

Shoalhaven catholic news

nowraparish.org.au

Nowra Parish
Established 1863

St Michael's, 20 North Street, Nowra (02) 4423 1712
St Joseph's, Moss Vale Road, Kangaroo Valley
St Patrick's, Albert Street, Berry

Sacred Heart, Bunberra Street, Bomaderry
Mary Help of Christians, Silvermere Street, Culburra
Holy Spirit, St George Ave, Vincentia (02) 4441 5571

A Christmas Message

Fr P J Faherty

This Christmas, as has happened across the centuries, millions of people world-wide will attend Churches to reflect, to remember, to worship, to pray. There will be countless thousands of works of charity and compassion carried out because it is Christmas.

Heads of State will deliver special messages to their people. The Pope will preside at Mass in Rome and give his *Urbi et Orbi* blessing to the city and the world. Children will stand spell-bound before manger scenes the world over. In all of this we are all struggling to take in, and respond to, both the enormity and the simplicity of the mystery—the *Word becoming Flesh and dwelling in our midst.*

On the eve of the recent Federal election a number of Church leaders were interviewed on the ABC Compass program and asked 'what values would they like to see guiding voters at the election?' Rabbi David Freedman responded by saying: 'Personally I think the job of the politician is in some regards more difficult than the job of the prophet. To translate those grand visions and actually bring heaven down to earth? I find his answer so relevant to the Christmas message for we sing with great delight: 'He came down to earth from heaven, Who is God & Lord of all.' (The hymn, *Once in Royal David's City*). Our task too is to translate what we both believe and celebrate into daily living.

At Christmas time we encounter many temptations. There is the temptation to be overly sentimental. The temptation to think of Liturgy as liturgical dramatisation only. There is the temptation to get too-involved in elaborate gift-giving. There can also be the temptation to focus just on our small circle of family and friends. There is the temptation to impose too many expectations on this holy Day—and forget what we are celebrating. Christmas is a Season of profound re-assurance, consolation and hope—for God remembers us.

There is also the practical challenge of Christmas, when we too are urged to "bring something of heaven to earth" so beautifully expressed by Howard Thurman, the African-American pastor, theologian and civil rights leader (1900-81):

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the kings and princes are home, when the shepherds are back with their flock, the work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

May the Lord bless you and all near and dear to you, with the graces and peace of this wondrous Feast.



No candles this Christmas

Reflections of a Nowra digger

How joyful it is to be in a church or a cathedral on Christmas night waiting for midnight Mass with dozens of candles brightly burning on the altar. The congregation is either talking in soft tones to their young children or perhaps on their knees praying for who knows what but the Christmas feeling is a truly wondrous one of peace. However, if we turn back the clock a few short years to say 1943 somewhere in the jungles of New Guinea, beside a narrow track and a quagmire of mud and water, rain falling so heavily that one cannot hear anything else. A few yards into the bush Father sets up his gear on an old rotten stump, and squelches about in the knee-deep mud trying to arrange some sort of altar, for his small chalice and tobacco tin for the hosts. Word goes out that Christmas Mass is on down the track, there are some who can get away for half an hour thanks to the generosity of their non-Catholic mates with the warning if they are needed they will expect them back quick smart. Remember they will have to do twice as much. Of course some of these lads may come with them also sneaking down to the "chapel"!

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Parish Retreat Day at Berry

Christine Da Silva

After a night of rain the day was sunny for the October Parish Retreat Day held in Berry. Fathers Pat, Ronan & Richard participated and 50 people from our different churches in St. Michael's parish attended.

Fr Richard commenced with a PowerPoint and music presentation entitled "Who do you say I am." We were offered a reflection on some of the names of Jesus given in Scripture. Richard's presentation was profound in its simplicity and he elaborated on the four letters that make up the sacred name of God—Y H W H. Some biblical scholars pronounce this as Yahweh. We can also pronounce the 4 sounds—Yo He Va He—essentially breathing sounds that can be used as a mantra.

