

# *The* Parish *Voice*

THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF BRUNSWICK AND BRUNSWICK EAST  
AUGUST 2019 – VOLUME 10 NO 2

## Welcome to Fr Joel



In early May 2019, Fr Joel Peart officially became the Administrator of our parish. Since arriving in the parish he has been kept busy with the demands of his ministry: parish meetings, funerals, baptisms, marriage preparation, visiting the sick – as well as the regular Mass schedule of the parish. One of his first projects was to renovate St Ambrose's Parish House to bring it up-to-date and make it a more liveable residence for priests of the future.

Fr Joel is a regular visitor to Our Lady's School where he spends quality time with the staff and students. This has been greatly appreciated at the school. He is pictured (right) with members of his family, who occasionally come to St Ambrose's for the 10.30am Mass and to support their son/brother/uncle in his ministry.



We welcome you, Fr Joel, into our midst and pray your time with us may be fruitful and life-giving for all.

*Tricia Murray*



# Walking the Camino

Parishioners Pina and Bill Dunne recently walked the Camino to Santiago through Portugal and Spain. Pina kept an online 'blog' which detailed their adventure. Here is a brief excerpt describing one day of the Camino.

'First day out of Tui and it feels like we are in the midst of a crowd. We lingered longer because of the amazing breakfast and probably because, after resting for a day, both body and mind find it difficult to re-start, difficult to take you to that place of pain... the stretched calves, the sciatic nerve pulling, the groin not quite stretching the right way, the bruised feet or the blistered toes.

We find ourselves immediately in the company of other pilgrims; a pair, a group of three and a family of about ten. All of us eager to start the day's stage, eager to know the other's origins and motivation. We leave to echoes of *buen camino* and "See you on the road to Santiago," and thoughts of aching muscles move to the far recesses of our minds.

The day is drizzly, after all this is Galicia. Most of us are wearing our rain gear. As we walk, we meet more and more pilgrims – some we've seen before, some we've spoken to before and quite a few newbies with hiking clothes right out of the box! We fall in step with one another and exchange our stories.

Francis, an Irishman living in Sydney, only has a few days to reach Santiago and is dealing with very



*Pina and Bill on their Camino*

sore feet. His experience of the road out of Braga mirrors our own out of Lisbon. We count ourselves lucky to have made it through unscathed! We separate and then find each other again... more talk: football, soccer, Brexit, Ireland, Australia... and the kilometres just fly! Similarly, we chat with Wei from China and others. We are simply enjoying the road and each other's company, all the while taking in and absorbing the tranquility that surrounds us.

The old Roman road twists and turns along creeks and rivers. Moss and lichen covers every bit of stone. The sound of water flowing and birds tweeting are our companions and, though we have walked far enough and our accommodation is within sight, the rude awakening that is called civilization rips us away from this pastoral paradise that we do not want to let go.

There is a surprising amount of energy in the air. Pilgrims in ones, twos, threes... family groups, school groups, parish groups, youth groups or simply a group of friends all journeying towards the same end. The same journey that millions have taken over the past thousand years or so. Everyone has a different reason for walking, a different expectation and a different way of experiencing the journey, but all are changed in some way for undertaking the journey and persisting day after day, at whatever pace one can manage.'

