

# THE BARK

OUR LADY  
OF FATIMA  
PEAKHURST

ISSUE THREE 2014

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## FELIX FROM THE SCHOOL OF ST JUDE VISITS OLF

In October, we were treated with a visit to the parish by Felix Mollel, a teacher of the School Of St Jude in Tanzania.

At a special High Tea function, Felix spoke to the audience wearing his traditional Massai dress, explaining the difficulties of getting an education in Tanzania and the work of the school in attempting to address this situation.

Felix's story was inspiring! Having himself missed out on being selected to attend the school, with perseverance he has managed to acquire skills and learn English. He has reached a level where he is now representing the school, speaking to groups such as ourselves, as well as the Rotary Convention in June 2014.

During this visit to Australia, Felix made the most of his time, visiting several schools across the



country, speaking about life at the School Of St Jude and the importance education plays in the development of Tanzania.

The school was established in 2002 by an Australian girl, Gemma Sisia. They rely heavily on the generosity of donations and sponsorships from around the world.

Felix was happy to visit us as we have been sponsoring the School Of St Jude for several years.

Felix learnt his English, which was very good, by speaking with school children as he drove the school bus in an earlier role at the school.

Felix was very entertaining and used PowerPoint slides to illustrate his presentation. He also invited everyone to visit the school and they would be assured a warm welcome.

*Continued on next page...*



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Some people in the audience had already paid them a visit and can vouch for the school's hospitality.

At the end of his talk, Felix called on our 'Chief' of Lending a Hand, Tony Thorpe, to come forward. None of us knew what was about to unfold, but what was to come was hilarious.

Felix dressed Tony as a Massai Chief Warrior, and he looked fantastic as you can see by the photo on the front page.

Tony, being the good sport that he is, stood there like a statue being draped in robes, and as his dressing finally came to an end, he was given a staff to hold.

As a result of this entertaining afternoon, and two very generous donations, the Lending a Hand Team was able to send a donation of \$3,000 to the School Of St Jude on behalf of our parish.

If you would like to learn more about the School of St Jude, please go to [www.schoolofstjude.org](http://www.schoolofstjude.org)

*John Vaux / Dominic Alati  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

## HIGH TEA FOR FELIX

What a lovely afternoon it was enjoying a High Tea while Felix from Tanzania spoke to the crowd.

Amid a theme of black and white, with flowers in pretty little jars trimmed in lace and ribbon, the atmosphere of the afternoon was set in motion.

Our waiters escorted the good folk to their chairs and the arrival of the food began. It was pleasing to see that there were several visitors to the parish who had come specially to hear Felix speak.

There were finger sandwiches of all different fillings, chocolate fudge brownies to die for, cute cupcakes nearly too nice to eat but once eaten they were delicious, chocolate strawberries, lemon slice to cleanse the palate followed by continuous cups of tea and coffee.

For once, the ladies of the parish were waited on instead of the other way around and the Lending A Hand Team was very pleased to do so.

It is anticipated that the High Tea will become a regular parish event.

*John Vaux  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

## OLF YOUTH GROUP OFF AND RUNNING

The Leadership Team has had many discussions this year about ways to better engage the youth of our parish.

It was decided after the Parish Half Yearly Meeting in August that we would move forward with a plan to hold a youth forum and ask the young people what they wanted.

So, on 10 October we held the youth forum where 16 young people attended. A lot of terrific ideas came out of this fact-finding mission.

The first step taken was to form a Youth Leadership Team. We thank and look forward to supporting this group of truly enthusiastic and impressive teenagers who have stepped up to take on this role. They have been coming together over the past couple of months to shape the way forward for our proposed Youth Group.



We are thrilled to report that Josh Taylor has stepped up as our Youth Leader – you may have heard Josh talk at the Masses over the weekend of 22/23 November.

No doubt you would also know Josh from his musical contributions at Mass when the Taylor Boys are rostered on to provide music.

A Youth Mass, planned by our Young Leadership Team, was really well received and attended on 30 November. A lot of children



participated in the Mass by reading, doing prayers of the faithful and offertory. This was followed by a family barbecue in the hall courtyard.

The friendly community spirit at this free event hosted by the Leadership Team was a great indication of the enthusiasm with which this youth project is being embraced.

We look forward to some really exciting things to come from the Youth Leadership Team in 2015. 'Peak Youth' will be kicking off with fun and friendship as well as a social justice aspect in the new year.

