastity) that the seed of these gifts took root in her.

In the silent recesses of her heart and body, and with the nausea and all that is a part of being pregnant, an umbilical cord developed between her and the seed of charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, faith, mildness, fidelity and chastity. Through that cord she gave to the seed her own flesh and so the baby formed and pushed to come into the world. Giving birth brings with it some pain. Giving expression to our ideas, thoughts, hurts, even joys, which form deep within us, usually causes pain – sometimes a lot of pain.

After the birth of Jesus, Mary began to rear her son. Remember that Jesus, who was God, had no control over his bodily functions – he chose to be born an infant. Adults had to change his nappies, carry him everywhere. Mary had to grow Jesus to manhood.

How can we bring a Christ presence into our homes, our parish, our school, our community? We can do what Mary did:

- Through daily prayer and pondering God's Word – even for a short time – the Spirit will come alive within us,
- Through continuing to pray for and practice the gifts of the Spirit - charity, joy, peace, patience, goodness, long-suffering, faith, mildness, fidelity and chastity, the Christ within us gestates, gains life,
- Though there will be some pain, by sharing the Christ presence with others around us, we give birth to our experience of Christ in the events of ordinary every-day life,
- God's works are as good as we make them. God is helpless: Christ is our "baby" to bear.

(summary of ideas from Ronald Rolheiser, *Against an Infinite Horizon* (Crossroad 2001:189-191)

and so many looked forward to his visits. He was a great story teller and would share many a police story with whoever would listen.

Terry was in constant pain but when he was asked how he was, he always replied with 'terrific'. The Saturday night congregation will miss Terry sitting on his walker at the back of the church.

May he rest peacefully in the arms of God.





We celebrate the Second Vatican Council

by Peter Cossins, Chairperson of Tugun (St Monica)/ Coolangatta (St Augustine) Parish Pastoral Council



On the 20th October to the vibrant strains of choir members and *Couples for Christ* evoking "Holy Spirit come, Holy Spirit come", over 140 from parishes in the South Coast Deanery gathered to celebrate Vatican Council II at St Monica's Tugun.



The event went off extremely well. Let's face it, the Holy Spirit was not about to let it fall flat and made sure we all came together to make it a huge success. The atmosphere was very positive, the attendance was at full capacity and the planning all came to fruition. Fr John Scarrott provided a well-balanced coverage of the historical significance, the Papal involvement, the impacts on the clergy and on us, and drew out the significance of all these factors for US, the church, into the future.



Fr John concluded with the American Jesuit John W. O'Malley's vision of the movement of the Spirit through the documents of the Council, from commands to invitations, from coercion to conscience, from monologue to dialogue, from laws to ideals, from definition to mystery, from threats to persuasion, from behaviour modification to inner appropriation, from ruling to service, from vertical to horizontal, from exclusion to inclusion, from hostility to friendship, from rivalry to partnership, from suspicion to trust, from static to ongoing, from passive acceptance to active engagement, from fault-finding to appreciation.



All credit to Rosaleen McDade and her committee, including Kathleen, Rina, Glenda, Jane and many others who gave of their time over many months to make this all happen. Thanks also to the very open Parish support from Fr John, Sr Sue and Denise who all contributed much to make this a special event in our Parish history.

Many suggestions were made to energise a renewed parish. Inspiration came immediately in the vision of the army of energetic workers who helped provide the lunch and clean up the hall afterwards.



Pope Francis reminds us that the Holy Spirit continues to annoy us, to move and push us forward as Church. How will we, as parish, continue to respond?

Watch out! The Holy Spirit will awaken you!



Tribute to our flower ladies, Nell and Del



A visitor to our parish, Monica Tierney, writes in the *Letters to the Editor* that Coolangatta/Tugun parish has been greatly blessed with dedicated and talented flower arrangers.

In 1995 at St Augustine's, the legendary Rose Ahrens retired from arranging the flowers and Del Sutton wondered whether she could undertake the 'job'. Urged by her husband, Roy, with the words "The only way to find out is to try", Del began on Pentecost Sunday, 18 years ago, with a host of poinsettias soaked in hot water. Del had led a team of, among them, Marcia Withers, Edna Devlin, Nancy Young, Trish Lawrence and Ruth Nugent, who *love* to do the flowers.

