



'AM' Magazine
(Augustine & Monica)



Christmas
Mass Times

St. Augustine's
Church, Coolangatta

Christmas Eve
Tuesday
24th December
at 9pm
(Carols before Mass)

Christmas Day
Wednesday,
25th December
at 8am
(Carols before Mass)

St Monica's Church
Tugun

Christmas Eve
Tuesday,
24th December
at 6pm
(Carols before Mass)

Christmas Day
Wednesday
25th December
at 9:30am
(Carols before Mass)

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PAPAL VISIT & MASS in SINGAPORE on September 11- 13- 2024

[shared by Pauline Goh-Stribling]



In April 2024, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis would visit four countries in Asia, with Singapore's visit taking place from Sept 11-13, 2024. The announcement brought joyous anticipation to the city state's nearly four hundred thousand Catholics. Singapore had only one other papal visitation - a five-hour stop-over visit in 1986.

As with my fellow Singaporeans, Bob and I were thrilled at news of the papal visit, so we made plans to return to Singapore for the event. Bob, a choir member at the church we attend in Singapore, immediately volunteered to join the seventeen hundred. There were just three choir practices with two at district level - (five districts), and the final practice, a whole day at the Stadium with all seventeen hundred voices.



There were thirty-one pieces of sung music with seven languages featured: Latin, Greek, Hebrew, English, Malay, Mandarin and Tamil; the last four being the official languages of Singapore. Bob was also invited to sing with the Schola group, a small fourteen member male group who sang the Gregorian prayers. While Bob had guaranteed attendance at the Papal Mass, I had no such guarantee, and could only hope and pray to be successful at getting a ticket when balloting commenced.

Preparations for the papal visit immediately went into full gear both by Singapore's Catholic faithful and the government.

Singapore's president, an Indian non-Catholic, would, in June 2024, pay a visit to Pope Francis when he was on official business in Europe.

Meanwhile, Catholic church leaders set preparations rolling by immediately booking the Sports Stadium, the country's biggest under-shelter venue for the Papal Mass to be held on Sept 12. It could sit just over fifty thousand. Choir members from Singapore's thirty-two parishes were invited to be part of a seventeen hundred choir at the Papal Mass.

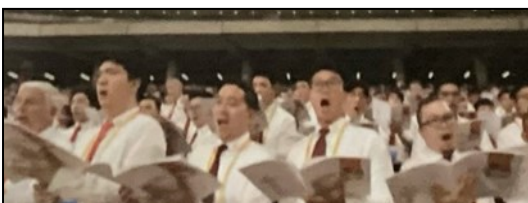


Bob Stribling in Choir at Pope's Mass in Singapore

Unfortunately it was not to be!

I was unsuccessful at both ballot rounds, so I had to contend with the online Mass celebration!

The Papal Mass was certainly uplifting! Attending online, I certainly had a 'bird's eye' view, so to speak! **{Cont'd next page}**





Communication



Meet Cardinal-elect Mykola Bychok of Melbourne

Cardinal-elect Mykola Bychok, the Bishop of the Eparchy of Saints Peter and Paul of Melbourne for Ukrainian Catholics in Australia, New Zealand, and Oceania, speaks to Vatican News about his responsibility and faith amid this time of war.



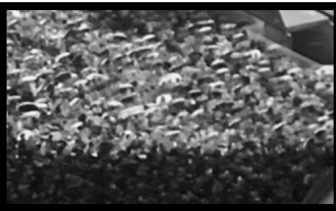
"Peace in the world will only come when people have peace in their hearts, a true peace that comes from the love of Christ."

In a wide-ranging interview with Vatican News, Cardinal-elect Mykola Bychok, CSsR, expressed this belief, as he highlighted the role of the Church in working toward peace amid the wars worldwide, especially in his native Ukraine.

During the conversation, the Ukrainian-born future Cardinal discussed his own spirituality, models of faith, and responsibility at this time of war.

"The Church must be proactive in being a mediator of a just peace, not just in Ukraine but in the Middle East and other parts of the world that are experiencing war and conflict," he insisted.

Cardinal-elect Bychok also reflected on how past Ukrainian Cardinals have inspired him, what he believes should be the Church's greatest priorities, and what his pastoral concerns are serving his faithful throughout Oceania. At the Sunday Angelus address on October 6, Pope Francis named him as one of the twenty-one new Cardinals, making him the youngest member of the College of Cardinals at age 44.