Fr Ronan's talk was entitled "But true prayer travels further still"—to seek God's presence and God's will. Fr Ronan is convinced after years of searching and reading that there is no secret to prayer that can be taught. The only problem

we can have with it is not to do it. In the scriptures we learn about God, but in our prayer we get to know Him personally. Prayer leads us to surrender more and more to God, leading us into deeper and deeper communion with Him. All the way to Heaven because Jesus says "I am the way."

The programme also included quiet reflection times, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary, Reconciliation, Vespers and Benediction.

All present enjoyed lunch which was pooled and shared. People commented that it was good to give a few hours from their busy lives in order to come back to basics and spend time with God. All comments were positive and people thought the day very worthwhile with one lady from Sussex Inlet stating that she would like to see more local Retreats offered. We enjoyed meeting parishioners from our other churches and were blessed to have 3 of our priests in attendance.

A note from Bahai, Chad

Sarah Davies

I've been in Bahai now since 23 Nov where I am working for the International Rescue Committee. The IRC is an international non-Government Organisation that was founded in 1933 and it works in emergency relief, rehabilitation, protection of human rights, post-conflict development, resettlement services and advocacy for those uprooted or affected by conflict and oppression. The IRC is currently working in around 25 countries and their programs reach up to 15 million conflict-affected people each year.

Chad is the 5th largest country in Africa; it is landlocked in the central northern region surrounded by Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Sudan, Libya, Niger and Nigeria. Chad is on the edge of the Sahara so it is mostly arid semi-desert. I have had to jump straight into proposals and budgeting for next year—a little difficult when still trying to get to understand the situation. I have been taking some photos but don't have the cable at the moment to download. It's a shame because it is difficult to explain what it is really like here in words. But it is really the desert—lots of sand, all the houses constructed out of sandy mud bricks so they have the same colour as the sand. It looks as if they have just been raised up from the ground. Plenty

Sarah Davies is the daughter of Ivor and Carol Davies of Bomaderry. She has an Engineering degree in environmental management. Her task in Chad will be to oversee water and sanitation services. She is located not far from the Darfur Refugee Camp in the Sudan. One of her previous postings was on the Indonesian island of Simeulue, off the coast of Banda Aceh, the island that was devastated by the earthquake and Tsunami on 26 Dec 2004.



Photo taken when Sarah was working with the Red Cross earlier in 2007.

of camels and donkeys. We live on a staple of spaghetti, bread and rice. I'm not going hungry, but am surely not eating particularly healthily.

The hardest thing to get used to is the cold showers. It is really quite cold here at night and we have no water heating system. So, it takes a bit to psyche up to wash. Apparently in the hot weather you dream of a cold shower... hard to

imagine though at this time of year. French language is coming back but especially difficult when trying to be precise over things like budgets - this is a bit of an effort. If you misunderstand what's for dinner it's not so much of a problem—but if you misunderstand what you are talking about when getting the budget right, which you will be locked into for the next 12 months, you have to be sure of the details!

Our Parish Dinner

Peggy Luxford

On Sat 29 September—the feast of St Michael the Archangel, our parish patronal saint—over 200 parishioners made their way into our Parish Hall after the celebration of Mass to a ‘catered’ Parish Dinner. There were smiles all over the faces of the many ‘faithful workers’ (many of them now ‘age-challenged’) who, in the past had worked often (but happily) in the kitchen at so many previous functions. Not on this night: they were now sitting down to be “waited on” and they didn’t need to go near the kitchen, for all they had to do was pay their money and ‘dress up’.

During dinner, guests were entertained by delightful music provided by the Morrison family. Guest speaker Daniel Hopper, Diocesan Coordinator for World Youth Day 2008 spoke enthusiastically about the plans at so many different levels that are underway to prepare for the great celebrations.

The dinner was an unqualified success and the consensus throughout the parish is that it should be repeated. Congratulations and a special thanks to the organisers from the many grateful parishioners. Well done!

Songs of Praise

Another wonderful experience.