Many remember the floral decorations at Fr Kevin Smith's 25th anniversary of ordination when St Augustine's was flooded with gold and white. Originally flowers were arranged at St Monica's by Eileen Pember. Nell Fraser offered to help her, and Eileen responded with, "I knew God would send someone to help me".



A quarter of a century ago, Nell suggested the forming of an Altar Society, and all the members were charged \$2 because there were no funds. Later in 1988, a function was held at Carmel Hinton's home in Tugun and a great day resulted in a profit of \$500. Until a bank account was opened, the money became frozen revenue, being kept in Carmel's deep freeze. Other luncheons were held at the Marist Brothers residence to raise funds. With this money, flowers, altar cloths, hand towels and quite a few more items were bought.



Throughout the life of the society, a wonderful band of ladies, for many recent years led by Nell Fraser at St Monica's and Del Sutton at St Augustine's, have worked on a roster to clean and arrange the flowers.

Nell has recently retired and is replaced by Elizabeth Lovell, Janet Edwards and Marcia Withers.

With the seasons not always kind to flowers, Father supplied funds to buy silk flowers to supplement the fresh ones. These silk flowers were always used with fresh ones in season to lessen any sense of artificiality. For years parishioner Leo Flynn provided the flowers, supplied by a Cudgen florist at a very reasonable price. Today for weddings, Garry O'Reilly, our magazine sponsor from *Tugun Fruit and Flowers*, is very generous in supplying flowers from the markets.

Many thanks to all who provide the beauty and fragrance of our worship.



*by Lucy Koschel
from Marymount College*



When someone says the word "Christmas", immediate thoughts for some go to the department stores filled with toys and decorations, but to many people, including myself, it means so much more. Christmas is such an important time of the year. It needs to be reflected on surrounded with loved ones. When I think of Christmas the first thing I think of is the weather. Most of our family live in Brisbane which is always stinking hot. Traditionally for others, Christmas lunches are roasts and hot vegetables, but it's too hot to have that there, so my family has always had a cold cut lunch instead. Then follows a game of either backyard cricket with all the cousins and uncles, Marco Polo in the pool, or hide and go seek, or as we like to call it, "Who can get stuck under Uncle Paul's house first".

The thing that sticks out the most about Christmas in my mind is the sense of community, seeing everyone in the Catholic community come together for Christmas Eve Mass: there's usually so many people that some have to sit outside, the tree to the side of the altar under which people leave gifts for the less fortunate, and old friends catching up after Mass. This all makes me proud to say that I am a part of our wonderful parish.

Sometimes, especially as a young person, we take Christmas for granted. We get so caught up in the commercial side of Christmas that we forget what it's really all about: celebrating the birth of Jesus. We forget that half of the word Christmas is CHRIST. Once we take a breath and forget about the planning and present buying, we are able to reflect on our faith and take time to appreciate that by going to Mass to celebrate the beginning of the life of Jesus. Christmas is an amazing time of the year and is probably the holiday I look forward to most, and I hope everyone in the Parish has lovely relaxing holidays, and Santa visits you all.



*by Aisling Brennan,
formerly from Elanora State High and
now studying journalism at Griffith
University*

In these weeks leading up to Christmas, my mind wanders back to past celebrations and starts getting excited for the upcoming holiday. As a child, little parcels would arrive from Ireland addressed to Mum, but, really they were for me and would be stashed under the tree and the guessing game would begin. Christmas day was a wonderful time.

Before bed on Christmas Eve, my family would light a candle for Jesus Christ to help him find his way into our hearts and home. After this, I'd be tucked up in bed willing myself to sleep so the morning would come as quick as possible. I'd wake up early on Christmas morning with the hurried excitement only a child can have when presents are involved. However, I was only allowed to look at what Santa had brought me as traditionally in my Father's family, presents were to be opened after Christmas Mass. So off we'd go to 7 am Mass and celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ with the rest of the Parish. I was always a little upset when Father Kevin would ask the children what Santa had brought them and I couldn't answer because my presents were waiting for me unopened at home. When we did get home though, all that sadness quickly dispersed with the joy of presents, food and being with loved ones. As I grew up, those traditions still remain. Mum is now the one who complains about getting up early for Mass and I can wait until afterwards to open my presents.

