
Easter Reconcilers, Not Dividers

Br Mark O'Conner FMS

The Spirit of the Risen Jesus produces peace and unity, not division. Paul was so right when he reminded the Galatians that '...*the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*'

However, as more than one biblical scholar has wryly observed: "Jesus preached the Kingdom and instead we got ... the 'Church'!"

A half-truth only, I know, but when one sees the ease with which people criticise each other inside the contemporary Church, maybe the Biblical scholars do have a point! For one of the least edifying aspects of the Church is the polarisation that some people so obviously 'feed off' and get their energy from.

It always amazes me how the extremes of the 'right' and the left' (for want of a better 'typology') so remarkably *resemble* each other. They truly 'mirror' each other in their language and behaviour. Their lack of respect for the dignity of the human person and for fellow Catholics very often masquerades as a concern for 'orthodoxy' or 'social justice/human rights' - depending on the ideological 'hat' worn. I advise we should all listen more to Hilaire Belloc's aphorism. "The Grace of God is in *courtesy*".

Indisputably, we are increasingly lacking civility and grace in the Church. Courtesy is becoming rarer. In such situations, pastoral leadership of any type can become a 'crown of thorns' for so many leaders. This is especially

true for Bishops and Popes, who are overwhelmingly good men and pastors, but who have the unenviable role of preserving unity amongst an increasingly 'tribalised' flock.

Of course, only death brings release from tensions and conflicts and yes, they are inevitable as the Pilgrim People of God winds its messy way through history to Christ, the Omega point. Mistakes are made by people at every level of the Church. 'Perfect' people need not apply to become members of the Catholic Church!

In other words, there is no excuse for the harassment some in the Church face from zealots. I like the story recounted by John Allen on that point: Bishop Kevin Farrell of Dallas recorded a web video responding to concern about a new undergraduate degree in pastoral ministry in his diocese. Critics objected that the program is soft on Catholic identity, to which Farrell replied: "Let me remind the Catholic people of this diocese that ... I'm the one who has to stand before God and say whether this is truly Catholic. That is my responsibility, and I do not take it lightly."

So what *is* the answer? Barry Gault in his recent article "Society Men: What I learned from the Jesuits" [*Commonweal*, April 22] provides one way forward, but it definitely does not provide the answer at all to my question. I do not recommend it - even if it does sound rather appealing at times! It is a marvellous anecdote:

Lola Montez, mistress of King Ludwig I, trained her bulldog to attack Jesuits. When the bulldog

bit a hunk out of a Jesuit theology professor, the enraged Bavarian intellectual community saw to it that Lola was imprisoned and, for the sake of exorcism, put on a diet consisting solely of raspberry juice.

The 'exorcism' required for the lack of charity shown in the Church today, however, will not be solved by either 'bulldogs' or 'raspberry juice'! (It is certainly no way to treat Jesuits!) They are a great gift to the Church after all!

Instead, much prayer and wisdom are called for. One Jesuit man of prayer and holy sage - Bernard Lonergan - does point to the *real* way forward. Long meditation on his wisdom below, is the only medicine I know to heal the current 'dis - ease' of some in the Body of Christ today.

Classical culture cannot be jettisoned without being replaced; and what replaces it cannot but run counter to classical expectations.

There is bound to be formed a solid right that is determined to live in a world that no longer exists.

There is bound to be formed a scattered left, captivated by now this, now that new development, exploring now this and now that new possibility.

But what will count is a perhaps not numerous centre, big enough to be at home in both the old and the new, painstaking enough to work out one by one the transitions to be made, strong enough to refuse half measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait ...



Bernard Lonergan, SJ



Diamond Jubilee of Br Xavier Collins

Br Julian Casey FMS, Provincial

I first came to know Xavier in 1962 when we were on the same community at Bunbury. He was well known as a sports person, a great organizer of events, an exuberant extrovert and able to thrive on social interaction. He was not sanctimonious or pious, but I found in him a committed Brother and a conscientious and careful teacher, who prepared and corrected his work, gave clear directions to students and who engaged them at all levels. He was active in community and, although a bit rowdy at times, could keep us well and truly entertained. So way back in 1962, he taught me much about fairness, about consistency, about hard work and about being a well-rounded teacher and community person. I have been fortunate along with many others to have experienced his generosity and loyalty and I will always remember his willingness to make people feel welcome.

