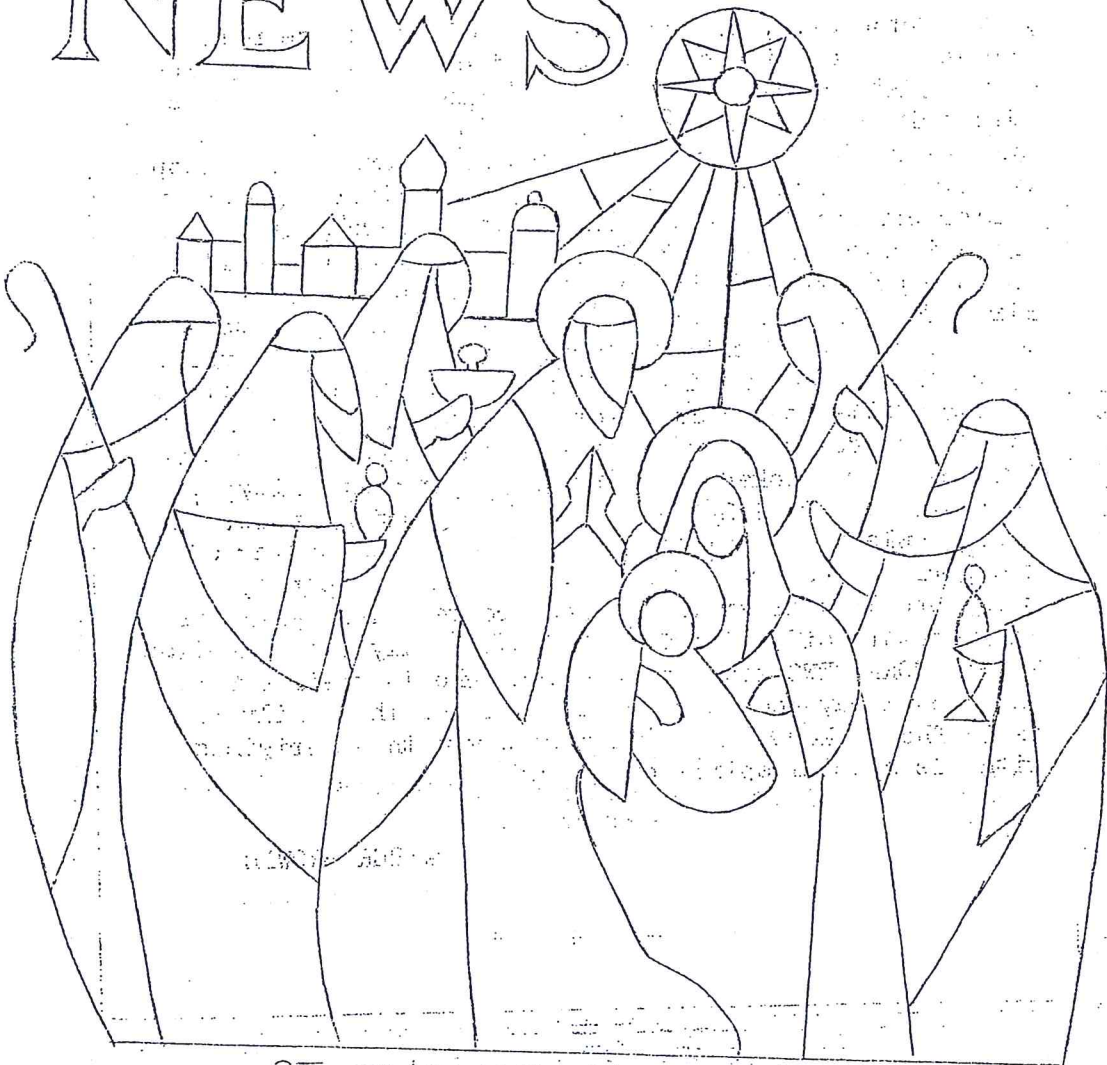


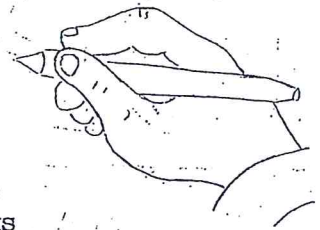
# MORE NEWS

8



ST THOMAS - MORE PARISH  
DECEMBER 1987

Christmas is a time when we must give thanks to God for His many blessings to us, individually and to our families during the year of 1987. I am sure each of us has a particular incident in 1987 that we can recall that we must offer thanks to God for.



