

MARIST NEWSLETTER

Marist Brothers • Province of Melbourne

• Volume 42 • Number 2 • March 2011 •

Fostering Brotherhood across the Oceania Region



Sixty three Community Leaders from the three Provinces of Melbourne, New Zealand and Sydney gathered at Mittagong for their first combined Conference.

Through workshops, discussions, reflections and hospitality gatherings, valuable insights about community leadership and being a Brother today emerged and will guide future community development.

Province News - Br Columbanus Pratt - To Bury the Dead - Bill Allen - To Give Drink to the Thirsty - Rolling the dice on the Gospel - The Sacrifice of Love- The Reagan Centenary



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Marist Newsletter of the Marist Brothers Province of Melbourne is a private publication for the dissemination of news, notices and articles of interest among the Brothers, the affiliated members of the Province and our lay associates who serve on Committees of the Province.

Copies are sent to each of the Brothers' Communities in the Sydney Province as well as to the General House in Rome and to some other overseas Marist Communities.

**The Editor welcomes contributions and suggestions
from our readers**



Our deceased and their families...

- * **Br Columbanus Pratt.** Died February 19, 2011. Sacred Heart College community, Somerton Park.
- * **Fr John Edward Begley, SJ.** Died December 9, 2010. Priest, Philosopher, Teacher. Inaugural Fellow of the Catholic Theological College, Parkville, Melbourne. Former student of Assumption College, Kilmore.
- * **Matthew Hall,** died February 10, 2011. Son of Ros and Vin Hall (affiliated member), both of whom were on the staff at Catholic College, Sale.
- * **Michael Kevin Bourke.** Died February 18, 2011, at 94 years of age. Uncle of Br Peter Bourke, Bendigo.

For those who are unwell ...

- * **Br Charles Howard,** Campelltown.
- * **Br Austin Stephens,** Netley. Recovering from a stroke.
- * **Br Alexander Moss,** Randwick.
- * **Br Ken Eaton,** Ashgrove. Ex-student of St Ildephonsus, New Norcia.

And also for ...

- * Those who suffered from, or perished in, the recent floods and bush fires across Australia
- * The victims, families and friends of those caught up in the earthquakes in Christchurch.

From the Provincial



7 March 2011

Dear Brothers and Friends,

At times we are positive in outlook, intellectually stimulated, excited by life, connected with God, alive in our faith. Other times we feel like the ashes of Lent: we are lonely, struggling, disconnected, and in need of prayer. We all become a bit forgetful of the ultimate values in our lives and it is probably true that we make a lot of concessions in order to live more comfortably.

Lent is upon us, a time to find out who we are before God, recognizing the liabilities we are burdened with and becoming more aware of the grace we receive to amend our lives. We focus on our life and we desire it to be less marked by self indulgence and more open to God and our neighbour. We use Lent as a time to reflect on who we would like to be: perhaps more reflective, more prayerful, more of service, more in touch with people in need or how we would like to be less busy, less selfish, less consumed with things, less worried about material goods.



When we reduce the level of our gratification and seek the grace of God, we leave behind hypocrisy and gloom and open ourselves to the peace and hopefulness that are the gifts of the Spirit. That sense of peace and hopefulness will inevitably extend to those around us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Br Julian Casey".

Br Julian Casey

Gathering of newly appointed Provincials in Rome.

I was grateful for the opportunity to take part in this gathering. It was an opportunity to review the changing landscape of our Province and the Marist world. As well it was a source of reflection on the leadership that was being required of us and the need for connection to the whole Marist world.

Appointment of Br Anthony Robinson as Regional Co-ordinator for Oceania

In another part of this Newsletter, you will read of the appointment of Br Anthony Robinson to take on the co-ordination of the Oceania Region. We are grateful to Br Anthony for taking on this significant leadership role.

Profile of Anthony Robinson as provided to the Leaders Conference at Mittagong.



I am the Community Leader for our new community at Rosehill. My day job is that of Province Secretary. I have been doing it now for six years and that follows an earlier stint in the role from 1990 – 1995. In between those two appointments I enjoyed 18 months doing the Second Novitiate and theological studies (on Mary) at the University of Dayton. Then I had a three year stint as Principal at St Francis Xavier College in Newcastle (A Senior Co-ed High School of 1000 students) and then four years as Director of Education and Welfare Services for the Province. My earlier years saw the usual range of roles in schools and time as Principal at Mt Maria College in Mitchelton and Marcellin College in Randwick. There is good energy around what is being put before us at the Chapters and I look forward to engaging in the conversations and decisions.

Opening of the Montagne Centre.

Being early March, it could have been unpleasantly hot; but in fact it was a cool drizzly day and we were relieved that the rain held off. Bishop Tim Costelloe blessed the Centre and the Honourable Martin Dixon, MP formally opened the Centre and spoke affectionately of his time at Marcellin College. Br Stephen welcomed the Minister and the Bishop and outlined the purpose of the Centre. In blessing the Centre and those who would work there, the Bishop spoke in the most encouraging terms about our efforts to ensure that our ministry was relevant and co-ordinated. Photos of this important Province event follow.

Province News ...



Br Stephen Bugg opens the proceedings



Bishop Tim Costello begins the Blessing



The Hon Martin Dixon, MP, speaks fondly of his time at Marcellin College.

Province News ...



The Minister and Bishop at the formal Opening of the Montagne Centre



The Marcellin College, Bulleen, Choir



A portion of the ninety people present at the Opening.



Province News . . .

Br Peter Pemble

Peter is currently in Melbourne commencing his Theology programme at the Melbourne College of Divinity. He is a member of the Coburg Community. Welcome Peter



Br Stephen Bugg



Following the successful opening of the Montagne Centre, and following the development of national groups such as MSA and the Marist Life and Formation Team, Br Stephen's role as Executive Director of Ministry has, to all intents and purposes, been brought to completion and he has indicated his desire to stand down as at the 11th March. This was accepted at our last Council meeting and we will

begin the process of drawing up new terms of reference for a Co-ordinator of the Montagne Centre. Once these are completed, we will look towards appointing someone to that position.

We take the opportunity to express our appreciation for Steve's contribution. He started at Parkville, moved to the Montagne Centre, supervised its development and began the process of ensuring that our ministries work together. It wasn't an easy task, but I think that the formal opening of the Montagne Centre was an indication of the work he has completed over the years. We thank him for his work and interest.