Francene Devoy

A feast of talent showcased our 7th concert held on 4 Sept. Performers included the choirs of St Michael’s and St John’s schools, Trilog, Food of Love, The Lydian Singers, Uniting Church, Ona Boyd Frazier, the Morrison Family and the Sooper Dooper “Kids Praising”, Kendra Murphy, Hannah Ryan, Adam Ryan, Jessica Phelps, Grace Miranda, Chloe Butler, Zoe Witenden and Imogen Frawley.

Donations of \$465 were raised on the day, which was added to by the Parish to total \$1000 which was donated to the Shoalhaven Linear Accelerator Fund.

News from Vincentia

Sr Val Green

Several of our Catechists attended the Annual Catechist’s Mass and presentation of awards at Fairy Meadow on 17 Nov 2007. We were privileged to have four children from our local State schools serve at the Mass. It is encouraging to see children from the State schools in our area committing themselves to be regular altar servers.

We now have sixteen servers including four on their “L” plates! All have completed 8 hours training and are enrolled in the *Guild of St Stephen*. As a ‘thank you’ we held our first altar Servers BBQ breakfast on Sat 1 Dec. All received a free movie ticket donated by the Visser family, who are half-owners of the Huskisson Picture theatre.

During the Christmas holiday period the Holy Spirit community will be bush selling raffle tickets, in conjunction with the Australian Triathlon competition at Huskisson. The hope is to build a hall for the Holy Spirit Community.

In recent months we expressed our sincere gratitude to a dedicated group

of ladies under the guidance of Betty Doyle who retired after many years of faithful service to floral preparation in the Church. We are in turn most appreciative to those who are prepared to come on to a new roster

Our Annual Spring Fair held on 1 Sept was very successful - 100 volunteers signed on for the day and the proceeds amounted to over \$11,000. Congratulations to all who worked to make this event such a great community day and such a great success! A thank-you BBQ was held at Erowal Bay for all who worked at the Fair—a happy & relaxed day was had by all! Thanks go to our regular BBQ’ers: Neil Noble & Ron Lowry—the sausages were cooked to perfection!

We are rounding up our activities for 2007 with a special Mass on Sat 8 Dec for the sick & infirm and their families & friends, including those who need assistance to attend the Mass, from their homes, retirement villages, nursing homes, hostels etc.

Catholic Women’s League

CWL Bay and Basin have recently had their Annual Christmas BBQ which was very well-supported. They have had several fund-raising activities over the last few months—one of which was a ‘Bottle Competition’ attended by over 50 members and friends in the grounds of Holy Spirit. There was much laughter and consumption of a delectable Devonshire tea. The group plan to have a Silver Circle, Garage Sale, etc in the coming year—proceeds of which go towards local & overseas causes.

The recently formed Branch of the CWL Nowra co-hosted the Diocesan International Day with the Bay & Basin Branch on 30 Oct at St Patrick’s, Berry. More than 100 members attended including both the Diocesan and State Presidents. Mr Charles Wood—born and raised in Paraguay—gave a very enlightening presentation on that country.

St Michael’s at Crossroads

Maree McMillan

We hosted the May meeting for Crossroads, which was a Musical Gala Night. For craft everyone had their photo taken which was scrapbooked into a wonderful frame for Mothers Day. During TAG-time we learnt a new song “Open my eyes Lord,” and Fr Richard presented a video which he had made on the Easter song “On the Third Day.”

Everyone on the night participated amazingly and had a fantastic evening. The meetings of this ecumenical support group for people with disabilities are advertised in the parish bulletin, and all are welcome to come along and join in. They are held at 7.15pm on the 2nd Friday at Nowra Baptist Church, Old Southern Rd, South Nowra.

India experience

Liz Jones

Imagine coming into land in a foreign country at around 1am, looking out the windows to see row-upon-row of shanty huts and then stepping out of the plane to be greeted by guards with rifles, thousands of bustling people and sweltering heat. Then, after managing to escape the bustle of the airport, jumping on a conspicuous tourist bus and travelling through streets lined with people sleeping, cooking and conversing. This was the first experience of the 36 member Kincoppal-Rose Bay School of the Sacred Heart music and social justice tour that went to India on Easter Sunday 2007.