PAPAL VISIT & MASS in SINGAPORE {Cont'd}

[shared by Pauline Goh-Stribling]

As reported in the news, cardinals, clergy, religious and some lay people from neighbouring countries, not part of Pope Francis' visit, had also been invited to the Singapore papal Mass. Everyone present at the Mass, young and old, cleric or lay, Singapore's Prime Minister a non-Catholic, several other government ministers whether Catholic or not, some of Singapore's non Catholic religious leaders....everyone exuded a sense of togetherness, a coming together to celebrate an Almighty.....and humanity. It was an amazing awareness!

The Papal Mass was a Mass like no other in Singapore's history - over fifty thousand in-person attendees, with forty-seven cardinals and bishops, two hundred and ninety-nine priests, four hundred and six altar servers, six hundred and fifty-six wardens, a seventeen hundred strong choir, and three hundred and ninety Communion ministers. Communion was over in 10 mins!

Everything worked like clockwork. A quiet reminder by an organiser to other organisers to remember to not be too focused on being a Martha and forgetting to be Mary, had set levity at the beginning and helped in creating a heartfelt celebration. Many attended online due to limit at venue.

With plenty of news coverage of Pope Francis' three

day-visit, it felt like the whole of Singapore celebrated his presence and God's blessings on Singapore!

In his state address, Pope Francis praised Singapore's economic success, its efforts in maintaining harmony and described Singapore as a mosaic of ethnicities, cultures and religious, all living together in harmony, and noted the impartiality of public authorities who engage in constructive dialogue with all. Indeed diversity is embraced in Singapore and all religious communities have the spirit of openness, mutual accommodation and respect that allows different religious communities to thrive in Singapore.

Pope Francis called Singapore a shining example of what humanity can achieve by working together in harmony with a sense of responsibility and a spirit of inclusivity and fraternity. Amid conflict and wars around the world, Pope Francis said Singapore has a role to play on the international level and encouraged Singapore to continue to work in favour of the unity and fraternity of humanity and the common good of all peoples and all nations in a way that does not exclude others, or is restricted to Singapore's national interests.

Bob and I thank God for sending 'His Messenger of Hope' to my motherland and for our abilities to celebrate Mass together via different paths.

Vivat Pastor Bonus!(Long Live the Pope!)

From the Office



Fr Noy comments



Making the world 'a better place' is an invitation to be a better person each day. It is the inherent calling of every responsible citizen to do something for one's country.

Many people engage in humanitarian works and charitable ministries to bring a new life to the world they live in. There are people who do the talk all their life, motivating others to do something about it. Legends always try to practise in everyday life what they want to tell the world. Likes and dislikes influence us and sometimes change us to a negative circle where we make judgements based on our differences without due respect. Conquer the world with love is what we have learned from our Master, Jesus.

We take the commandment "Love your neighbour as yourself" for granted, thinking it doesn't need any extra effort. But when we start to achieve it, we realise it is almost impossible. But if the WHY is POWERFUL, then the HOW is easy. Creating common ground amid all the differences is a quality and it is vital in the modern world to maintain peace and happiness.

Strong and principled diplomacy is a skill that unlocks our leadership potential. Having confidence and patience, the ability to listen, the openness of mind and heart to compromise and the drive to complete the work demanded, are all everyday diplomacy skills, that are elements of our power to thrive in work and life.

Whether we are leading a team, promoting change or defining our future, the art of diplomacy will set the pace of our achievements.

May this beautiful year end with a great opening to the New Year with lots of initiatives that promote friendship, faith and life in everyone. May the PEACE and JOY of Christmas empower us to lead our lives in LOVE, sharing the beauty of God's kingdom. Let us chase our dreams and engage lives with a purpose.

As we evolve with GRACE, count every moment to rise to the occasion. Keep shining and let the LIGHTHOUSE continue to navigate to a wonderful future.

Fr. NOYICHAN.



Vinnies 2024 Christmas Appeal

The Appeal is launching on the weekend of 30 November/1 December.

'Giving Trees' will be available in both churches from that weekend. Gifts need to be returned by 15 December. Please ensure that gifts are NOT wrapped and have the tag from the 'Giving Tree' attached. Feedback from past recipients is that gift cards are much appreciated as this permits them to select personal items for their children and themselves.

Thank you to everyone for your continuing generosity to both the financial appeal and the gifts. Your kindness makes Christmas that much brighter for those down on their luck.



Left to right: Mike and Marg Canny, Marg and Keith Preston, Gaston Lo



Keith Preston: Far left

St Vincent de Paul Festival Mass

This celebration was held on 27 September at the Sacred Heart church, Clear Island Waters.

