



ST BENEDICT'S

Newsletter

November 2010

Vol 2

In recent years, St Benedict's has developed quite a reputation around Canberra. It is a small parish that is very active, and not afraid to serve the wider diocese in ways that would seem to be beyond its capacity or resources.

One of the particular features of St Benedict's is its focus on mission. In this edition of St Benedict's news we wanted to focus on the evangelising work that takes place here. This work of outreach takes many forms and meets many needs including service to the poor and marginalised, support groups for those dealing with addictions, doorknocking around the suburb to welcome people back to the church, the RCIA program to teach the faith to those wanting to become catholic, youth ministry and cross cultural mission training.

In this edition of St Benedict's news we will look at some of the young people who have gone out on mission to high schools in Australia and communities overseas; the Called and Gifted program that seeks to empower lay people for mission; some of the local works of evangelisation that have been happening at Narrabundah and we also look at the work of St Vincent De Paul in the prison.

Going out on mission

Youth groups are always full of energy and excitement. Yet even the most zealous youth leaders can find themselves questioning whether the young people are really experiencing conversion or are they just involved so that they can have fun. Pope Paul VI said that the great test of conversion is that "the person who has been evangelised goes on to evangelise others". The real test of whether a youth ministry is doing a good job is if the young people are then sharing their faith with others.

St Benedict's has four youth groups run by the Disciples of Jesus community and it would seem that they are definitely doing something right. Over the last two years, five young people from DOJyouth have taken up the call to evangelise their peers. They have chosen to give up a year of their life (or in some cases two years) to work with "Youth Mission Teams Australia". They have worked with other young

people running retreats in high schools around the country and giving witness to their faith.

Peter Meli set out on mission last year along with four other youth from St Benedict's, including Felicity Pollard, Catherine Supple, Jacob Fulop and James Hay. Peter Meli has been attending mass at St Benedict's for the last seven years and has been involved in the Luke 18 and Discipleship youth groups. "I decided to join youth mission team in 2009 initially out of a desire for adventure and evangelisation. I'd started a daily prayer life mid 2008 when I was 17, and experiencing this new deeper dimension to life and Gods amazing love, I was eager and bursting to share it with others and get my friends into a deeper relationship with God." While they sacrificed many things to be involved in this outreach, they claimed that the work itself was the reward. "The most rewarding thing about

working with youth is literally seeing their lives change because of a personal relationship with Jesus" said Peter.

Peter is currently finishing his second year of work with the Youth Mission Team and feels that his understanding of mission has developed greatly as a result of this work. "My understanding of this big word, evangelisation has changed from having an image of preaching to random people on the street about the love of God, to just something simple as smiling at someone. A quote from Mother Theresa is "Love begins with a smile". I think she's hit the nail on the head. Evangelisation is just simple things. Listening to young people, laughing at their jokes, and most of all, being that example of a man of God, striving to grow in virtue, and praying every day." For more information about their work, go to www.ymt.com.au

Overseas Mission by St Benedict's Youth

For the last ten year, St Benedict's has hosted mission training programs run by the Asia Pacific School of Evangelisation. APSE is a work of the Disciples of Jesus community, and seeks to train young people in Cross-cultural mission. This year two teams of young people were trained for missions to Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. These teams were engaged in basic evangelisation work and training of local leaders.

Mission to PNG by Brianna Thomas and Anna Ringrose-Voase

On a recent trip to Papua New Guinea, eight young Catholics from St Benedict's experienced a new way of faith and evangelisation while on a two week mission trip through the Asia Pacific School of Evangelisation (APSE). In the first week, we spent some time with the Disciples of Jesus Community (DoJ) and many of the villages up in Mount Hagen. People walked for up to seven hours to attend the retreats we were running during the day, which were truly a blessed experience. We were given a chance to communicate through the language barrier, and share our faith with many. What spoke most clearly to many of us was the feeling of receiving far more than we were able to give to these beautiful people, as we were inspired by their intense trust in God. Some villages spent weeks preparing for our

visit, and the Papua New Guinean hospitality, not limited by their poverty, demonstrated a true heart in these people for love beyond limits.