Congratulations to our Youth Leadership Team who are Josh, Ivana, Kathleen, Sinead, Andrew, Cooper and Michaela.

At the youth Mass we also thanked and gave a certificate and gift to all the altar servers – about 20 turned up which was fabulous.

We also took the opportunity to thank and present a certificate to Jenni Payne for 25 years dedication to training the altar servers.

*Emma Williams  
for the Leadership Team*

## **ONSITE BLOOD BANK VISIT**

What a great success the visit by the Mobile Blood Bank was. Lending A Hand initiated this visit and the team was thrilled with the response.

We had a total of 75 people visit the mobile donor centre over the two days.



Out of this we had 64 people donate – 34 of them were new donors and we had 17 people who didn't have appointments turn up to donate.

All in all a great success and positive feedback on the great location and great community.

We are looking forward to the Red Cross coming back on December 30 and 31, and hopefully next year as well.

If you missed out this time, mark the dates on your calendar. Christmas and New Year are a busy time for the Blood Bank and they need lots of donations.

Remember, every blood donations helps three lives.

Thanks to Lynelle for all her help with this project.

*Emma Williams  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

# REPORT ON THE CATECHIST'S MASS

The Annual Catechist's Mass was celebrated by Bishop Terry Brady at St Mary's Cathedral on Sunday, 21 September 2014. A number of priests from the Archdiocese concelebrated the Mass with Bishop Terry including Fr Paul Smithers, our Parish Administrator while Fr John was on leave.

The Welcome and Introduction was conducted by Douglas Mawhinney who was appointed as Director Confraternity of Christian Doctrine this year.

The newly accredited catechists were presented to the Bishop and formally commissioned as Specialist Religious Education teachers.

The Bishop thanked all catechists present for devoting themselves to the works of Religious Education and Catechesis and invited them to renew their commitment:

*I dedicate myself to be more like Christ in my thoughts and in my actions. May the light of Christ always shine forth in my words and my deeds, so that all those I teach may see Jesus reflected in me. May Christ be our life and our light.*

At the end of Mass, the presentation of awards took place.

Awards were presented for 20, 25, 30, 40 and (would you believe) 50 years of service as catechists. The strength of commitment of these people to their ministry is just amazing!

Certificates were also presented to Catholic Schools whose students participated in the Student Catechist Program.

One of our very dedicated catechists, Tony King, received an Apostolic Blessing for 20 years service as a catechist. The Parish congratulates Tony on his award and thanks him for his service to the State School children of our Parish.

After all these years, Tony is retiring from catechist work for a well-earned rest! He will be missed!

Tony's retirement is, I think, an opportunity for parishioners who may have considered becoming catechists to heed the call to become messengers of the Gospel and give generously of their time and talents to this special ministry.

Think about it! It would be good to see Tony's legacy continue!

*David Payne for the Catechists*

# LITURGY LINES

Three young men from our Parish, Stephen Abel, Travis Hochwallner and Morgan Lee, were commissioned as Eucharistic Ministers by Fr John on 24 August. It is wonderful to see the youth of our Parish taking on such roles.

The Children's Liturgy organised a special Father's Day Vigil Mass on Saturday, 6 September, which was followed by a barbecue and Family Trivia & Games Night, which was a great success (see story page 11).

A Remembrance Mass commemorating our deceased family and friends was held on 14 November. It was a beautiful Mass with the reflection PowerPoint prepared by our wonderful Parish Secretary, Lynelle, being a highlight. The Mass was followed by supper.

At the Masses on the weekend of 15/16 November, four of our parishioners, Sean Brown, Deb Cummins, Josh Taylor and Agnes Webb, were installed by Fr John as acolytes. We thank them for their commitment to this special Ministry of service.

The Sundays of Advent commenced on the weekend of 29/30 November – the beginning the new Church Year (Year B). The words on the Christmas trees on the back wall challenge us about the real meaning of Christmas. The new Advent Candles purchased earlier in the year are on display along with the Jesse Tree.

The Advent Reconciliation Paraliturgie will be held on 16 December.

Our Christmas Masses are Christmas Eve 6pm and 9pm, and Christmas Day 9.15am (see back page).

New tabernacle covers and lectern cloths in white, violet and green have been recently made for the Parish by the Sister Disciples of the Divine Master, Strathfield.

The Liturgy Committee wishes to thank Fr John and Fr Moses, who minister to us in such a wonderful way, and all the parishioners who have contributed to our liturgy throughout the year.