It was some 45 years later before I had the chance to live in community with Xav again. In the intervening years, I knew him more by repute as a person of loyalty, organization and hard work.

Many of you don't know that in 1966 Xav took over as acting Principal at Griffith, whilst the then Principal was thankfully away doing his second novitiate. It was the time of the Wyndam scheme in NSW, which required complex planning and organization. In that school, Xav transformed the chaos into a well-organized unit, meeting all the requirements. At the end of that time he was being asked go to Somerton Park for four years to look after the Sport, take on Boarding duties and teach during the day.

I think we all know of the long years Xav has spent in Boarding schools, 22 years at Forbes and more than 11 years at Kilmore. Often times, when people spend considerable time in one place, there comes the question of whether the person is nesting in a comfortable, familiar environment and pursuing an easy routine. Not so Xav... he was Boarding Master in a Co-ed school which required an immense workload in managing the lives of boarders:- over 150 boys and over 60 girls at Red Bend Catholic College. During those 22 years, he supervised every breakfast, lunch and dinner in the Boarding school. I estimate that to be about 17,100 meals supervised!!! No nest there.

Xavier has always been a careful and thoughtful tactician throughout his sporting career of playing and coaching. He was, after all, a very successful sportsman and taught others the art of winning gracefully and losing with dignity.

I have to admit, having played cards against and with him, that he is somewhat of a tactician as a 500 card player and plays misère with a great deal of finesse, although I would claim that he has a bit to learn about team bidding. He is a handy person to have around the house when things need fixing or organizing. He has a good ear for Music, sings well and has led the boarders in singing at Mass over the years.

Xav is practical and a realist. He had little in the way of formation in those early years in the Province when the more potential you showed, the less formation you got. So he had to rely on his own talents and cheerful disposition to get him by.

Fairness, consistency and a cheerful firmness made him a natural Master of Discipline in the bigger Colleges and he was a great support to Principals. He has no grand theories, but he kept the wheels of these places turning. He didn't force ideas on those unwilling to accept them and worked hard and long to help keep schools functioning.

He did battle with the cold in Kilmore and the heat in Broken Hill, with overwork at Somerton Park, with scarce resources at Mt Gambier, Thebarton and Griffith. He was literally tireless for the Boarders at Forbes and Kilmore. He expended his talents at Sport:- Cricket Football, Athletics and Basketball, not for his own sake or to be feted, but simply to use sport as a way to character building for those who participated.

This difficult business of loving in a self-sacrificing practical way has been the hallmark of Xav's contribution. Frontiers may change, politicians may huff and puff and taxation systems come and go, but for the vital tasks of life to be fulfilled, we need this kind of generous effort that Xav has shown. I believe that the 60 years that Xav has spent at this task has been much more enduring.

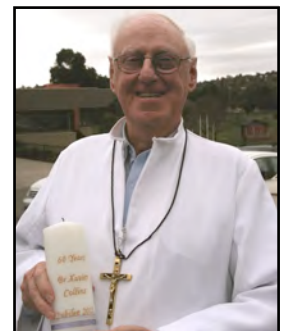


Xav, a powerful Marist presence working with the maintenance staff at Assumption College.



So Xav, we are grateful for all that you have done for us and on our behalf. We appreciate your continuing presence at Assumption College working with the maintenance staff. This celebration also assures you of our constant prayer for you and our deep appreciation of all that you are for us.

May you learn to see yourself with the same delight, pride and expectation with which your Brothers and your God see you at every moment.



On behalf of the Brothers and all here present it gives me great pleasure to invite this group to be upstanding and toast your 60 years of Marist Life: to your good health and to your future.



Diamond Jubilee of Br Dominic Stewart

Br Gerard McNamara FMS

Dominic's many years as a teacher across a wide range of schools in Victoria, the long years of part-time study to upgrade his qualifications and his time as principal at Parkes and Griffith, were all well documented at the time of his Golden Jubilee celebration ten years ago.

The start of the new millennium, though, brought the opening of a new school, and in 2000 Dom became part of the inaugural staff at Samaritan Catholic College where, over the next nine years, he continued his labour of love in the area of Special Education. In the early years of Samaritan I occasionally had the opportunity to work in the same classroom as Dom, and was able to see at first hand the results of the hours of research which went into the preparation of his lessons for each individual student. Later, he would reflect that his greatest satisfaction probably came from those opportunities to work with newly-arrived immigrant children who had little or no knowledge of English.