Christmas to me is a time that we celebrate the birth of Christ and we remember the man he grew to be – a man made in the image of God sent to Earth to love and protect us. Oh, and presents!



*by Conor Maitland
from Palm Beach/Currumbin State High*

We start off on Christmas Eve by meeting relatives from far away, who plan to take every last bed possible. Then we head off to church late on Christmas Eve, singing Christmas carols and getting swamped by energetic and joyful people. On returning home, my sister and I plan on what we are doing the next day. While I'm trying to sleep with hype, my parents and uncle Karl are having fun sharing stories and preparing for the big day tomorrow. I wake up at around four-five in the morning and eagerly locate treats while sneaking past my uncle on the couch. He is the one who will be due to make eggnog for every kid on the block.

My parents slowly wake, and my dad cooks some of his famous bacon and eggs with many other things like banana pancakes and maple syrup. We sit together as a family and take turns to open presents.

The day continues with relatives arriving and leaving, and all the adults launch my countless cousins into the pool. By the afternoon, most of the sweets are eaten by my sister and I, and after that all you can smell is the fresh scent of turkey roast with rosemary and other tasty herbs and spices, which is being cooked next to a large pork crackling. Everyone sits down to eat dinner and we all dig into the turkey.

At the end of the day, the vibe in the air is so joyfully overwhelming that I am hopeful the next 364 days of the year go fast and we can do it all again soon. Christmas means this to me because of what my mum, dad, relatives, friends and Jesus have done for me.



*By Ivy Mullins,
All Saints' College, Robina*



When I was a little girl, Christmas meant trying to get my little sister not to cry on Santa's knee (looking back at the photos, it is evident I wasn't successful!). It meant waking at five am and creeping upstairs to open the presents Santa had left. It meant Coco Pops for breakfast and cutting the plastic wrapping off toys. It meant dragging the four collapsible tables upstairs in readiness to seat 58 relatives, and nodding politely to claims of "aren't you getting tall" or "I remember when you were this big" when they arrived. It meant chicken on bread rolls for lunch, soft drink that fizzed up your nose and feeding your salad to the dog when no one was looking. It meant watching the adults trying not to hit cars in the street with flying champagne corks and trying to sneak another ice cream while no one was looking.

Now what Christmas means to me has altered slightly. While I still try to feed the dog my salad, drag the four collapsible tables upstairs and eat Coco Pops for breakfast, I have learnt from the numerous knocks on the front door as the family pours in - hugging, kissing, placing hot chickens on the kitchen table and the six packs of beer in the eskies, that Christmas time is the one time when the majority of my family is together, talking and laughing and reading the lame jokes out of bon bons, which I have to explain to the younger cousins. And that is something special. Contrary to what my eight year old sister may try to convince you, Christmas is not about the presents. Christmas means family to me.



Pastoral Parish Council PPC Report:

The new Council has been formulating objectives in attempting to operate from a broad overview to promote a sharing of responsibility for the development of a more vital Christian community. They seek

- to prepare a calendar of regular parish functions and persons responsible for their organisation;
- to examine our communication mediums, eg., Newsletter, website, magazine, pamphlets, and review effectiveness;
- to clarify the role of the committees formed – Liturgy, Welcoming, Communication, Social Justice;
- to review arrangements for hospitality at Masses;
- to ascertain details of facilities/services provided by parish such as Columbarium, Hall hire, Special Activities, etc;
- to develop the idea of portfolios for PPC members so that each member has information on a specific area;
- to develop a definite structure for meetings.

Sadly there have been three resignations from the new Council owing to family commitments and commitment to other ministries: Mary McCarthy, John Maitland and Graham Callaghan. We thank them for their desire to assist on the PPC and wish them well in their future endeavours.