As a parish we, too, must offer thanks to those many people who contribute so much to the life of the parish, such as the people who take their place in the various ministries in the liturgy; the ministers of the Eucharist and the word, the altar boys, the musicians; those people who prepare our Sunday liturgy and the liturgies for our senior citizens and our children; the church cleaners; those involved in the Catholic education of our children and who prepare the children for the reception of their First Communion and Reconciliation; and who take the various groups of children around the parish. As well, there are groups who look after the Catholic education of our adults; the Marian Mothers groups, Prayer groups and Young Adults group. The everyday needs of our parishioners are looked after by the Caring Community, the St Vincent de Paul Society, and the Visiting Group. Many people are involved in the day-to-day running of the parish - our ground staff, maintenance people, those who look after the various rosters for the parish, the monetary side of things and the weekly mass sheets. To the MORE NEWS team and everyone who in their own individual way does so much to build up the family that is St Thomas More - may God reward you this Christmas with His special spirit of Joy and Peace.

FATHER BROWNE

# P

# arish

# a t t e r

WE'RE SKITING! This year is the first year since MORE NEWS was first printed in February 1980 that we have had six issues out in the one year! Many thanks to the team of CAROL MCGRIDGE and KEVIN and MOYA ECCQUARD who do such a great job of producing it. My special thanks to the regular contributors, who give me the incentive to get it all together, and you, the readers, who pass on your valuable comments and criticisms. With this edition, we say goodbye to WIKKI, who has grown up now, and won't be doing the Children's Page any more. Thanks, Nikki, for all your hard work.

We'd love it to be even more successful next year, and with parishioner participation it can be. Please remember, I don't have a roving reporter, so letting me know about your group's happenings, thoughts on parish life, your letters or favourite prayers, is invaluable to me.

With all good wishes for a happy and holy Christmas, and a relaxing, carefree holiday season.

The Editor

\* \* \* \* \*

## PEARLS OF WISDOM

Have you ever looked at diamonds,  
or admired the glow of pearls?

If an oyster has a problem  
when sands gets in its shell

Then it covers it with beauty  
and it makes a pearl as well.

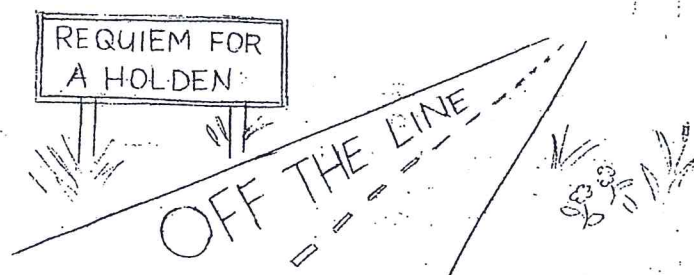
And a worthless lump of carbon  
Hidden deep beneath the earth

Changes form because of pressure  
And a diamond is given birth.

Without problems, without pressure  
They'd both have been sand or coal.

Let us be thankful that our problems  
Help to make a lovely soul.

- Bouquet, Pokeno



The old girl arrived as suddenly as she departed. The Morris Oxford gave up the ghost, and I needed transport by 10 pm the next day. It had already been decided that the next car we owned was going to be a Holden Stationwagon. (The family had grown from one to five since we bought the last one.) My husband arrived home at 5 pm with it, and in pouring rain, having never driven such a monster before, I was off.

Already twelve years old when we acquired it in 1976, we delighted in its flashy features - indicators that blinked, rather than stuck out, self-locking ignition, the powerful engine, but most of all, the room. We revelled in accommodating the children with ease. Pushchairs and pets were loaded in the back, along with all the paraphernalia that goes with a family of seven.

Ours was the car that was safe to cross the harbour bridge in in gale force winds - as solid as a rock - not like the fancy tin stuff that was flooding the market by then.

Our parish was Glenfield, where we attended Mass in the school hall. The ceremonies in those days had a different flavour - seats to be set out beforehand, make-do altars, and accessories. and on Holy Thursday, the Blessed Sacrament had to be transported back to the presbytery by car. Two or three years, we had this honour, and never did the old girl get such a clean and polish as she did for those occasions.