*Pina and Bill Dunne*

# Time is my friend

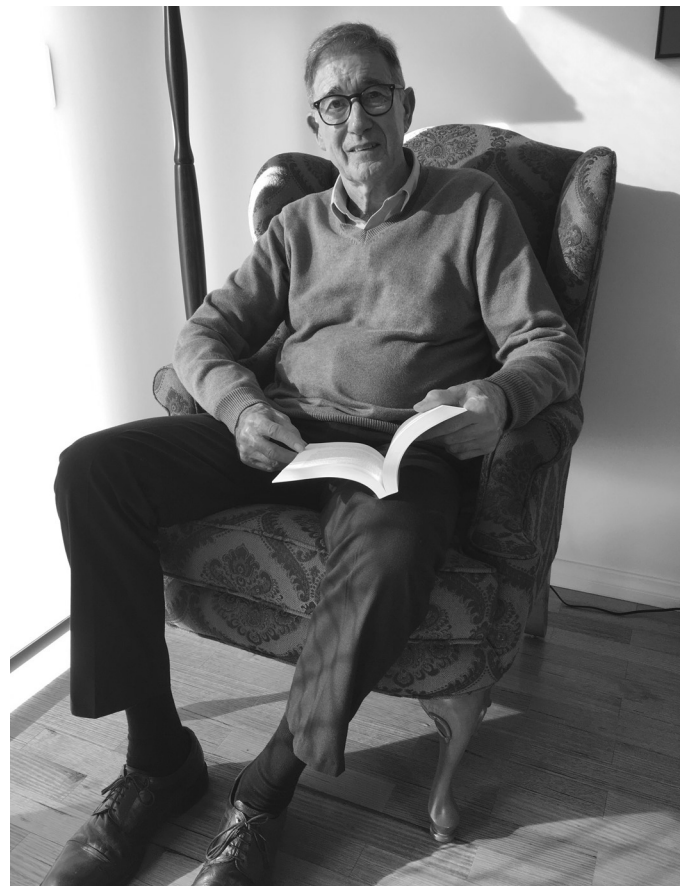
Well, it is now some three months since I retired as parish priest of *The Catholic Parish of Brunswick and Brunswick East*, and retired as a parish priest – now having the title of Pastor Emeritus! These past three months have included a week in the Northern Territory and a five-day Retreat at the Cistercian Abbey at Tarrawarra, in the Yarra Valley.

However, what these three months have especially included is coming to terms with retirement – from the busy and full lifestyle of a parish priest to the more leisured and spaced vocation of retirement. As a retired parish priest I have been available for weekend supply – celebrating the weekend Masses for a parish priest who is sick or away on holidays. For example, during July, I was celebrating the weekend Masses at Kilmore – which included overnight accommodation.

What is no longer part of the life of a retired parish priest is the daily demands and experiences of a busy parish: appointments and meetings, funerals and weddings, visiting the sick and housebound and bringing them the Sacraments, preparation meetings for the Sacraments and Sunday Liturgy, answering requests that come via phone, email, mail or front door, responding to all that is involved with the Parish School and the two nursing homes within the Parish, supporting the parish outreach action, and the ongoing pondering and conversations on how the parish might keep on walking in both ministry and mission.



*Fr Michael in his office/prayer room, standing by the nameplate given to him by a parish family. It reads: MICHAEL H CASEY, PASTOR EMERITUS!*



*Fr Michael enjoys reading as he sits in the chair given him as a farewell gift from the Parish.*

Thankfully, over these years, I have shared parish ministry with a great team of Pastoral Associates and Parish Staff, and have been encouraged and inspired through the wisdom and action of the Parish Leadership Team. As well, there have been so many parishioners who have shared their time and energy and gifts in helping make the parish happen!

Now I have to take time to adjust – to adjust to the different pace, to allow time to be my friend, and see the opportunity to deepen to a more contemplative attitude to life – with a lot more time for quiet, for prayer, for reflection, for reading, as well as the daily weekday private Mass.

This doesn't mean that I am becoming a hermit! I am very grateful for the opportunities to keep contact with parishioners and be part of organized occasions. After 22 years in Brunswick, so many of us have travelled so much together – sharing our thoughts and our heart, our gifts and our commitment, our hopes and our faith. And we have gathered on Sundays and other days, gathered around the altar to celebrate what is so central to our Catholic life and spirituality – the Liturgy of the Mass. We have had great times together. We have had significant times together. We have experienced so much for which to be grateful.

As I thank God, I also thank you, sincerely.

*Fr Michael*

# Our sincere thanks

**F**or the past six and a half years Tricia Murray has been a very central member of our Parish Staff. With the portfolio of Faith Development and Administration, Tricia has been very central to so much of parish life, – the “go to” person for so many of us. Well, the time for her to retire from her three day a week position has come, and she will be retiring on Friday 16 August – but will, of course, continue as an active member of the Parish Community.