Ecumenical Peace Service

by Peter Cossins

The Ecumenical Peace Service at St Cuthbert's Anglican Church, Tweed Heads, was well attended by parishioners from Tweed Heads Anglican Church, Kingscliff Uniting Church, Kingscliff Anglican Church, Banora Point Uniting Church, Tweed Heads Catholic Church, Elanora Uniting Church, Palm Beach/Coolangatta Anglican Church, Twin Towns Uniting Church Coolangatta and St Augustine's/ St Monica's Catholic Churches, Coolangatta/Tugun.

The colourful service offered prayers to overcome obstacles to peace, such as human violence and abuse, natural disasters, drought and famine, destruction of our natural habitat, pollution and conflicts and disputes among us. Rev Kevin Bourke of St Cuthbert's spoke of peace as much more than just an absence of conflict or war. The peace offered by God is so much more and instils in us, a hunger for justice, dignity, and an end to distrust that culminates in suspicion and conflict, promoting wisdom and patience in an overall environment of love and trust.



The ecumenical services sponsored by the Border Council of Churches are special spiritual events, recommended to all in the future.

Royal Commission - Curse or Blessing?

by a parishioner

The recent past has been a challenging time for us all as Catholics when we have been confronted by the need for a Royal Commission into the history of sexual abuse that has come to light. Maybe it can be good for us to be able to step back a little and understand our reactions as the Catholic community.

Some have reacted with anger that this has happened at all and have felt that our 'dirty washing' is out for the world to see and they feel that they have been tarnished along with the church simply by being Catholic.

Others have reacted 'judgmentally' with blame for the victims accusing them of 'making it up in order to get money' or 'there is no way that happened'. This is one way for us as Catholics to become stuck in the cycle of denial, blame, sadness and anger. Sadly, this is hurting ourselves and also the victims.

Others are 'hearing' the incredible sadness of the damage that has happened to so many innocent children who now, as adults, struggle with the on-going effect of their terrible experiences at the hands of someone they trusted. We are realizing that this wound continues to weep, not only in the victim's life (now adult) but its effect is felt in their family and causes further wounding. Few of us realise the impact of hurt that this sexual, emotional, psychological and spiritual wound has in the everyday lives of the sufferer. We can understand this more when we reflect on the reality that 'Hurt people HURT people' and many families of these victims will certainly agree with this statement because of the way the parent's wound has impacted on them.

Some of us have read Bishop Geoffrey Robinson's book or have heard him speak at functions, or interviewed on television. Some have become angry with him for speaking out but sadly this anger can be badly misplaced. Thankfully there are some few institutional voices who have added their support to Bishop Robinson's words.

Jesus told us that GOD IS LOVE!

I believe that the Jesus I have come to know will be sitting with the victim and the perpetrator (who often, was also abused) and Jesus would simply be holding the wounds of each so lovingly and calling for us to do the same. He most certainly would not be judging and adding further pain to the victim. (How does the victim feel when they are hearing themselves judged and criticised and blamed by the 'good Catholics' around them?) This is not the way of JESUS.

The challenge for me and for us??? Maybe we can first of all pray for ALL caught up in this sad situation. Maybe we can make sure that no child is placed in a potentially distressing situation. The statistics show that most of the sexual abuse is happening within our own homes, or from friends of the family. How challenging is this?

We can pray and act in the name of all victims of sexual, psychological, physical, emotional or religious abuse and have our voices heard in the places that matter. Let us pray for the Royal Commission and for all those whose lives have led them to need to be involved in this great sadness.



A Parable of Christmas



"I *hate* Christmas," she announced, stretching out her short, fat legs encased in black footless tights. "I *hate* Christmas!"

There was no response. The four of them sat suitably distanced on the bus seat: the teenager who had spoken, an older woman who held her head erect and clutched her handbag, a young man, well dressed with a flashy back-pack, and an older man, rather shabby and tired in appearance with a battered brief-case.

The 209 bus was already ten minutes late. It was the week before Christmas, and the prospective travelers knew how crowded the bus would be, when it did eventually arrive. Then there was the crush of last minute Christmas shopping with the frustration of choosing economical gifts and special food treats when much was now *sold out*. So the four on the bus seat stared straight ahead.