During his time at Redden and Samaritan, Dom also gave the best part of twenty years of faithful service to the brothers with whom he lived in community at North Fitzroy. He spent many of those years as bursar, making almost daily visits to the local supermarket for the "red spot specials", as well as his weekly trips to the Victoria Market in search of even cheaper bargains. For a good many years he also took responsibility for the lawns and gardens at Holden Street and provided us with colourful displays of flowers, along with the tomatoes

which he planted so as to ripen just in time for Christmas. His very tasty meals were also produced with the same care and attention to detail as his lessons, and he expected the brothers to arrive with the same punctuality as his students did for their classes.

In the years following his Golden Jubilee, Dom had to struggle with a number of health issues, and he remains very grateful to Brother Tony Paterson for offering him the opportunity to take a day off from work each week. He commented many times about how understanding, considerate and supportive the Brothers were to him, especially during his time in hospital: though he also well remembers a visit from Brother Paul Gilchrist who made him laugh so much that he almost suffered a relapse!

There were occasions when Dom really wondered whether he would be well enough to take up the offer of travelling overseas for the Third Age Programme at Manziana but, having made the decision to go, he worked out a plan to rest up in London for a couple of weeks before heading across to Italy. Prior to leaving he told us that he would most likely spend this time in libraries doing research. However, on his return, it sounded as if the main highlight of the weeks in London was the way in which he "conned" the chefs at his hotel into providing such big breakfasts that he didn't need to spend any money buying lunch! Still, it must also be noted that Dom speaks very highly of his time at Manziana, an experience which he found thoroughly enjoyable as well as very rewarding.



Dominic accepts a presentation from Julian

On his return to North Fitzroy, Dom came to really appreciate the space which part-time work had given him. He was able to fit in much longer walks as part of his health regimen, and it was not unheard of for him to walk from North Fitzroy to South Melbourne beach for a swim. Legend even has it that on at least one occasion he then walked home again! No doubt he was endeavouring to live out the motto of his beloved Carlton Football Club: “Mens sana in corpore sano” – “A healthy mind in a healthy body”.

At the beginning of 2009 Dom was asked to move to Kilmore and he willingly accepted this request to “go in haste to a new land”, thus anticipating by some months the “call” of the General Chapter in Rome later that same year. He has gradually settled into a more relaxed lifestyle, helping out as a chauffeur and general support person in the brothers’ community, while taking the opportunity to continue his daily walks. If ever the representatives of the Johnny Walker Company needed someone for their advertisements to follow in the footsteps

of Steve Waugh and Justin Langer, they need look no further than our Dom!

The move to Kilmore has kept him close enough to Melbourne to maintain his weekly visits to the city, and to keep in touch with his family. Dom is able to catch up regularly with his sister, Joyce, and really appreciates the opportunities to spend time with her. As he says, there is a level of understanding between family members that isn’t experienced anywhere else. He is also able to stay in touch with his sister-in-law, Pauline, and is very grateful for her wonderful support and generosity to him over the years. I’m sure Pauline’s many successful tips for the “doubles”, “trifectas”, and “quaddies” have also brought him a great deal of joy as well!

No tribute to Dom would be complete without a mention of his ongoing faithfulness to daily Mass, community and personal prayer, and his regular visits to the Blessed Sacrament. No doubt these play a major part in providing him with the inner strength that we have all come to know and appreciate as he lives out his quiet, effective presence with us.

*Ad multos
annos,
Dom!*



... and “just keep on walking”.



Diamond Jubilee of Br Kevin Hoare

Br Bryan Leak FMS

In this Marist Family celebration we give thanks for the lives of our Jubilarians and, with them, we remember those who have gone before us on whose shoulders we stand; those who accompany and encourage us as well as those whose leadership provide us with inspiration and care.

The ceremonial candles, which seem to grow bulkier with the years, illustrate Christ's light within us and remind us that what we have to give comes from those who have given to us.

Our Brother Kevin, like St Marcellin, was raised in a rural family and pioneered with Aidan and Brian the Macedon Juniorate. His early years of teaching provided the steep learning curve common in those times. Practical common sense, generosity, hard work, application to learning on the job and the support of his Brothers in community, quickly saw him gain his 'Triple A' rating: Able/Adaptable/Available.