It has been my privilege to have Tricia sharing parish leadership with me during my 22 years as parish Priest of St Ambrose’s Brunswick, and the past 10 years of Our Lady’s East Brunswick. She is so gifted in areas of spirituality, Liturgy and Sacred Art, and we have experienced that giftedness over these past years. Think of the themes for our Seasons of Lent and Advent, the altar frontals, our Easter Triduum, the RCIA, the Seasonal decoration of our two churches, the Easter Candles, and her contributions to the Liturgical music. Think of the Taizé Prayer nights which featured many of her own icons, the Winter Series of Education in Faith and Prayer, and her central role for many years in Centering Prayer. She has taught me so much. She is a real team player.

In her role of Administration, we are so grateful for the weekly Parish Newsletter, and her style in its presentation, as well as *The Parish Voice*. We are grateful for the Sacrament materials and

certificates that she has designed and has prepared as required for Baptisms, First Reconciliations and First Communions. We are particularly grateful for her insights and artistic skills captured, for example, in our Parish Logo, and so many other aspects, including the day to day demands from emails, letters, phone, and door bell, that have filled her three day a week employment position.

Tricia has been a member of our Parish Leadership Team for many years, and is involved in many other committees and ministries of the Parish. We are all so grateful for what she gives to Parish, and we are so grateful for the spirituality that she deeply lives.

Tricia, we deeply thank you, and may you enjoy the space that retirement will grant you. May God bless you for all you have given us.

Michael Casey



*Tricia, third from left, with the Parish Craft Group. This group makes such things as stoles for the parish sacraments, items for parish fundraising and small tokens for Mother’s Day or Father’s Day.*



## Parish Meditation Group

**E**very Tuesday evening, apart from school holidays, the parish meditation group meets in the Spirituality room at St Ambrose’s Parish Centre. The gathering consists of a time of listening to a talk related to the tradition of Christian meditation, followed by 20-minutes of silent meditation. The group can vary from three to eight participants on any particular evening. On the cold and rainy night that this photo was taken there were four in the group (one, of course, is taking the photo!). If you are interested in deepening your spiritual life through meditation, please come along on any Tuesday night at 7.30pm.



# Valbona's Dream

Valbona is one of our Italian parishioners, originally from Albania, who came to Australia nearly three years ago and currently resides in Our Lady's House. She would like to express her sincere and profound gratefulness for having been welcomed into the parish with kindness and having been given accommodation since last April in a moment of difficulty in her life.

Valbona had a premonitory dream last January, which she would like to share with us in her own words.

*"In the dream I was crying, because I was going through a very hard time. I was kneeling down in a prayerful position and while crying I saw a door opening and a figure of a man appeared, surrounded with light, so that I could not see his face. I thought he was Jesus because he was tall. He told me "Come in, follow me". He then continued, "What do you need? Don't you cry anymore". I replied that I needed accommodation and he said that I would find everything I needed there. He started to show me around and I kept saying "Wow!"*

*Once the dream was over, I hoped and prayed so much that it could become true and I tried to find out what place it could be. One day in early April I was advised to visit Brunswick, so I walked along Sydney Road until I reached St Ambrose's church. I decided to go in without too much hope. With great surprise I found Fr Michael who had just finished celebrating Mass. I asked him if he had time for me and he*



Valbona with Fr Michael earlier this year

*replied "Yes" straightaway. I had the feeling he'd known me forever. He asked me what I needed and when I replied "accommodation and a job" he said that he had a flat for me! We jumped in the car and we drove to Our Lady's. As Fr Michael was showing me around the flat, I kept saying "Wow!" and that's when I realised that was the place of my dream and the person was not Jesus but Fr Michael".*

In the end, it doesn't really matter if the man in the dream was Jesus or Fr Michael...he was probably both at the same time. Fr Michael acted as a true disciple of the Lord, manifesting Jesus' own attitude and preaching. He embraced Jesus' mercy and compassion, generosity and love, like a great priest should always do. He reminds us of Jesus with the Samaritan woman.