The tour group, consisting of students, staff and alumnae visited four main cities in India over 12 days. All of the cities were distinctively different and presented each and every tour member with an eye-opening journey to remember for life. Some of the experiences were sad, others funny but most of the time just bewildering. There is great economical divide and a huge gap in the standard of living.

This was particularly evident in Mumbai where we went and visited the *Little Flower of Jesus School*. The school is run by the Society of the Sacred Heart and it is designed for slum children. The experience there was phenomenal. Not knowing what to expect on arrival we were greeted with the ultimate Bollywood scene: dancing, bright costumes and drumming in the street and everyone else watching the commotion going on. This then continued on as we climbed the stairs that were lined with students welcoming us and holding a plaque with our names on it. The tour of the school was very special as we sang songs and were given a run-down of their syllabus. After we visited the school we were then placed into groups of 3 or 4 and buddied up to one of the students and their families. We then went and visited their homes in the slum area. We were told that these were not the worst of living conditions and in my naivety this was one of the things that shocked me the most.

Visiting the houses was a moment that I will never forget. We weaved our way

through small, damp passage-ways past lots of people in their homes to our family's house. Here we were welcomed with some of the most generous hospitality I have ever experienced. The home had 5 people living in it; the total area would have been smaller than most dorm rooms; it had two levels. There were no electrical appliances that we could see, though many other families we saw were watching television. The bottom floor had a sink and pots: that was it. The father was at work and the daughter was the only member of her family that spoke English. They laid



out the carpets for us to sit on, yet they sat on the concrete floor; they bought us drinks, yet they had none and even though they barely have enough to survive they also gave us flowers. Their generosity towards us was by far the most overwhelming and humbling moment of the trip—how we would treat royalty they treated us and acted as if we were doing them a service visiting them—however I see them as doing us a great service.

Everywhere we went and everyone we visited were so excited about us being there and generous. I hope they knew it was mutual even though on occasion we looked like stunned-mullets as we battled with the heat and trying to digest what was happening in front of our eyes.

Rose Bay's sister school Sophia college was another point of remembrance

as we visited the SPJ Sadhana school within that complex. A school devoted to helping the mentally challenged students including many of the students who were kicked out of other schools for being too difficult. Here we were part of an experiment as we sang to some of the art students and they painted. However the part that struck me most was one student with Downes Syndrome who had been selected to speak at the youth Special Olympics. Her speech on terrorism was truly amazing and had the teachers in tears and the students silenced by the brilliance and insight presented. We continued that day on a trip out to OHM creations which was a centre for mentally challenged women and men where they made various things, from food to quilt work. This was a company that was setup to provide these people and their families who cannot continue to support them, with a safe place to work. All the people working there were very good at what they did and very happy doing it.

We didn't spend the whole time like this: we did all the tourist stuff and some shopping as well. We visited the great Taj Mahal, museums and so many forts that by the end of the trip we were 'fortified,' however the memories that struck me as most beautiful were the ones where we interacted with the people and their culture.

I was fortunate to experience the Indian culture along with my two sisters, Kate and Abbie and many of my school friends. The trip taught me a lot and made me truly grateful to be living in such a fortunate situation.

Memorial Liturgy

Jane Fleming

Congratulations to Fr Pat for the very moving liturgy he gave on Sat 3 Nov for the Memorial Liturgy for the holy souls at Worrige Memorial Chapel. It was lovely to see so many people attend. Afterwards there was a delicious morning tea and people circulated around to greet old friends again. This is a great parish event that commenced some years ago.

More than a Museum—it's a miraculous journey

Jody Le

On Saturday 10 Nov, 6 adults, 1 toddler and 2 babies from St Michael's *Young Adults Group* set out on a mini-pilgrimage in Sydney. After traveling up from Nowra, our first stop was St Mary's Cathedral where we celebrated Mass, prayed in the Cathedral and were enthused by the grand electronic countdown to WYD sign over the Cathedral entrance.