Community Leaders at Mittagong

You would have received reports of this gathering to keep you in touch with what was happening. I am sure your community leaders have also spoken about this event. It was an important coming together of the Brothers across the Pacific, Australia and New Zealand. It was another occasion by which Brothers in the region could get to know one another and share our story and experiences. It enabled us to become aware of our common Marist aspirations and our efforts to ensure that communities are places of Marist Brotherhood.



Province News . . .



Marist Brothers Oceania Council

Province of Melbourne
Province of Sydney

Province of New Zealand
District of Melanesia

4 March 2011

Dear Marists, Brothers and Lay,

OCEANIA REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR

In recent years, the regional leaders together have been responsible for directing and co-ordinating regional activities. With the decision last December to move towards a new governance structure there is a need for someone other than the leaders with the time to take on this role.

We are pleased to announce that **Br Anthony Robinson** has been appointed to the role of Oceania Regional Co-ordinator for three years. We are very grateful to Anthony for accepting this responsibility and service to all of us. He was previously the Secretary to the Oceania Council (2005-09) and the Chair of the Concurrent Chapters / Assembly. He has excellent capacities and experience in administration!

The position of Regional Co-ordinator was named in our documents regarding future structures for Marist Oceania. We know that we need someone to give focussed attention to translating our desired structure into operation. It will take some time. Indeed, it will be Anthony's role to help the regional leaders and their Councils to plan what needs to happen.

Key Functions

1. To give shape and direction to the SEVEN groups of Principles agreed to at the Chapter Assembly.
2. Chair the COMS meetings.
3. To develop a *way forward* for implementing the chosen structure for Oceania.
4. To transition COMS and the OC into the Oceania Senate.
5. To propose and implement a structure and role for the Oceania Mission Council (or equivalent).
6. To work with Br John Klein, General Councillor, in the development of the Statutes: Melanesia; New Zealand; Oceania Senate; the idea of a Regional Vicar.
7. Facilitate the desired *co-responsibility* within and between the AU's.
8. Oversee Communications and publications.
9. To keep the Leaders (separately and collectively) informed and briefed so that the necessary consents and approvals can be given.

For the moment, Anthony will continue his work as Province Secretary in the Sydney Province. He will be trimming some of his current workload there. We anticipate that this arrangement will work for the next few years. He will be assisted by Br Tony D'Arbon who remains the Executive Secretary of COMS and the Oceania Council.

In this new role, Anthony will be moving around the region for various events such as assemblies and Chapters to get to know people and situations better. We ask you to make him welcome.

We wish him every blessing and good health,

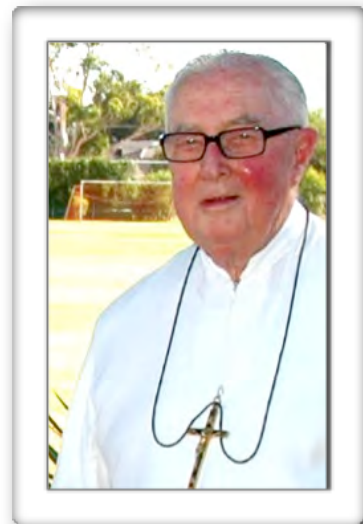
For the College of Major Superiors
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Eulogy for Br Columbanus Pratt AM

Died 19 February 2011



At five o'clock on the morning of 19th February – Br Columbanus, Neil Richard Pratt breathed his last. He was 86 years of age and his death did not come unexpectedly. For those who knew and loved him, it was a release from the pain and discomfort caused by an aggressive viral infection in ulcerated legs. He was aware that the end was near. He accepted his doctors' verdict calmly and, during the last rites, he responded to the prayers concluding with the Salve Regina. Although he was not widely known for his patience, he calmly and patiently waited for that moment when the Lord would call him from this life on earth to eternal life.

Neil Richard Pratt was born in the 13th December 1924 to Osmund and Kathleen. He was one of nine children and Mary and Eileen pre-deceased him. Gathered today are his family, three brothers: John, Peter and Osmond, and three sisters: Sheila, Moya and Therese. To them and their families we offer our condolences and support on the death of their brother, Neil, and we assure them of our deepest respect, affection and admiration which we had for him whom we knew as Br Columbanus or Col: - a man of great passion, faith, integrity and intellect.

Gathered here also is Col's community at Somerton Park, a very special group led by Br David Blay, and the community at Netley led by Br Leo Kavanagh who cared for him so attentively in his last days. To these, his confrères in South Australia we offer our sympathy and support. Friends were a most important part of Col's life and it is not surprising that so many friends from South Australia are here. So we all gather here today to honour this Marist Brother, to give thanks for his life, to share his unique and special story and to be grateful for a life lived fully and a mission carried out faithfully.

Col began school at Cabra before moving to Sacred Heart College. After completing his Intermediate Certificate in 1939, he decided to begin his training at the Marist Juniorate in Mittagong NSW. A keen cricketer, a highly intelligent student, a jovial companion and a talented singer/performer, he entered fully into life at Mittagong. He continued his training and made his first vows as a Marist Brother in 1943. He began his teaching career immediately.

Even as a young man, he had a natural authority which meant that he had his class well motivated. He was an excellent teacher, well prepared and organised, both challenging and encouraging of his students. What followed was 22 years of unbroken service, teaching in senior Science. But he made the most of his limited opportunities. He took on and completed a Science Degree which was a seven-year minimum part-time course requiring 12 hours attendance per week for the whole of the course. Of the 29 units, he passed 21 of them with distinctions and topped the class in two of them. The rest were passed at credit standard: an extraordinary achievement for someone who taught all day at senior level without any free periods, who took sport, athletics training and managed choirs as well. This surely was the origin of his custom of working very late into the night and then, as was his habit, napping at odd moments during the day!

Not satisfied with his Science Degree, he then undertook higher studies in Education and graduated Bachelor of Education in 1964, again completed on a part-time basis. He was by no means an academic or monastic recluse. He had an extraordinary circle of friends and colleagues. Wherever he was, he made friends and, through his correspondence, maintained continuous contact with them. We were always surprised by his reference to so many friends. At Auburn, for example, he made friends with the family of Jack Lang, the famous NSW premier, a friendship that was to continue. He

made the trip back to Sydney to attend Jack's funeral with the family.

