



Vol 33 Spring Edition - 2014



Augustine & Monica

Walk with Us



Walking in the footsteps of Monica and Augustine

"We are companions on the journey
Breaking bread and sharing life;
And in the love we bear
Is the hope we share –
For we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.
We have been gifted with each other,
and we are called by the Word of the Lord –
to act with justice, to love tenderly
And to walk humbly with our God,
to walk humbly with our God."

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St . Monica's Tugun

WELCOMES

Visitors, Newcomers, Locals

We are very pleased
to have you join
us in prayer

Weekend Masses Weekday Mass
Sat Vigil - 6pm Tues - 5pm
Sun - 6.45am - 9.30am



St . Augustine's
Coolangatta

WELCOMES

Visitors, Newcomers, Locals

We are very pleased
to have you join
us in prayer

Weekend Masses Weekday Mass
Sun - 8am Wed - 7am
Fri - 7am (except 1st Fri - 9am)
(Reconciliation 8.30 before Mass)

Fr John Comments



no longer attack the Church as such; they simply no longer bother to listen to what we teach. That is sad because the Church has much to offer the world and our society, about its values and its direction.

A study in the English *Tablet* (12-7-14) reported on the attitude to the Catholic Church in England:

'Negative attitudes towards the Catholic Church and its leadership have increased in recent years due to hostility to official teaching and clerical sexual abuse, a new academic study has found. An analysis of 180 opinion polls among British adults from the 1950s up until the present day, showed that while latent and institutional anti-Catholicism has died away, there has been a steady decline in esteem for Church and clergy. The findings are revealed in an article by Dr Clive Field, who

As we approach the Feasts of our Parish Patrons, Augustine and Monica, we once again reflect on who we are as a parish community. In his time, Augustine faced intense challenges to Christianity, himself having dallied with many of them for his first thirty years. We too are experiencing this same decline in esteem for the Church and the clergy in Australia. Many people in Australian society

holds honorary academic posts at the Universities of Birmingham and Manchester, for the latest edition of the *Journal of Religion in Europe*. Dr Field's research of the opinion polls found that particularly since 2000 hostility to the Church as an institution has increased.'

The survey also found that: 'Catholics – and not just the general public – believe the Church is out of touch on moral and gender issues. This, Dr Field argues, suggests that hostility to the Church is not a new form of anti-Catholicism.' Pope Francis fared well in the polls. Large numbers of people appreciate his manner and his way of proclaiming our faith. We also need to learn his respectful and positive way of living and proclaiming our faith. We, as Church, especially those who are not clergy, need to realise, that according to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, they are also called to assume leadership in contributing to society. If the clergy have lost some of their clout, you have positions of influence in family and society.

What is the lesson for us today? We have many challenges facing us in contemporary society. The issue of compassion towards those seeking refuge in our country is respected by neither of the major parties. The harsh budget measures handed out to our young people, especially those under thirty are unchristian. The lack of respect for human rights in our country, with so many indigenous people and mentally ill people ending up incarcerated, are challenges for all of us. The lack of respect for women evidenced in so much of society is a sickness that affects us all. The list could continue. What I ask each of us to consider is, "What am I going to do about it?"



From Pope Francis' "Joy of the Gospel"

I ask God to give us more politicians capable of sincere and effective dialogue aimed at healing the deepest roots – and not simply the appearances – of the evils in our world! Politics, though often denigrated, remains a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, in as much as it seeks the common good. We need to be convinced that charity is the principle, not only of micro-relationships (with friends, with family members or within small groups) but also of macro-relationships (social, economic and political ones).

I beg the Lord to grant us more politicians who are genuinely disturbed by the state of society; the people, the lives of the poor! It is vital that

government leaders and financial leaders take heed and broaden their horizons, working to ensure that all citizens have dignified work, education and healthcare. Why not turn to God and ask him to inspire their plans?

I am firmly convinced that openness to the transcendent can bring about a new political and economic mindset which would help to break down the wall of separation between the economy and the common good of society. (paragraph 205)

Any Church community, if it thinks it can comfortably go its own way, without creative concern and effective co-operation in helping the poor to live with dignity, and reaching out to everyone, will also risk breaking down, however much it may talk about social issues or criticise governments. It will easily drift into a spiritual worldliness camouflaged by religious practices, unproductive meetings and empty talk. (paragraph 207)



Congratulations

The Parishioners of St Augustine's and St Monica's join with Mrs Jann Stuckey in congratulating Elizabeth Fritz: "I am sure many residents will join with me in congratulating Liz Fritz upon receiving the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) award in the Queen's birthday honours. Liz has touched the lives of thousands of vulnerable people in over 27 years' service at Blair Athol Homeless Accommodation Support Services at Bilinga. A determined and humble advocate for those less fortunate, it is fitting that Liz be recognised with this award which I am sure she will accept in her trademark modest way."