Despite predictions of a cold and rainy day, the sun blazed as we then walked 4.5km to Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney. It was a beautiful pilgrimage walk around Circular Quay, over the Sydney Harbour Bridge and through North Sydney. It was also a testing walk as we had to carry 3 loaded prams up what seemed like hundreds of old cobbled stairs through The Rocks to reach the Harbour Bridge walkway.

We were greeted at Mary MacKillop Place by a very enthusiastic Josephite sister who was delighted to meet pilgrims from Nowra and tell us about the WYD Cross and Icon that had been placed on Blessed Mary MacKillop's tomb when it first arrived in Australia in July this year.

Sister then gave us a background history to Blessed Mary MacKillop before we set off on the museum journey through her life. I had visited the museum previously and been impressed, but hearing Sister talk brought Mary MacKillop out of the history pages and become for me, a real life inspirational Catholic. The museum is a wonderful interactive experience and we all learnt so much about her life and her spirituality.

We ended our day in the chapel and spent time in prayer considering how the Lord would have us apply Mary MacKillop's vision to our own lives:

"Never see a need without doing something about it."

Special recognition for faithful service

Lyn West

The annual Diocesan Catechists' Mass was celebrated at St. John Vianney's Church, Fairy Meadow by Bishop Peter Ingham with a number of priests concelebrating, on Saturday 17 November. Fifteen Catechists from the Nowra Parish were among a very large congregation of Catechists who very actively participated in a Mass that was most prayerful and uplifting. Among our fifteen Catechists were two ladies who have recorded thirty- two years respectively as catechists in Government Schools. They are Joyce Buttell currently at Callala Bay School, and Yvonne Berringer who is a catechist at Culburra Beach School.

Each Catechist has her story to tell. Joyce was born at Crows Nest and educated by the Sisters of St Joseph at St Leonard's and Narrenburn. Her younger sister Margaret attended Primary School with Bishop Peter. Joyce studied domestic science, but chose to work as a switch-board operator, and later as a book keeper.

Joyce and her husband Ernest married at St Leonard's on November 1st 1958. Joyce began as a Catechist in Ashcroft, where she carried out the Catechetical ministry for 18 years. When Joyce and Ernest settled at Callala, Joyce became a Catechist at Culburra for 8 years; with the opening of the Callala Bay School,

Joyce transferred there some 7 years ago. Bishop Peter presented her with a life membership plaque. Her message to would-be-Catechists is simple "if you love God and love children, its easy carry out this ministry.

Yvonne Berringer was born in Sri Lanka, and attended an all girls' Methodist High School there. She worked as a commercial artist with the well know company J.W. Thompson. Though Yvonne was Anglican she began praying the Rosary with her future husband Des and his cousins. She was received into the Catholic Church prior to their marriage in 1967. Sri Lanka at the time was in the grip of serious political turmoil and so Yvonne and Des migrated to Australia in 1968. She began her Catechetical ministry in Canley Valley, a work she carried out there for 14 years. When the family moved to Orient Point twenty years ago, Yvonne resumed her work as Catechist at Culburra School in a short time. In this the year of their fortieth wedding anniversary Yvonne will also have completed 31 years as a Catechist. In fact her certificates of training are signed by Cardinal Clancy. Yvonne feely privilege and proud to have been called by God to be both a Catholic and a Catechist. Congratulation to both Joyce and Yvonne for your many years of faithful and loving service.

Special Religious Education Numbers 2007

Berry	87	Kangaroo Valley	12
Bomaderry	53	Shoalhaven Heads	50
Callala Bay	73	Terara	10
Cambewarra	46	Nowra	75
Culburra	31	St George's Basin	83
East Nowra	56	Tomerong	28
Greenwell Point	13	Sanctuary Point	80
Illaroo Rd, North Nowra	85	Vincentia	122
Judith Dr, North Nowra	40	Huskisson	24
Falls Creek	22	Total	989

St John the Evangelist High School

Jo Geer & Helen Crocco

The Reconciliation Walk

The Yarn Circle and gardens have now been completed to enable staff to conduct Aboriginal studies classes. The construction of this project has involved a spiritual journey for all. The significance of the Yarn Circle is Aboriginal people coming together to communicate and teach one another.