"I *hate* Christmas," she tried a little louder, closing her bright red lips with a vengeance. "I *hate* it. Relatives all visiting with the 'My, *haven't you grown!*' The presents – underclothes again from my Mum. She shops - Dad *never* shops. A tube of pink lipstick from my Nan hoping I will wear it! The same *every* year! I *hate Christmas*." Again there was a shocked silence. The older woman pursing her lips and raising her eyebrows, clutching her handbag even more tightly. After a few stunned moments the young man leaned forward and said, "You don't know how lucky you are! You got oldies who care about you and lots of things happening at your place for Christmas."

"What?" she retorted. "Don't tell me that *you* don't get presents – with your best quality duds and shoes. Someone looks after *you*." The two older bus-seat occupiers became alert, looking from one young person to the other.

"Oh, yes, I have everything that money can buy! My parents are top of the tree business tycoons. They earn lots of money and it takes up *all* of their time. I don't even know how they came to find enough

time to *have* me. They don't give presents, because I get whatever I want all year round. They don't celebrate Christmas, certainly don't have time for relationships with relatives. They spend the holiday away at a resort or in bed recovering from the many office parties they must attend to network their business. "Anyway," he said more calmly, "why celebrate an event that happened 2000 years ago? It's just old history!"

The older man and woman were listening intently. The man spoke thoughtfully, "It isn't history, as such, you know. Christmas is a *living* experience. The Christmas story is about a living presence bringing peace and goodwill to humankind. *Peace* and *goodwill* – those are the words in the story of Christmas."

"There's not much peace and goodwill around," the young man retorted. "Do you watch the news at all? So much for a *living presence* of peace and goodwill!"

"You're looking in all the wrong places," the older man slowly explained. "Last week I came home at dusk, parked my old car on the footpath and forgot to switch my car lights off. Not long after, a passing cyclist knocked on my door to tell me my car lights were on. He had to stop, get off his bike and take the time to let me know. If I had tried to start the car in the morning, I would not have felt too peaceful I can tell you, and what is more my lack of peace would have radiated to others around me. His action of goodwill created a living presence of peace."

"That's such a small thing," the girl who hated Christmas mused, screwing up her nose. "Hardly worth mentioning beside the wars in the world!" "It was a big thing in my life," the older man assured her. "And the part that you have missed is that the cyclist had to *put himself out* to bring me peace. It is up to all of us to *BE* the living presence of Christmas! Can you imagine the energy of peace and goodwill if we *all* put ourselves out to bring peace and goodwill to others?" "The bus is coming!" the girl exclaimed. "Can I slide in behind one of you? I don't have any money to buy a ticket."

"Here, dear," the older lady touched the girl's arm, "Don't come behind me, but *with* me. I'll buy you a return ticket. I was only going to spend the money on pale pink lipstick for my granddaughter."

Pat Mullins



Many are the campaigns for worthy causes, for example, growing facial hair in Movember to raise funds for prostate cancer; fasting from alcohol or our favourite food in Febfast to generate money for sufferers with depression and mental illness. We have had a I-o-n-g campaign in politics stacked with criticism. Not only do we criticise politicians, but also others in our Parish! What if we had a parish campaign of our own – not to generate funds but to cultivate goodwill, for example, *Cut the Criticism for Christmas?*

We could use the slogan in our weekly newsletter and wherever we could, to remind us, when we feel like being critical of another, or a group, or another point of view: in the old Indian saying, "to walk in another's moccasins". If we did take up the *Cut the Criticism for Christmas* slogan, it would give us permission when

A Campaign for Christmas

somebody began to criticise in conversation to say good-naturedly, "Hey! Aren't we cutting criticism for Christmas?" – a reminder to them and to us. If a situation creates serious unrest and hurt, let us offer gentle constructive suggestions.

There once was a leader of a group who led with martial law, very organised, very definite directions, determined. Behind her back, she was nick-named *General Macarthur*.

