

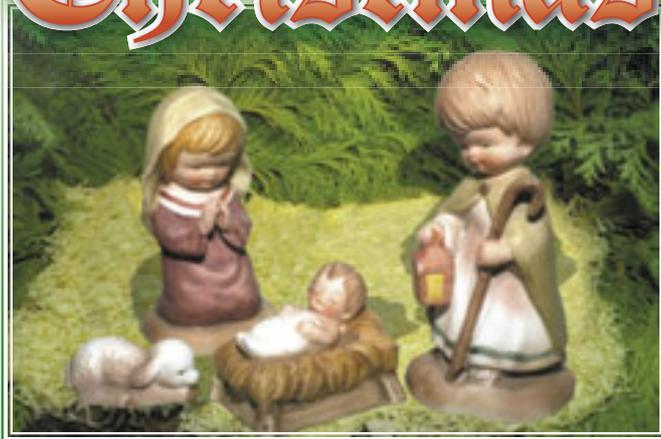


# inform

ISSUE 63 December 2005

Newsletter of the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch

## Christmas



### *A Powerful Message of God's Love*

*May you have a very blessed Christmas;  
much happiness, peace and family joy.  
May you experience the closeness of  
the Christ Child, Jesus  
who was born at this time.*

*Johnneen*

John Cunneen,  
Bishop of Christchurch

## Reliquary of St Therese of Lisieux



*The Carmelite Sisters and Bishop wait at the gate to welcome the reliquary.*

The Pilgrimage tour of the reliquary to the Diocese of Christchurch in October exceeded all expectations, with great crowds honouring the Saint at all eight venues: Cathedral, the Carmelite Monastery, Ashburton, Timaru, Waimate, Riccarton, Darfield and Greymouth. Thanks go to the committee and the parish and Carmel Auxiliary teams who excelled in the organising (and also the local coordinator, Fr. Bill Middleton - Ed). The priests at the venues and others who provided reconciliation were generous with their time as was Bishop John who accompanied the Pilgrimage around the Diocese. Homilies and Liturgies were excellent and we relished Fr. John O'Connor's article in the Press. Fortunately we were able to provide good reading material, pictures,

medals, programmes etc. due to generous sponsorship we received, which along with individual gifts and book sales met the cost of the tour.

The visit will long be remembered by those who were fortunate to be able to join in. The Riccarton Parish Newsletter said: 'This humble saint somehow draws us to her, and then on to thirst for an experience of God's wonderful, faithful love for each one of us. She teaches us how we depend on Him, and because, by ourselves we are like little children, how we can put our total trust in our Good Heavenly Father.'

*Fr. Bill Middleton*

## Driving on the road at Christmas?

**Please drive carefully.**

*This sign is on the main highway north of Christchurch, just near Woodend.*



## The Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament.

Located in Barbadoes Street, architect F.W. Petre's magnificent concrete, Oamaru stone-clad building is regarded as one of the finest examples of church architecture in Australasia. It replaced the original chapel and church of the Blessed Sacrament that was opened in 1864.

Today the Cathedral stands as an enduring witness to the Catholic faith and courage and generosity of the first Bishop of the Christchurch Diocese, the Most Reverend J. Grimes SM and his people.

The Cathedral is often referred to as "the Basilica" because its style is based on that of the old Roman basilicas whose secular origins and purpose were transformed by the early Church into places of Christian liturgy. While faithful to the plan of the basilica, F.W. Petre was able to introduce many original architectural elements.

The Dedication of the Cathedral took place on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1905.

In this Centennial Year of the Cathedral, numerous observances over the course of the year have seen large numbers of people involved in Centennial events.

§ A prayer card in the languages of Cathedral worshippers was prepared and distributed and a set of faith sharing leaflets, entitled "Living Stones" was prepared and made available to parishes for group use. They featured specially photographed elements of the Cathedral and related sections from Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, "Novo Millennio Ineunte."

§ A history of the Cathedral was commissioned and published for the occasion. Called "A Suitable Temple", it was written by Michael Hanrahan, whose forebears were original contributors when the Cathedral was built. Its publication was funded by the Diocese.

§ Specially made banners were introduced into the Cathedral for the Centennial Year. Purchased and made by parishioners, the liturgical colours with Eucharistic and Maori motifs capture something of the Cathedral's identity.



