Gold & Silver Jubilarians

Five priests from the Diocese celebrated a combined 200 years of priestly service at the annual gathering of Priests in June. After a concelebrated Mass a dinner was held in their honour in the Burnside Parish Centre. Congratulations and 'ad multos annos'!

The Diocese congratulates Fr Charles Drennan who travels to Rome in September to work in the offices of the Secretariat of State in Vatican City. It is a great honour not only for Fr Charles and his family, but also for our Diocese that he has been chosen to help in the mission of the wider Universal Church.

Fr Charles Drennan

Golden Jubilarians – Fr Leo O’Connor, Msgr Gerry O’Connor, Fr Kevin Manning SM, (Bishop John Cunneen)
Silver Jubilarians – Fr Denis Nolan & Fr Brendan Daly.
A letter from our Bishop

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

1. Between your reading this and my writing it the priests in this diocese will have taken part in four days of seminars: two days with Father Gerald O’Collins, an Australian Jesuit teaching theology in Rome who will speak and discuss with us about “Preaching the Resurrection and Redemption Today”; during the two days with Drs Gerardine Taylor and Tony Robinson from Sydney we reflect on “Sustaining a Healthy Lifestyle as Celibate Men Committed to the Gospel Today”. While “pledging our commitment to assist the healing of those who have been abused” we must also do all we can to ensure “our clergy and religious are people of integrity, whose dedicated and generous service of God and the Church is beyond question” (NZCBC Pastoral Letter June 2002). We pray and behave so that as Pope John Paul II said, “So much pain, so much sorrow lead to a holier priesthood, a holier episcopate and a holier Church.”

2. As we look to Our Future building on what has been achieved to date through this initiative the following tasks are being addressed:

1. To develop further patterns of collaboration and partnership among associated parishes by means of integrating schedules of Mass times in each cluster of parishes to enable

Sunday Masses to be supplied when a priest from the cluster is absent or unavailable. (cf. The pastoral letter which initiated the project.)

2. To thoughtfully consider and evaluate which parishes are best associated in the various clusters.

3. To look to foster the various ministries, role and offices of the lay faithful in parishes, so that they can take their rightful place in the life of the Church.

4. To promote the desirability of persons working in associated parishes as youth workers, adult educators etc. where needs and resources permit.

5. To look ahead and plan for future contingencies in terms of the deployment of priests and associated parish assistants when the number of priests in parish appointments reduces.

6. To adapt the FUTURE NOW programme/process in the light of evaluating its use in the Lincoln-Leeston parishes with a view to promoting its use in other parishes.

These tasks need to be pursued in a steady and consistent manner without fuss but with a determination to prepare for a changed future in terms of parish structures.

We must all continue to do all we can by prayer and activity to promote vocations to the priesthood. The Looking to Our Future Group at present comprises: Father J. Nicholas (convenor), Monsignor B. Jones, Father W. Grounds, Sister Raylene Dwyer RSM, Mrs Michele Ward, Mrs Mary Redding.

Every best wish,

Sincerely,

John Cunneen
Bishop of Christchurch

The Department of Child Youth and Family Services has completed a review of approval status of Catholic Social Services. The Diocesan Welfare Council is pleased to acknowledge the excellent report received from Child Youth and Family Services after their recent audit of the Agency. This comprehensive audit is conducted at six monthly intervals. The next assessment being due October 24 2002.

At each audit all aspects of the Agency are examined. The Agency was credited with comprehensive procedures to deal with issues ranging from prevention of abuse, client and staff safety, programmes offered and the financial management and systems in the operation of the Agency.

The Diocesan Welfare Council congratulate the Manager and staff of Catholic Social Services on their professionalism and caring approach to those with needs in our city.

Medugorje Tour

Fr Chris Friel will act as Chaplain in July next year for a two week tour to Europe, including Singapore, Rome, Capri, Dubrovnik, five days in Medugorje and Split – with an additional nine days in Vienna and Prague as an optional add on. Seats are now very limited.

Contact Adrienne Gemmill at Harvey World Travel, South City Centre, 555 Colombo Street Christchurch for itinerary and prices.

Phone (03) 365-1777
Fax (03) 365-1778
Whose responsibility is it?
some thoughts about the scandal of sexual abuse

In the last couple of months Catholics here have been confronted with the same devastating revelations of sexual misconduct by priests and religious that were already afflicting the Church elsewhere, notably in the United States and Australia. As concerning as the incidence of abuse has been, the revelation of the part played by some bishops elsewhere and religious superiors here and abroad who in effect facilitated ongoing sexual abuse by reassigning those guilty of it to other pastoral ministries.