At one combined function, this leader took an instant dislike to the overall person in charge, referring to her as *General Macarthur*. There was a great deal of suppressed giggling, which did not go unnoticed. Eventually the group confessed that this indeed was the name to which they

referred to *her*. She was shocked but, giving the matter open consideration, she realised that what she had disliked in the overall leader was in fact what she disliked in her own personality. In accepting this, she and the overall leader became firm friends, and the rest of the group learned a great lesson. She didn't change! But we were able to accept her (and ourselves) a little better. The motto is, "be careful what you criticise in others!"

The angels at Christmas were told the Christ-child came to bring peace and goodwill. Let's all try to generate more peace and goodwill at home, at work, at church and in society.

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus said, "What you do to the least (lovable?) amongst you, you do to me". The one who most disturbs us is our Christ.....a sober thought this Christmas!



In a big green shed at the back of Currumbin a group of young boys are bent intently over a lathe as they watch the older man slowly turn the piece of wood in his hands into something beautiful. They are excited because soon it will be their turn and they too will have the opportunity to create something amazing from a mis-shapen piece of wood and it will be theirs, made by them!!

This is The Woodwork and Craft Club located at St Augustine's School where dedicated community members patiently teach students the art and the skill of creating items of woodwork. Currently over 40 students are participating in this unique mentoring program where they get to meet and work with some of our local senior citizens. The boys will be taught how to make wooden tool boxes, rolling pins, CD stands and the art of 'marquetry'.

A recent donation from the Tugun Community Bank Branch of Bendigo Bank will enable the Club to purchase a mobile wood lathe for the facility and increase security for the site. The Tugun Community Bank has been supporting the organisation for a number of years and is proud to be associated with such a successful local program.



The Craft of Learning

Wendy Handley, Chair of the Tugun Community Bank, said the Bank was eager to support such a practical example of the whole community working together to achieve great goals. She said, "Over the past ten years the Tugun Community Bank has given back more than \$500,000 to the local community through grants and sponsorships and this is one of our shining examples".

The Club was started by Tom Rolfe over twenty years ago. Increased operations commenced in their full-time location in April 2011 and enabled the group to fulfil its core function of teaching primary school students. "The aim of this program is to provide

something for those students who prefer to be using their hands to learn and achieve. They are also introduced to a range of engineering equipment as well as the carpentry" said Club President, Brad Canfell.

A group within the Club, 'Toys for Kids', devote their time all year round to making wooden toys which are then distributed amongst the Gold Coast's disadvantaged at Christmas. The Woodwork and Craft Club is a not-for-profit association and membership is open to both men and women.



*"Dear God,
Remind me that the greatest gifts are wrapped
in people, not paper"*



*Farewell from Year 7's 2013,
at St Augustine's*

by Maddie, Maggie, & Hannah.

Thank you for kindly donating money and supporting us in our fundraising activities, such as our footy tipping competition, PNG appeal and powerballs, just to name a few.

We would especially like to thank Father John, who has eagerly held our school



On the behalf of all of the years 7's we would like to thank the parish community or helping us to get to this day.

liturgies. Also to the other parish volunteers who have helped out with the Eucharist at Masses and also at Reconciliation and Confirmation.

Thanks again to everyone in the parish who have made our time at St A's so special.





CELEBRATIONS!

The following celebrations have blessed our Parish life since our last edition. Please let us know your important occasions so that we can publish them and acknowledge significant events.

BIRTHDAYS

Anton Keiss - 90 Years

Cynthia Hannebach - 60 Years



BAPTISMS

William Priestly
Deegan Richardson
Kohan Richardson
Ivy Richardson
Harry Cooper
Lachlan Pratt
Oliver Pratt
Raphael Roberson

Jack Ritchie
Leo Gore
Eloise Marchant
Noah Connelly
Heidi Hamilton
Billy Wheeler
Fletcher Johnson



REST IN PEACE

We mourn with the loved ones and pray for the following parishioners who have died.