Our sixth baby arrived, but crowding was never a problem. On camping holidays we placed two foam squabs in the back, and the two littlies had the warmest, driest beds of all. It was also the baby who, at 18 months of age, let the handbrake off, and set the car in motion down the drive and then down the road, until halfway down, it veered onto the footpath and knocked down a concrete lamp post. Baby was removed, unhurt, and the Holden was simply driven back home.

The new bonnet wasn't the same shade of blue, and we never did get around to a repaint job, but it just made it more unique, somehow.

In later years, with its rusty patch cut out, and replaced with a strip of aluminium, it acquired a mana of its own. The three oldest children, by now, had all learnt to drive in it, and our Holden was THE car to be driven around in. The teenagers reckoned there was nothing quite like it around - and they were right!

In recent times, with a second car to do the day-to-day running around in, the Holden became the work horse. By now, the boys were into sailing, which saw it trailing boats in summer, while in winter, the dirtiest football kids were made to sit in the back. She grew old and tired but never failed to fly through the W.O.F. test. Just as well - with a family our size, retirement was out of the question!

Then, one Thursday night last month, one of the kids went shopping. With nothing more on her mind than buying a birthday present for her best friend, the 'Golden Holden' and she were off. When she returned to the car park to come home, the car had gone.

Nobody talked about it much - but every time the phone rang, we wondered if it had been found. Family rang - any news? At first we were sure it would turn up - it can only have been taken by joy-riders, couldn't it? But the call on Saturday told us the worst. The offender had been caught, but couldn't say where the car was. It's funny, but we didn't want a culprit - just the car.

She's gone now. Oh, we have reminders - the oil patch on the concrete - the dent in the letterbox - the trailer with nothing to hook onto. In the meantime, a family grieves for an old friend - not worth much in monetary terms, but an irreplaceable part of our life.

CLARE RUSSELL

+ + + + +

#### WHAT YOU GET

"What is the difference between results and consequences?" the teacher asked a bright student. The youngster answered: "Results are what you expect; consequences are what you get."

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

May I extend my sincere thanks to all those who worked hard for the recent Fair. We had a reasonable day weather wise but it was disappointing to see the lack of interest from the buyers. The parish did not give good support to the Fair and that is disappointing. Where were all the men of the parish? - on observation the ladies out-numbered the men by 4 to 1.

Do I sense a mass exodus to the golf course as rugby was not to blame because the game didn't start until 3 pm.

Whatever your reasons please remember it's our annual parish fundraiser and you are needed.

To all those who won raffles and prizes, congratulations, and once again to all who were involved, you did a great job.

God Bless you all.

Norman Price

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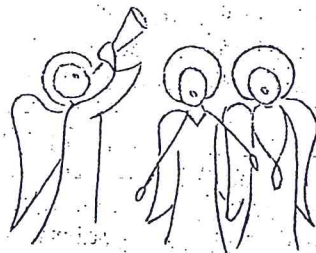
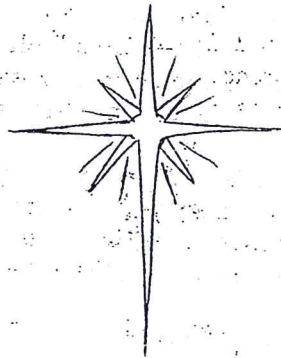
Apathy is our  
most serious  
problem today

But who cares?

# The Innkeeper's Wife

Poor lass, poor lass,  
Yes, I know what you feel,  
It's all of it dreamlike,  
It's none of it real,  
And you far from home  
And your mother not by,  
But we'll do our best for you  
So be brave, girl, don't cry.  
Your first is it now  
To fill arms and heart?  
Rest easy, my lovely,  
It's not long from the start.  
What me? bless you, love,  
Six I've had, three I lost,  
All fine, so I thought,  
But the pain that they cost  
Was greater than birth pain.  
But rest now,  
Your son will be strong  
And love you I vow,  
And no sorrow cause you,  
Though they all bring you some  
There love, loose my hand now,  
Your baby has come.  
Here take him and kiss him  
And welcome him dear,  
I'll call in your man  
Then he'll know his son's here ...