§ One hundred years to the day, Bishop John Cunneen, assisted by many of his priests and a great gathering of Catholics, concelebrated the Mass for the anniversary of the Dedication at 11.00am on Saturday 12 February.

§ On the same day, at 2.00pm, a Liturgy of the Word to which the Heads of Churches and other dignitaries had been invited, was celebrated. During this, Bishop Cunneen dedicated the newly-installed Stations of the Cross. These had been carved from Carrara marble by Llewellyn Summers at the commission of the Cathedral Trust. While the introduction of these new Stations of the Cross led to some protests, the visitors' book in the Cathedral shows that many people appreciate them.

§ One week later, on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> February, a parish group from Holy Family Parish, Burwood, came to the 9.00am Sunday Mass which was celebrated by its parish priest, Msgr. G. O'Connor. This was the first of many spiritual pilgrimages made over the course of the year by parish and ethnic groups from every part of the Diocese and meant, for some, their first ever visit to the Cathedral.

§ The end of the month of May saw a highly successful Centennial Ball held in the Christchurch Convention Centre and attended by 500 or so members of the Diocesan family. The next day, May 29<sup>th</sup>, was the titular feast of the Cathedral and Archbishop Dew of Wellington, Metropolitan for New Zealand, came to concelebrate Mass and to preach. Members of the Maori community offered him a powhiri

on his first visit as Metropolitan to a suffragan See of the Province.

§ Special resources were developed by the Catholic Education Office for use in the primary and secondary schools and colleges of the Diocese and some schools came to visit the Cathedral.

§ On October 7<sup>th</sup>, the Forty Hours devotion was held to honour the dedication of the Cathedral to the Blessed Sacrament. Impressive numbers of people came from the parishes around Christchurch by day and by night to participate.

§ In June a secondary schools' music festival was held. A primary schools concert was held earlier this month.

§ In November, a chain of events rounded off the year. A Requiem Mass for the Deceased Benefactors of the Cathedral which the CBS Choir and Orchestra accompanied with Faure's Requiem, a Latin Mass, an evening of historical readings, a Flower Festival involving many parishes of the Diocese and the annual Christ the King procession at the Cathedral, will all be seen at the Cathedral. As well, a Centennial Dinner was held at Riccarton Park.

§ The Cathedral Parish will be making a Holy Hour on 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. Then there is the penultimate pilgrimage by the Korean Catholic Community at 12 noon on December 4. The final pilgrimage of the Centennial Year is that of Christ the King Parish on the afternoon of the same day.

Every best wish,  
Sincerely,



John Cunneen

**Bishop of Christchurch**





## Deceased Founders and Benefactors of the Cathedral.

It was music rather than people that filled the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament on the evening of Wednesday November 3<sup>rd</sup>. But without a Solemn Mass of requiem for its deceased founders and benefactors the Cathedral centennial year would not have been complete.

The haunting themes of the Faure Requiem by the Cathedral Choir and Orchestra provided a perfect setting for a prayerful remembrance, and the

‘Pie Jesu’ sung beautifully by the CBS Junior Choir, capped off a nostalgic night as the text of the Latin Tridentine Mass of Requiem was heard once more. It served to bring to mind the memory, not only of those whose offerings, large and small, built the Cathedral, but those who in more recent times gave of their time and talent to conserve it so that we might hand it on to future generations in all its beauty. May they rest in peace. *JMH*



## Charismatic Movement.

Over the last fifty years this Movement has been one of the powerful movements in the life of the Catholic Church to help its members be renewed in their life of faith. Right at the heart of this renewal is the seminar that is called ‘A Life in the Spirit Seminar.’ It is a series of eight gatherings that help the participants to become more aware of the power of the Holy Spirit and to open their lives to this Spirit so that their love of Jesus and their love for the Church become more alive for them. The photo shows participants at a ‘Life in the Spirit Seminar’ that is currently being conducted in Bryndwr, Christchurch.

## Inform Distribution.

Before every edition of Inform a willing group of volunteers come together to insert the CDF leaflet and prepare it for distribution. The photo shows them doing this work for the last September issue.