(photo courtesy of Jann Stuckey's Electoral Office)



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



The Dream Of A Journal Which lives 10 Years On by Paula Lancaster

I know it is clichéd but when asked to write an article for A.M.'s 10th anniversary I couldn't believe it had been 10 years since A.M.'s first publication. Reflecting on this moment

made me feel proud and sad; proud that I had been part of a wonderful initiative for our Parish and sad because the people who helped me initiate this wonderful task have now passed or moved on.

As part of the Parish Pastoral Council we discussed the idea of a journal/magazine that would reflect on past and present issues in relation to our Parish. I was stepping down from the Council to have my family but wanted to do something to assist the Parish. The idea of the magazine seemed feasible and the committee members obliged me by having meetings at my home.

With my husband's publishing skills and my computing and English skills, John and I worked on a template design for the journal. It was important to Father Kevin and the committee that the publication be professional and unique – thus the decision that it be a journal. After many meetings we finally agreed on a structure that would be the formula for each edition.

Our meetings were not only about the journal. They were very much about new friendships. They were about John and Elizabeth teaching me about growing vegetables, natural therapies and their wisdom from life experiences. They were about special people giving me support. It was

a time when I had ventured away from being a career woman dedicated to teaching, to a stay at home Mum bringing up two beautiful children. They were special moments where we sat discussing articles and editing as we shared tea and homemade deserts.

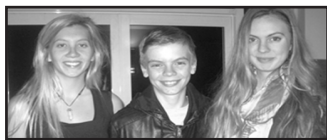
Can you imagine a room full of perfectionists? Well! Perfectionists debated where a comma should be placed down to how many spaces there are or should be between headings from one page to the next. We killed many trees and worked to all hours of the night to get the journal "just right" for our printer's deadlines. Many thanks to Nan, Rose Rixon, who stepped in on those afternoons to bath, feed and put Joseph and Bella to bed while we worked on tirelessly without domestic interruptions.

As time passed we were privileged to have many people join our team when time availed them. All additions added to the depth of the journal and the supportive friendship group. My commitments to a growing family meant I needed to resign from the Journal because of the time occupation associated with the publication and editing of the Journal. I loved my time with the Journal and appreciated, more than anything, the sense of belonging to a caring group.

I will always value the satisfaction associated with producing a Journal and working with a wonderful group of people. When time next avails me I will once again join such a group. If you are reading this article and have some time spare I cannot commend this group more highly – on a satisfaction and friendship level, it is ten out of ten!

God Bless John and Elizabeth. Thanks for all you gave me. I miss you both so very much. Best wishes and blessings.

Paula Lancaster



Who's young and would like some fun?

St Monica's and St Augustine's parish now have a fledgling youth group, thanks to Emmanuel, some courageous, sparkling young people and a small number of parents. The group plans to meet every second Friday evening between 6.00 and 8.00pm in St Monica's hall. The plan aims at a fun-filled and exciting way to learn how to talk to God as young people, to hear more about the story, beliefs and values of our Church, and importantly to get to know each other through games and socialising. The evening will climax with a meal.

Early arrivals at a function in July were Alice Tate, Kitty and

Joseph Rodgers (pictured in the photo). When asked why they decided to be part of a youth group, they said that the parish was made up of older people and the younger generation needed to know why Church was important to the older parishioners, to keep the life of the Church going. Most of the members of the group were aged between 12 and 16 years. If or when they came to Church, they sat like they did in school and tended to switch off – rather than pay attention or learn much. Whereas the youth group planned to learn by games and activities which were energising. Further, a young person was more likely to listen to another young person who experienced life as they did, and who unexpectedly talked about God in a relaxed and friendly, fun-filled atmosphere.

The leaders of the youth group welcome all young people, whether they have friends there yet or not; and also interested parents and helpers. *Who's game for the challenge?*

Thank-you Marge

Our thanks to Marge Heriot who is retiring as our parishioner representative on the Border Council of Churches. Marge has done a sterling job over the last few years, reminding us of ecumenical events and encouraging us to be part of the broader Christian movement on the Coast. Thank-you Marge.