It is true that what has happened has been both distorted and magnified by a media bent on using the scandals to discredit the Church's moral authority and teaching. Dean (now Bishop) Bluck's severe criticism of the media's handling of the abuses was well deserved. Without question the facts needed to be brought to light and publicised. We could have done without the sensationalism.

For all Catholics the established facts themselves are abhorrent enough. They are what need to concern us. How did all this come about? Who is responsible for it happening? For addressing the crisis it reveals? Does it throw any light on the relation and interaction of ordained ministers and lay people in the Church?

In the United States blame has fallen on and been accepted by the bishops, for those of them who had re-assigned known offenders and thus become complicit in their ongoing abuse. Here, the New Zealand bishops have issued a pastoral letter in which they "deprecate past mistakes, especially those that were made by ourselves or by our predecessors in handling complaints of sexual abuse." The United States bishops also accepted, at their meeting with Pope John Paul II in Rome, that the morass of sexual abuse being revealed has arisen out of a climate of pervasive dissent from the Church's moral teaching which has been permitted to flourish, even in the seminaries. Is this crisis then a matter for bishops, priests and religious?

It is true that the primary responsibility for proclaiming the truths given by Christ to the Apostles belongs to the bishops of the Church, and to the priests who share in their ordained ministry — those truths that need to be proclaimed in and out of season, and in our time are most definitely out of season. But we lay people share responsibility for the mission of the Church. It is a prerequisite for exercising it that we freely give our assent to that teaching and commit ourselves to the effort to follow it however difficult this may at times be. The clergy have the duty to proclaim Christ's truth and give us the grace of his sacramental presence to help us live it. But it is in the nature of what is on offer that it can only be proposed, not imposed. We are the ones who have to choose to witness Christ's life to the world around us.

The Notre Dame historian Scott Appleby made an important point when he was invited to address the United States bishops at their historic June meeting in Dallas. He agreed that the laity were not to blame for the scandals currently being confronted but said that neither could their consciences be held to be altogether clear. He said that since 1968 the laity had massively dissented from the Church's moral teaching and had not listened to those bishops and priests who had tried to persuade them of the compelling truth of the Church's position. Catholic lay people used artificial contraception, practised sex outside marriage and endured abortions at much the same rate as other people. This, he said, is what had led to the breakdown of the Christian community.

Surely this comment is worth our reflection here? Here too, the rejection of the riches of the Church's teaching on sexuality and marriage has been followed by the denigration and disparagement of other authoritative teachings — such as the Church’s inability to ordain women to ministerial priesthood, to take one example. We too evidence a very real breakdown of the unity of the Catholic community. The crisis revealed by the incidence of sexual abuse is being treated in the Church in the United States as a wake up call from the Lord to intense renewal, to the holiness that shows itself in integrity and fidelity to the Gospel.

It could be that we too need to hear it.

**Betty O'Doud bwmodowd@globe.net.nz**

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**Rosary House Spiritual Life Centre**

**Preached Retreat**
October 9–16
Fr John O'Connor
An opportunity to grow in sensitivity to movements of the Holy Spirit in daily life.

**Guided Retreat Friends of God**
November 5–12
Fr Mark Beban SM
“...in each generation she passes into holy souls, she makes them friends of God and prophets.” (Wisdom 7: 27) “I have called you friends.” (John 15: 15)

Is it real to have a sense of God as my friend? If it is, what does this mean for my relationship with the living God? During this retreat we will explore these questions.

**The Bethlehem of Our Hearts**
November 22–24
Joy Cowley
All of us, men and women alike, are called to become pregnant with God and give birth to Christ in the world. Is this idealistic metaphor or reality? Come and find out as we prepare for Advent with a weekend of creative prayer.

**Personal Guided Retreat**
December 7–14
Fr Mark Chamberlain & Team
A personal guided retreat is a time in silence and solitude during which the retreatant is guided each day personally by a Prayer Guide to discern the movement of God’s Spirit.

**Guided Retreat**
To see the Invisible God
January 4–11 2003
Fr Shane Dwyer SM
An encounter with the Hidden God made present in the Scripture and our own prayer experience.