But it wasn't just in his teaching and studying where he made the most of his opportunities. In 1965 he attended the Second Novitiate for five months in Fribourg, Switzerland. His trip was thoroughly planned and organised and, being not only a man of science but also someone with a real sense of history and culture, he lingered in places geological, historical and musical as well as calling on his relatives in Wales, the birthplace of some of his family, and in general had a full and interesting trip with just a tinge of disappointment that he was unable to get to the United States.

His next four years teaching Science at Sacred Heart College was a wonderful time for him. He knew the Geology of South Australia like the back of his hand and his influence in Geology and Earth Science continued well after his departure. One of his proudest achievements was being the President of the South Australian Science Teachers Association, becoming the National President and organising and leading the national conference at Rostrevor.

Soon after, he was principal of his Alma Mater, Sacred Heart College. Most of us have an affection for our old school, but I am yet to meet a more loyal "Old Collegian" than Columbanus. He embodied so much of Sacred Heart College and in his later years we discovered that the secret to uplifting and cheering him in moments of anxiety and

depression was to relive nostalgic moments of his experience and life at SHC



Col had three Principalships: Sacred Heart College in 1970, Assumption College in 1977, Notre Dame College at Shepparton in Victoria in 1987.

His concept of leading a school was to ensure that the school was a place of learning and of faith. He didn't have much of "a bedside manner" with students. He expected them to pull their socks up, to behave themselves, to study and work hard. The schools Col led were well ordered and organised. His assemblies were well planned, and had an almost military precision about them. At times, he would even refer to them as "addressing the troops". But he would encourage the student group, indicate what he was delighted with, challenge them and sometimes correct them. The externals of the school - prayer, attendance at Mass, equipment, grounds, student uniform and behaviour - were of high importance. He would brook no deviation from the standards he set. Unruly students, untidy groups, teachers not wearing a tie, careless bus-drivers and latecomers were all the subject of his censure and nobody could issue a reprimand like Col could. Not even the Brothers were exempt from his exacting ways and, from time to time, his disapproval. A

Union representative who tried to bully him at Shepparton found a formidable opponent and retired from the fray.

As Principal he knew the loneliness of one on whose shoulders lay the burden of making final decisions that would affect the school community. Sometimes he was without the support of senior personnel or even higher authorities. It was a burden that he carried with quiet dignity, even as he contemplated deeply on the consequences of his decisions and the unpopular nature of his actions. But he was strengthened in the isolation of his position by one overriding factor – every decision he made was not about popularity but about the ultimate good of the school and its students, even if they didn't immediately like it or him! Generally, parents applauded and the community surrounding the school took great heart in knowing that the school was in good hands.

In many ways Br Columbanus saw himself as a guardian of Catholic Education. Never marching to the beat of another's drum – or the latest fad of the post-modern movement – he lamented that not all shared or understood his high ideals and aspirations. His contribution to the Australian Education landscape – and to Catholic education in particular – did not go unrecognised and in the Australia Day honours for 2000 he was appointed a member of the Order of Australia for his outstanding service to education. He received that AM medal as someone proud to be a Marist Brother and wore his religious habit during the conferring of the honour.

It was in the 1970s, during a Course at the East Asian Pastoral Institute, that Col's love affair with the Philippines began and, in 1980, he arranged a transfer to the Marist University at Notre Dame de Marbel in the Philippines. Col was at his happiest during these years. There he taught tertiary-level Geology, Chemistry and Physics. He indulged his passion for Geology by getting up close to an erupting Mayan volcano, being awe-struck by the lava pulsing out of the cone, and by the sound of it like jet engines. He climbed to the peak of Mount Apo, (some 9000 feet above sea level) and exhausted himself by trekking through the steamy wilderness of South Cotobato to Mt Parker and its Lake (over 5,000 ft above sea level). He rarely travelled without his geologist's hammer. He attended an international geology conference in Manila, took a course in handling radio-active materials and travelled during six summer holidays to teach Science at Summer Institutes.

Filipino students responded so positively and in a way unlike Australian students. This brought the best out in Col: he taught with more energy; he cared for those from poor families and organised financial assistance for those who struggled.

Enough, you might say. But, in fact, with up to 3000 students to choose from, Col could not resist indulging his passion for singing by starting up a choral group, the Tambuli Singers. He had them singing at public events throughout the area. Within the University

itself, he directed a performance of the musical "The King and I"- a typically ambitious project over three hours long with a cast of 70. Just like the Beijing Olympics, he didn't want to risk a mistake, so he pre-recorded the event and the performers danced vigorously and mimed their way through with the audience oblivious to this arrangement.



He witnessed the overthrow of President Ferdinand Marcos when people-power first manifested itself. His many letters are full of commentary on this and he became a kind of "foreign correspondent" for the Marist Newsletter. Whilst he had no time for Marcos, he was very wary of the New People's Army and the danger they posed, particularly to ageing geologists wandering around the NPA area with a geologist's hammer

He was delighted to be invited back to the Philippines to manage the Marist Asian Centre for young Marist Brothers who were undertaking their post-novitiate training. He was Dean of Students and had the responsibility of organising their university courses. As well, he was managing the building project there. At the age of 68, this turned out to be a really hard task but one he persevered with until the task was done. The provincial of the Province writes

“The Filipino Brothers, who lived with him and knew him so well, have been touched by his dedication to work, enthusiasm in teaching and openness to new learnings. He has left us a wonderful Marist Legacy.”

Despite bouts of typhoid, dengue fever - and even though there were typhoons, floods and volcanic eruptions - it was a wonderful time for him in all ways personally and spiritually. He was a wonderful host to visitors and, in quieter moments, spent his evenings without TV enjoying the company of the Brothers and attending to his growing correspondence.

The affective Filipino culture helped Col to recognise and express more of what he felt:- matters of the heart. It was a wonderful gift to him, attested to in his correspondence. His devotion to Mary was enlivened by his contact with the Filipino people, uninhibited and exuberant in their devotion. It touched his heart, affirmed him and he brought back to Australia a



confident and explicit devotion to Mary and a positive means of expressing this. This was particularly noticeable on his return to principalship at Notre Dame in Shepparton.