Omission

The last issue of A.M. omitted to acknowledge the prayer on the front cover entitled, *The Power of the Resurrection*.

It was borrowed from the prayer card of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, entitled *A Prayer for Solidarity*.

Our apologies for omitting to acknowledge our source.



Art-work

We thank Janet Mann for the original floral art-work on the right hand corner of the front page reminding us that Spring is upon us.



TUGUN BEACH (formerley Foodworks), 459 Golden Four Drive, Tugun Ph:5534 5414



Rediscovering Peace, Healing and Happiness

by

Fr Hugh Brown O.Carm,
Parish Priest, Port Melbourne & Middle Park

I'd like to share with you a few moments from my life that taught me about happiness. Back in 2001, I turned 50 and found myself deeply unhappy. I had lost my sense of joy and purpose. I felt I just wasn't good enough to be a priest. You could say I was having a 'mid-life crisis' and I probably was. As a result, my heart – my whole being – took me on a 10-year "journey" so I could find 'happiness' (whatever that meant).

I left both the Parish and the Order to live on my own and find my own way of working. Although I'm probably not being very theologically correct, can I share the lessons I learned with you?

Lesson 1 - Care for each other:

I settled for a while in the Latrobe Valley where I was fortunate to stay among people who weren't wealthy, or by and large scholarly. They lived simply. As neighbours we had our differences; but when the chips were down – like when our area was ravaged by the Black Saturday bushfires – they were there, caring for those less fortunate.

Lesson 2 - God loves you, no matter how small you think you are:

I also spent some time in a small town called Churchill. There I would look at the night sky. I was in awe of both its splendour and its size. Compared to the night sky, we're a speck. Yet, despite this, God made each and every one of us. More importantly, God loves us all with a generosity that is as vast as our universe.

Lesson 3 - All can be forgiven:

I then moved to Morwell where I gave a sermon one Sunday. Someone shuffled in and hurled verbal abuse at me, my deacon, and even the young altar server. It was unpleasant, to say the least. I was furious. When it came time for the Sign of Peace, I thought, "Hugh - swallow your pride and go and wish your attacker peace". When I did, he cried. After the service, I went over and asked if he'd join me for a coffee. I'm glad I did.

We had a wonderful time. After many cups of coffee, I learned my attacker's name was Michael. He was abused as a child. He was HIV positive and had cancer. Just released from prison the day before (which was also his 70th birthday), Michael had been dumped at a hospital that wasn't prepared to do anything for him. As we parted, he asked, "Father, would you do my funeral?" I replied, "Michael, it would be a privilege!"

Realisation:

It took some time but I eventually realised I was sad because I was chasing a vague thing called "happiness". My years in the "wilderness" showed me that happiness isn't something you hunt down. It doesn't jump out at you and say, "Here I am!" Through the goodwill and good sense of others in my life, I now see that happiness only comes with faith. Faith allows you to be at peace with yourself. I hope your life journey takes you on a path to rediscover peace, healing and happiness.

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The Shoes We Fill!

by Pat Mullins

This is a story about Gunther, a wealthy industrialist from the far North of Europe. He and his family visited friends in Queensland a decade or so ago. Coming from a climate of freezing temperatures and snowy landscapes for most of the year, Gunther was fascinated by the weather, life-style and the freedom of the casual attire of North Queensland. So much so that he returned to Australia some years later intent on spending more time in the North. He wanted to embrace this culture – he wanted for the time of his visit, he said, to BE a Queenslander.

Immediately on arrival, before driving North, he bought himself a pair of shorts, a bright floral shirt and a pair of rubber thongs, as he said, so that he might fully immerse himself in the freedom of Queensland. All went well, until the first evening about a day's drive North, when he and his family presented themselves at a small restaurant for dinner. The waiter politely refused Gunther

entry on the grounds that he was wearing thongs – unsuitable footwear for a respectable restaurant. Gunther was irate. He could not understand it. His Queensland friends tried to explain that there is much more to being a Queenslander than the way we dress, or our life-style, which are externals.

There is much more to anyone of us, in fact, than what can be SEEN (even though these externals reflect who we are and do in some way create us). There is even more to who we are than we ourselves know ourselves to be. WE are MYSTERY! We are PRESENCE. How hard it is to be with others, and believe that just our PRESENCE, the mystery of who we are, is enough. We seek always to strive to better the externals, the words, the gestures, our appearance (all of which it is true, reflect and create our presence) but we are always MORE even than that. We are a spatial presence.