A Happy and Holy Christmas to everyone.

*The Liturgy Committee*

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# FRIENDSHIP GROUP



Our little group is going well. We have 26 guests and transport is provided if necessary. We have 10 very willing helpers who supply morning tea then we settle down to play cards or board games. Lunch is at 12noon and we finish at 1pm.

Every six weeks bingo is played with small prizes for the winners. We are looking forward to our Christmas party on 11 December with Tony Girdler as our entertainer.

*Helen Cozzi*

## JACK'S AMAZING PROGRESS CONTINUES

Almost three years old, young Jack Ethan Atkins-Walker has been taking some huge steps forward – literally. In November, he showed he can manage four or five steps at a time.

Recently, he ripped out his feeding tube, which is used to ensure he receives sufficient fluids and exercise his new kidney.



He was scolded for pulling it out, and objected to having it replaced. So he was given a choice – drink or replace the tube. He chose to drink.

So now little Jack is without his face plaster and seeks out his water, ensuring his tube stays out.

We fondly remember 23 December 2013 as though it is a second birthday for Jack. It was the day he and us all were given hope, when previously there was none.

You can follow Jack's remarkable progress at his Facebook page: Family and Friends of Jack Ethan Atkins-Walker.

*Peter Atkins*

Young Jack made a brief appearance at the Father's Day barbecue before the Trivia Night. He is pictured below with his mum Anita and grandparents Peter and Kerry.



# HELPING GOODOOGA

Goodooga's a small town of about 300 people, situated 75 kilometres northwest of Lightning Ridge, which has the nearest supermarket, hospital and petrol station.

About 20 of the people in town are not Aboriginal and these include four or five of the teachers at Goodooga Central School, the matron at Goodooga Health Clinic (which used to be a hospital), the two police (one a man and the other a woman), the post mistress and her husband, the owner of the local pub and then there is Christian Brother, Pat Lynch (pictured).

It once used to be a bustling town of more than 1000 people and the centre of a thriving sheep industry; many of the people in town were sheep shearers but several factors have made this a thing of the past. Probably the most significant of these factors was the lack of rainfall – there hasn't been any decent rain for more than three years when the town was cut off by flood waters.

Goodooga is situated in the Wilcannia-Forbes diocese, with the nearest priest in Bourke, 250 kilometres west.

Br Pat Lynch is known to me because he attended Christian Brothers Lewisham with my dad over 50 years ago. He entered the Brothers after finishing school in 1957 and completed University as a Christian Brother.

He has taught in several Christian Brothers schools, including Albury, Waitara and Penrith. After finishing teaching, he worked with street kids in Kings Cross, then became the Catholic chaplain at Parklea prison.

After prison chaplaincy, he taught English in China for several years. On returning to Australia, he decided to settle at Goodooga and explore the opportunity of serving indigenous people.

After my Dad told me about a recent trip to visit Br Pat, I thought about how Lending A Hand might be able to help in Goodooga. I contacted Pat and he told me about a community garden he was trying to bring back to life. The garden provides a place for people to do some work and meet as well



as the purposeful task of building and caring for something. On top of this, the garden provides fresh produce for the township to use.

Pat explained to me how they use the few tools that the school has to offer and how a large storm last year destroyed their shade cloth.

Lending A Hand, on behalf of the OLF parish, agreed to assist Br Pat in purchasing two wheelbarrows, mulch, a hose, fertiliser and ties.

Br Pat was most grateful for the generosity of the OLF parish and will be keeping us updated on the garden's progress as it begins to more fully evolve.

*Emma Williams  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

## VISIT TO EBONY AND IVORY HOUSES

Lending A Hand had a busy weekend in August at Ebony and Ivory Cottages.

These cottages are operated as part of the Homicide Victims Support Group. Our team of 18 people willingly rolled up their sleeves to help. Both houses were given a good scrub. We probably concentrated a little more on Ivory because it has not had the major renovation that Ebony has.

We cleaned all the windows and screens, cleaned under and behind all the furniture, removed the cobwebs from inside and out, chainsawed a big tree that had fallen, put up all the new curtains (massive thanks to Tommy and Breda), put up two key-locked boxes, hung some prints to brighten it up, raked all the leaves and tree debris, mowed, mulched the garden, vacuumed, mopped and more.