Fr Michael relieved Valbona of a great load and she is extremely grateful to him, like we all are. We desperately need to witness such a refreshing and hopeful image of the good Church and genuine priesthood.

We thank Valbona for having shared her story with us and we pray for her as she tries her best to find a job and be granted the necessary documents to remain in Australia.

Elisa Ronzoni



## The Friday English class

*Mithra from Iran and Shanti from Nepal (missing are Maria from Greece, Maria from Italy, Feng from China, Sr Marjetka from Slovenia (when she can), Leila from Iran, and a couple of others!'* We are grateful that our parishioners Jo, Agnes and Tom give generously of their time to give free English classes, and English conversation sessions during the week, to those who most need it.

Our parishioner, Jo Bennett, who helps to run the Friday English class upstairs in St Ambrose's Community Centre, writes about the photo at left: *'We usually have about 10 people coming and going, they come when they can. Today we have Leo and Suria from Beijing, Sergio from Venezuela, me,*

# Our First Parish Priests

As we welcome a new priest into our parish, let us journey back in time to look at the lives of the first parish priests who were appointed to Brunswick and Brunswick East. We are part of a long history. May their stories inspire us to treasure the history and the mission of the two churches in our parish.

## Fr Edmund Luby – St Ambrose’s

Fr Edmund Luby was born in County Tipperary, Ireland in 1856. He was ordained a priest at All Hallows College Dublin in 1878 at the age of 22. The following year he was sent to Australia where he was to spend over 30 years of his priesthood. His first appointment was to St Mary’s, West Melbourne, as assistant priest. However, in 1883 he became ill with paralysis and spent 3 years convalescing at a nursing home in Brighton.



In 1890, St Ambrose’s became a parish independently of Coburg. Fr Edmund Luby was appointed as the first parish priest, a role he was to fulfil for 22 years. He was loved by his flock and respected by all who knew him. He was essentially a man of peace with a kindly nature, empathetic to the sufferings of the poor and afflicted. He energetically developed St Ambrose’s parish and built schools for the many Catholic children of Brunswick at that time.

Two years before his death, Fr Edmund Luby was able to visit his beloved Ireland. He was in poor health and, for 12 months before his death, he suffered from heart problems. He died at St Ambrose’s presbytery on Easter Monday 17 April 1911 at the age of 55.

St Ambrose’s Church was filled to overflowing for his funeral. In his eulogy, Archbishop Carr said, “Fr Luby knew his flock intimately. He led them like the Shepherd of the Scriptures through his good example. They knew his voice and believed that it was the voice of truth, justice and charity.” It could truly be said that Fr. Luby had laid down his life for his flock as, almost up to the hour of his death, he was engaged in his parish duties. At the conclusion of the funeral, thousands of people gathered in Sydney Road as the procession moved toward the Melbourne General Cemetery.

## Fr Joseph King – Our Lady’s

Joseph Edward King was the tenth child born to Denis and Bridget King on 31 March 1874. He attended school at St Ignatius’ Boys School, Richmond, and won a scholarship to Xavier College. Sometime around 1892, he began his studies for the priesthood at St Patrick’s College, Manly, and was ordained by Cardinal Moran in St Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney on 29 June 1898. His early appointments included Bacchus Marsh, South Melbourne and St Patrick’s Cathedral as well as being a Military Chaplain.



In 1911, Fr King was appointed as the first parish priest to Brunswick East. As yet there was no church in the area, so Sunday Masses were celebrated in the Excelsior Hall in Nicholson Street until a school-church was built in Barkly Street. He was able to oversee the building of Our Lady Help of Christians Church which was eventually blessed and opened on 19 May, Pentecost Sunday, 1918.

For the next 24 years, Fr King worked strenuously as the shepherd of his East Brunswick flock, in spite of years of illness. He died in Our Lady’s presbytery in 1935 at the age of 61. At his funeral, Archbishop Mannix said of him. “Wherever he went as a young priest his ministrations seemed to have been especially blessed. The number of converts he received into the Church is beyond counting. His influence with the young in every parish in which he laboured is something that might well be the envy of his colleagues in the ministry.”