## A Question of Faithful Service.

Every Sunday for 25 years Bill and Jan Woffenden were at Christchurch Hospital to help with the afternoon Mass for the patients. The chaplain would tell them who wanted to come and in what Ward they were, and Bill and Jan would go and help bring them to the chapel. This came to an end in August when this Mass was discontinued. Congratulations Bill and Jan. Thank you on behalf of so many former patients. May the Lord continue to bless you.

## Sisters of the Little Company of Mary

This Congregation of Sisters, well known in Christchurch, have a *New Initiative – Mary Potter Volunteers.*

The Sisters have developed a programme of preparation for volunteers who wish to participate in their global mission of prayer and ministry to those in need, especially the suffering and dying.

In January 2006 the first volunteer, a young Australian woman who is a trained nurse, will join the LCM Sisters in Tonga, (an extension of our NZ Region) as a Mary Potter Volunteer.

**Is this your call to become a Mary Potter Volunteer?** For more information please contact:

Sr Raye Boyle LCM. 213 Rintoul St, Newtown, Wellington 6002. Phone/Fax: 04 389 9730  
Email: rayeboyle@paradise.net.nz

## The Institute of Charity (Rosminians)

Many in Christchurch will remember, with gratitude, the Rosminian priests who served in this Diocese for many years.

Recently the order celebrated the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of their founder, Antonio Rosmini. He had many outstanding qualities; he was always willing to serve God and the Church in whatever way the Lord might lead.

The lay members of the Rosminians still exist in the Christchurch Diocese. They meet informally once a month to help each other to continue to grow and live this spirituality. Anyone is welcome and if you are interested and would like more information, please phone: Elizabeth Griffen, (03)355-7609.



# Visit Our Parishes

## Around the Parishes

### St Mary's Parish, Christchurch.

During this past 'Year of the Eucharist' we have celebrated this great gift to the Church.

We had Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, between Masses, on the fifth Sunday of each month. Also Eucharistic Adoration each Thursday evening after the 5.10 Mass.

A highlight was the occasion of 16 Children receiving 1<sup>st</sup> Communion.

As did other parishes, we went on Pilgrimage for a Holy Hour at the Cathedral and also participated in the Forty Hours Devotion there.

This year our Parish enjoyed hosting the Parish Pastoral Councils and other Committees from our pastoral area with a pot luck meal. It was a great social occasion and a beginning of the plan to work more closely in the mission of the Church.

### St Mary's Parish, Hokitika.



*Sister Eulalie and Veronica unveiling the plaque.*

With the Sisters of Mercy two important events were celebrated here recently.

The Pioneer Sisters arrived 127 years ago, from Ennis, County Clare, Ireland. A plaque was erected at Riverside to mark the 125 years anniversary.

Also Sr. M. Eulalie Martini celebrated her 75 years of professed life as a Sister of Mercy. As a young girl Sister knew many of the pioneer Sisters and was able to recount many stories about those days to the over thirty-four Sisters who had travelled to the West Coast for these celebrations. Sister Eulalie is blessed with good health and a clear mind and



is able to continue her pastoral work in Plymouth Court, where she now resides.

The Sisters, friends and parishioners took part in the celebration of Mass in the Church at 9.00am and then proceeded to Riverside for a ceremony and an unveiling of the plaque by the two 96 year old Sisters, Eulalie and Veronica. Because of the inclement weather the hot meal provided afterwards, at the Sisters' residence, was much appreciated.

May the Spirit of Mercy live on in all the Sisters of Mercy who hear the call to respond to the needs of our times.

### Tinwald Parish



They look happy. What has been going on? Bishop John assisted by Monsignor James has just blessed the plaque (pictured) commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Holy Spirit Church, Tinwald. This plaque was erected by the parishioners in grateful memory of all the blessings they have received here and also in remembrance of past parishioners and priests who have worshipped in this holy place. Isabelle Quaide, a first day parishioner, put together a photographic history board which brought back many happy memories. It was a great day of celebration.

### St Patrick's Parish, Greymouth

Altar Servers with parents at parish sponsored overnight ski trip. (See last edition of Inform for full details.)

### Halswell Parish Wedding Mass

On August 6, over 40 couples renewed their Marriage Vows at a special Mass at Ss Peter & Paul Parish, Halswell. Following the Mass, over 170 people of all ages celebrated the event with dinner at the Riverview Restaurant, partying well into the night. Thanks must go to the Parish Youth led by Ben Kearns, who instigated the idea and took the financial risk on himself. With good budgeting, and Parishioners' participation, all costs were met (just). The event helped to meld the Parish into an even more friendly one.