The second week of the trip was spent in the capital, Port Moresby, helping to run an Asia Pacific School of Evangelisation, together

for us Australians and the other APSE participants to sleep on and spent weeks cleaning out the school which APSE was hosted at. One of the highlights was the culture night, where participants of different tribes performed dances in traditional dress, some of which we were invited to join, proceeded by an enthusiastic performance



with the very alive DoJ community there. There were up to 50 participants, each involved in youth ministry in their own parish or city in some way. Throughout the week, participants attended seminars and lectures, which taught them about giving testimonies, leading and being involved in worship, the role of the laity and other relevant topics. The community was so generous in preparing for the event; they fundraised the equivalent of about \$7000 to buy mattresses

by our Australian team of '*We are Australian.*'

Re-entry into Australia was more difficult than we anticipated, as our eyes had been opened to life in a third world country and were once again taken aback by the difference between lifestyles. While in Papua New Guinea, we had nothing to give the people we met but ourselves, and just had to trust in God that He would use us to touch hearts and change lives.

Bringing the gift of St Benedict's to the whole of Canberra

by Fr Dave



One of the most commonly asked questions around St Benedict's is, "What is the Eucharistic Centre?" The best way to explain this is to look back at the history of this place.

At the time when the Missionaries of God's Love were invited to care for the community of St Benedict's, the Diocese was considering the possibility of amalgamating the parish with the Cathedral. Fr Kevin Flynn began speaking to the MGLs about the possibility of them taking on the care of the parish. It was at this point that things started to become a bit different.

The Missionaries of God's Love are a missionary congregation, with a particular charism to evangelise young people and the poor and marginalised through the power of the Holy Spirit. The MGLs realised that there was a need to preserve their missionary charism while respecting the identity of the parish. It was felt that the best way to achieve this was by establishing a centre for mission and outreach. This centre would work in partnership the Parish, yet be separate enough so that the parish could maintain its normal life of worship.

The Missionaries of God's Love were commissioned by the Archbishop to build a Eucharistic Centre at St. Benedict's Narrabundah on August 1st, 1998. At this time, the concept of the 'Eucharistic Centre' was an attempt to create a new way of serving the local church with a strong vision towards mission. Over the last twelve years, this concept has developed into a reality.

The Eucharistic centre operates out of the same buildings as the parish, and often has parishioners actively involved in events and outreaches. While the parish is primarily focused on the area of Narrabundah, the Eucharistic Centre seeks to bring the gospel to the whole of Canberra. The main distinction between the Parish and the Eucharistic centre is the intention that lies behind the work. The events and works of the Eucharistic centre are intentionally focussed on evangelisation, seeking to actively bring people through the process of conversion to the point where they start to evangelise others. Central to this process is the work of the Holy Spirit. The Missionaries of God's Love have been birthed out of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, and believe that there is a particular

grace for conversion that comes through an encounter with the Holy Spirit.

The heart of the Eucharistic Centre is the 7pm Charismatic mass, which draws people from all over Canberra and has a very strong focus on personal conversion. The Eucharistic Centre has formed partnerships with many small groups and lay movements that share in this work on mission. The Disciples of Jesus Lay catholic Community plays a large role in this work, facilitating the four youth groups at St Benedict's while also being actively involved in many other works of service and mission.

While these two entities are distinct, the reality is that the Parish and the Eucharistic Centre both have a great influence on each other. We often see that those who have been evangelised through the work of the Eucharistic Centre find their home in the stable community of the parish. Over the past twelve years, this partnership has borne amazing fruit and has allowed the gift of this community to be brought to the wider Church.

You have a story to tell or maybe you have skills in journalism, editorial management etc. and would be willing to help write, collect and edit articles for the newsletter next year. Contact Fr Dave at the Parish office or Pierre Rey on 0407 489 403



Cells of Evangelisation By Brendan Price

As Christians, we enjoy a profound communion with each other, especially in the Eucharist. The Catechism of the Catholic Church specifically notes the ‘unity of all [the Church’s] members with each other as a result of their union with Christ’. However, these bonds can seem to have little practical effect on our lives – it is easy to feel lonely, and find lonely people, at church. We can see the same people every weekend and hardly know them, finding it hard to move from an initial invitation or introduction into a fuller relationship.