Margaret Griffiths
Philip Nielsen
Thomas (Terry) Flanagan
Ronald Lovell
James McDougall

Thomas Rolfe
John Summers
William Shillingford
Ramon Orchard
Neil Roggenkamp

WEDDINGS



Thomas Murphy and Laura Stokes
Nicholas Greeneberg and Amy Harrison
Florian Mueller and Louise Grogan
Joel Broughton and Christina Bass
James Tracey and Jessica Bool

Dudley & Betty Ryan
- 60 Years



Tony & Maureen
Maguire - 45 years

John & Rose Rixon
- 45 years



Brenda & Vic
Hindmarsh - 45 Years

MARRIAGE RENEWAL



A huge bunch of red roses adorned the Saturday night Mass on the 19 October, when Orlando and Trilby Rebello celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary. The couple returned from Perth to St Monica's, which was their parish between 1980-1989, to renew their marriage vows, surrounded by their children and grandchildren, who gathered from Sydney, Melbourne and Tweed Heads.

Photo: Courtesy of joliphotos.com

Our Extended Parish Community

Les O'Keefe is a former Australian Olympic backstroke swimming champion. Today, as the result of a severe stroke, he is confined to a wheel-chair and to exercise in the hydrotherapy pool.

Les married his lovely Val, a talented seamstress, 57 years ago. On the 2nd October last, before Fr John, they renewed their marriage vows at a Mass celebrated at Domain Aged Care Home at Kirra.

Val looked beautiful in a tiara and carried a posy of lily-of-the-

valley and iceland poppies in orange and yellow tones to match her outfit. She was supported by her daughter, Amanda, and granddaughter, Amylee. Les and his brother, Ray, sported colourful Hawaiian shirts. Val gave to Les the wedding ring he had never owned. Amid the gathering of excited residents and staff, Bernadette Duffy sang hymns and old favourites from the couples' early life.



A special day of blessings all round!



From the
Editor's Desk
by Pat Mullins



This December *Tugun Lights up for Christmas*. The lighted blue cross of St Augustine's shines over Coolangatta. As church, we too have a message to lighten the hearts of all. In my teenage years, our family took a small child from the orphanage each year over Christmas. We gave the children pretty dresses, new shoes and toys. One little girl had wispy hair and we bought her a card of bobby (hair) pins. When it came time for her to return to the orphanage, we were packing up her gifts when she asked, "Can I keep these bobby pins?" "Of course," we said. "You can keep all the clothes and toys". She said, "Yes, but those clothes and toys will go into the cupboard so everyone can share them, but these pins I can keep. They can be mine". Perhaps this is the light of Christmas – recognising what "is mine"...a realisation of what the birth of God into human life in Jesus means to each one of us – the treasure we each are as God's creation. This treasure each of us is invited to find, (even though a bit muddy) is our unique gift which has light for the world.

In this issue of *Augustine & Monica* amid the bustle of shopping and parties, we seek the true meaning of Christmas, as celebrated by the bright lights of our young people Lucy, Aisling, Conor and Ivy. We endeavour to throw light on the events of these last few months which have created communion among us: the energetic Celebration of Vatican II, the Parish Picnic and the Ecumenical Peace Service. We celebrate the light given to us in the gifts of those such as the Funeral Caterers, Doris Zagdanski, Nell and Del the flower ladies, Maurice Sheehan, one of our sponsors Bendigo Bank, Br Ted, Maureen Delarue and Marge and Dorothy gathering used specs for Sri Lanka. We acknowledge the mud on our treasure in the articles on the Royal Commission into Sexual Abuse and in our campaign to *Cut Criticism* in Advent, and as we remember new life and life passing, we note the love in the air of marriages and especially renewal of marriage vows.

Christmas lights lift our spirits in a celebration of joy and praise for the Presence of Christ alive today in the hearts of all those around us. A truly Happy Christmas and thanks to the A.M. committee and to all parishioners and the community.



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The material in this journal remains
the property of the editor.

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Life moves on, and colourful parishioner, Maureen Delarue is moving from Bayswater, next to St Monica's, to take up residence in the Retirement Village at Kincumber, Central NSW, to be closer to her family

Maureen began her education in Victoria with the Josephites and continued at St Joseph's Clovelly, Sydney. Music is in her genes. Her father played the flute and her mother the piano and violin. Maureen began music lessons at an early age and sat her first music exam when six years old, gaining her Letters to teach music while still at school.