It is said that God is not a noun. God is a verb, a doing word! We are made in God's image. We too are the verbs TO BE. Like God in our very being, in our PRESENCE, by simply being with and for another, we are God's gift in space and time.



ANNUAL COMMISSIONING MASS for Pastoral Councils

Parish Pastoral Council Representatives attended the Annual Commissioning Mass at St Stephen's Cathedral on Sunday 6th July at 2.30pm, celebrated by his Grace, Archbishop Mark Coleridge. There are 15 Deaneries in the Brisbane Archdiocese, all with a number of parishes attached. Coolangatta-Tugun is one of seven parish members of the South Coast Deanery covering the area of South Queensland (referred to as the Gold Coast).

All parishes in the Archdiocese were represented and a fully magnificent choir was put together with representative choristers from many parishes, which added meaning, solemnity and joy to a wonderful occasion. The Mass was concelebrated by the Archbishop with many priests representing the Archdiocese.

The Archbishop lit the special blessed candles, held by the Chairperson from each of the Pastoral Councils, from the Paschal Candle and enjoined them to carry the light of Christ to guide the leadership of service to their parishes, to:

- Plan and think with the mind of Christ

- Love and care with the heart of Christ
- And walk boldly in the footsteps of Christ

So that the light of Christ may burn more brightly in the heart of each Australian and that the Church will be transformed by the power of Christ's resurrection in our lives. Peter Cossins accepted the candle on behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council of Sts Augustine and Monica.

Below are some members and family of our Parish Pastoral Council who attended the service.



Left to right: Amanda Cossins, Kevin O'Flaherty, Pierre Chaperon, Eugene and Marion Nolan.



Terry Collins (on left) being accepted into membership of Gold Coast/Tweed Catenian Circle recently by Paul Bellhouse

What Is a Catenian?!

By Brother Peter Cossins

The Catenian Association is an international body of proudly Catholic laymen who meet at least once a month in local units called Circles, to enjoy each other's company and thereby strengthen their 'family life

and faith' through friendship. It is open to laymen (men baptised or received into the Roman Catholic Church) from the age of 21 years.

The Catenian Association was founded in Manchester (UK) in 1908, through the initiative of Bishop Casartelli, Bishop of Salford, to encourage Catholic professional and business men to associate for mutual self-help, and to develop social and family bonds. It has no political, ecumenical or theological objectives - as an Association - but is more an Association of "Brothers" (as members are termed), who themselves are active in Catholic activities and building family bonds. 'Catena' is Latin for a chain and symbolises the links of brotherhood.

The Catenian Association has branches (known as "Circles") in the United Kingdom, Malta, Ireland, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Australia and India. It has approximately 10,000 members world-wide and in 2008 celebrated its Centenary year and raised £250,000 for the Water for Life Project in Africa.

The Association has a number of objectives:

- To foster deep and long lasting friendships among members and their families;
- To provide benevolence of a spiritual, moral and financial

nature to members and their families who find themselves in difficulty or need

- To provide support to the Clergy
- To advance the interests of young Catholics and assist them in the choice or pursuit of a career.

The Circles of the Catenian Association usually meet once a month for discussion, a short meeting and dinner. Many special local events are organised throughout the year involving wives, partners, family members and clergy. One clear motivation is to be available to a wider circle of friendships and provide motivation, support and comfort to those we meet as Our Lord would expect.

Gold Coast Tweed Circle welcomed Surfers Paradise parishioner Terry Collins into their Circle recently. Terry's latest mission is to promote the Rosary among fellow Catholic men connected to the international lay movement, the Catenian association. Terry and his wife Suzanne who have been married for 32 years, pray the Rosary "religiously every night".

Terry, 69, was excited to share his passion for the Rosary with the Catenians. "I can honestly say that because we pray the Rosary every night, in 32 years we've never had a cross word to each other," he said. The couple have been making Rosary beads for over 13 years, and have sent thousands overseas. "When we say the Rosary of a night time, we put ourselves at the foot of the Cross with Mary, and we go to Jesus through the heart of Mary," he said. "The Rosary has enriched our marriage."