### Sumner Parish

On 16<sup>th</sup> October the School, the Parish and the Catholic Women's League held a combined Fair in the school grounds. Despite a gloomy weather forecast we were blessed with a beautiful day, and the joint effort raised almost \$4000 for the school in Samoa sponsored by the CWL. Not only was this an amazing amount for our small community, but the spirit of goodwill and co-operation, apparent to all who came, was wonderful. We thank again everyone who helped in any way.

We also had a very enjoyable Confirmation of 22 youngsters from the parish on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October. The support of so many friends and families made it a memorable occasion for everyone.



## Mercy Sisters - A New Congregation

On 12<sup>th</sup> December 2005, the four Congregations of the Sisters of Mercy (Dunedin, Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland) will become one new Congregation. They will be 'The Sisters of Mercy, New Zealand'. 'Nga Whaea Atawhai o Aotearoa'.

To commemorate this event, friends, families, past students and anyone else interested, are invited to join us at a Eucharist to be celebrated on:

**Thursday 15 December, 5pm.  
Our Lady of Victories Church,  
106 Main South Rd, Sockburn.**

## Divine Mercy

Every third Friday of the month a prayer vigil is maintained to pray for the sick, the dying, family, peace and those without hope. This is a one hour vigil held from 3-4pm during the 24hr Adoration of the Blessed Eucharist conducted at Christ the King Parish in Burnside, Christchurch. The Chaplet of Mercy and Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary are prayed along with selected prayers from the Diary of St Faustina together with reflections on mercy and silent time.

There is also a First Class Relic of St Faustina present at all vigils and this is available for all who have prayer requests to make, through the intercession of St Faustina. Please consider joining our group to implore mercy for the whole world.

### The Woolston Parish

We welcomed Sue Falvey and the Choir from the Greymouth Parish at a recent Vigil Mass. Their singing added greatly to the celebration.

### Pleasant Point Parish



Mr. Pat Scannell and Miss Eileen Kelliher of St Mary's Parish, Pleasant Point, were given a surprise on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> August when they were called up during Mass by the Parish Priest, Fr Michael Pui, to receive their Centenary Medals for distinguished parish service.

### Mairehau Parish

What a privilege it was for our Parish to spend a Holy Hour with the Carmelite Sisters on Sunday 16 October, reciting the Office and attending Benediction. Before leaving we had a chance to meet some of the Sisters.

On All Saints Day, the parishioners joined with the school pupils to celebrate 9am Mass. The children had studied the lives of several saints and the church was colourful with portraits

of these saints produced by the pupils.

- A large gathering of parishioners met with Father Paul at the Belfast Cemetery on 6 November to pray for the Holy Souls, particularly for relatives of the parishioners buried in this cemetery.

### Hoon Hay Parish,

*St Vincent de Paul Conference*

This group regularly visits the Catholics who are patients in Princess Margaret Hospital. In recent times it has become more difficult for them to know who might be there and wanting a visit, because of the 'Privacy Act'. If you are to enter this hospital and would like a friendly visit from them, make sure you let the Hospital Chaplain know or the President of the Conference, Emmet Conaglen, Phone (03) 338-9349.

### North Canterbury Parish Celebrations

*The Hawarden Parish* will celebrate its 120th Parish anniversary on Sunday February 26th 2006, with Mass at 11am and lunch to follow. All ex-parishioners are invited to attend. To assist with catering kindly advise Bridie Power, PO Box 29, Hawarden, if you will be attending. You will then be advised of registration details.



The Filipino Community and the Diocese welcome the new Priest from the Philippines, **Fr Frank Gan**, who is going to work among us.



RETIREMENT VILLAGE

### Have you visited Maryville Courts Retirement Village?

369 Manchester Street (Next to St Mary's Church) Phone 379-0357

**Experience quality of life in your active retirement years ...**

- Two bedroom self-contained units
- Central to city living and close to shops
- Companionship, outings and activities
- Dining facilities available
- Independent living with 24 hour security

Registered under  
the Charitable  
Trusts Act (1957)

Under the Patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Christchurch. It is never too early to plan ahead for a comfortable secure lifestyle. Villas available.

Open 1-4pm Monday-Friday or call 379-0357 for an appointment.