When Col returned to Sacred Heart College at the age of 70, he undertook the role of Archivist. This was an extraordinary gift to the College when he turned his considerable talents to the task of preserving and recording the wonderful history of this place. He wrote numerous publications, including one on his beloved Paringa Hall. He concluded a biography of the founder of the College, Br Stephen Debourg, and a centenary history of Boarding at the College from 1905 at Largs Bay. Col's passion for his craft is evidenced by his thorough research and his attention to detail.

In 1997 Sacred Heart College celebrated its centenary. Over the three preceding years Col

had worked assiduously to ensure these centenary celebrations were worthy of the College. His achievement in overseeing these most successful celebrations was acknowledged by the planting of a tree in his honour at the front of the College.

We all know that you cannot give yourself wholeheartedly to a project without feeling something. Col was a passionate man and did not belong to “the cool generation”. It was not Col’s way to “play it cool”. He could be controlling, fiery and impatient but basically he was a man of the heart and a man of prayer. In his determined way over many years, he set aside time for prayer and carved out a space for it in his busy life. In his last years, after the death of Des Crowe, his prayer became simpler and he attained a certain depth of awareness of his own desire for God, more able to see God’s providence in his life and more able to express his awe at the beauty of God’s creation. A person perceives beauty only to the extent that he has it inside him. It presupposes a certain nobility of disposition and ultimately, through

his prayer, Col was led beyond the limits of his external personality traits to a deeper and subtle aspect of his true self. Towards the end, he could see that his life had been enriched and expanded. Peacefulness and acceptance were the external manifestation in his last days.

I must stand aside now and let Col speak for himself:

He said to me one day:-

“I look back with great pleasure on all the blessings and the good things the Lord has provided me with over the years. It has been a wonderful life”

We all say “Amen” to that. May he rest in Peace.

Br Julian Casey
Provincial
25 February 2011



To Bury the Dead

Br Mark O'Connor, fms

In 1974 the cultural anthropologist Ernest Becker won the Pulitzer Prize for his book *The Denial of Death*. The fear of our eventual extinction is so terrifying, so anxiety-producing, Becker argued, that virtually all cultures construct elaborate schemes to deny our mortality and enable us to believe that we are immortal. In fact, Becker believed that perpetuating this denial of death constitutes one of the chief functions of culture. But denying death is disastrous. It causes us to form illusory, false selves, and even worse, thought Becker, on the social level it foments all the horrific violence and aggression against others that we see in our world today (since we must prove other death-denials as false, and even eradicate them, else ours is exposed as a lie).

The *denial of death*, then, can never be our way as believers in Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One. For Christians are called to face the reality of death and hold it in creative tension with our sure hope of Resurrection. The Crucified One is the Risen One!

Our faith in the Resurrection does not mean avoiding the brutal truth that death *is* a terrible and awesome moment.

That is why we constantly ask Mary our Mother (in the Hail Mary) to 'pray for us now and at the hour of our death'.

No wonder, then, the care and love we as Christians give when we lovingly "bury the dead". Every person deserves the beauty and dignity of being lovingly farewelled at what one theologian has called 'the moment of truth'.

In the Irish tradition there is the beautiful practice of the 'Wake' - where friends and relatives hold 'vigil' and 'accompany' the deceased person before the final rites of the Church. The body is revered and blessed because it is a 'seed' being planted that will rise to new life. In the early Church, for internment, the body was buried facing the East, expressing the expectation of the second Coming of Christ.

The Celtic poet John O'Donohue (who himself died suddenly in 2008 at age 52) often wrote of the mystery of how Death transfigures our separation . . .

It is a strange and magical fact to be here, walking around in a body, to have a whole world within you and a world at your fingertips outside you. It is an immense privilege, and it is incredible that humans manage to forget the miracle of being here. Rilke said, "Being here is so much." It is uncanny how social reality can deaden and numb us so that the mystical wonder of our lives goes totally unnoticed. We are here. We are wildly and dangerously free. The more lonely side of being here is our separation in the world. When you live in a body you are separate from every other object and person. Many of our attempts to pray, to love, and to create are secret attempts at transfiguring that separation in order to build bridges outward so that others can reach us and we can reach them. At death, this physical separation is broken. The soul is released from its particular and exclusive location in this body. The soul then comes in to a free and fluent universe of spiritual belonging.

O'Donohue captures something of the sense of mystery and sheer awe surrounding the

'passing over' of the human person - back into the silent heart of God .

Perhaps it is that sense of the *mysterium tremendum* which is why the famous ancient Latin tag *De mortuis nil nisi bonum* --- "Of the dead, speak nothing unless good" conveys a profound truth.

For to 'bury the dead' ultimately demands of us that we 'let God be God'. No trying to 'play God' in any way and judge other people after their deaths. Like it or not we are not in control. God is. To bury the dead is in Mary Oliver's words: "to let it go" and to stand vulnerable aware that 'underneath are the everlasting arms' (Deuteronomy 33:27).



Mary Oliver

In Blackwater Woods

Look, the trees
are turning
their own bodies
into pillars

of light,
are giving off the rich
fragrance of cinnamon
and fulfillment,

the long tapers
of cattails
are bursting and floating away over
the blue shoulders

of the ponds,
and every pond,
no matter what its
name is, is

nameless now.
Every year
everything
I have ever learned

in my lifetime
leads back to this: the fires
and the black river of loss
whose other side

is salvation,
whose meaning
none of us will ever know.
To live in this world

you must be able
to do three things:
to love what is mortal;
to hold it

against your bones knowing
your own life depends on it;
and, when the time comes to let it go,
to let it go.

~ Mary Oliver ~

Bill Allen (ACK 1935-39)

Br Brendan Feehan fms

If you ever get the chance to read Bill Allen's autobiography "Wombats, War and Whitehall", don't miss it. Better than anything that can be recorded in this brief space. It tells the story of a remarkable life that, first of all, does credit to the man himself, the parents who raised him, the schools that assisted them with his education and a wonderful wife.

Darlingford, the country town where he grew up, is now under the waters of the Eildon Weir. It was from there that he went to board at Assumption in 1935 and rewarded his parent's faith in him by being Dux of his class and later a member of the prestigious First XVIII.