Having volunteered for work in the missions, Kevin has experienced many years on the frontiers of our province. He vividly describes a recent challenge to fill the role as Parish Administrator in Santa Teresa: "It took a bit of getting used to - like driving a road-train when your only experience was in a mini", illustrates his willingness to get on and do what needs to be done. He was always determined to be qualified in what he did.



Revisiting Kairiru in 2009

His first Mission appointment was to St Xavier's High School on Kairiru Island and there he filled the roles of teacher, builder, headmaster and community superior. He welcomed and supported me in my first years in PNG. Success followed determined hard work. Returning 10 years later, again as headmaster, he found political change and economic pressures had raised new challenges. Years at Passam National High School, and later in Wewak, enabled him to connect with several generations of ex students now influential in their communities. He was also involved in the formation of our young

Melanesian Brothers and they hold him in very high regard for the way he lived the Champagnat virtues of presence, simplicity and love of work. It was a very privileged experience in 2009 for me to attend, with Kevin and Majella, the jubilee celebrations of the Marist Brothers in the East Sepik Province of PNG.



Kevin was also a pioneer and spent 13 years in our aboriginal apostolate. He was a foundation member of our

community at Santa Teresa where he is currently in his third term. His cultural sensitivity and experience in PNG encouraged him to take the young men from Santa Teresa to meet their cousins in PNG and their brothers in the Top End and be made aware of possibilities beyond their own experience.

With Aidan, he formed the first community at Milikapiti on Melville Island. Both were equal to the challenges and dangers of the unexpected. Their simple accommodation next to the Community Centre was recognised as a place of welcome and security. The drunken man armed with an axe, and intent on killing his wife, obviously thought so when he banged on their door. Respect, courage, faith and experience enabled them to manage the situation. Settling him down to a drink (strong coffee no doubt) and listening to his story over a few hours, they calmed him down and sent him off without his axe. He retrieved it several days later when he needed to cut some wood.

With Bougainvillean Brother Chanel, Kevin pioneered a school at Rokera on Malaita Island in the Solomon Islands - a lonely outpost. In more recent years, he brought his practical expertise to our Rural Training Centre at Vanga Point, also in the Solomon Islands.



Even in Melbourne, Kevin's involvement was with the MEWS programme supporting those whose challenging behaviour had excluded them from mainstream schools.

In all of these years of varied, challenging and sometimes dangerous experience, Kevin has manifested a calm, respectful simplicity and practical wisdom. He always makes himself available.

Please stand with me as we congratulate and thank Brother Kevin – a Marist Treasure.



Kevin greeting Sir Michael Somare, Prime Minister of PNG.



Diamond Jubilee of Br Aidan Smith

Br Bryan Leak FMS

I first lived with Aidan in community when I was appointed to Mount Gambier in 1966 after my scholasticate at Dundas. However, I would like to begin this tribute by describing Aidan in his current context at Red Bend Catholic College, Forbes.

As we celebrated Champagnat Day with a school Mass, five Brothers renewed their vows. With Aidan and Brian each contributing 60 years, we totalled 280 years service as Brothers, more than 100 of these spent at Red Bend. Both Brian and Aidan were members of the first community in 1956. With Ken and Laurie they are part of the 'living history' of the place.

In this environment, where great attention is given to 'keeping order' (pecking order) and 'guarding territory'; where 'stubborn old bugger' is a muttered term of endearment, Aidan is the master of 'mischievous intervention':

"Not that I want to appear inquisitive, but . . ."

"Br Julian was saying to me just the other day . . ."

"I'm a good listener . . . it's one of my strengths".

With Brian, he shows great fidelity to prayer and community exercises. He is committed to caring for others and building a home.

As he shared with students at the Champagnat Day presentation – "I feel at home here".



In his daily work, riding on his "multi apps" rig, Aidan gives witness to "Life not being a bed of roses". It requires a vision of what can be done, a lot of hard work, putting up with pain and setbacks (roses have thorns) to produce a beautiful, welcoming result that can be shared.