For bookings and further information please contact:
**Rosary House**
15 Dublin Street
Christchurch
Ph: (03) 379 1298
Fax: (03)366 1418
Email: roho@xtra.co.nz
Parishes

St Albans
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Somme Street, while small in size once again proved big in generosity. They mustered over $4,000 in just four weeks to send Philip Kelly off to the World Youth Day in Toronto Canada. Phil left on his 21st birthday for what proved to be “the most incredible experience in my life”, joining four other young people from our Diocese.

A novel idea sparked yet another very successful parish-wide social event titled “Guess who’s coming to dinner” on August 3 (the night of the Bledisloe Cup decider). Invited guests did not know where they would be going to dinner, and the hosts did not know who would be arriving, until minutes before the doorbells rang.

St Albans Catholic School is enjoying some fresh changes, including advertising for a new principal to replace Ray Hansen who has taught at the school for over two decades, a new pastor in Fr Jack O’Connor, Bishop John opening a new administration wing, and a bright new paint job. The adjacent presbytery has also been painted to match the school, but the jury is still out on the overly bright blue façade, that has some visitors wearing sunglasses.

North-East Christchurch

At the completion of the entrance hymn, Glenys Kofoed, the parish chairperson, called up a parishioner from each of the five previous parishes where he had served – Sockburn, Greymouth, Dallington, Timaru and Aranui – to light a gold candle. This was the beginning of the Holy Family celebrations for Msgr Gerard O’Connor, who was celebrating the Golden Jubilee of his ordination. The five candles represented each decade of his Priesthood.

Following Mass a lunch was held in the Windsor School Hall, which was decorated with gold balloons, gold decorations and a large banner. Following speeches Mgrs. Gerard replied and cut the Jubilee cake.

After lunch there was much singing and dancing followed by a social time. The afternoon ended with Benediction, presided by Bishop John.

Mairehau
Our parish lost a much loved and respected member of the faith community on June 19 when Winnie Smith was tragically killed as she made her way to morning Mass. Winnie had been a parishioner for many years and was an honorary grandmother to many youngsters in the community. As well as being totally committed to Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Winnie was deeply involved in Diocesan happenings and was a member of the Third Order of Carmel. The esteem with which Winnie was held was evident by the large number who attended her Requiem Mass. God bless you Winnie and grant you eternal rest.

Hornby

Sr Marie Poff RSM – a retired teacher of many children throughout the Diocese offers the following personal asides – from the mouths of babes …

■ The teacher while standing beside a small boy heard him praying, “eternal rest grant to her O Lord, and let the petrol light shine upon her.”

■ The Hail Holy Queen, “turn then most gracious advocate” became “turn then most gracious overcoat.”

■ The priest was talking to the children about sin and asked for examples. One lad answered that pulling a dog's tail would be a sin. The priest, curious, asked why this would be. “Cos God said, what he has joined together, let no man pull asunder,” said the lad.

■ In earlier days it was customary to address the Bishop as Your Lordship. For small children, this was not the easiest to grasp. After much practice the previous day, one little boy greeted the special visitor to his school with, “Good morning Your Shipload.”
Parishes

Bryndwr

Jesuit Mission in Bihar, India.

The Annual Fete or Bring and Buy, which is the focus of the appeal for the work of the Mission in Hazaribag in Bihar, will be held again this year on Sunday, November 24. The function will be held in the Hall at St Matthew’s Parish, Bryndwr immediately after the 10.00am Mass. Contributions of goods are invited and may be left at the Hall 4.30pm Saturday or before Mass on Sunday. Supporters unable to attend may of course make a donation to either Greg Donohue, 40 Alpha Ave, or Mike Perkins, 29 Watford St. Fr Berny Donnelly will be home on holiday this year and will celebrate the Parish Masses that weekend. He is looking forward to meeting old friends. We shall also have an evening meeting for him to talk about the work of the Mission.

Enquiries to Greg 355-6168 or Cora 351-7453.

Sumner

Our parish is working well thanks to the help of so many parishioners who take on jobs around the place. They all help to keep things running smoothly and we are grateful to everyone who contributes in any way.

The Pastoral Council has recently updated the parish roll and is about to organise an extensive visitation of parishioners. They have produced a small information booklet for newcomers and a list of all those doing various ministries and jobs in parish.

We have a beautiful church and now we have a tidy resource room too. It has a new cupboard giving storage space for parish groups and pleasant working space for Sister Audrey.