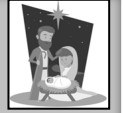
At the mass, four new presidents were commissioned, including our parish's own Keith Preston. We farewell Keith, and his wife Margaret, both invaluable stalwarts of our local conference and Parish who are returning to Melbourne to enjoy the loving immediacy of their family - not the weather! From across the South Coast Diocese, seventeen new members were inducted. Comments attested to the solemnity and uplifting nature of the mass which was followed by a delicious supper.

Volunteers needed!

Tugun/Coolangatta conference and shops are always in need of volunteers. These are highly rewarding evangelical services which afford insights to our community and also offer great companionship.

Parish Introductions

Getting to know people in our Parish compiled by Nicola Hanzic



If the bricks of St Augustine's could only talk, what tales could be shared! So many have passed through the doors of St Augustine's and here are a few more who contribute to the tapestry of our church today.



John and Rose Rixon: John has always had a link with St Augustine's Church, because he was born and bred in the area, the family home being at 64 Dutton Street, Coolangatta. He and Rose were married in the church on 11 October, 1968. All of their children were married there, as well as all of John's aunts. John and Rose started to attend the 8 am Sunday mass at St Augustine's Church when the 6.45 am at St Monica's was cancelled during Covid. Special memories of the church are the missions that used to be run there, as well as the Statue of Our Lady being passed around different homes in the parish where the Rosary was recited. John is a Eucharistic Minister. He also helps out with collections.

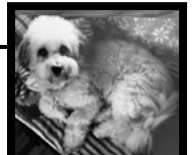
Christine McLachlan: "I have always admired the beauty of St Augustine's church building, and I am appreciative of the supportive and welcoming community. When I was growing up, I used to attend the Sunday evening Mass with my family. This used to be followed by Benediction and, as a child, I was always amazed by the number of lit candles in the church during this service. I received the sacraments in St Augustine's Church although I was married in St Joseph's at Tweed Heads. The most meaningful mass that I have ever attended was in a paddock."



Gabrielle and Peter Ford: Gabrielle, (known as Gabby to all her friends), is a mother of 8 children, with seven still living. She moved up here from Sydney, with her husband and son, Peter, in 2002. At this time, some other family members were already living here. Peter and Gabby also started to attend mass at St Augustine's when the 6.45 am mass at St Monica's was discontinued. They both said that they really appreciate the friendliness of the parishioners. They also enjoy the atmosphere of the church. Peter assists with the maintenance of the Parish church buildings and is also a Commentator at mass. Brother Darcy Murphy, a Christian Brother, is Gabrielle's brother.



Over recent years, two very special animals have also become part of the fabric of our church. Who can forget Father John's dearly loved dog Max, or Marge and Dorothy's beloved pet, Wookiee? Both used to attend mass with their owners. It was a sight to behold!



Dean Arndell: Dean's family consists of his wife, Nga Doan, and her son, Tam Doan. All family members are very involved with St Augustine's because Nga plays the organ, Tam is a greatly appreciated altar server, and Dean is involved with collections during mass. Dean came from Mt Maunganui, which is in the North Island of New Zealand. Nga and Tam came from Phan Thiet in Vietnam. Interestingly, Dean was a member of the RCIA Program and was received into the Catholic Church before his marriage to Nga. They see St Augustine's as possessing good energy, as it sits on the hill overlooking Coolangatta. They also see it as very community and family orientated, with many long-term friendships being formed.

Lloyd and Marie Pinchin: The family first joined St Augustine's after they moved up here from Lismore in 1958. All four of their children were baptised in this church. Two children were married there too.



In the past, Marie belonged to the Mothers Group and both used to help out when the fetes were held. Depending upon where they were living at the time, they used to attend either at St Augustine's or St Monica's Parish Church. Currently, they attend the 8am Mass because it is a perfect timeslot for them. Both Lloyd and Marie revel in the friendly atmosphere of St Augustine's Parish community. Lloyd, in particular, appreciates the aesthetics of the church building.



Sean Woods: Our seminarian, Sean, hails from Brisbane and entered the Holy Spirit Seminary, at Banyo, in 2016. Sean has obtained a Bachelor and Master of Theology, as well as a Bachelor of Behavioural Science. He will officially become a member of the clergy, as a Deacon, when he is ordained during Diaconate Celebrations in November. If all goes to plan, which is likely, and with the Archbishop's permission, he will be ordained as a priest in 2025, either on or around the Feast of Saints Peter and Paul. We wish Sean all the best in his future ministry, and thank him for all that he has done for us whilst in our Parish.

CENTENARY UPDATES

Reported by Nicola



In those days.....

1924 was a leap year, (as is 2024!)