With the war hotting up and moving closer to Australia, in late '41 at the age of nineteen he enlisted in the RAN, trained at Flinders and was commissioned at sea on HMAS Hobart which did duty mainly in the Pacific and around the Coral Sea escorting convoys, providing cover for landings with the Guadalcanal landing a stand-out, until she was torpedoed mid-1943 and rendered helpless. Bill survived with only a swollen ankle while the man who replaced him early on his watch never saw the night out. The following morning on deck the Captain, thinking he was asleep, woke him only to be told he wasn't sleeping but praying and promptly gave him the full *Gloria in Excelsis* in Latin remembered from his Kilmore days

After the war and a short period back on the farm he completed his Economics degree and began a lifetime of working with Governments and Prime Ministers from Menzies to the Whitlam years and time with Fraser.

When the Public Service as he knew it began to unravel, in 1975 he was moved sideways from his work in the Victorian Department of Labour and National Service of which he was Director for nearly fifteen years, and sent by the Government as an 'International Advisor' to

Wombats - War - Whitehall



The author on graduation day.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The work he did in his years as Director of L&NS was outstanding and valued as he was meticulous in his research for briefs presented to his Ministers.

After his early retirement in 1982 Bill, his wife Nancie and the family moved to the house they had bought some years earlier at Sorrento.

The large crowd at Bill's Requiem Mass bore witness to his popularity and was a tribute to one who, while in high office, thought little of its status and treated all as equals.

Bob Ryan, Ray Carroll and Br Brendan Feehan represented Assumption College.



The author (on right) as President of Assumption Old Collegians Association, in 1949.



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Parish Priest: quangsdb@yahoo.com

7 February 2011

Dear Fathers, Brothers and Sisters,

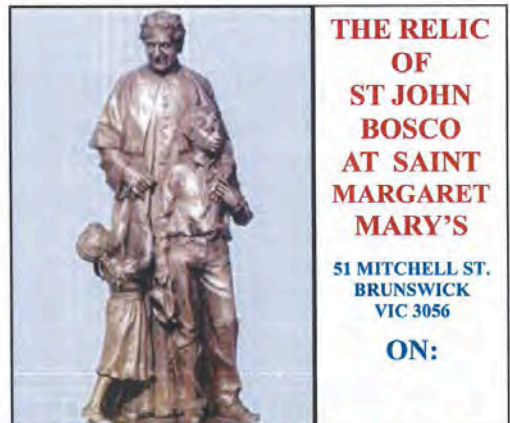
In preparation for the 200th birthday of Don Bosco in 2015, the relic of the Saint, embedded in a statue of human size, is touring 130 countries where members of the Salesian family are living and working. You are warmly invited to this historical event at St. Margaret Mary's, 51 Mitchell Street, North Brunswick, during 18 – 20 of March 2011.

I have enclosed a brochure detailing the three day event, could you please let your religious members know about Friday and the parishioners about the Saturday and Sunday events.

Priests are welcome to concelebrate mass. Please bring your white chasubles.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Anthony Nguyen Huu Quang SDB
Parish Priest



**THE RELIC
OF
ST JOHN
BOSCO
AT SAINT
MARGARET
MARY'S**

**51 MITCHELL ST.
BRUNSWICK
VIC 3056**

ON:

*** FRIDAY 18/3/2011 FOR RELIGIOUS**

- 5.00pm: Gathering & Input on "Don Bosco, Teacher and Father of the Young" presented by Fr Frank Moloney SDB, PhD.
- 6.00pm: Dinner provided by St Margaret Mary's
- 7.00pm: Input on "The Mission of Salesians and Salesians Sisters Today" presented by Sr Margaret Bentley FMA.
- 8.00pm: Prayer around Don Bosco - sharing our journeys empowered by the Salesian spirit.

*** SATURDAY 19/3/2011: YOUTH DAY**

- 10.00am Gathering Inputs & Activities
- 12.30pm: Lunch Break
- 2.00pm - 6.00pm: Activities, Film, Inputs
- 6.00pm: Dinner Break
- 6.00pm: Vigil English Mass (Bishop Deakin)
- 7.30pm: Candlelight Vigil Prayer
- 8.30pm: Concert: "Dreams"
- 10.00pm: Fireworks

*** SUNDAY 20/3/2011: DAY FOR PARISHES**

- 9.00am: English Mass
- 10.30am: Italian Mass
- 12.00pm: Vietnamese Mass
- 2.00pm: Quite prayer or Film on Don Bosco
- 4.15pm: Firecrackers then Procession
- 5.00pm: English Mass (Bishop Costelloe SDB)

To Give Drink to the Thirsty

Br Mark O'Connor, fms

“I thirst.” – John 19:28

Modern science tells us that water is the stuff of life; it is vital for all living organisms and about 60 per cent of the average adult’s body weight is water - at birth, this may be as high as 75 per cent.

No wonder, then, that our faith sees ‘water’ as a divine symbol of God’s life in us and urges us to ‘give water’ physically and spiritually to others. As G.K Chesterton once remarked: ‘All water is holy water!’

There is a profound link between a spiritual thirst, prayer and encountering Christ today. Mother Teresa put it well when, after four hours at prayer, she once said to a gathering of people:

Jesus wants me to tell you again ... how much is the love he has for each one of you - beyond all what you can imagine. Not only he loves you, even more - he longs for you. He misses you when you don't come close. He thirsts for you. He loves you always, even when you don't feel worthy. Why does Jesus say 'I thirst'? What does it mean? Something so hard to explain in words - ... 'I thirst' is something much deeper than just Jesus saying 'I love you'. Until you know deep inside that Jesus thirsts for you - you can't begin to know who he wants to be for you. Or who he wants you to be for him."



All of us search in our own ways and at our own pace for the great beauty of God made flesh in Jesus of Nazareth. We 'thirst' for his presence. The writer Frederick Buechner describes a moment where his 'thirst' for God was made real. He was at Sea World in Florida (of all places) on a beautiful day as six killer whales were released into the tank:

What with the dazzle of the sky and sun, the beautiful young people on the platform, the soft southern air, and the crowds all around us watching the performance with a delight matched only by what seemed the delight of the performing whales, it was as if the whole creation—men and women and beasts and sun and water and earth and sky and, for all I know, God himself – was caught up in one great, jubilant dance of unimaginable beauty. And then, right in the midst of it, I was astonished to find that my eyes were filled with tears ... I believe there is no mystery about why we shed tears ... We shed tears because we were given a glimpse of the way life was created to be and is not.