As an aside, Fr Paul (who filled in for Fr John recently) asked if we could take with us a young man who had been in a bit of trouble and needed to do some community service. His dad came with him, and was an absolute bundle of energy.

About 11ish he came to me and said how about I pull this old garage down, chainsaw that dead tree and build a

nice carport there instead, "I will pay". Wow I said, but, hang on, I have to ask first! Anyway our friend from HVSG turned up so I introduced them. This young bloke and his dad are really keen to come with us again, only next time they are catering with a big BBQ for us all. On this occasion we really were lending a hand in more ways than one!

We all agreed the house looked fabulous when we left. We have some other ideas of things we could do to make Ivory even better next time. A big thank you must go to all those who gave up their

Sunday to Lend A Hand. Your enthusiasm and hard work is inspiring.

We are grateful to HVSG for once again trusting us to do some maintenance on their two cottages. It was as always, a privilege to be involved.

The following week I received a phone call from HVSG to ensure that the keys had been placed where we found them the previous Sunday. He told me that the police were in transit taking a family to Ivory House to use as immediate crisis.

I debated about sharing this part of the story because on one level it made me so very sad but on the other hand, we should feel proud that we left Ivory in such a loved state that at least a little piece of us Lending A Hand may bring some comfort to others in a time of extreme distress.

So often when you give generously you never quite know if what you give will get used in the best way.

I think with this project we can all be assured that giving of our time is truly helping others.

There will be more opportunities to be involved with the upkeep of these cottages next year.

*Emma Williams  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

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# DID YOU KNOW

It's good to see our beloved Ruth back on her feet and running the choir after her knee operation.

By all accounts, Fr Moses enjoyed his recent trip home, and says with all the good food he was dished up he put on a few extra kilos.

The Lioness Fair was held in the church grounds again in November (pictured below). Many parishioners took advantage of the fair and were spotted throughout the day. Of course our own Connie Alifano has been a part of the Lioness Club for many years. Slowly but surely the fair is growing in size and becoming more popular.



We know there are a few people in the parish whose health is not quite 100%. To them, we wish you a speedy recovery and hope you're back on your feet very soon.

Acolyte, Goody Maquinad, is off to the Philippines to join his wife for Christmas.

Richard Allison was joined by wife Lisa on a recent trip to the USA.

John and Maureen Dowd had a fabulous trip to the Holy Land, and you can read about it on page 13.

It's sad to see the Tooheys, Frank and Lyn, leaving the parish after many years of service. We wish them all the best in the next stage of their lives.

The members of the Catholic Women's League recently enjoyed their annual Christmas Luncheon, pictured below. It's been a busy year for the group and we were pleased to have Father John and Father Moses join us on the day.

Who says you slow down when you retire? Try telling that to David Payne. Not only has he taken on an even more active role in the parish, including being a Catechist, but he's also learning Latin. If he can find the time, I'm sure he'll be off to the cricket this summer too.

The Remembrance Mass on Friday 14 November had to be seen to be believed. What a moving ceremony it was. The PowerPoint of Remembrance brought so many of us to tears, it was such a moving tribute to the loved ones we have lost but still remember and cherish in our hearts. Simply beautiful. Full credit to the masterwork of Lynelle, and of course Frs John and Moses made it a beautiful Mass from start to finish. The Liturgy Team should be congratulated for initiating the Mass and setting the scene.

Finally, I wish you all a very safe, happy and healthy Christmas, and may 2015 bring you an abundance of God's blessings.

*Inez Mullen*



# NEWS FROM THE LEADERSHIP TEAM

The Annual General Meeting was held on 30 November. Despite the poor attendance the meeting was productive.

The Leadership Team Report by Chairman, Robert De Marcellis, read as follows:

On behalf of the Parish Leadership Team, I would like to thank all the wonderful parishioners who have contributed in so many ways to the running of our Parish this year.

All the Ministries within the Parish can be justly proud of what they have achieved over the year.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge those from the Parish involved in:

- Creating our Parish Youth Group, 'Peak Youth' to cater for the needs of the youth of our Parish;
- Providing more opportunity for fellowship among parishioners through social activities; and
- Implementing our Maintenance Program to improve our Parish assets.

These areas, and Parish Finances, have been of most concern to Leadership Teams in recent years.

A big thank you to Frances Finch and Ronny Martinovic who completed their three years service with the Leadership Team.

We also look forward to welcoming Camille Philips and Bob Barisic (pictured) to the Leadership Team.