Each day, as staff and 600 bus students arrive, they are welcomed by cared-for gardens and the cheery gardener himself. We hope that a caring, Marist spirit can touch the whole community. Aidan has the ability to connect easily with all members of the school community, offering a sympathetic and ready ear. Having faced the challenges of open-heart surgery and senior's disabilities, Aidan's latest challenge is to master mobile phone technology. The Guinness Book of Records attests to Aidan's fidelity to that particular form of medication.

With Kevin and Brian, Aidan was a pioneer of the Macedon Juniorate and has gone on to pioneer many of our ministries and live many years on the remote frontiers of our province.

There were no “courses for horses” preparing Aidan for the challenges of his appointments. At Forbes in 1956, after 15 floods invaded the property, Aidan was introduced to a D4 bulldozer and given the task of constructing 2.5 kilometres of levee bank. Ten thousand cubic metres of earth had to be worked and imbedded into place.

That levee bank continues to protect our school property to this day.

As with Kevin, practical sense and hard work enabled to cope with steep learning curves. At Mount Gambier, dedicated teaching saw his students top the state in Agriculture. Whereas, fresh from the Scholasticate, I managed to have my whole Latin class nestled in the bottom 10% in the state.

With Brothers Cletus and Leo, Aidan started our Aboriginal ministry at “The Gap” centre near Alice Springs. He spent more than 12 years at Alice Springs, Milikapiti and Darwin. The simple sentence “You like us, Brother” expresses why he was appreciated in these communities.



The Brothers Smith - Walter and Aidan

Aidan was also a supportive presence and model of Marist values in our training houses: Nae Nae in New Zealand, Trichy in India,

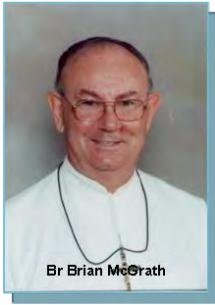


Lomeri in Fiji and in Sri Lanka where his generosity, availability and practical expertise inspired confidence. Early in his stay in New Zealand, one conscientious student asked what qualifications he had to direct the course. If doubt was not dispelled, discussion was definitely cut short when Aidan assured the class that he had an internationally recognised certificate in ‘pig castration’.

The playground apparatus the ‘monkey bar’, with its horizontal ladder, provides an image of his progress through life and Aidan, in company with our other jubilarians, provides a model of courage and fidelity.

- Choosing to reach out as a welcoming presence to others
- Enduring the “letting go” as strength declines
- Courageously holding on in fidelity as Brothers.

Let us stand and express our deep appreciation for the wonderful contribution our Brother Aidan has made to our Marist Family.



Diamond Jubilee of Br Brian McGrath

Br Laurie Toohey FMS

It is my great pleasure to propose a toast to our Diamond Jubilarian, Br Brian McGrath.

Brian has a strong affiliation with South Australia, having been born and bred in Norwood and educated by the Brothers there until the closure of that school. As a result, he spent some time at Sacred Heart College until his parents decided it would be easier for Brian to travel to Thebarton, there being better access by public transport.

Nowadays, at home in Forbes, Brian can be seen at the computer every morning, checking first the weather forecast and then perusing the Adelaide Advertiser, compulsory reading especially during the football season. Brian is the Adelaide Crows No 1 supporter in the central west of NSW. If they win, the Adelaide flags are displayed in the dining room window for all to see. Alas, the dearth of wins this season has meant that they have rarely been seen on display so far.

Brian has been a great companion for Brother Ken over many years - Marist "twins" in fact. In reality, they have been a great support for each other and have never let the grass grow under their feet. I always enjoy Brian displaying photos of their various trips and the vivid descriptions of their adventures. As a lead up to their travel adventures, there is a frenzy of planning - information about their destinations eagerly perused to see what was on in the way of movies, special events, new buildings etc. - all to be checked out.

The Royal Easter Show in Sydney is high on their list as a "must see". I was fortunate to go with them one time and there was nothing we

missed out on. They knew where to get a good cup of coffee, the best spot to view the wood chopping, the sheep dog trials, the Grand Parade, etc. Also, most importantly, the location of the cleanest toilets.



Brian and Ken pre-dated modern GPS technology and could well have been consultants for those who created the program. In fact, they are still far ahead of this modern technology, as many brothers well attest. Brian can tell you what to visit, how best to get there (bus, train, tram, foot), what to see, cost of entry, etc.

Now a couple of typical anecdotes regarding Brian and Ken.

