

The Parish *Voice*

THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF BRUNSWICK AND BRUNSWICK EAST
APRIL 2018 – VOLUME 9 NO 1

A Faith Filled Celebration



Those of us who attended the recent Saturday night Easter Vigil Liturgy would have strong memories of the moving Liturgy of Baptism in which eleven people were baptised or received into the Catholic Church. They were James and Sophie Harris and their four children – Oliver, Jess, Abby and Lily. There was Nancy Kwok and her two children, Alfred and Edwin. Also there were Kim Dao, and Andrea Khaw whose husband Damian became a Catholic two years ago. Unfortunately for us, since beginning their RCIA journey in November 2016, many of them have moved out of Brunswick to live in other suburbs.

It was indeed a spiritual and sacred occasion for which they had prepared through the regular meetings throughout 2017. At these fortnightly

meetings they were opened up to the teaching and spirituality of our Catholic faith. Then at the meetings earlier this year they spiritually and reflectively prepared for their Initiation into the Catholic Church.

It has been a long and exciting journey. We sincerely thank our parish sponsors who have accompanied our Candidates – Emmanuel Baglieri, Annette Tepper, Connie De Nino, Jo Keen, and Di Travers. For the sponsors, and the catechists Tricia Murray and myself, it has also been a special and rewarding experience.

Let us continue to remember our 2018 RCIA Candidates in our prayers.

Fr Michael

A Personal Reflection on Kath Richter, Parishioner and Friend

I met Kath Richter when Frank and I moved into Our Lady's parish in August 1990. Kath was involved in a number of groups there including liturgy, RCIA, retreats and parish bush walks and picnics.

By the mid-nineties we were meeting socially with Kath and other parishioners for Pizza nights at *Il Carretto*. But I didn't really know much about her until several weeks after Frank's sudden death in May 1998. It was during that time of loss that Kath told me about the tragic death of her young husband, Peter Richter, in a car accident in August 1972, just nineteen months after their marriage at St Andrew's Werribee.

When Kath told me this it was the beginning of a closeness that can happen when two people share their grief. Over the next almost twenty years, I found Kath to be a wonderful friend and a trusted confidant. She was a great listener. We had a lot in common. When our opinions differed we took each other's ideas on board. Some people thought we looked alike and were sisters, which amused both of us! Kath had a great sense of humour which she never lost.

In 2008 when Kath was working in East Timor at a Marist Teachers' Training College, she sent me and others regular emails with updates of what she was doing. No matter where we were, we always kept in touch. Kath got to know some of my family members and joined us for birthday parties, and family events.

Kath took an interest in people and what they were doing. People warmed to her. She was sensitive and compassionate to others when they were experiencing personal difficulties. She also developed an amazing personal resilience which became evident in her approach to her final illness.

Most people know very little about Motor Neuron Disease. Kath's type of MND involved the loss of the ability to speak, to swallow and to breathe.



Kath (centre) at Sr Barbara's Memorial Mass on 10 June 2017 with her nephew Ben and his partner Neridah visiting from Alice Springs

Kath, who loved travelling, had her last overseas trip with a friend in August 2015, but she lacked her usual energy at the time. By Christmas her speech became slurred. Early in 2016 she had medical tests for a possible stroke. In July 2016 she was diagnosed with MND. The thing I remember most about that day was that Kath rode her bike for her visit to the specialist in Parkville!

Kath's philosophy was to do what she could for as long as she could. In March 2017, I went with her and two other friends of hers for a fabulous holiday at her brother's place in Tasmania.

On our return Kath still did as much as she could, but needed assistance at home. By then she was using a ventilator to breathe at night and a few hours in the afternoon. Swallowing became more difficult. I asked her one day if she ever felt like throwing something at a wall in frustration at her illness. She said, 'Sometimes, but it doesn't last long.'

She enjoyed being driven into the country and still went to Mass. On 10th June she went to a memorial Mass at Our Lady's for Sr Barbara. The last parish Mass she attended was the Requiem for Vittorio Di Dio.

Unable to speak, Kath communicated by writing on a portable whiteboard. She welcomed visitors and always enjoyed 'talking' to young adults about their activities. Members of my family and a friend visited Kath and sang and played for her at home and when she moved into Mercy Place in late October 2017.

On 11 January 2018, unable to breathe without a ventilator, Kath died surrounded by family members and friends.