# Diocesan Youth Team News

## Youth

### Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Masses

Our successful Masses in the Cathedral continued with standing room only for the many young people and families who attend.

### Youth Camps 2005

We held our first *Revolution Camp* for those in years 9 and 10 with 60 young people gathering at Glentui to have fun, share faith and build relationships. Around this diocese there are many young people being a revolution by the way they live their lives by the Gospel values.

Our annual *Antioch Camp* was for those in years 11, 12 and 13, and was held at Woodend Christian Camp. Once again we had an awesome team of young people leading the weekend and sharing their faith and life experience with their peers. Antioch is always a life changing experience for many young people and 2005 was no exception.

The *Jam Camp* was held for those in years 7 and 8 for 69 energetic young people at Eyre Lodge near Oxford. This year we focused on the scripture "I have come so you may have life to the full" (John 10:10). We concluded the weekend with parents and families joining us for Mass which created a great atmosphere with a full house!.



## Young Adults

### Arise Young Adults Conference - July

This year we held our very first one-day Young Adults Conference - Arise 2005. Over 100 Young Adults gathered at St Bede's College for a day of workshops, prayer, dinner, music, inspirational talks and much more. Our keynote speaker, Rob Falzon, inspired and challenged the Young Adults present, to Arise and become the people God made them to be.

### World Youth Day - August

There were 12 young adults from the Christchurch Diocese who attended the World Youth Day in Germany with over 1 million people! This was our biggest ever group and there were many wonderful experiences for them.

### Parishes

The music ministry have provided music and support in many parishes around the diocese.

## Catholic Women's League



At the August Christchurch Diocesan Council meeting, the Christchurch President, Mrs. Lorraine Doyle, presented a cheque for \$8,750, the proceeds of the New Zealand Catholic Women's League 2005 At Home Appeal, to Mrs. Carmel Gregan-Ford, Education Manager of the Kidney Foundation for New Zealand.

Each year the Catholic Women's League branches throughout New Zealand contribute to this appeal. Over the past ten years the sum of approximately \$100,000 has been donated to various organisations - Cystic Fibrosis Assn, Stroke Foundation, Asthma Society, Neurological Foundation, Life Saving New Zealand, Habitat for Humanity - to name a few. This sum is over and above the \$232,242 that members have sent to their various Mission Stations in the Pacific and local charities in 2005, remembering always that the majority of League members are 'just past the first flush of youth'.

## The Diocesan Website

- The Diocesan Report can now be viewed online.
  - A complete list of all Mass times and parish details. (including a map) for each parish of the Diocese.
  - A full list of all priests in the diocese with contact details.
  - News and events updated weekly.
  - A weekly gospel reflection by Msgr Tom Power.
  - Photos of each parish Church.
- And much more!

## Diocesan Annual Report

This annual report, covering all that the Diocese has been doing over the last year, is now available on line at: [www.chch.catholic.org.nz](http://www.chch.catholic.org.nz). It is a very extensive report of all the different agencies and groups that make up our diocesan family and makes for interesting reading.



## BELL, LAMB & TROTTER

FUNERAL DIRECTORS LIMITED

*A Canterbury Tradition Since 1872*

Ian and Suzanne Bell are delighted to have  
**Dominic Orr as the Catholic representative**

of Bell, Lamb and Trotter Funeral Directors Limited, assisting them to provide a caring, professional service that is a unique and fitting tribute, reflecting your loved one's life, personality, beliefs and culture.

Ph 03 389 7999 Fax 03 389 9485

FERRY PARK CHAPEL, 297 FERRY ROAD, CHRISTCHURCH

# Schools

## Catholic Cathedral College



### *Visit to Christchurch by Brother Ghislain from Taizé*

For the last four years, the students of the Music Department at Catholic Cathedral College have studied the spirituality and music of the community of Taizé, France. They were delighted that Brother Ghislain accepted their invitation to visit Christchurch this year to pray with them, share his experiences and join in their preparation for Prayer Around the Cross. On Monday September 12<sup>th</sup>, students from Christchurch's five Catholic Colleges spent time with Brother and experienced Taizé Prayer in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at the Cathedral.