Why mercy, what's this?  
The whole sky on fire,  
And who are these coming  
Down the hill to our lyre?  
Lord, lord, they are angels,  
Some shepherds, a king!  
Oh, maiden, who are you  
And who do you bring?  
And what have you borne  
That makes my heart sing?  
Look, look, he is smiling  
And waving his hand,  
Don't crowd him - he's newborn,  
Oh, isn't he grand!



### A SPECIAL ORDINATION

It is now two years since "our" Seminarian Mark Chamberlain was ordained in his parish church. One of our new parishioners, Catherine Hishon, was present at the ceremony. She shares her thoughts with us in this article.

Last December I was very privileged and honoured to be able to attend the ordination of Fr Mark Chamberlain. I had worked with one of Mark's sisters for a few years and my husband's family had lived in the same area and also been friends with Mark's family for many years.

Mark's ordination was celebrated in his home parish of Saint Peter and Paul in Nightcaps, a small farming and coal mining community. The parish was extremely excited and proud to have the ordination in their church as they are normally celebrated in the cathedral. Another reason why it was to be such a special occasion was that Bishop Boyle had also been born and raised in the Nightcaps area.

The evening of Mark's ordination was very warm. There was a huge gathering of both Catholics and non-Catholics. Many people had to stand around the walls, in the foyer and outside the large church.

Being a non-Catholic at that time I was quite ignorant and nervous at the thought of attending my first Mass and an ordination; and I felt very unprepared. I needn't have been so up-tight!

When we entered the church I felt very much at ease and uplifted. For the first time I really felt God's presence. It was so intense I remember thinking that if I looked into the corners of the church long enough I would surely see Our Lord standing there watching this very spiritual occasion. There were many many priests and ministers of different denominations present and when they came forward for the "laying on of hands" it really felt as if I too was carried forward to lay my hands upon Mark. It was all very emotional and I was among many in the church with tear-filled eyes and a saturated handkerchief! The hymns were truly beautiful and seemed to be written for this particular occasion.

After the Mass we were all invited to a celebration in the hall. This also was a very special experience. Everyone seemed to have

continued on P. 23





# Stressed? read on...

Dr Peter Evans, a psychiatrist at the Austin Hospital and The Melbourne Clinic at Richmond, had this to say about STRESS when he spoke to an appreciative audience at Immaculate Conception Church, Hawthorn in Australia:

STRESS is a much-used and mis-used term.

Without defining it, we are familiar with it as an outside pressure causing our body to react in a certain way to meet that stress. It is a 'fight-or-flight' mechanism of the body to increase our performance in dealing with the danger that meets us. As such it has an important function to perform. Our civilisation makes the effects of stress more obvious. In addition, things like a threat to one's job, financial insecurity, illness or injury can further place burdens and increase stress.

Stress can show itself as irritability or sleeplessness, giving rise to indigestion and vague physical symptoms that have no recognisable medical pattern.

## Twelve Ways of Dealing with Stress

1. TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT IT if it is a particular problem. This will defuse the stress response.
2. DON'T BE AFRAID TO ESCAPE SOMETIMES. Get away from it for awhile.
3. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY can often work it off.
4. BE PREPARED TO GIVE IN OCCASIONALLY if the stressed situation is with a particular person, unless you are sure of the need to up-hold the truth on this occasion.
5. TAKE ONE THING AT A TIME. Live the present moment. Attend to the present thing, leave the others. The mind can cope with only one problem at a time.
6. RATION YOUR WORRYING. If a worrier, don't be afraid to set aside a small amount of time (10 to 15 minutes) and worry! Then STOP and don't do any more. Be strict on yourself. This is more efficient than worrying all the time. If you have a problem, you may need this 10 to 15 minutes daily. People who are grieving may need to talk over it for a short time. We see this happening with people three years after the bush fires.