Moving on..... October 6, 2024, (exactly 100 years after the first mass of St Augustine's Parish was celebrated by Father Leo Carlton), was definitely a day to remember. The morning was sunny and the mass was solemn. Incense, prayers and the sound of glorious music wafted to the heavens. Afterwards, parishioners and visitors alike mingled and enjoyed the delicious morning tea on offer. One of the highlights of the morning was the planting of a lilac tree, donated by a parishioner, Lee Niblett, to commemorate the day.



November 17 was a memorable date too, as it was an occasion to remember past and present parishioners who have made the parish what it is today. It was a delight to listen to the combined choir and musicians from both St Augustine's St Monica's. What a joy it was, too, to see the involvement of some schoolchildren. The highlight was definitely the recessional hymn, "My Lighthouse." The music, actions and words definitely rocked the church.

A big thank you goes to the Hospitality sub committee who worked tirelessly to make things happen. Our thanks also go to John Cameron and staff at St Augustine's School for providing the tents. Having transport organised for people going to and from the Mass was a bonus!



The weekend of November 9 and 10, saw Sean, our seminarian, being acknowledged for all his help in the parish family, including the Centenary Committee.

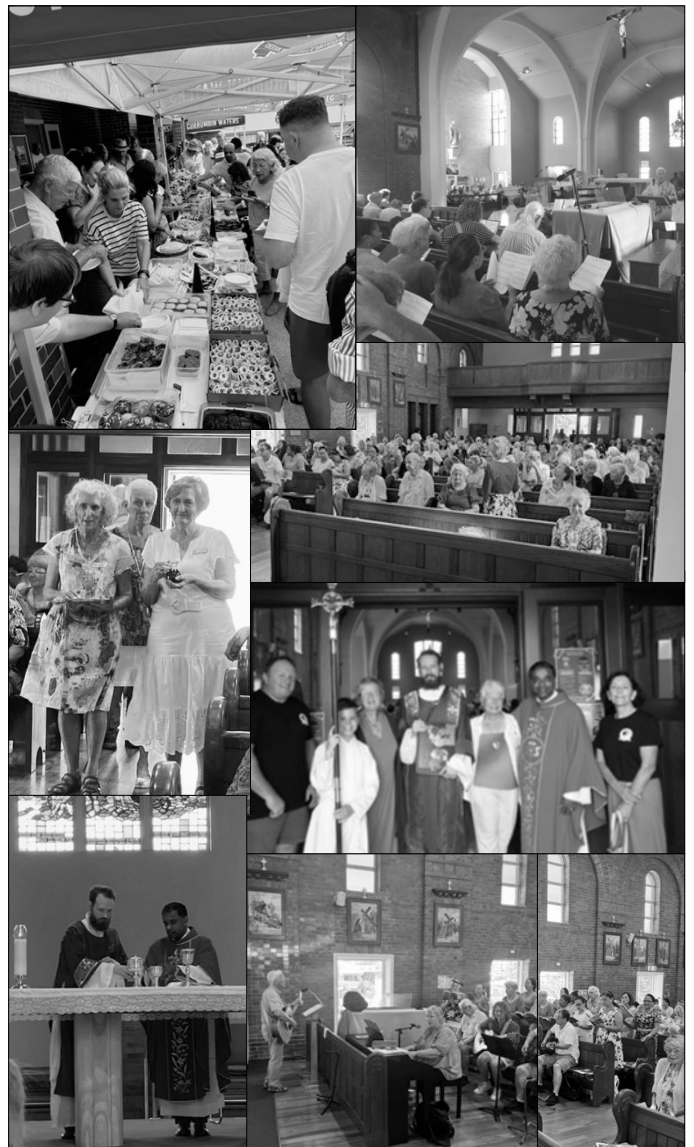
Forthcoming Events:

Trivia with a Twist, Wednesday, February 5, 5-8 pm Qld time. Have you started to get your team together yet? It promises to be a night of great fun. You don't need to know lots because there'll always be someone who knows something. **Remember, there are not only prizes for the winning team, but also for the best team dress-theme.** There will be a bonus point for the best team name as well. (Of course, the judges' decision will be final). Then there'll be lucky door prizes to win, as well as a light supper and a drink to enjoy. "Bring your friends and brain power, any voltage."

Entry: \$25 ticket: \$100 for a pew of 4

Socialising at the Ivory on Saturday, March 1, 3.30 - 7pm QLD time: Enjoy an evening out with friends and family. Maybe you'll even be able to catch up with someone you haven't seen in a while? Raffle draws will commence at 5pm.

Tickets: \$65 per person, with only 150 on sale.



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