At his own wish, Fr King was buried in the grounds of his beloved church of Our Lady Help of Christians. Today we can visit his grave and remember this wonderful, dedicated priest.

*From the parish archives*

# Ann and John's big adventure



Ann and John outside the 4-seater plane that took them over Lake Eyre

**A**nn Saunders, who has recently retired as parish secretary/finance officer, and her husband John are now travelling around Australia in a campervan. Ann recently sent a message to the parish.

'We are in Coober Pedy after travelling to Adelaide, Flinders Ranges, Port Augusta, Roxby Downs, Woomera and Andamooka.

We went to Mass here yesterday in the underground church at Coober Pedy, a fascinating place! When you drive into Coober Pedy it is just

like driving into another town until you walk into the bookstore which is underground and most of the attractions are underground. We have been on a tour around the town which was very interesting and today we drove to William Creek and had a plane ride over Lake Eyre for an hour. There is water in lake at the moment and it will probably be there until August.

Hope everything is going well at the parish. I miss everyone!

Ann Saunders

## Plenary Council 2020

**I**n October 2020, the Catholic Church in Australia will gather for a historic Plenary Council. Last year, the Australian Church began preparing for this Council by attending *Listening and Discernment* sessions and by listening to one another's hopes and dreams for the Church in Australia.

Across Australia, more than 222,000 people participated in the listening and dialogue encounters and contributed 17,457 submissions during the first stage of preparation for the Australian Plenary Council.

The voices of the faithful help all of us to understand something of the current reality of the Catholic Church in Australia. This gathered data also reveals some deeper hopes and questions, and the diverse yearnings, that we are now challenged to consider together.



Plenary Council 2020  
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

The National Themes for Discernment, inspired by the data, have been named as:

**How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:**

1. **Missionary and evangelising**
2. **Inclusive, participatory and synodal**
3. **Prayerful and Eucharistic**
4. **Humble, healing and merciful**
5. **A joyful, hope-filled and servant community**
6. **Open to conversion, renewal and reform**

In our own parish, in the near future, there will be the opportunity for further discernment and discussion on the themes listed above as we continue to seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit for our Church today.

The Parish Leadership Team

# A generous response



*The Mini Vinnies from Our Lady's School with their many donations for the St Vincent de Paul Winter appeal*

**I**n late June, members of the parish St Vincent de Paul Conference visited Our Lady's School to accept the many donated goods that the students had collected in the weeks leading up to the Feast of the Sacred Heart, the traditional time for the Vinnies Winter Appeal for the poor.

This year, the students concentrated on household items such as washing detergents, cling wrap, toilet paper, etc. The *Mini Vinnies* group from the school

were happy to present them to our St Vincent de Paul Conference members and also to help sort them into product type and pack them into 20 hampers for distribution. There was also a large amount of food items that have now been placed in the St Vincent de Paul store cupboard.

Thank you to Our Lady's School for such wonderful generosity!

*Helen Lynch*

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## It's time to pass the baton on to another editor

**F**or the past 21 years, I have been editing the parish magazine and now the time has come to hand the responsibility to a new generation. This magazine was originally called 'The Ambrosian' but, when our two churches came together, the name 'The Parish Voice' was chosen. I would like to thank some of our regular contributors: Mary Connell, Jo Bennett, Sr Therese Power, John Murray, Maureen O'Brien, Fr Michael and, of course, Paul Mercieca for his outstanding photography. There have been numerous contributors over the years – too many to mention – but my deepest thanks goes to you all. I hope the parish magazine will continue to be published. Thanks also to the many parishioners who have allowed their stories to be told. It has been a great privilege.

*Tricia Murray*

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### Thanks to all who have contributed to this issue:

Elisa Ronzoni, Fr Michael Casey, Tricia Murray, Jo Bennett, Ann Saunders, Helen Lynch, Pina and Bill Dunne  
Paul Mercieca (photographer)