(The Longing for Home, pp. 126-127).



Recollections and Reflections
FREDERICK BUECHNER
kindle edition



There is also no mystery to the imperative of the gospel that we respond to those who are thirsting at *all* levels. Certainly, we are now, rightly, very conscious that we need to care for our planet. Many on the planet lack in the basic access to water needed for dignity, and organisations like Caritas need our support as they assist these suffering people. In our land of drought and flood no one can seriously practise the works of mercy unless he or she cares for the earth and the poor - as God's good creation.

And in our inner lives - where we are alone before the living God - our 'thirst' for God needs to be addressed. Maybe we are 'thirsting' but for the wrong things! Mary Oliver's poem 'Thirst' provides one way forward. It suggests we all need a long 'conversation in our hearts' 'on how we find the 'living water' as we age and 'dry up'! Let her prayer and wisdom be ours.

THIRST

Mary Oliver

*Another morning and I wake with thirst
for the goodness I do not have.*

*I walk out to the pond and all the way God
has given us such beautiful lessons.*

*Oh Lord, I was never a quick scholar but
sulked and hunched over my books past the
hour and the bell; grant me, in your mercy,
a little more time.*

*Love for the earth and love for you are
having such a long conversation in my
heart.*

*Who knows what will finally happen or
where I will be sent, yet already I have
given a great many things away, expecting
to be told to pack nothing, except the
prayers which, with this thirst,
I am slowly learning.*

Beacon Press, Boston, 2006, pp. 1, 52, 69

Rolling the dice on the Gospel

Richard Rohr OFM: 23/01/2011



They hadn't understood about the loaves! The Gospels use those words to describe the crowd that Jesus had miraculously fed with five barley loaves and two fish. They ate, but they didn't understand. What didn't they understand?

This is the story: Jesus had been preaching to a large crowd, several thousand people. But they were in a remote place and, after a time, the people had been without food for a long time. They were hungry, so famished in fact that they lacked the strength to return to their own towns and villages. The disciples approached Jesus and asked him whether they should go into the neighboring towns and buy food for the crowd. Jesus told them instead to feed the people themselves. They protested that they had too little food, almost none. Jesus asked them what they, in fact, did have. Their answer: "Only five barley loaves and two fish." And this came with a question: What good is that among so many? The equation is hopeless: so little food, so many people.

And so Jesus asked them to bring the loaves and fish to him. He blessed the food and asked the disciples to distribute it among the hungry thousands. We know the rest of the story: They set out the food; everyone ate as much as he or she wanted, and they gathered up twelve baskets of scraps left over afterwards. And the crowd was impressed, so much in fact that the next day they followed Jesus around the lake, hoping for another such feeding. Jesus, for his part, was saddened by their lack of understanding: They hadn't understood about the loaves.

What hadn't they understood? Two things:

First: When the disciples initially approach Jesus and ask him whether they should go into the neighboring towns and buy bread, their question betrays that they are unaware that they are with the bread of life. They are in the presence of that which is the object of all the world's hungers and which, in its bounty, is unlimited and infinite. Yet they want to go off and buy food elsewhere. The lesson: When you are with the bread of life there is no need to go off to buy food, or anything else, elsewhere! You have all the resources you need to feed every kind of hunger. The disciples' wanting to go off to buy food elsewhere betrays their lack of awareness of this. They didn't see the incongruity, the irony, in their request: Jesus is the bread of life, food for the life of the world, and they ask him if they should go off elsewhere to buy what is needed to feed the crowds.

The second thing they didn't understand was the meaning of the equation: so little food, so many people. A few small loaves of bread and a few fish are hopelessly inadequate to feed a crowd of thousands. It goes against common sense to put such a pathetically meager fare before so many people. How can five loaves and two fish feed a crowd of thousands?

Sometimes well-meaning homilists have tried to explain what might have happened by suggesting that Jesus' invitation to share drew out from the people the privately guarded resources of food that each had brought and, when everyone shared what he or she had, all

were fed and there was food to spare. Such a homily has its own good lesson, but the point of the story is precisely the hopelessness of the equation. In essence, the resources of the Gospel always seem hopelessly dwarfed by the world's power, the world's hunger, the world's sin, and the resources that the world itself seems to offer.

Five loaves and two fish set out to feed a crowd of thousands is the Gospel equivalent of the famous story in the Jewish scriptures of the young shepherd boy, David, standing before the giant, Goliath: A young boy, barefoot, holding a boy's plaything, a slingshot, standing before a giant, a trained soldier, clothed in iron, with a sword-bearer carrying his weapons, is also a

hopeless equation: So little power against so much strength. But the young boy triumphs because God is on his side. It's the same with the loaves and the fish.

What do we need to understand about the loaves? We need to understand that we are with the bread of life, everything we need to feed the world we already have. We don't need to go anywhere to buy anything. We have the resources already; though on the surface those resources will always look over-matched, hopeless, dwarfed, nonsensical, wishful thinking. On the surface, invariably, we will look like David before Goliath, puny and pathetic, not up to the task of defeating a giant or feeding a hungry, greedy world.



REMAR MINISTRY TEAM - 2011

Hannah, Laura, Jake, Br Peter Walsh (MLFT), Simone (Co-ordinator), Jasmine & Kiran

The Sacrifice of Love

Br Mark O'Connor, fms

The Anglican writer J.B. Phillips once wrote a beautiful little book of meditations entitled 'Your God is too Small!' He pointed out how so often we all have false images of God and these prevent us from seeing the real God at work in our lives.

Sometimes however we actually make things difficult for ourselves and others by not properly appreciating the real depths of our own faith.

For we can think we 'know' what a certain concept means but we actually get it a little off centre! We substitute the wondrous and life-giving mystery of God with something that diminishes us and even puts some people off!

One word like this that often – but need not mislead – is the concept of 'sacrifice'.

Talk of 'sacrifice' is a vital aspect of Christian life as it is understood in our living and praying of the Eucharist. But often it gets misused. Let's reclaim it for our daily life.

The *Sacrifice* of the Mass is at the heart of our faith. But all too often the poverty of our understanding of 'sacrifice' betrays us.