*Au Revoir,
Maureen Delarue*

Her Dad was in the Navy and lost his life in the War, after which Maureen had to take a more responsible role in the family. She also became involved in talent quests run by Legacy, which led to her being awarded a scholarship to the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, where she learned piano from famous teacher, Alexander Sverjensky. Maureen was also much in demand as a church organist in the days when music was required at regular Benedictions as well as Masses.

Married to Alf Curnow, a friend of her elder brother, they had a family of five children. When Alf retired they moved to Runaway Bay and later to Tugun, where Alf lost his battle with cancer. Fr Kevin Smith began his ministry in the parish on a Friday

in 1993 and buried Alf on the following Monday. Some years later Maureen married John Delarue, who was a friend of Jock and Nell Fraser, and who had supported her in rehabilitation after surgery. John passed away after succumbing to Alzheimer's disease in 2012.

War again brought grief to Maureen and her family, when her grandson was killed in Afghanistan.

Maureen, though suffering knee and hip surgery of later years, has shared her rich musical gifts with the parish, and also will not be forgotten for her legendary sausage rolls.

*May this new adventure
bring you many blessings,
Maureen.*



Maurice Sheahan 60 years in St Vincent de Paul Society



Maurice receiving his award from State President St Vincent de Paul, Brian Moore – 60 years service.



afternoon tea following the ceremonies, in true Vincentian style; a magnificent feast enjoyed by young boys who were missing Mum's home cooking, and a style of hospitality that has not changed over the years!!

Becoming a bank officer in a career spanning 34 years, Maurice worked in many towns/suburbs of Victoria and New South Wales and worked with the Society wherever he went. He found he was welcomed everywhere and that Vincentians were always the nicest people, who made him feel at home.



Reserved seating at Maurice's Mass

of money each month to Lismore. Conference members would visit the local hospital before rosary each Wednesday, but very limited assistance was required in this area.

Kotara, in Newcastle: the focus was on prayer. The Parish Priest would attend the first part of the meeting each week, gleaning ideas for his Sunday homily. Requests for aid there were limited as the Parish was in a wealthy area. The main call to duty was to 'check in' the homeless men into the Mathew Talbot House each week. This refuge was located on the Newcastle Waterfront and run by the head office of the Society. The Parish Conferencers assisted on a roster basis. It catered for 20/30 men each night. No alcohol was allowed and each man had to produce a silver token to prove that he had had a shower – clean clothes were provided if needed – he then proceeded to the dining room for a dinner of meat and three veg, followed by sweets and a clean bed.

Maurice joined the Society in 1953 whilst in Leaving or Year 5 at St Patrick's College, Ballarat, Victoria. That group was known as Junior St Vincent de Paul. The boys would visit Nazareth House (a home for the elderly), distributing boiled lollies for the women and 3 or 4 cigarettes for the men. They always stopped and chatted to each resident about football, races, current affairs, the weather, etc. The boys enjoyed their short escape from Boarding School, some of them sharing the odd smoke, courtesy of the Society! The highlight of their two years was induction and the festival Mass, organised by the Conference members, or more importantly the



L-R: Regional President, Nev Byrnes; State President, Brian Moore; Conference President, Kevin Devine; Maurice Sheahan; Fr John Scarrott PP;



Maurice's & Margaret's Family



Gathering for the Celebration.



Parish helped Maurice to celebrate!

Tugun: Maurice joined the Conference here in 1994 after being introduced by Norma Evans. For many years he did the Friday home visits with the late Bunny Mullins. Sadly his legs began to weaken due to seemingly endless surgeries (and old age)!! And with some other health issues, Maurice was forced to relinquish visitations. The fact that a large number of visits were to top storey dwellings accessed by rickety stairs only hastened his decision. At the present time, he still assists with the Christmas and Winter appeals and compiles the applications for the annual St V de P bursaries.

Congratulations Maurice!