We sincerely thank Fr John and Fr Moses who minister to us in such a wonderful way.

We, as a Parish, look forward to the challenges and opportunities of next year, as we prepare for the Parish's 50th Anniversary on 12 May 2016.

Copies of the Minutes of the AGM (and Ministry Reports) are on the church noticeboards.

**Finance:** Tony Thorpe advised that budgets have been prepared showing a break-even for 2014/15 and a deficit for 2015/16. With the Parish's assets ageing, there will be increasing demand on funds for maintenance. New initiatives by the Leadership Team will also require funding.

**Maintenance:** Paul Moreton advised that over \$90,000 was spent on necessary maintenance in 2014. Works planned for 2015 include repair of low-level roofs of church (\$7,000), re-carpeting the church (up to \$35,000) and re-staining church pews (subject to approval - \$25,000).



**Youth:** Josh Taylor of the new Youth Leadership Team outlined the Team's vision for the youth of the Parish including Friday night meetings for younger and older youth, Youth Masses, *The Bark* and Bulletin articles, Parish website updates and assistance to Lending A Hand.

**Communications:** Charles Centorrino advised that a strategy and communication plan were being developed with consideration of all communications needs, both internally and externally. Reaching out to Catholics who no longer attend church would be part of the strategy.

**Catechists:** Julia Goff expressed much concern about the Parish's capacity in 2015 to cover the 21 classes of local Primary Schools requiring special religious education. With the loss of a number of current catechists, new recruits are desperately needed. Parishioners are asked to seriously consider this mission of teaching Catholic children about their faith and God's love for them.

Fr John concluded the meeting with his sincere thanks, commenting that "the Spirit was working through people in the life of the Parish".

A happy and holy Christmas to all parishioners.

*The Leadership Team*

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## LENDING A HAND IN EAST TIMOR

The Lending A Hand Team announced in March this year that we had agreed to support the village of Liquidoe in East Timor with a donation of \$10,000 to complete a partially built church in one of the five towns in the area.

This is an area where Korean priests, one of whom is Fr John Cho who was Fr Moses's parish priest in Korea, minister to the local people.

The good news is that we have had a report back via Fr Moses indicating that as well as our donation, Fr Cho received a donation from Korea, which combined has enabled the partially built church to be completed, as well as another new church. They decided to extend the original plan because of the number of people in the area and both of the churches are now in use.

Building the two at the same time has allowed savings to be made.

On this page is a picture of the completed church. As indicated at the time we announced this donation, apart from providing the needed church, the funds also provided work for the local people.

Funds were directed to purchasing basic materials and the local people were able to earn wages in constructing the buildings.

Construction materials like cement, slate, paint, iron, wood etc. were purchased from Dili, and the local people made all the blocks themselves with the cement and sand, as well as most of the furniture such as pews and doors.

As can be seen from the picture above right, they have done a great job and the final building is a wonderful result. Clearly, from the surrounding area, lawn mowing would not be an expense that they would need to be concerned about!

The sad news is that Fr Cho's health is not good enough to stay in Timor much longer and he has had to have further treatment and care, so he has decided to go back to Korea early in 2015 with his assistant priest.

He expects that all the villages and chapels will be included in Aileu Parish because it used to be the mother parish before Fr Cho came to the area, and unfortunately the Diocese of Dili is struggling with a shortage of priests. Normally, most of the



parishes have 10 to 15 chapels in rural areas.

All the five of villages Fr Cho is now in charge of were parts of Aileu Parish, so Fr David, the Timorese parish priest of Aileu, would look after that area after Fr Cho leaves.

Fr Cho sends us his and his community's deep appreciation and best wishes for our generous support and prayers.

Thanks to Fr Moses for communicating with Fr Cho and providing us with this feedback.

*Tony Thorpe  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

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# PARISH TRIVIA NIGHT

Well over 100 people enjoyed the parish Family Trivia and Games Night on Saturday 6 September, 2014.

It followed the special Father's Day Mass and a very popular sausage sizzle.

Host Richard Allison was in fine form, interspersing his best 'Dad jokes' between trivia questions.

Anne-Maree Williams was busy during the night, tallying the scores as the answer sheets were submitted.

The Leadership Team put on the event, which is just the start of their aim to have more social events in the parish and build community spirit.

The trivia competition was hotly contested with



teams battling it out tooth and nail for ultimate glory. iPhones and other electronic devices were naturally banned from use.