Totem poles and stepping stones have been an expression and interpretation of students' own investigation into Aboriginal culture and the effects that colonisation had on Aboriginal people.



Winners of the 2007 Arcadians Award for School Drama Presentation

Karen Young

Karen Young has been Principal of St John the Evangelist Catholic High School since June 2001. She will be moving to John Therry Catholic High School Campbelltown in 2008 to be Principal there. She has made many additions to the school curriculum and the school is in the process of building to accommodate the growth in the number of students. Part of her term has been dedicated to ensuring all staff, both teachers and support-staff alike, are given opportunity for Professional Development. This has seen St Johns at the forefront of technology and innovation across the Diocese. The school community thanks Ms Young for her hard work and dedication over the past six and a half years and we wish her well in the future.



Ms Young will be replaced by Mr Neil McCann, who is well known to the school community as he served some time as our Assistant Principal and comes to us from Corpus Christi High School at Oak Flats.

St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hampers

Each year St John's undertakes a unique project as part of our Social Justice Project: *St Vincent de Paul Christmas Hampers*. During Term 4, students, parents and teachers of our school community give generously: a steady flow of items are collected in order to supply 40 families from the district with a Christmas Hamper. For some families in our midst, these are hard economic times. Having this awareness, our school believes it can make a difference: the least we can do as a community is to rally together to provide a little Christmas cheer and joy to these struggling families.

Serving this noble cause means giving selflessly: this is done through the act of providing resources on a school level.

Following the collection of items, an enthusiastic team gets to work devoting their time and energy to prepare and pack the hampers for ready distribution. All of these students have actually set aside the chance to go on camp or some other activity in order to engage in this task! This is a truly a fine application of the core values central to our school.

We at St John's are proud of the connections we have with the needy of our community. We believe this is a worthy project that is designed to bring some happiness to the silent, but needy clients who rely on St Vincent de Paul at Christmas.

We wish all parishioners a happy, blessed and joy-filled Christmas.

world youth day sydney 2008

On 15 Nov, Bishop Peter Ingham and members of the World Youth Day staff from Wollongong met with business, civil and community leaders from across the Shoalhaven at the Nowra School of Arts to launch an awareness of World Youth Day 2008. The meeting provided a great opportunity to network with representatives from a wide range of groups, and continues the amazing work that is being done as the Diocese prepares for WYD in 2008.

(Left-right) Bishop Peter, Amanda Lloyd (Parish WYD Coordinator), Andres Ramos (St John's WYD Coordinator) & Fr Richard at the Community Leader's Forum.



world youth day 2008 - in the shoalhaven!

What's it all about?

World Youth Day (WYD08) is more than a week of events for youth and young adults. While it gathers thousands of young people from around the world to celebrate and learn about the Catholic faith and to build bridges of friendship and hope between continents, peoples and cultures, it also includes 2 main events that will directly impact our Parish.

Who's it for?

The main target audience for World Youth Day is youth and young adults aged between 16-35 years. But WYD is an event for the whole church. Single people, families, clergy, religious, interfaith groups will all participate. We are encouraging the entire Catholic community of young and young-at-heart in the Diocese of Wollongong to become involved in our lead-up events prior to July 2008. All are welcome.

Journey of the Cross & Icon

A highlight of our lead up towards WYD will be the **Journey of the Cross and Icon** across the Diocese from 24 March to 5 April 2008. Not unlike the Olympic Torch Relay that preceded the Sydney Olympic Games, these symbols of faith have been travelling since 1 July 2007 all around Australia. The Cross and Icon will travel through our Parish over 3 days:

- On **Sat 29 March**, they will stop briefly in Kangaroo Valley (from 5pm - 7pm) on their way to Ulladulla.
- At 6pm on **Sun 30 March**, the *Cross and Icon* will arrive (hopefully by Navy helicopter) at the oval at St John's High School for a large outdoor Mass and youth festival, which will feature live bands, drama and sharings. The festival will continue with an all-night vigil in the School Chapel.
- At dawn on **Mon 31 March**, the *Cross and Icon* will be taken by road to Hanging Rock Lookout (near Ben's Walk) for a simple service reminding us that Jesus Christ is the light of our lives.