### **St Patrick's School, Waimate.**

The 125<sup>th</sup> Jubilee was a rousing success with 300 former pupils attending. Right from the Friday evening until the Sunday celebrations there was a great spirit of rejoicing among all. A display of photos and memorabilia, by the present day school pupils, showing the life of the school over the years was especially appreciated.

We did the usual things one does at these jubilees but the Jubilee dinner and the special concelebrated Mass would stand out as highlights. It was something new for Waimate to have liturgical dance as part of the liturgy of the Mass.

The Provincial of the Sisters of St Joseph, Sister Anne Neven, wound up a great weekend with the planting of a tree which will commemorate the weekend.

A history of St Patrick's School has been published and is available in Waimate Bookshop.

### **Sacred Heart School, Addington.**

We had our 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary a short time ago. It was a magnificent success due to the hard work of so many. Especially notable is the

'Commemoration Book' edited by John Clark. It is packed with information and photos and a pleasure to read. Copies are available from Box 5509 Christchurch for \$20.00. Also we now have installed and had blessed new Jubilee Gates which we are proud of. We invite you to come and see them when you are in the area.

### **Our Lady of Victories School - 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee**

Next year will be the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of OLV School. In preparation for this important event we are compiling a database of past pupils and gathering information for a commemorative book. To offer stories etc and for information, please contact the school secretary, Anne Adlam - Ph:348 7790 or email us.

### **St Anne's Catholic School, Woolston**

Centenary Celebrations 10 – 12 Feb 2006. We extend an invitation to all associated with the school to attend our celebrations. To obtain a registration form please: email: [reception@stannes.co.nz](mailto:reception@stannes.co.nz) or Phone/fax: (03) 384 3073 or PO Box 19 625, Christchurch.

## World Youth Gathering 2005



### Colonge, Germany

My name is Anna Burrowes and I was chosen to be one of the two International Liturgical Representatives for New Zealand at the World Youth Day in Cologne Germany, along with Daniel Eyre from Dunedin. Both Daniel and I stayed with the other International Liturgical Group at a place called Hans Altenberg in Cologne. The group consisted of 170 people represented

by 65 countries. During the week of World Youth Day this group was assigned tasks to perform at the Masses. On the Sunday before World Youth Day began our group received a blessing with the relics of the Three Wise Men in the Cologne Cathedral. The group was reminded of the journey that the Three Wise Men made, just as we followed the star to Cologne. On Thursday for the Opening Ceremony our group travelled down the Rhine to the Cologne Cathedral with the Pope. I was a flag bearer and had the New Zealand flag. We followed the procession with the Pope into the Cologne Cathedral. I felt really proud to carry the flag representing our country. On Saturday Night I read at the Vigil for the Way of Mary and walked with the World Youth Day logo at the end of the Final Mass. It was a most wonderful and blessed experience to celebrate my faith with other young people from around the world. I would recommend any young person to go to World Youth Day – Sydney 2008.

## Quote of The Month

***Do I believe that sin is real for me.***  
*The Definition of Sin as given in the Catholic Catechism 1849 and 1850*

Sin is an offence against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is a failure in genuine love for God and neighbour caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity. It has been defined as "an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law."

Sin is an offence against God: "*Against you, you alone have I sinned, and done that which is evil in your sight.*" Sin sets itself against God's love for us and turns our hearts away from it. Like the first sin, it is disobedience, a revolt against God through the will to become 'like gods', knowing and determining good and evil. Sin is thus "love of oneself even to contempt of God." In this proud self-exaltation, sin is diametrically opposed to the obedience of Jesus, which achieves our salvation.

# God Works In Strange Ways



When I was young, I had a favourite dress. It was a green floral dress and I wore that dress until I couldn't possibly wear it anymore. I did not actually get to wear it much, it was just that I was growing quickly in those days! My mother decided to have a clean up of our wardrobes and of course out came 'my favourite dress'. My parents gathered clothes new and old to take to the children at Nazareth House. Although I protested loudly, I was not allowed to go with them.

Some time after when travelling by train to school I saw a group of children with several 'nuns' looking after them. To my great surprise, one of these children, a lovely young girl, was wearing 'my favourite dress'. Strange as it may seem I was thrilled and excited to see her in it. I never forgot it.