Proclaiming the Gospel is directed towards people being incorporated into the body of Christ. Jesus draws close to us so that, in union with him, we can enter into the divine communion of the Trinity – this mystery of intimacy drives St Paul to write that ‘we, who are many, are one body in Christ’. Later, St Thomas Aquinas will say ‘Head and members form, as it were, one and the same mystical person’.

Cell groups are offered by the parish as one way to further the goal of mission by encouraging communion. They are small groups that meet regularly, to deepen faith

and fellowship and welcome others.

Our cell meets fortnightly in our home, every Thursday evening. Some people can make it over a bit

A Eucharist
which does not
pass over into
the concrete
practice of love
is intrinsically
fragmented.

- Pope Benedict XVI
Deus Caritas Est

early, and we have dinner together; some can stay a bit later and have a drink before heading home. The formal part of the evening begins with some singing, a time of worship which also is a great leveller – let’s just say it increases our gratitude for the music ministry

on Sunday! We then read the Gospel for the coming Sunday, going through it twice quite slowly, and people can share anything that stands out for them. This also links us in with the parish, often making the reading at Sunday mass more powerful because of the chance to reflect on it a little, and making you wonder what will be drawn out in the homily. After this time of sharing, we have some input, normally a short talk recorded by the parish priests, with a chance to discuss or reflect on some questions afterwards. The formal part of the evening concludes with a time of intercession, with people sharing situations and particular intentions or thanksgivings.

However, the relationships tend to overflow the formal setting, with people seeing each other for games nights, helping each other move houses, and recently setting up a regular coffee session after 9am mass on the third Sunday of each month.

My experience of belonging to St Benedicts has been greatly enriched by cells, and I would encourage anyone interested to contact Fr Dave or Nathan Kensey – unless someone invites you along first!

St Vincent de Paul

by Karen Flood

The mission statement for St Vincent de Paul speaks of *“a lay Catholic organisation that aspires to live the gospel message by serving Christ in the poor with love, respect, justice, hope and joy and by working to shape a more just and compassionate society.”*

We are all familiar with the wonderful work St Vincent de Paul does with the provision of physical support to people in need, Vinnies home visitation programmes to the aged and lonely, Vinnies regular camps for disadvantaged children, Vinnies aged care facilities, “op shops” drug, alcohol and gambling counselling, night patrol van providing food and friendship, and the list goes on. Many reading this article have had involvement with door knock appeals, blanket appeals and Christmas toy and food collections or one of the myriad of ways one can be involved with the work of the society.

Two relatively new St Vincent de Paul conferences have been established in the last little while in Canberra and both have members in St Benedicts Parish.

The first is **The Maximilian Kolbe** conference, established at the time of the building of a prison in the ACT. This conference exists to provide support to people in prison and their families. Mass is offered in the jail on a regular but not terribly frequent basis and, along with other Canberra priests, Fr Steve and Fr Dave have made themselves available to celebrate these masses. On each occasion a couple of members of the Maximilian Kolbe conference also attend. Members of this conference also offer meditation in the jail, are involved in visitation of prisoners and support of the families of prisoners as they endeavour to cope with a member of their family being in jail.

The other conference is **The Teresa of Jesus** conference. This conference began, and continues to exist with the specific goal of providing spiritual support to men at Samaritan House which is a St Vincent de Paul shelter for homeless men or men at grave risk of being homeless. Through The Blue Door, which is a St Vincent de Paul outreach at Ainslie Village, this conference also offers spiritual support and friendship to men and women living in the Village and in some instances providing transport to mass at St. Benedicts. This conference meets every third Tuesday at St Benedicts. At these meetings we pray together, work our way through some spiritual reading and generally provide the mutual support required for our work to continue.

If you would like to know more about these conferences contact Karen Flood, 62869836.

Explosion

During the school holidays, nearly a hundred youth took over St Benedict’s for the annual Explosion conference. The event was run the combined DOJ youth ministries (Luke 18 and Discipleship) and attracted young people from all over Canberra and New South Wales. The week was packed with seminars and lectures, times of prayer and worship, and finished up with a huge celebration on Saturday night.