- Around 9am, the *Cross and Icon* will begin a procession through the streets of Nowra, from Marriott Park along Kinghorne and Junction Streets to St Michael's School and Parish centre. Early in the afternoon, the *Cross and Icon* will again be taken in procession, down to the River and then across the Shoalhaven Bridge to Bolong Road and the Bomaderry Homes (the memorial to the Stolen Generation) and the handover to Kiama Parish (3pm).

These days will provide many opportunities for celebration, prayer and witnessing Christ's love for humanity. Join in as it passes your way.

- **Light of the Cross Festival:** 4 April 2008 – Massive evening festival as part of the JCI program.

Days in the Diocese

From 10-14 July 2008, some 2,000 international youth will experience HomeStay accommodation with families from across our Diocese. Given the natural beauty of the Shoalhaven region, we will be hosting from 500-700 pilgrims. *That's a lot of beds!*

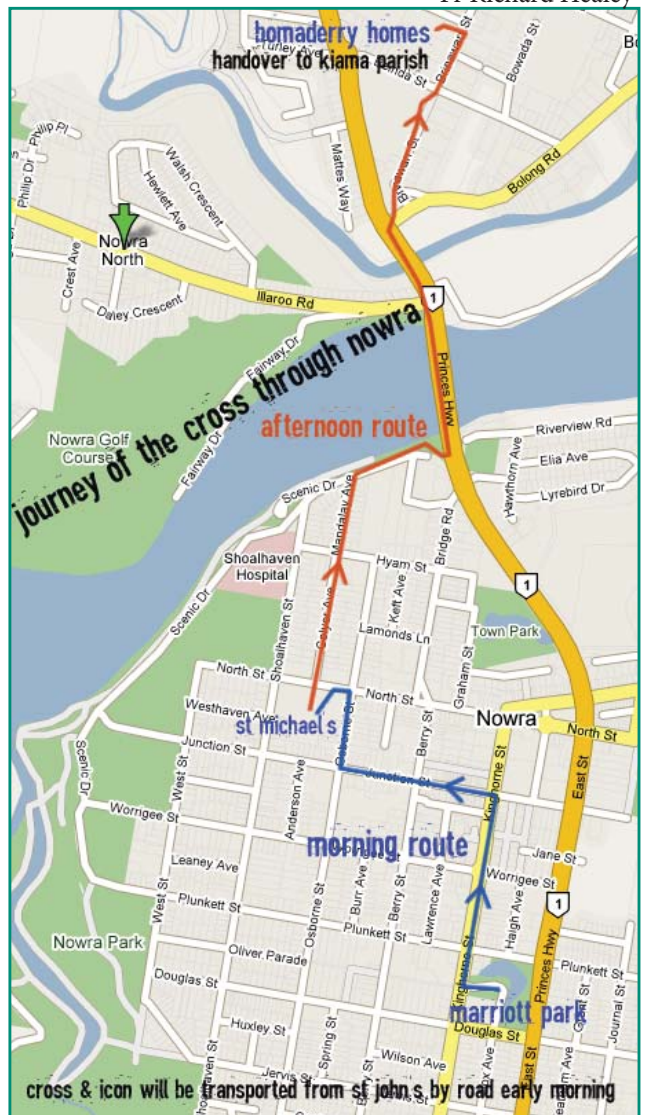
Pilgrims and locals will enjoy a number of activities in the true spirit of Australian hospitality. Most of the events during Days in the Diocese will be local, to give international pilgrims an experience of the true Australia.

How can I get involved?

There are many ways people can get involved by sharing their time, talent and treasure with WYD08 preparations right now. *You are very welcome.*

- Join the **Nowra WYD08 team** and help plan local events. Contact **Amanda Lloyd**, our Parish Coordinator—email

Fr Richard Healey



wyd08@nowraparish.org.au—or call her at St Michael's School.