Fr John’s 70th birthday party was a great success and we thank his widespread friends for their attendance. Our Passionist Family Groups are active and we are lucky to have the opportunity to enjoy many social activities through them.

Tinwald – Hinds

In June our parish members said farewell to Kevin and Patricia O’Brien from the Hinds end of the parish. Kevin served on the Holy Spirit Parish and Finance Councils at various times for over 30 years, mainly representing St Ita’s – Hinds. He organised the collection of stock for the parish fair over a number of years and the meat stall was always a favourite of the public. Kevin always kept a sharp eye on the building, making sure it was kept in good repair.

Patricia served as Secretary to the Parish Council, was a representative for the Hinds CWL, was one of the Parish Youth Leaders and a leader for the Renew Programme. All this stood her in good stead as she is now the National President of the Red Cross.

We are very grateful for all the time and effort both Kevin and Patricia have put into the running of the Parish and wish them well in their well earned retirement.

Cathedral Parish

Parishioners are enjoying the new heating in the floor. The Cathedral is a very cold building and the air can never be warmed, but it is very nice to have warm feet. We are happy to report that not only is the floor successful – the power bill has decreased.

The cost of electricity in the Cathedral has been a burden for both the Parish and the Diocese over many years; we have installed long lasting light bulbs in the chandeliers, which we have been assured will also give considerable savings.

A new plan to raise money to pay off our loan is underway. It is called the 2 x 2$ club.

We estimate that if all Mass attendees at the Cathedral give $2 per week for 2½ years our debt of $52,000 will be paid off. A special receptacle has been made to take the donations, this will stand at the back of the church.

On the weekend of August 16–18 Bishop John visited the Parish. He met with Parish groups on Friday night, visited the sick, was the celebrant for the diocesan Marian Celebration and met with the Parish Council, the Finance and the Parish Visitors group. Preparing for the Bishop’s visit was a good pastoral experience for us, as we reflected on the life of our Parish community.

Sacred Heart – Timaru

Our Basilica is now restored and debt free. Fr Earl Crotty SM has taken over as the Parish Priest from Fr Matthew Cosgriff SM, who has left after 5½ years for a sabbatical time in England.

The parish has set about designing a new set of altar furniture to complement the interior of the Basilica. Work is in progress.

Have you visited Maryville Courts Retirement Village?

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

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Open 1-4pm Monday-Friday or call 379-0357 for an appointment.
World Youth Day Celebrated in Christchurch

On Sunday July 28, 7:00pm in the Catholic Cathedral 700 mostly young people joined with Bishop John Cunneen and a number of priests to celebrate World Youth Day. This coincided with the international celebration in Toronto Canada with Pope John Paul II where 800,000 gathered for the final Mass.

The Diocesan Youth Mass was a lively and joyful celebration organised by the Diocesan Youth Team who also provided the music. This was one of the many celebrations all around the world held on World Youth Day.

One person at Mass said afterward, “I was so encouraged and uplifted to see all these young and not so young people taking part in this wonderful celebration.”

During the Mass images off the satellite were shown of the hundreds of thousands of young people who had been invited by the Pope to celebrate World Youth Day in Canada.

In his message to young people the Pope challenged them to be a light to the Church and the world. "Allow me, dear young people, to consign this hope of mine to you. You are the men and women of tomorrow. The future is in your hearts and in your hands. God is entrusting to you the task, at once difficult and uplifting, of working with him in the building of the civilisation of love.” (Vigil Homily July 28 2002)

Agencies and Organisations

The Legion of Mary

The legion is an association of Catholic men and women whose purpose is the sanctifying of its members for the glory of God and the strengthening of the Church.

Its priority is the spiritual and social welfare of each individual. Members participate in the life of the parish through the visitation of families, sick people – both in their homes and in hospitals – and through collaboration in apostolic and missionary initiatives sponsored by the parish while endeavouring to work always under the patronage of Mary and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

New members are very welcome.

For further information please phone (03) 388-4760 or (03) 322-7354.
Sisters of Mercy – Golden Jubilarians

Sisters Elizabeth Kelly, Dorothy Cotterell, Anne Frost and Pat Butler are this year’s Mercy Golden Jubilarians. These four “Sisters have lived 50 years of Religious Life, witnessing to the gift of the resurrection. Jubilee is a gift out of time that leads us to reflect on the deeper things of life and commitment. ... We are pilgrims on a journey and the Jubilarians celebrate this stage of their journey in the very centre of our liturgical life, the Mass. Here they celebrate their union with Christ and boast in the cross of Christ by which the world has been crucified to them and they to the world and always in the hope of the resurrection.”