CONVOCATION



ORDINATION





COMMITMENT



CELEBRATION



CONCENTRATION

Changes to the Mass

The words we say and hear at every mass are undergoing some change. The Mass will remain the same but there will be some different responses and prayers of the people and the celebrant.

A revised edition of the Roman Missal in Latin was published in 2002. Our current translation dates to 1973 and some parts of the Mass first appeared in English as early as 1970. After a generation of usage the current translation has been revised to reflect the current Latin edition.

The revision process has been undertaken by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) the same organisation that provided the first translations in English a generation ago. The new members of ICEL include up to 11 bishops from different countries and teams of expert translators in Latin and English. The process to revise the texts has involved conferences discussing many drafts. When a draft was agreed upon after many years of work by ICEL it was submitted to Rome to be further worked on by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments and the Vox Clara Committee which has its own team of experts and made its own adjustments before publication.

There will be a number of workshops, discussion groups and resources available to help everyone to know and understand the changes to some of the texts. In anticipation of the changes a DVD called "Become One Body One Spirit In Christ" has been made available as a catechetical resource for us. If you want a preview you can go to www.becomeonebodyonespiritinchrist.org.

We hope to make an initial start on understanding the changes during Advent then into the New Year.

CALLED AND GIFTED

by Adrian Wellspring

Fr Chris Ryan MGL encouraged me to attend a Called and Gifted Workshop in September 2006. I was uncertain what new things I would learn as I had read a lot about spiritual gifts over many years. Despite this, I went to the Workshop and had a very valuable experience.

A key part of the Workshop is doing the Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory. There are three primary lists of gifts in the Bible (*Romans 12: 6-8; 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11; Ephesians 4:11-12*) ranging from administration to teaching. The Inventory covers 24 of the most common charisms including most of those listed in St Paul's letters.

Reflecting on their life experience each participant assesses the extent/frequency in which a given statement is true for them. For example: "People, including strangers, often talk to me about their concerns and inner lives. They have told me they feel safe telling me about deeply personal things" – a) never; b) little; c) some; d) often.

The workshop is followed soon after by a structured individual interview for participants to help further explore and understand the results of the Inventory.

The exciting thing about the Workshop is its practical usefulness for the ordinary lay man and woman. The Church describes the laity as those members who live in the world and receive their call from God to seek His Kingdom by engaging in earthly affairs and ordering them to His plan. Lay men and women make up 99% of the Church!

Spiritual gifts are both tools given to accomplish God's work and an important sign as to what that work might be. They are given to Christians by the Holy Spirit to enable them to be powerful channels of God's love in the Church and the world. The Inventory is intended to be used as the first step towards discovering a person's spiritual gifts which are clues to the particular mission of love to which God has called him or her.

Just as yeast makes dough rise to form bread, our participation as lay people in various groups in society, and in the fields of science and the arts, sports, media, education, politics and economics etc should bring about a world transformed by Christ working through us. This lofty vision is only achievable with the spiritual gifts God has given us, an understanding of His unique purpose for our life, and a willingness to be an instrument of His love for others.

St Benedict's and Corpus Christi Parish South Tuggeranong collaborate in conducting the Workshop. It is no co-incidence that St Benedict's is involved with this initiative. St Benedict lived on the edge of a major historical shift. The Roman Empire was dying (about 500 AD) and the mediaeval world was just beginning. St Benedict himself would have lacked this perspective which is only clear in hindsight. Amidst the chaos, violence and economic turbulence of a decaying Empire, St. Benedict searched for, and encouraged, signs of vibrant new life. In so doing, he helped shape Western European culture for the next 1000 years.

The future of our world is cloudy too. We cannot say with certainty whether a new age is on its way, already begun or nearly ending. We are, however, confronted by the same question St Benedict always asked: What does it mean to live according to the Gospel in times like these? It is difficult to think of a more important priority - or urgent task today - than the effective equipping of lay people to pursue the Church's mission in times like these.

The next Called and Gifted Workshop will be hosted at Corpus Christi Parish, Gowrie, on 5 and 6 November this year. For more information about the Workshop contact Adrian Wellspring on 6295 8532.