Firstly, whilst in Sydney on one occasion, they attended the blessing of the waters by the Greek Patriarch prior to the fishing season. Close perusal of their holiday photos reveals they can both be seen in the procession along the wharf, just behind the Patriarch. Several photos later, there they are on the boat with the Patriarch just as he is throwing the cross into the water for some lucky young man to find.

Secondly, whilst in Sydney, my brother Mark and his wife were watching the evening news on TV and were surprised to see Brian and Ken appear not once but three times in the news. At a

gathering for Archbishop Tutu they could be seen in the background. Later, the news featured Joan Collins, the celebrity author from USA, about to enter her car and being pursued by TV cameras. Brian and Ken just happened to be nearby. The third time saw Brian and Ken amongst the throng as the camera panned the rush hour at Central Railway Station.

Back in the late seventies and early eighties, during the *exeat* weekends, Brian took it upon himself to take groups of indigenous boarders from Forbes to Sydney to widen their horizons and to mix with a wider group of people, enjoy the beach, the zoo and go to the movies. He negotiated financial support from the Government to cover the cost of these excursions.

Now, with a larger number number of indigenous boarders, Brian has taken on the responsibility for their laundry, personal tidiness and hygiene - a challenging chore at times.



Brian is very creative, no more so than in the creation of seasonal displays in the College Chapel which inspire a prayerful response in those who visit or attend liturgies there. This creativity spills over into the school gymnasium on special occasions.

Brothers who have attended the annual retreat at SHC, and arrive prior to Christmas Day, witness the erection of the Christmas tree and the slow travel of the Magi towards the crib.



Brian now works as “assistant to the assistant” in the school library where he is a treasured presence for all, both students and staff alike.

In conclusion, in terms of family, Brian has a very close relationship with his sister Cathy and brother-in-law Graham plus all his nieces and nephews. He often talks about them and their exploits with great pride in his voice.

Brian, I hope and pray, like many others, that the Good Lord keeps you with us for many years to come so that we can continue to be supported by your cheerful presence and enjoy your ready assistance when needed.

Enjoy the Day



Jubilee presentation at Forbes

Response to the Jubilee Toasts

Br Kevin Hoare FMS

On behalf of Aidan, Brian, Domnic and Xavier, it gives me great pleasure to respond and thank Brothers Bryan, Gerard, Julian & Laurie for their many kind and encouraging words.

You may NOT know that we are fairly unique group in that, in early 1951, five of us were the first ones from the Macedon Juniorate to go to the Novitiate. John Della joined us before leaving Melbourne - he had been teaching at Griffith. At Mittagong, we met up with the four Southerners who finished their studies there as they had entered the Brothers before the Melbourne Province was established.

It was about the middle of 1952 that twenty-five young Brothers headed out to begin their teaching careers. Ten of us were posted to various schools of the newly formed Melbourne Province where Br Placidus had been opening two schools a year for the previous few years. Meanwhile, the other fifteen of the group headed north. Of those twenty-five, eight of us (five are here today) are still following in the "footsteps of St Marcellin Champagnat", while three Brothers in Terry Gleeson, Brendan McGuire and Mark May have already gone to their Eternal reward.

Three others who were part of our group for a time and who have also died are Bernard Cogley, John Dullard and Noel Dennis. I'm sure they are part of that heavenly group which would be looking down on us in a special way today.

I have been asked to pass on the very good wishes of the others fourteen members of the group who could not be here today.

Matt Walker and Tom Dowling were able to

join us in the Brisbane celebrations and while there I was able to make phone contact with Pat Keating and Hugh McNamara. In Sydney Br Aidan and I, plus Greg O'Regan, were able to join in the celebrations for Brothers Francis Field and Eric Blumenthal. Rom Cable, Pat Larkin, John Chute and Barry Casey phoned in their good wishes while Brian Flynn emailed his congratulations from Canada. I thank Bernard Scott and his wife, Anne, for joining the five of us here today.

I'm sure that, with that heavenly Marist gathering, are our parents and it would be interesting to hear the various comments being shared just now. What great faith they had to permit us young teenagers to leave home and to set out on this Marist way of life and it is through their prayers and sacrifices that we are here today celebrating our Diamond Jubilees. Our thanks must also go to the other members of our families and relatives for their prayers and support down through the years. In addition, we thank the many Brothers with whom we have shared community life and the staff members we have worked alongside in our various school postings.