Maureen O'Brien

Journeying with Andrea through the RCIA

I met Andrea for the first time at the initial RCIA meeting in February 2017. Despite being pregnant with Cecilia, and young Lucas to care for, she was committed to the journey. In fact, her children were part of the reason she was here. She and her husband Damien saw them as a gift from God and their existence drew them into our community.

Andrea has walked the path with a clear understanding of what it means to be Catholic, that it is not just a label, but a dedication to live a life that demonstrates you are a follower of Jesus.

Andrea recognises that this is no easy task in our world with its focus on the material, but through much self-reflection she has accepted the task. I wish her all of God's blessings as she becomes a full member of our Church.

Connie De Nino

Photo: L to R, Andrea Khaw and Connie De Nino after Andrea's reception into the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil



Holy Week in the Parish



Photos from our Holy Week ceremonies include, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: the gentle Palm Sunday donkey; parishioner Francesca Mercuri at the Blessing of the Palms; Husband and wife, Franca and Tonny, after the Washing of the Feet on Holy Thursday; Bill washes the feet of his wife Pina at the footwashing on Holy Thursday; the children gather around Fr Michael after Children's Liturgy on Palm Sunday.





On Good Friday, parishioners are invited to come to the cross and venerate it. At this point in the ceremony we acknowledge that Jesus' body has been taken down from the cross. The cross becomes a symbol for us of the great mystery of life emerging from suffering. The cross is now, symbolically, a Tree of Life. Parishioners bring their own experience of pain and suffering to the cross and unite it to that of Jesus Christ.



PHOTO ABOVE:

Parishioners gather around the Easter fire, outside St Ambrose's Church, at the start of the Easter Vigil.

RIGHT:

Edwin, our youngest candidate for baptism at the Easter Vigil, is baptised in our Easter font. He is held by his father Henry. L TO R: Connie, Nancy (Edwin's mother), Di Travers, Fr Michael, Emanuel and Catherine surround him.



Getting to Know ... Elizabeth and Henry Leung

Many Parishioners would know Teresa Leung who sings during the 6.00pm Mass at Our Lady's Church.

Teresa's parents, Elizabeth and Henry, live in Hong Kong and visit Teresa for several months each year.

Her father Henry was born in Hong Kong, the eldest of five children. He attended the University of Hong Kong and graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering in 1966. He worked for the Public Works Department building roads and bridges and then in Geotechnical Engineering working on underground railway projects.

Her mother Elizabeth was born in China. In 1949 her Parents and five siblings moved to Hong Kong. Elizabeth attended Government and Buddhist Primary Schools and Secondary School with the Franciscan Sisters. At sixteen years of age she was baptized into the Catholic Church. Elizabeth graduated from the College of Education and taught in Catholic Primary Schools. She worked in Special Education for 26 years.

Henry and Elizabeth met while travelling with friends and were married in 1975 at St Teresa's Church after whom their daughter is named.



Henry and Elizabeth Leung with their daughter Teresa

As Teresa was to commence Secondary School her parents decided to enrol her at Genazzano FCJ College in Kew. From 1993 to 1996 they lived in Kew to be with Teresa as she settled into school. Henry then returned to work in Hong Kong and Elizabeth obtained a Graduate Diploma at the University of Melbourne.

Elizabeth and Henry are committed to their parish, St Margaret's in Hong Kong. Henry is a Communion Minister and visits the elderly on Communion rounds. Elizabeth is a Reader at Mass.

They are grateful for the support of Our Lady's parishioners. "Our faith is enhanced and we feel God's presence". We too are grateful for their presence in our Parish.

Mary Connell



Taizé Prayer in the Parish

During Lent we gathered at St Ambrose's to pray in the Taizé tradition using icons, chant, silence and readings.

Also, on Holy Thursday, after the Evening Mass, we gathered in the darkened church at Our Lady's for a time of Taizé prayer. Here we focused on icons of the suffering Christ, chanted the beautiful Taizé chants and read psalms of pleading to God — the same prayers Jesus may have prayed during his agony in the garden.

A 100th Birthday!

Recently, Kath Vincent – a much loved parishioner, formerly of Bank Street and now residing at *Craigcare* in Pascoe Vale – turned 100 years of age. About 60 family and friends joined Kath to celebrate this wonderful occasion.

Kath lived in Bank Street for 68 years. She was a regular at Northern Bingo in Sydney Road with her friend Dot Hardstaff, and was also well recognised at Barkly Square Shopping Centre.