- Become a **HomeStay Coordinator** or a **HomeStay Host** to assist our parish in undertaking the Days in the Diocese in July.
- Give a **WYD pilgrim registration** to a family member, friend, or parishioner for Christmas.

WYD08 Week in Sydney

15-20 July 2008 – Six days of celebration in Sydney with thousands of pilgrims, including an Opening Mass of welcome to Pope Benedict XVI as well as a mixture of catechesis (teaching), creative forums, seminars, concerts, speakers, opportunities for service and prayer, a Way of the Cross walk through the Sydney CBD culminating with a vigil and Closing Mass with His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI at Randwick Racecourse.

Christmas holidays timetable - Nowra Parish

Mass times for the Christmas Season 2007

CHRISTMAS EVE - VIGIL MASSES *Monday 24 December*

Nowra	7.00pm
Culburra	6.00pm
Vincentia	6.00pm & 10.00pm
Kangaroo Valley	9.00pm
Berry	9.00pm
Shoalhaven Heads*	6.00pm

CHRISTMAS MIDNIGHT MASS

Nowra	12.00 midnight
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CHRISTMAS DAY *Tuesday 25 December*

Nowra	8.00am & 9.30am
Berry	8.00am
Bomaderry	9.30am
Culburra	8.00am
Vincentia.....	8.00am & 9.30am

Please note: There is no evening Mass on Christmas Day - Tuesday 25 December

SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION

St Michael's, Nowra

Wednesday 19 December – 7.00pm

Summer Mass Timetable

Saturday 29 December 2007 - Sunday 27 January 2008

Vigil Masses (Saturday)

Nowra.....	6.00pm
Culburra	6.00pm
Vincentia.....	6.00pm
Shoalhaven Heads*	6.00pm

Sunday Masses

Nowra.....	8.00am, 9.30am & 6.00pm
Berry.....	8.00am
Bomaderry.....	9.30am
Culburra.....	8.00am
Vincentia.....	8.00am & 9.30am
Kangaroo Valley.....	11.00am

* Shoalhaven Heads Community Centre

...continued from front page

No candles this Christmas

In the meantime there are no confessions (time will not allow such luxuries) so Father gives general absolution. The troops are arriving in dribs and drabs—looking not unlike drowned rats, they stand around until Father (he looks like a drowned rat also) goes into action. Two chaps hold a groundsheet over him in some sort of fashion trying to keep him not so wet. Another with a large banana leaf trying to shelter the “altar” Some of the troops are standing and some kneeling in mud which nearly goes up to the top of their legs. Try it sometime! Their guns beside them being kept from the mud if possible while someone hums Holy Night very softly (they don’t want “you know who” to hear). They simply trust that the rain will keep it that way.

Father mumbles away in Latin—he can’t be heard anyway. Just short of the elevation a burst of gunfire a little way off spoils the concentration for a few minutes, but it comes back soon enough (along with the leaches), after all it is Christmas.

Communion is rather untidy—it’s hard to keep the host completely dry.

Mass finishes and the troops return to places where it does not feel like Christmas whatsoever. Father is back on duty looking out for the wounded. The rest have had their midnight mass!—even if it was about eight o’clock in the evening, in the darkness with only a torch heavily covered by a pair of digger’s hands for Father to read by. After all it might be Christmas but they don’t want “you know who” to see any light the Christmas feeling was with them for a little while but something besides home was missing—there were no candles that Christmas!



P.S. Father Con Reis joined his fallen comrades on 20 September 2006—a super Chaplain, a wonderful priest, God’s representative on the front-line. Well done!

Parish Clergy:

Fr Pat J Faherty (Parish Priest, Nowra)

Fr Richard Healey (Assistant Priest, Nowra)

Fr Ronan Kilgannon (resident in Kangaroo Valley)

Fr Leo Duck (Assistant Priest, resident in Vincentia)

In case of sudden or serious illness please do not hesitate to call a Priest at any time.

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