Sacrifice has nothing to do with some capricious god who demands the destruction of our love and life - let alone our humanity. No, our God loves us infinitely and beyond our wildest dreams. Sin exists for sure but it hurts us, not God!

The Christian gift of love then, the gift of self, doesn't diminish me in any way. Christian sacrifice is fundamentally different from simply 'giving up' things. It is not a negative but a positive!

None of us can ever 'force' God! Do this 'sacrifice' and God will make it happen - is not prayer but magic.

Recently an American Jesuit, Robert J. Daly an emeritus professor of theology at Boston College has helped many come to a deeper understanding of the real importance of the Catholic doctrine of 'sacrifice'.

His book is "*Sacrifice Unveiled: The True Meaning of Christian Sacrifice*." Its thesis is remarkably simple, straightforward, but one with enormous implications for how we Catholics understand our faith and how we believe and pray the Eucharist. It's all about self-giving Love

Daly believes the "absolutely key reality of authentic Christian sacrifice" is the "self-giving love between the Father and the Son"—not about a cross, not about a victim, but about the gift of love between the Father and the Son. I think he's right, and not just about Christian sacrifice, but about God, which means the most fundamental things.

Most of his book isn't about what Christian sacrifice is; it's about what it is not and how what it is not has controlled our use and experience of the idea of sacrifice. The word has both a range of meaning and so much history - that's really what Daly has to take on. He argues persuasively that almost all of our ordinary ideas of sacrifice and even some of the New Testament itself run counter to a true Trinitarian understanding of Christian sacrifice.

"Christian sacrifice," he writes, ". . . is not primarily a ceremony or ritual; nor is it something we 'do' or 'give up.' For it is, first and foremost . . . a mutually self-giving event that takes place between persons."

In the first instance, those persons are the Persons of the Trinity. The self-giving event

among them is love, love that existed among them before time and creation, love that exists beyond time and creation, love that exists beyond love.

In Daly's view, the starting point for thinking about God is the love and life God the Trinity has revealed to us about God's self. The life of the Triune God starts not with the birth, life and death of Jesus, not with sin and sacrifice, but with Love.

The Trinity then is at the heart of it all: True love between the Father and Son is always gift between them, not a demand. The gift

of love between the Father and the Son does not mean either is diminished in any way.

Let's celebrate the Sacrifice of the Mass but make it clear that the mystery we are proclaiming is not about a vengeful God demanding a 'blood' sacrifice to appease him .

No ! Let's link the Love that moves the heavens and the stars from all eternity - with the love that moves our hearts and minds as we reach out to others in the 'sacrifice of love'

WANTED

If any community has any spare Office books or "People's Companion to the Breviary" not being used, we have use for a few more of both books here at Fitzroy.



Many thanks

Br Paul Kane

The Reagan Centenary

George Weigel, *The Catholic Difference*, January 12, 2011



February 6 is the centenary of the birth of **Ronald Wilson Reagan**, one of the most intriguing public figures of our time.

Clark Clifford, the ultimate Washington insider, dismissed him as an "amiable dunce." Yet Reagan's posthumously published diaries and speech notes show a man of considerable insight and intelligence, who was shrewd enough to understand that the contempt of the elites was a political asset in securing the loyalty of the electorate and in getting what he wanted out of Congress and the federal bureaucracy.

He was feared by arms controllers and the foreign policy establishment as a man likely

to blunder into a nuclear Armageddon. Yet recent studies by Martin and Annelise Anderson demonstrate that, unlike the liberal poobahs of deterrence, Reagan never learned to live with the bomb and bent every effort to rid the world of nuclear weapons, through both disarmament and the development of effective strategic defense.

His anti-communism was derided as primitive, unsophisticated, and a danger to world peace. Yet the historical record shows that his "simplistic" prescription for ending the Cold war -- "We win; they lose" -- turned out to be the key to the victory of imperfect democracies over a pluperfect tyranny.

Few great public figures of late modernity have been so misunderstood in their lifetime or revered at their death -- with the exception of another man who was never supposed to become the titanic figure he became, **Pope John Paul II**. And, as I try to show in *The End and the Beginning: Pope John Paul II -- The Victory of Freedom, the Last Years, the Legacy*, these two unexpected giants of the late 20th century had strikingly parallel biographies, despite the obvious differences in their backgrounds and interests.

They were both orphaned young: the future pope, literally; the future president, virtually, given the alcoholism of his father.

They were both men of the theater, whose extensive acting experience gave them both crucial skills and a conviction: that the word of truth, spoken clearly and forcefully enough, could cut through the static of evil's lies, rally hearts and souls, and create possibilities where only obstacles were apparent.

Their understanding of, and loathing for, communism came to both of them early: Reagan, through his battles with Hollywood communists for control of the Screen Actors Guild; John Paul II, through his experience of the brutalitarian period of Polish communism after World War II. Both knew that the crucial battle with communism was in the realm of the human spirit, for communism proposed a false, yet seductive, view of the human future that could best be matched by a nobler vision of human freedom.

They were both dismissed as "conservatives" by pundits for whom "conservative" was a polite placeholder for "reactionary." Yet the truth of the matter was that both were radicals: Reagan, in his convictions about ridding the world of nuclear weapons; John Paul, in the depth of his Christian discipleship.

There was no "holy alliance" between them, as some overly imaginative reporters have alleged. But there was deep mutual respect. Shortly before Christmas 2001, John Paul II asked me, "How is President Reagan?" As it happened, I had just run into former attorney general Edwin Meese, who had told me a story that I shared with the Pope. Meese had gone to the christening of the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan



earlier that year, and had brought the former president (whose illness prevented him from attending) the typical ship's baseball cap, emblazoned "U.S.S. Ronald Reagan CV-76," that had been given out on the occasion. Reagan, a gentleman to the end, responded, "Thank you, Ed. That's very kind. But why would anyone name a ship after me?" Twelve years after leaving office, the most consequential president since Franklin Roosevelt had no memory of having led his country, and the free world, for eight years.

John Paul II, who could not imagine the unreflected-upon life, was saddened by my tale, and asked that I get word of his solidarity in prayer to Mrs. Reagan. It's a comfort to imagine these two happy warriors now, in different circumstances, beyond the reach of either misunderstanding or sorrow.