7. DON'T TRY TO BE PERFECT. Behave as a reasonable being. In the British legal system, the criterion is whether the person behaved in a reasonable way, not whether he behaved in a perfect way.
8. DON'T BE TOO CRITICAL OF OTHERS. Everyone has faults and difficulties. Criticism may come from low self esteem. Stress will diminish in us if we are accepting, and judge others gently, and not harshly.
9. DON'T BE OVER COMPETITIVE. We live in a competitive world and some competitiveness is inevitable. But it is a source of stress. It pays to be co-operative rather than competitive.
10. BE PREPARED TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE in a tense situation with another. If you reach out in an accepting way, stress and tension will be diminished.
11. BE ABLE TO ENJOY YOURSELF. Have fun, do relaxing and enjoyable activities.
12. DIET. Avoid excessive coffee, alcohol and smoking.

#### A Simple Technique for Tuning Out and Relaxing

When anxious and stressed, we sigh. This is the body's own mechanism to reduce tension and all the techniques capitalise on the natural mechanism of sighing. So being able to sigh is an important way of reducing tension.

Take a deep breath in and hold it. Then let go as though you were sighing. Nobody would ever know; that is why you can do it in a tram, train or church! Keep on sighing in that way - breathing out very slowly - but in a way that is not forced. Keep this up for 10 to 15 minutes.

A feeling of tranquillity comes over you.

While sighing, there is something else you can add:

Relax toes in shoes for example. Then press down into the seat you are sitting on, then relax, press elbows out into the arms of your chair, then relax ... The mind will feel clearer.

Immediately going out into a stressful world, your stress level will go up again, so take an occasional sigh along the way.

This will prevent you from generating more energy than you need to perform the task in front of you.

Reprinted from "Madonna"

# Kids' Page



HELLO EVERYONE,

Hands up those who just can't wait for the holidays and Christmas! Of course you all know that the reason we celebrate Christmas is because it's the day Jesus was born in the stable at Bethlehem.

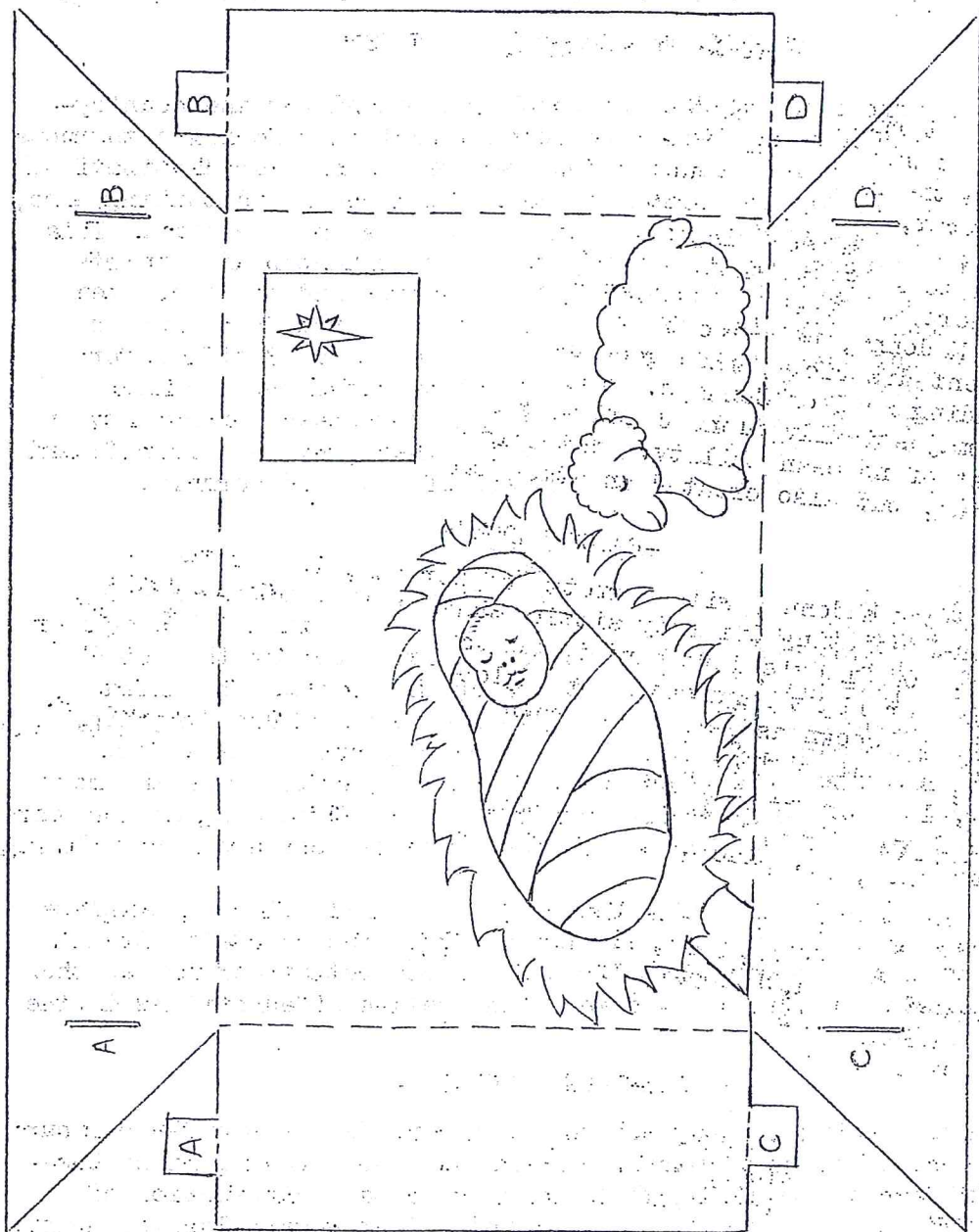
We are so busy thinking of all the good things which happen at Christmas time, that we sometimes forget some people loved Jesus so much that they died for him. St Stephen was one of these people, and his feast day is on December 26th, the very next day after Christmas (the one we call Boxing Day). Here is the story about him:

Stephen loved Jesus very much. He worked hard for the poor. He told everyone that Christ was their Saviour. So many people followed him. They listened while he spoke, for his eyes were bright with love for Jesus. And he spoke beautifully of what Jesus had taught and done. One day the enemies of Jesus said, "We must stop this man. We killed Jesus, but this Stephen still makes others believe in Jesus. We must kill him too."

First they ordered him to stop preaching. He laughed. He could not stop talking about the Saviour he loved. So they caught him. They dragged him outside the city. He told them that Jesus was not dead but had ascended into heaven. Angrily, they picked up rocks. They flung them at Stephen. He fell dead. But first he saw Jesus coming to take him. He was the first Martyr.

This stable is for you to make for under the Christmas tree or to put on the mantelpiece. It would probably be best if you trace it off onto thicker paper - if you are going to cut this one out, make sure to ask Mum and Dad first if they've finished reading the back of it!

Hope you have a HAPPY CHRISTMAS and a great holiday.



1. Cut around outline.
2. Colour in
3. Bend on dotted lines.
4. Fit tabs into slots
5. Fold tabs down and stick.

DEC. 1981  
A PILGRIM'S JOURNEY TO THE HOLY LAND  
"AROUND THE WORLD IN 42 DAYS"

In the afternoon we boarded the coach and headed for the countryside. It was not long before we found ourselves climbing a tortuous road up the side of a mountain and when we reached our destination, Montserrat, we were surprised to find a huge concreted parking area, capable of accommodating many buses as well as private cars. This seemed to indicate that, not only did a great number of tourists call here to visit the Monastery, the Basilica and the venerated Black Madonna, but also that the local people from Barcelona and adjacent districts, made good use of the beautiful Basilica for attending Mass on Sundays. The colourings inside the Basilica were majestically blended and must surely have been arranged by an artist of no mean ability. Not only did they provide a magnificent setting, but also created an atmosphere of love and worship.

-BLACK MADONNA -

The Black Madonna, with a grotto of her own, is a rather large statue depicting Our Lady sitting down with the Child Jesus on her knee. Our Lady's left hand is portrayed as steadying the child while her right hand embraces a globe of the world. The Child Jesus is shown as wearing a crown, to remind us of His Kingship, and with His right hand raised as though imparting a blessing. However, I am of the opinion that, for the majority of us the most unusual feature would be that both Mother and Child are, as the very names implies, black-skinned and their garments coloured accordingly.

Our second surprise was the discovery of a small village, complete with post office, and hall, squatting inside the mountain itself. I must record, however, that I received much better service at the post office than I had from some of the well-staffed offices in the larger cities.