The honours for the night went to the team named the 'In Laws'. They held a solid lead over 'Minty Freshness' and a three-way tie for third – 'Paul's Prodigals', 'The A-Team' and 'The Mud Larks'.

We're not sure what the significance of some of the team names was, but no doubt it meant something to the members.

The coin toss competitions were hugely popular – one for the adults vying for a bottle of scotch, and another for the younger parishioners aiming to win a box of chocolates.

Will the Trivia Night be back next year? Let's hope so because it was well organised and great fun.

*Dominic Alati*



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# NEWS FROM LENDING A HAND

You might recall the front page article in *The Bark* in 2012 which featured the story of Santo, a young man in southwest country NSW in the Wagga/ Riverina district.

Santo (pictured right) suffers from Acute Lymphoblastic Leukaemia which required regular chemotherapy treatment. This has involved travelling regularly to Sydney, a trip of seven hours each way. Sometimes, his exhaustive treatment required hospitalisation in Sydney for many months, away from his family. Lending A Hand, on behalf of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, provided a motorised wheelchair through the charity Country Hope.

We have just recently received great news from Ellie Webb who runs Country Hope. She tells us "Santo is going really well. You would not recognise him! He doesn't have to use the wheelchair as often at the moment as he has gotten stronger and can walk small distances.

"He came to our camp this year. Mum was a little anxious, but all went well, he had a great time. He is in high school now. He struggles in a few



areas, which is only natural for what he has been through and how much he has missed." So, all is progressing well with Santo at the moment.

The merits of Lending A Hand, introduced by our Leadership Team in 2004, were recognised by Fr Paul Smithers during his time at Peakhurst.

Fr Paul, now the Administrator at Beverly Hills, is considering setting up something similar in his parish, and recently asked to meet with our members to get a better understanding of the operations of Lending A Hand.

Fr Paul suggested the possibility of having some combined activities between the two parishes, and the Lending A Hand team will give some thought to how this can be achieved.

Fr Paul had introduced two parishioners from Beverly Hills who assisted at the Lending A Hand clean up at Ivory House in August. The two, a father and son, have since spent a number of weekends demolishing an old garage on the grounds of Ivory house, transforming it into an entertainment area beside the house.

This will add considerably to facilities that have been upgraded through the working bees conducted by parishioners over the past two years, and make the stays at Ivory House much more comfortable for people, affected by homicide, using the house for respite.

*Tony Thorpe  
for the Lending A Hand Team*

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# THE DOWDS' JOURNEY TO THE HOLY LAND AND JORDAN

Last September we, Maureen and John Dowd, went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan. We travelled in a group of 40 with Olive Tree Travel from Melbourne. Our priest was Fr Wim Hoekstra from Glenbrook.

After arriving at Amman, we travelled by coach to Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee staying four nights. We swam in and sailed on the Sea of Galilee, visited Cana where we renewed our marriage vows, travelled to Nazareth, Capharnaum, Mount of Beatitudes and Caesarea Philippi.

Leaving Tiberias, we headed for Jerusalem staying seven nights. From there we made day trips to Bethlehem, Mount of Olives, Garden of Gethsemane, Bethany, City of David and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The highlight in Jerusalem was walking the Via Dolorosa, the Way of the Cross. We found this experience most moving as we walked in the footsteps Jesus would have walked through the narrow streets to Calvary.



We travelled by coach into Jordan, floated in the Dead Sea, visited the site of Jesus' Baptism in the Jordan by John the Baptist and then explored wonderful Petra.

Even though we visited many places where Jesus is said to have lived or passed through, the most significant side of the Pilgrimage was actually being in and experiencing where Jesus lived.

Looking out over Jerusalem and seeing the Garden of Gethsemane, walking the steps Jesus would have walked going up to the Temple, has made real for us the reading of the Scriptures.



We were very blessed to have the opportunity to spend time with such a wonderful group, all like-minded, and celebrate daily Mass with our well-loved priest. This trip will be something we will treasure for the rest of our lives.