When I began working I had to travel past Nazareth House in the distance each day. I was always puzzled by it, but did not think much about it. I was always scared of 'nuns' as I did not have a Catholic education and did not come from a practising Catholic family, although my parents were particular about our receiving the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, First Communion and

Confirmation. My older sisters and brother went to Mass when they were younger, but fell away, leaving me going to Mass on Sundays with the neighbours and then on my own. Although it would have been easy to stop going, I somehow felt I had to go.

My working life led me into an amateur musical comedy society where I made many wonderful and valued friendships. The Sisters, children and elderly from Nazareth House were always invited to the last dress rehearsal. I was also asked to deliver some goods to Nazareth House one day and met a few of the Sisters. I was rather mystified by them, although they were very down to earth and happy. I did some voluntary work for them from time to time, which gradually increased.

One day I walked into the chapel when I heard the Sisters at prayer. They were chanting the Divine Office. Of course I did not know what that was then, but with my love of music I was enchanted by it. Not that they were **that** good!!!, but the atmosphere was captivating to me. It was like something I had never known yet was seeking. Getting to know these Sisters more I came to realise they prayed hard, worked hard, laughed hard and loved much and it was contagious. I had what most people would see as everything yet I did not have what they had. My everything had something missing!

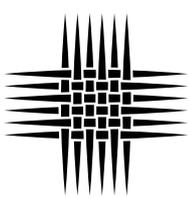
Then came the 'nagging' feeling of HIMSELF saying, 'I want you'. I kept arguing with Him for a couple of years. I told Him in no uncertain terms that He had to be joking – I did not have a Catholic education, I knew very little about the Faith, I had a good job, my own car, my family and my many friends. I also had a very busy life, but He just kept nagging until I knew I had to try. There was no peace until I said, "All right, You want me, You had better help me".

Trust was something I had to learn early in the decision. My family were devastated – thought I was cracked to put it mildly!!! So I left home, family and friends to enter the novitiate many miles away in another capital city. That sacrifice was not easy yet a very little sacrifice when compared with so many of the other Sisters.

My first day in the novitiate was one of mixed feelings. There was a sense of sadness, fear of the unknown, excitement and strangely peace. I wanted to make such a good impression on my first morning. My clothes were all laid out for me and I dressed rather nervously. On top of my folded clothes there was a band with press-studs on the end. It obviously went round something. I tried it around my neck but it was too big. I tried it around my waist but it was too small. I then thought it must be some sort of penance that the Sisters had forgotten to tell me about. So when the Novice came in to see whether I was all right I plucked up the courage to ask her where it went, where you put it. She replied with a wry like smile that it went around the curtain!!! Well it was only my first day and I DID have lots to learn!!!

As a Sister of Nazareth you can do lots of things, for example, catering, teaching, teachers aide, nursing, clerical work, pastoral care, church work etc. For me it was to be nursing and I thank God for the privilege of being able to care for the elderly. My years in religious life have increased my love for God, His Blessed Mother, for the Church, for my Faith and for my Congregation. Here I am many years 'down the track' still trusting Him and still ever grateful for the precious gift God has given me in my vocation as a Sister of Nazareth.

Sister Dominica of the Cross  
Nazareth House, Christchurch



cavell leitch  
law

## Friendly people - Expert Advice - Awesome Service

We will: ■ help you grow and protect your assets

- update your will
- discuss enduring powers of attorney
- form your family trust
- help you solve a legal case or represent you at Court

For further information contact  
Michael Sweeney, Mark Callaghan,  
Clare O'Neill

Cavell Leitch Pringle and Boyle  
Level 15, Clarendon Tower  
Cnr Oxford Terrace & Worcester Street

Telephone (03) 379 9940  
Fax (03) 379 2408  
Email cavell@clpb.co.nz, www.cavell.co.nz

## Full Colour Christmas Edition

Thanks to the generosity of our regular printers, SprintPrint, of 19-21 Gasson Street, we have been able to print Inform in full colour this time. Thank you SprintPrint.

## Inform

A quarterly published by the Catholic Bishop of Christchurch.

Deadline for the next issue will be 17<sup>th</sup> February 2006

Send material (preferably emailed) to

The Editor, Father Mike Doyle

252 A Ilam Road, Christchurch 8005,

Phone (03)351-3291, Fax (03)351-9912, Email: mjdoyle@paradise.net.nz

Diocesan Web page: [www.chch.catholic.org.nz](http://www.chch.catholic.org.nz)