SUGGEST A
NAME FOR THE
ST BENEDICT'S
NEWSLETTER

Narrabundah Door knocking.

By Fr Steve

A few members of the St. Benedicts community launched out on a very wet Saturday morning in September to let residents in Narrabundah know what was happening at St. Benedicts and invite them to join in. The volunteers were a little apprehensive at first but after some prayer, instruction and re-assurance that there were others praying for the door knocking in the church, they stepped out enthusiastically. There have been some very interesting encounters with people. Some people have invited us in for a cuppa and a chat. We have been surprised by those who seem genuinely pleased that someone would take the time to invite them to St. Benedicts. One pair of volunteers found because they came from the church one man opened up about some negative experiences he has had with churches. He seemed quite thankful that these people could listen and empathise with his experience.

An elderly couple invited the door knockers into their home and ended up praying together for the wife who was quite sick.

There is a lot of movement in Narrabundah; selling and buying of houses, old houses being knocked down and new ones being built. It has been good to connect with those who have moved into the area. The long term residents of Narrabundah, some living here over 50 years, enjoy talking about their memories of the area and their relationship with the St. Benedicts school and church and the various priests and nuns.

The door knocking is also a way of connecting with those who feel alone-the elderly who are shut in at home, those who have chronic illnesses, some young families doing it hard.

We are recording all those who would like a visit or who would like to connect in some way. Then as a community we can begin to reach out to those who are in need or are showing renewed interest in the church.

We continue to door knock each Saturday 10:00am to 12:00noon. Come join us (we start out from the St Benedicts parish centre) or join those who pray at the same time for the door knocking.

RCIA

All of the separate groups and works at St Benedict's are like individual streams that flow together into one main current. The one work that unites everything that we do at St Benedict's is the RCIA program (the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults). The RCIA program is a six month course of formation in the faith for those who are preparing to be baptised or people from other Christian traditions wanting to become Catholic. Over the last few years we have had dozens of people enter into our community through this course. This work is supported by a faithful team who walk with the candidates and catechumens each year as they learn the faith.

Many of those who help in the RCIA team have come through the program themselves. The current coordinator of the programs is Narelle Jones. "After participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults as a candidate myself in 2007, I have been very keen to be involved in ongoing programs. I guess I thought that having been a candidate I have some insight to what the participants are experiencing and hopefully can encourage them along the way."

This year's program has recently begun with several people participating. Once again, many of those who entered the Church in previous years have returned to help form the new participants. "It has been a great experience to walk the journey with others as they explore their faith, what the Catholic Church teaches and how they respond personally to what this means for them. The range of people involved varies so widely and assisting on the team has been a great learning experience for me. I would encourage anyone who is interested to consider getting involved, whatever your background you will find that you have something to share with others.

Two New Deacons and a finally professed brother



In recent years, The Missionaries of God's love brothers have been attracting many vocations from overseas. The international flavor of the MGLs was very evident recently with three brothers from different countries making big steps in their journey towards priesthood. Bony Abraham, from Kerala in India, and Vincent Widi, from Bali in Indonesia were ordained to the Diaconate according to two different liturgical rites. The two new deacons were joined by Alex Nolasco from the Philippines, who professed his final vows as a consecrated brother. All three of them joined the MGLs in 2005.

On Friday October 1st Bony Abraham was ordained a deacon for the MGL by Bishop Sebastian of the Indian Syro-Malabar Catholic Church. It is one of the 22 sui iuris (latin for 'of one's own laws') Eastern Catholic Churches in the Catholic Church. It is the largest of the Saint Thomas Christian denominations with more than

3.6 million believers. It is also the second largest Eastern Catholic Church in communion with the Bishop of Rome. The celebration was a unique mix of Syro-Malabar rituals, parts of the Mass sung in the Malayalam language by the local Indian choir, other songs in English by the MGL worship ministry, and congregational charismatic praise. Bony is the first Indian to be ordained for the MGL, and this was the first ordination celebrated in Australia using the Syro-Malabar rite. Archbishop Mark Coleridge concelebrated the Mass, together with many Indian priests as well as the MGL priests. Bony is due to be ordained in the latter part of 2011, whenever a Syro-Malabar bishop is visiting Australia.