*John Dowd*

*Pictured above: At the site of Jesus' baptism in River Jordan.*

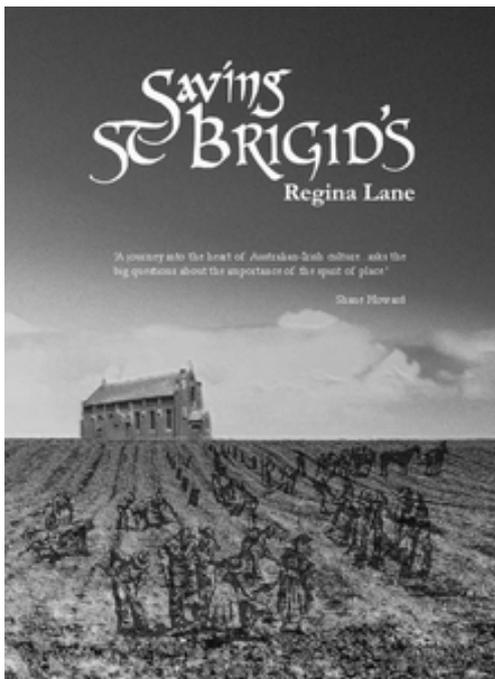
*Pictured left: John and Maureen at renewal of vows at Cana.*

# SAVING ST BRIGID'S

I've just started reading a book entitled *Saving St Brigid's* by Regina Lane.

I heard the author interviewed on Richard Fidler's *Conversations* program on ABC Radio a couple of months back.

The book is about the battle by a parish community to stop the Catholic Church selling its church and hall against its wishes. The story had me thinking that this could happen anywhere.



St Brigid's Church is located in a small township called Crossley in south-west Victoria.

The area was settled by potato-famine survivors from Ireland in the 1840s. The grand old red

brick church sits at the top of a hill overlooking the Southern Ocean. The church was built by the parishioners' ancestors and paid for a century earlier. The author's grandfather was a driving force for the building of the church.

In 2006, the Catholic Church decommissioned St Brigid's Church. The parishioners were expected to attend Mass and the Sacraments at a neighbouring town.

The parishioners (and the community) viewed themselves as the rightful owners of the St Brigid's precinct because their ancestors had built the church and hall and they were maintaining it.

The Friends of St Brigid's was formed to save the church and hall. In December 2009, after a long public campaign, the Friends of St Brigid's finally purchased the precinct from the Catholic Church taking out a mortgage of well over \$200,000.

The vision of the Friends of St Brigid's is for an Australian-Irish Cultural, Community and Heritage

Centre. In order to keep St Brigid's open to the community on an ongoing basis, the group has to fundraise \$2,000 per month to pay the mortgage, rates, insurance and utilities.

When I ordered the book, Regina Lane rang me. She was interested in our model of Church at Peakhurst. Her comment was: "That's all we wanted too".

The whole thing is such a sad tale!

The book is available from Bridin Books. Part proceeds of the sale go to the Friends of St Brigid's. More information is on the website: [www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au](http://www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au)

I've also left a brochure regarding donations on the back noticeboard of the church.

St Brigid's Might be a good cause for our Lending A Hand Team!

*David Payne*

## ARTICLES FOR *THE BARK*

Relevant contributions for *The Bark* are welcome. All articles should have a spiritual relevance to our church. Preference is for articles to be emailed to: [domalati@hotmail.com](mailto:domalati@hotmail.com) Otherwise, leave at the Parish House with your name and contact details. Articles left anonymously will not be accepted.

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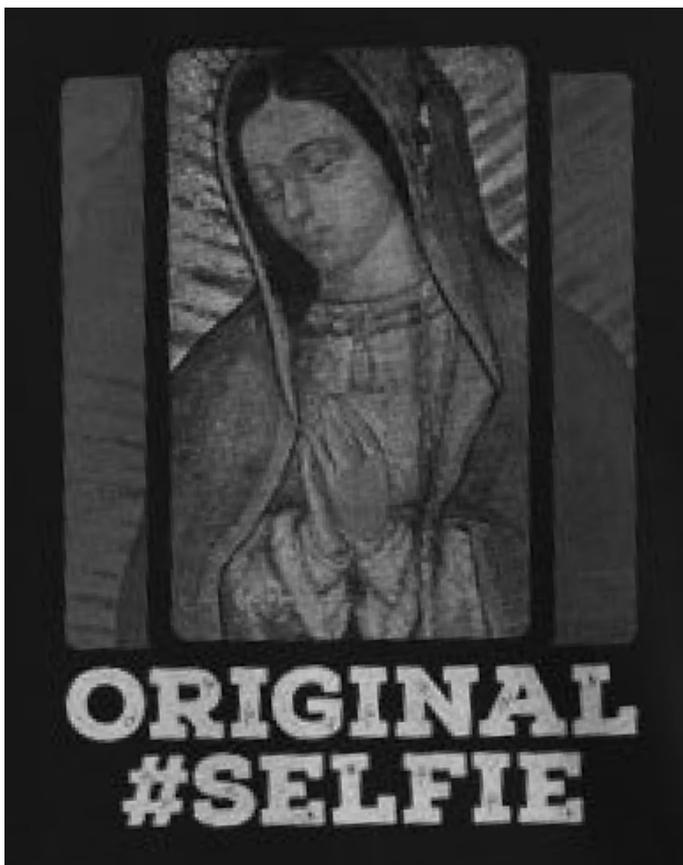
Articles should be no more than 300 words. Pictures help your article and make it more likely to be read. We encourage you to send articles and/or pictures of events directly related to our parish, or key events in the lives of our parishioners.