REMEMBER ME

Br Mark O'Connor, fms

The last words of a person soon to die are often laden with significance. Or at least Aquinas thought so.

What St Thomas Aquinas has to say about Christ's choice of his last words is well worth setting down:

"The last things to be said, especially by friends who are about to leave us, are those that are best remembered. At such a time, our love for our friends is greatest; and what we love most is what sinks deepest into our hearts"

(Summa Theologiae 3.73.5)

Scripture scholars agree that those last words for Jesus included a poignant plea of a doomed young man that his friends remember him. 'Do this in memory of me': Luke's Gospel agrees with Paul's account in First Corinthians in having Jesus give that command to those who were eating with him at the Last Supper.

So why is remembering so essential? What happens when we remember Jesus? What does it mean to 'remember' Jesus in the Eucharist?

Frank McCourt in his autobiography, *Angela's Ashes*, gives us a clue. He tells of a confession he once made as a young boy in Limerick, Ireland.

His mother had just given birth and their in-laws from the North had sent five pounds to buy milk for the new baby. But his father, an alcoholic, had taken the money and was drinking it up in the pubs. His mother had sent him, a young boy, to find his dad and bring him home. But young Frankie can't find his father. What he finds instead is a drunken sailor in a pub, asleep, with a largely untouched plate of fish and chips in front of him.



Ravenously hungry, he takes the fish and chips outside and eats them. Then, feeling guilty for stealing, he decides he had better go to confession. It's Saturday afternoon and he goes to a church and confesses to a priest that he stole fish and chips from a drunken man.

The priest asks him why he did this and Frankie answers that he was hungry, that there is not a scrap of food in their house, and that his mother is raging by the fire because his father is drinking away the money meant to buy milk for the new baby. The priest, hearing all this, suddenly becomes quiet. Instead of scolding Frankie and giving him a penance, he does something else (Mccourt's words):

"I wonder if the priest is asleep because he's very quiet 'til he says, 'My child, I sit here, I hear the sins of the poor, I assign the absolution. I should be on my knees washing their feet. ... Go. Pray for me.' He blesses me in Latin, talks to himself in English and I wonder what I did to him."

These words wonderfully describe one of the central meanings of the Eucharist. We 'remember' Jesus when on our knees washing each other's feet . We 'remember' Jesus when we serve each other with humility and self effacement. We 'remember' – make present again the Body of Jesus - whenever we live out in our daily lives the vision of St Teresa of Avila (1515–1582). Few have put it better:



Christ Has No Body

*Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.*

BROTHER DANIEL LYNCH - NOVICE



On Sunday March 6, one month after his arrival in Canberra, Daniel Lynch was formally accepted into the Novitiate Formation Program in a simple, prayerful ceremony by Br Jeffrey Crowe, Provincial. Supporting Daniel were the Canberra Community including Br Kevin Herlihy. We were joined by Br Michael Flanagan, Daniel's Master of Postulants, Br Tony Leon, his Vocation Director, and Br Michael Hill, the Chair of the Oceania Formation Commission. Br Tony Caddy, Formation Director, Br Patrick Connell, newly professed, and Ash Higgins, postulant, were present with us from Melbourne with Gerard Barklmore – postulant from Forbes.

During the Ceremony Daniel was presented with the Institute Cross by Br Jeffrey, the Constitutions by Br Tony Shears, a Prayer candle by Br Lawrie Mc Cane, and an Icon of Jesus & Mary by Br Michael Flanagan.

Daniel was assured of the prayerful support and encouragement of the Brothers and all Marists in Oceania as he begins this significant journey of Novitiate formation.

The Canberra Community



PLEASE NOTE : The date for the St Colman's Shepparton Old Boys' Association Reunion has been changed from Sunday July 10, 2011 to the weekend of **August 19-20, 2011** For details contact Ray McPhee:

[<raymcphee@iprimus.com.au>](mailto:raymcphee@iprimus.com.au)

or PO Box 7310. Shepparton, 3632

Time for a Smile

During a visit to my doctor, I asked him, " How do you determine whether or not an older person should be put in an old-age home?"

"Well" he said, "We fill up a bathtub, then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the person to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I understand," I said. "A normal person would use the bucket because it is bigger than the spoon or the the teacup." "No", he said. "A normal person would pull the plug. Do you want a bed near the window?"

A man applying for a job at a Mildura Lemon Orchard seemed to be far too qualified for the job. The foreman frowned and said,

"I have to ask you this: Have you had any actual experience in picking lemons?"

He replied: "I've been divorced three times, bought a Leyland P76, a Beta video player and took up all the Telstra floats. Then I voted for Kevin Rudd and Julia Gillard. How am I doing so far?"

A father was approached by his small son who told him proudly, 'I know what the Bible means!'

His father smiled and replied, 'What do you mean, you 'know' what the Bible means?'

The son replied, 'I do know!'

'Okay,' said his father. 'What does the Bible mean?' 'That's easy, Daddy...' the young boy replied excitedly, 'It stands for **B**asic **I**nformation **B**efore **L**eaving **E**arth.'

There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country.

'Is there anything breakable in here?' asked the postal clerk.

'Only the Ten Commandments.' answered the lady.

There is the story of a pastor who got up one Sunday and announced to his congregation: 'I have good news and bad news. The good news is, we have enough money to pay for our new building program. The bad news is, it's still out there in your pockets.'

People want the front of the bus, the back of the church, and the center of attention.

While driving in Pennsylvania, a family caught up to an Amish carriage.

The owner of the carriage obviously had a sense of humor, because attached to the back of the carriage was a hand printed sign...

'Energy efficient vehicle: Runs on oats and grass.

Caution: Do not step in exhaust.'

It's a pitch-black night and a ship's captain suddenly sees a light dead ahead on a collision course with his vessel. He sends a signal. 'Change your course immediately ten degrees east.'

The light signals back: 'Change *yours* ten degrees west.'

The indignant captain then signals: 'I am an admiral of Her Majesty's Navy. Change *your* course sir!'

'I'm a seaman, second class,' comes the reply. 'Change your course, sir.'

By now the captain is furious. "I'm a forty-thousand tonne battleship! I'm not changing course!'

There's one last reply: 'I'm a lighthouse - your call, mate!'



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