The Gold Coast Tweed Circle meets monthly, drawing members from Murwillumbah, Tweed, Coolangatta, Tugun, Burleigh Heads, Surfers Paradise and many other areas on the Gold Coast. More information can be obtained for Brisbane and the Gold Coast/Tweed from Paul Bellhouse, (Membership Officer) on (07) 5534-4453 or paulbellhouse@gmail.com

The main website is: www.thecatenians.co.uk and the Australian website is: www.thecatenianassociation.org.au

The Parable of the LEGO movie

by Pat Mullins



Finding ourselves with a couple of hours to fill in while our car was being serviced, the only movie available was the LEGO Movie, an ingenious computer animated Warner Bros adventure comedy film, directed and co-written by Australians Phil Lord and Chris Miller. Like the Jews of 2000 years ago, the Lego Universe waits for 'the Special', a Lego figure prophesied to save the universe from a giant construction figure known as "Lord Business". The tyrannical Lord

Business threatens to use a super weapon called the 'Kragle' (actually a tube of Krazy glue, with the label name partly worn away) to cement all lego into fixed pieces and thus to destroy all creativity in the Lego universe. The only chance of saving the universe, and allowing lego builders to change their creations, lies in finding the Piece of Resistance (actually the cap of the glue).

Our hero is an ordinary Lego construction minifigure named Emmet Brickowski, who returns to the site after hours because he has forgotten something. He accidentally falls down a hole and feels impelled to pick up an object. In a flash he passes out, experiences weird visions and wakes to find the Piece of Resistance has become a part of him. Despite his protests, the Lego construction workers

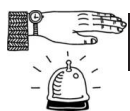
acclaim him as 'the Special'. It seems that the essence of what interests us – in television, novels, movies, games, or sport – is the eternal challenge of the choices we are called to make however simple or minor or life-changing, between the goodness or Godness within each of us and the inclinations of the immature or damaged side of us.

In the LEGO movie, Emmet's community, like the disciples of Jesus, don't understand him. He is so human, so ordinary, and seen as lacking creativity to make the changes they expect of him. Like the early Jews, we too need a Jesus who meets our expectations. Our understanding (like Emmet's Piece of Resistance) grows to be more a part of us, as we desire understanding. We realise we will never know God fully because our search for God comes on a different level to human knowing, within our spirit. Lord Business wants to control creativity by glueing his perceived perfect creations together permanently, thus preventing change, newness and joy for more and more Lego builders.

But all is not lost! Coming to Emmet's aid are a council of Superheroes, Lego figures of Batman, Wonder woman and a number more. Their best endeavours fail, however, because like all Superheroes in life and in the church, their individual creativity becomes a barrier to their working together. Just when it appears all is lost, Emmet flings himself off the edge of the universe to save his friends. Like Jesus, we are called to take a risk, to make a leap of faith. Seeing Emmet's sacrifice, Lord Business has a conversion, and Emmet is able to explain to him that he too is 'Special', as is everyone. Lord Business allows Emmet to cap the Kragle with the Piece of Resistance, and today everyone can build unique creations from Lego!

A Project to Colour

Because St Augustine lived around the year 400, when there were no cameras or mobile phones, we don't know what he and his mother looked like. But we do know that he was always reading and writing and searching for the way to make the best of the gift of his life. In his search he did turn away from the good things his mother wanted for him, and she was always praying that he would find what God meant for him, and for him to give to others. Would you like to imagine Augustine and Monica in Lego and colour them in?



Does this ring a bell?

There's a story about an elderly couple who went to the local hospital every week for the wife's medical treatment. Before returning home they bought a bottle of wine and some fresh bread, and enjoyed a meal together.

In time, the wife died.

The husband continued to come on the same day each week, buying a meal of bread and wine, sitting at the same table and remembering. He thought with love, joy, and pain of his life with his partner and of their stories.

He remembered the stories they shared of their childhood and their parents, and the stories of their grandparents, often wondering how much was truth and how much was legend.

He came every week not because he felt obliged, but because he wanted to come – to do this in memory of her. And the memory became an energy in his life, bringing out his best self and encouraging him to reach out in care and love to others.

Today it is considered modern to substitute for 'God', such words as 'Nature', 'the Universe', 'the Divine', 'Love' so as not to be seen to be too religious; and Jesus is relegated to a sentimental Sunday school hero.

But how important it is to embrace the person of Jesus, if God is to transcend the division between the Divine and the human; if we have a human presence to relate to in our everyday lives.