Articles are published and edited at the editor's discretion and no guarantee can be given that an article will appear.

Opinions on church issues are welcome. Opinions expressed in articles are those of the author and not necessarily those of *The Bark*, Our Lady of Fatima, Peakhurst or the Catholic Church.

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# FUNNIES



The topic for my ninth-grade class was palindromes, words or sentences that are the same read forward and backward. I asked the question "What is the first thing Adam said to Eve?"

I was expecting the answer "Madam, I'm Adam," but one student had a better reply:

"Wow."

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Louie was shipwrecked and lived alone on a desert island for years until he was finally rescued.

Before leaving the island, he gave the rescue party a tour. "I built myself a house. That's it there. Here's the barn, and over here is the church I worshipped in."

"What's that building over there?" one of the rescuers asked.

Louie sneered as he said, "That's the church I used to belong to."

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Spotted outside a church in Michigan:  
"Honk if you love Jesus. Keep on texting while you drive if you want to meet him."

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A computer salesman meets St Peter at the Pearly Gates. St Peter tells the salesman that he can choose between heaven and hell. First he shows him heaven, where people in white robes play harps and float around.

"Dull," says the salesman.

Next, St Peter shows him hell: toga parties, excellent food and wine, and everyone looking as though they're having a wonderful time.

"I'll take hell," he says.

He enters the gates of hell and is immediately set upon by a dozen demons who poke him with pitchforks. "Hey," the salesman demands as Satan walks past, "what happened to the party I saw going on?"

"Ah," Satan replies. "You were probably shown our demo tape."

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Three men die on Christmas Eve and go to heaven, where they're met by Saint Peter. "In order to get in," he tells them, "you must each produce something representative of the season."

The first man digs into his pockets and pulls out a match and lights it. "This represents a candle of hope." Impressed, Peter lets him in.

The second man pulls out some coins and shakes them. "These are bells." He's allowed in too.

"So," Peter says to the third man, "what, pray tell, do you have?"

The third man shows him a set of car keys. "What do these have to do with Christmas?" asks Peter.

"They're Carol's."



Jesus Saves

# CATHOLIC CHURCH PEAKHURST PARISH OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

825 FOREST ROAD PEAKHURST 2210

**Parish Priest:** Fr John Crothers **Assistant:** Fr Moses Kim  
Parish Secretary: Lynelle Lembryk – PH: 9533 2594 – Fax: 9533 5908  
Email: olfpeak@bigpond.com.au – Web: www.ourladyoffatima.com.au

## LITURGIES

**Saturday Vigil:** 5pm **Sunday:** 9:15am and 6pm. **Wednesday and Friday:** 9:30am Mass followed by Rosary.

## SACRAMENTAL SCHEDULE

**Baptism:** 10:30am 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. Contact Parish House for details.

**Marriage:** Six months notice required. Contact Parish House for details.

**Anointing:** Any time day 9533 2594 or night 9580 1310.

**Reconciliation:** Saturday 4:30pm.

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

Robert De Marcellis (Chair), David Payne, Agnes Webb, Emma Williams, Camille Philips, Bob Barisic.

## THE BARK

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## Christmas Mass times at Our Lady of Fatima Peakhurst



**Christmas Vigil:** 6pm Wednesday 24 December

This is the Children's Mass and features the Children's Pageant,

Music by the Taylor Boys

Carols start at 5.30pm

**Christmas Eve:** 9pm Wednesday 24 December

Music by the Parish Choir. Carols start at 8.30pm

**Christmas Day:** 9.15am Thursday 25 December

Music by the Parish Choir. Carols start at 8.45am.