Kath loved to sit in the Centre while her daughters, either Kaye or Trish, would do the shopping. She told me how much she loved seeing little children who would smile at her and say to their parents, “Look, GRANDMA!”

Kath’s great friend, Betty Moore, lived one street away and they spoke each week on the phone. This has continued as Betty still lives in Ewing Street and chats to Kath in *Craigcare* weekly.

I have enjoyed the friendship of these two special ladies over my 10 years at St Ambrose’s and it has been a privilege to visit them regularly with Holy



L to R: Betty Moore, Sr Diane Cleveland and centenarian Kath Vincent

Communion. Their deep faith and reverence is inspiring. Betty will turn 90 during this year.

We went to the 100th party together and Kath was delighted to see us, but she especially commented, “How lovely it is to see Bet.” As we were leaving I gave the usual goodbye with a hug and a kiss and I said, “I love you Kath!” and as always she responded with, “I love you MORE!”

Sr Diane Cleveland

Amid the Action of the Sydney Road Street Party



Bobby Hardstaff, Annette Tepper and Kay Purches spent time serving on our parish craft stall at the Sydney Road Street Party in March. Every year, Sydney Road closes down for a day of festivities which include stalls, music, multicultural food and street entertainment. Thanks Bobby, Annette and Kay for your generosity!



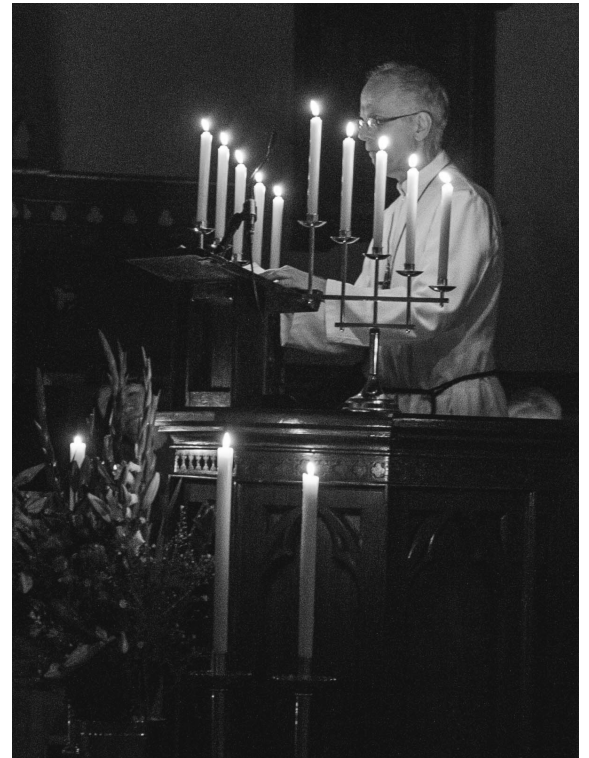
Our Confirmation Candidates

On Sunday 18 March, Bishop Terry Curtin visited our parish to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation on our young candidates. This was a significant day in their lives as they had spent much time preparing for it, including a day of reflection at St Ambrose's Community Centre. We wish them every blessing as they now journey forward as fully initiated members of the Church.



The Rite of Election

This rather blurry photo was taken in St Patrick's Cathedral after the Rite of Election for our RCIA candidates. The ceremony takes place on the First Sunday of Lent, with the Archbishop welcoming those who are to be baptised and received into full communion with the Catholic Church. Here we see all our candidates with their sponsors, and also the children who were to be baptised along with them at our Easter Vigil. What a warm and welcoming occasion this was!



Br Michael Herry sings the Exsultet at the Easter Vigil

Br Michael Herry

A saying that has been attributed to St Augustine is the following: "To sing is to pray twice". So let us be thankful for our parish choir who have helped us 'to pray twice' – not only during our recent Easter Triduum, but also regularly at our Saturday evening and Sunday 10.30am Masses. Especially though, let us thank Brother Michael Herry, who in the photo is singing *The Exsultet* at the Easter Vigil Liturgy. Br Michael has worked consistently with the choir, with regular practice sessions before the 10.30am Mass each week, and extra sessions in preparation for Easter and Christmas. Br Michael, for your commitment and enthusiasm and musical ability, we sincerely thank you.

Fr Michael

Thanks to all who have contributed to this issue:

Mary Connell, Maureen O'Brien, Fr Michael Casey, Tricia Murray, Sr Diane Cleveland, Connie De Nino, Paul Mercieca (for his amazing Holy Week photos), Ann Saunders