Teaching has greatly changed over these sixty years from the time before Government assistance. At the first school I was at the parents struggled to pay the one shilling and six pence school fees each week while the men of the parish would hold a gambling night towards the end of the year so that we could pay the bills and have enough money to go to the Retreat and have a holiday.

With post-war migration in full swing, the class sizes were sixty plus and the students would be sitting in those long forms of five to a desk

where the ink wells had to be filled at the beginning of each week. We would be out at the blackboard with our piece of chalk. This was the time before photocopiers. Nowadays, in this electronic age of computers and ‘smart’ boards there are real problems when the power goes off. At Santa Teresa when a grade three arrives in class he/she goes to the ‘smart’ board where the names are printed, touches their name and moves it to a place on the ladder ... first to arrive goes to the top place on the ladder and so on. This is very different to the calling and marking of the Roll, with a pen stroke to the right in the space next to the name if present in the morning and to the left for the afternoon. Of course, once you knew the students’ names, one would just look for the empty desks, mark the absences, then use the time saved for teaching.

Someone once gave me the following quotation:

YESTERDAY is HISTORY.

TOMORROW is a MYSTERY.

TODAY is a GIFT.

That’s why it is called the PRESENT.

Our HISTORY, since our Golden Jubilee, has seen each of us, except for Br Bryan, move to a different community and all have probably slowed down somewhat.

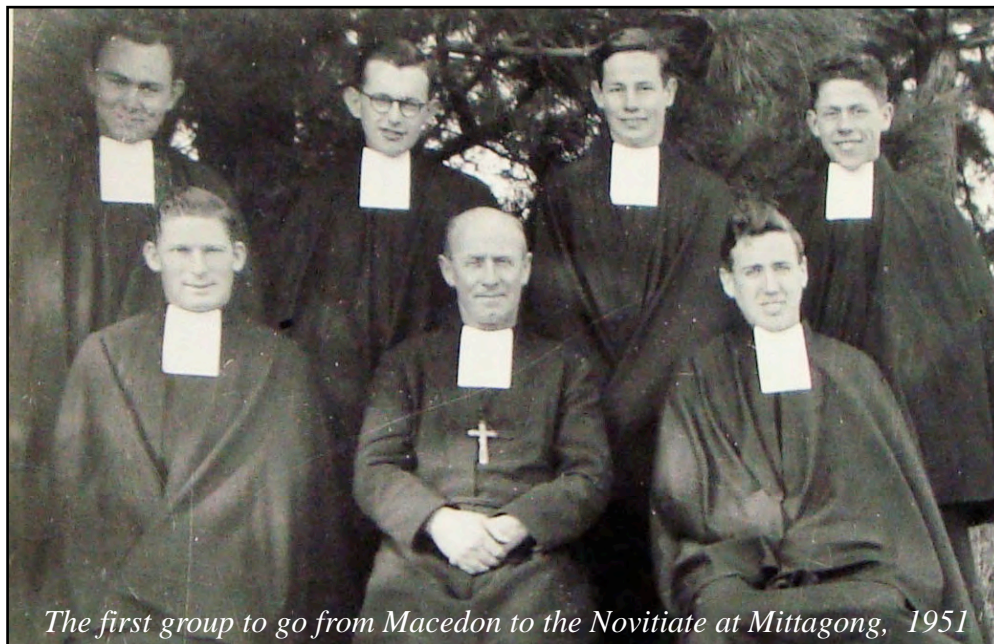
As to the TOMORROWS, we leave those in the hands of God and our Good Mother Mary, although by the end of next year we know that we’ll be part of the new Province in Oceania and we could find ourselves anywhere.

TODAY I thank you all for your PRESENT of being here; PRESENT with us for this celebration. We wish you God’s Blessings and a safe journey back home.

We may be fading slightly but we’re still “fair dinkum”.

So let’s continue sharing one another’s company, fill our glasses and then let’s drink to the future (always in moderation, of course).

THANK YOU.



The first group to go from Macedon to the Novitiate at Mittagong, 1951

Back: Br Brian McGrath, Bryan Flynn, Br Kevin Hoare, Br Terence Gleeson (dec.)

Front: John Della, Br Paul Mannes, Br Aidan Smith