(From Homily given by Fr K. Burns)

Agencies and Organisations

Marriage Enrichment Weekend

This weekend is to encourage couples of all ages to look at aspects of their marriage within the context of their Catholic faith.

The topics being covered include things such as communication, sexuality, and setting and achieving priorities – plus of course free time to enjoy the fantastic environment! The weekend runs from October 11–13 at Bellbird Heights, Living Springs. The subsidised cost is $75 per couple.

For a registration form please contact
Mike Stopforth 366-9869
email: mstopforth@christchurch.catholic.org.nz or
John and Celia Kennedy 348-9646
email: jm.cmkenndey@xtra.co.nz.

Pregnancy Counselling Services

Are you concerned at the rising rate of abortions in our city? Would you like to be part of a team that educates women on the detrimental effects abortion can have ie. spiritually, mentally and physically? We are looking for women who are compassionate, caring, experienced in the ups and downs of life, who are willing to commit and give a few hours a week of their time. For more information please contact Lynette 332-6810, Gabrielle 942-0561 or Pat 348-7835.

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We will:
- Help you grow and protect your assets
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- Form your Family Trust
- Help you solve a legal case or represent you at Court

For further Information contact
Michael Sweeney, Mark Callaghan or Clare O’Neill
Level 10, Clarendon Tower, Cnr Oxford Terrace & Worcester Street
Telephone: (03) 379-9940 Facsimile: (03) 379-2408 E-mail: cavell@clpb.co.nz
There’s always something happening at ... Catholic Cathedral College

The most obvious to the casual visitor or passer by is the replica leper hut for Quail Island being built on site by the construction class. When finished it will be dismantled then re-erected on Quail Island.

The Justice and Peace Group designated August 5–9 Peace Week to remember August 6, the anniversary of Hiroshima. After prayers for peace 57 helium balloons, one for every year since the bombarding of Hiroshima, were launched to mark this event and to remember all victims of violence through war in the world today. Friday August 9 was a multi-day with the proceeds going to the Battered Women’s Trust and at lunchtime there was a peace concert.

During the second term Yrs 7 and 8 took part in the MS Readathon and raised over $1000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Society while having an enjoyable time reading.

Some babies will be warm this winter as a result of the knitting efforts of 7JR and 8DS Religious Education classes. They have been enthusiastic and have just about run out of wool.

We are very pleased to have students from our sister school Hikarigaoka Girls’ High School in Japan visiting us. Hina, our Japanese exchange student was very happy to meet up with her classmates. We were pleased to hear first hand of Anita Read (Yr 13 2001) who is there on the Gap Scheme and to meet her Japanese “sister”.

In June the Junior Conservation Group visited Willowbank Reserve where they planted trees for the kiwi enclosure, the highlight of the day was being taken into the nocturnal area of the kiwi house and to have a close encounter with the baby kiwis. They also spent a day weeding and adding to the Cathedral College plantings on the Port Hills at the Ada Track.

In July the Senior Conservation group went to Quail Island where they planted shrubs, flaxes and trees.

Once again the YES team were pleased with the results of the Young Enterprise Trade Fair, being placed second overall and winning the “Best Stall” for the second year running.

The Senior Netball team competed in the Mission Cup in Napier, unfortunately they did not win that cup, but were awarded with St Joseph’s Greenmeadows the Joan Harnett Trophy for fair play.

St Patrick’s School, Kaiapoi began the term with a new look after the opening of its extended administration area and new staffroom. Fr Frank Kelly blessed the buildings following the official welcome by the school’s cultural group.

From the Editor

This edition of INFORM marks another milestone for our Diocesan publication – with this 50th edition.

Its continued aim is to bring our Diocesan family closer together by an exchange of news from around the parishes.

The original editor Sr Margaret D’Ath, now in retirement in Auckland, was heard to say after one early commentator said it would not last, “that’s all the incentive I need!”

My thanks to all parishes who regularly forward news, to Clare and Cliff Strange who typeset the final publication at TypeShop Ltd, our printer Brian Roughan at Sprint Print and our regular advertisers.

In the words of Elbert Hubbard an editor is a “person employed by a newspaper whose business it is to separate the wheat from the chaff and to see that the chaff is printed.” My apologies for those times when some of the wheat ends up on the fire!

Happy reading.