On Friday 19th November, Vincent Widi was ordained to the Diaconate. This ordination was held in the normal Latin rite. The ordinations had to be held separately due to the different liturgical traditions. While Bony is

traditionally from the Syro-Malabar Rite, he will have permission to also celebrate the normal Latin Rite mass. Next year, Bony will be based at St Benedict's, while Vincent will be heading to Darwin to help the MGLs brothers at the St Martin De Porres Aboriginal chaplaincy.

Alex Nolasco made his final profession as a consecrated brother on Saturday 20th November. Alex will return to Manila to complete his training for the priesthood, and will hopefully be the first MGL priest to be ordained in his home country.

LETTER FROM THE PPC—November

Dear fellow parishioners

As the end of the year draws near, on behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council we'd like to provide you with a brief overview of the activities in our parish this year and an update of ongoing events.

- A full OH&S audit was undertaken of the church and the surrounding building in the Parish. This was a requirement by the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn and our Parish embarked on the work very seriously;
- St Benedict's hosted the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mass during NAIDOC week in July, celebrated by Archbishop Mark Coleridge;
- The Aboriginal Catholic Ministry for the Archdiocese will be based at St Benedict's;

- The regular distribution of the St Benedict's magazine, gratefully designed by the team at Bytes and Colours;
- Reactivation of the 'cell groups' in the Parish; and
- Renovation of the roof and carpet - the roofing contractors are due to start before the Christmas period, but we are still waiting for confirmation on the exact date.

A special thank you to everyone who has generously contributed to the Church Renovation fund. Work on the roof will begin as soon as the contractors can allocate the necessary time. We will continue to keep you informed of the progress of this major project for our Parish.

Finally, on behalf of the PPC, we would like to wish you and your families a very happy and safe Christmas. We look forward to working together as a Parish in 2011.

Yours in faith

Philippa Murphy
PPC Chairperson

Fr Steve Fletcher (Parish Administrator),

Pierre Rey (6pm Sat)

Mark Doverty (6pm Sat)

Philippa Murphy (9am Sun)

Louise O'Rance (9am Sun)

Joan Evans (6pm Sat)

Helen French (9am Sun)

Meaghan Younger (school representative)



Farewell to Fr Joseph

After three years of faithful service, Fr Joseph will soon be leaving St Benedict's. Fr Joseph began his placement at St Benedict's in 2008 while he was still a brother. In that time he has celebrated his Final Vows and ordination to the Diaconate and Priesthood. Joseph has become a much-loved member of St Benedict's and will be greatly missed. He will begin a new placement in Darwin next year working with the St Martin De Porres Aboriginal Chaplaincy.

DO YOU WANT TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS?

Ask for some space in our next newsletters, promote your business around the Parish and at the same contribute to the cost of publishing this newsletter.

We are planning to print between 3-4 newsletters next year and distribute between 200 and 300 copies in the Parish.

If you are interested, contact Deb at the Parish office or Pierre Rey on 0407 489 403. The next Newsletter will be published April 2011 before Easter

ST BENEDICT'S

MGL news

Brown Town



At the end of November, St Benedict's parish was turned into a sea of brown and white. Every six years, the Missionaries of God's Love brothers hold a convocation. This is a large meeting where all of the MGLs brothers and priests gather together to discuss their work and mission and pray to see where God is leading them in the future. Between the 21st and 28th November, 49 brothers and priests gathered at St Benedict's to discuss the mission of the MGLs. The vent was made possible with the help of many generous parishioners who helped to accommodate some of the priests and brothers during the week. The brothers were fed thanks to the heroic efforts of Cathy Newton, who cooked for the whole week.

The theme of the convocation was "The missionary heart of Jesus; the heart of the Missionaries of God's Love". During this week the brothers and priests spent many hours in discussions, and seeking the Lord in prayer to see where God is directing their mission in the future.

The convocation coincided with the 25th Anniversary of the MGLs. The convocation began with a mass with Archbishop Francis Carol. Fr Ken took the opportunity to publicly thank Fr Francis who gave permission for the Missionaries of God's Love to develop and provided valuable support for many years.