- CHAMPAGNE EVENING -

As we were heading for Lourdes the following day we rounded off our stay in Barcelona by attending a Flamenco dance evening with champagne drinks in a building that appeared to be a combination of Concert Hall/Restaurant. The stage and audience were located downstairs while those enjoying food or drink, and still watching the show, being catered for upstairs. The dancers put on a really

stunning performance and with the help of the drinks we voted the evening an outstanding success. Just to add to the excitement the coach driver lost his way and took us here, there, and everywhere all around the city. Eventually, much to his disgust, annoyance and some shame he was obliged to employ a taxi-cab to guide us to our destination - hotel.

- TRAVELLERS' WOES -

At 8 am on Wednesday, 18 June, we commenced our day's journey to Lourdes, a place to which we had all looked forward to visiting with joy and expectancy. While it was a beautiful warm day the trip was quite uneventful and the countryside less than inspiring. The ground for the most part appeared to be rocky, dry and arid, with small patches of cultivation here and there and the odd dwelling to keep them company. We arrived at the hotel in Lourdes at 7.45 pm and went straight into dinner. It was while we were enjoying our meal that we learnt the rather distressing news that one of our party had lost her wallet the day before, and along with it had gone all her money and travellers' cheques. However, it transpired that she had taken out insurance and so, despite the shock and inconvenience, the horizon was not as dark as it could have been.

- THE LOURDES GROTTTO -

Before detailing our visit to the Grotto, perhaps it may not be inappropriate to recall some of the facts relating to Lourdes. Until the second half of the 19th century it was just a village situated at the foot of the Central Pyrenees. Between 11 February and 16 July 1858 in a grotto in the village the Blessed Virgin made eighteen appearances to a young peasant girl named Bernadette Soubirous. (In 1953 she was canonized as Saint Bernadette). During Our Lady's appearances a spring developed and it has been proved beyond all doubt that the water therefrom has effected many miraculous cures. The claims of all such happenings are examined by a Medical Bureau consisting of a permanent president and a panel of doctors (of any nationality or religious persuasion) who may happen to be in Lourdes and who have registered their names with the Bureau.

Lourdes has now developed into a town of some 25,000 people.

In our next instalment we shall commence our journey to Paris via Bordeaux.

God Bless you all.

"Katrina Rose"

## A Builder's Story

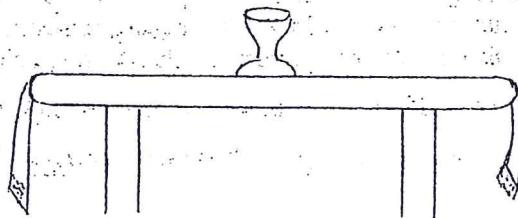
It is not often that I am moved by a deep sense of responsibility when given another job to do. I have been in the building trade for over 30 years now, working on churches, schools and housing for our priests and nuns. My tasks have been varied and some very interesting, but never have my inner most feelings been moved until recently when I was asked to carry out an alteration to an altar.

Made of solid kauri, rich in character, the altar had a sense of deep hidden history when I first saw it. In the days when the mass was said in Latin and the priest faced away from you, the altar was almost a misfit in today's mass. The task was to reduce the length by a metre to one point two metres and to reduce the height by one hundred and twenty five millimetres without altering the character. The altar stone was still set in the top so it was a case of reducing both ends and keep the stone centre. I pondered many thoughts during the working on this altar. How many times had holy mass been celebrated on this piece of kauri? How many souls had gone to see their maker?

Built by a master craftsman this piece of work was glued and screwed everywhere, even the joints were dowelled. Remembering of course this was all done by hand, all was revealed when the inner side of a facing had a signature 'J. Avery 15th December, 1905'. Carefully this piece was returned to the altar, hidden inside for maybe another hundred years. Proudly the altar now stands as a useful piece of history being able to have holy mass celebrated again. In a changing world I felt a deep sense of responsibility to retain the past and yet adapt this work into a practical altar in today's celebration of the last supper.

I felt very humble alongside J. Avery, but my name too was signed and dated for the future.

Norman Price





OUT OF THE MOUTHS ...

This happened in Seoul, Korea:

In the last few days of the run-up to Christmas Day the Sisters in a city parish had made and decorated the crib for the parish church. By the afternoon of Christmas Eve all the figures were in place except for the Christ Child. Just before Midnight Mass began the Christ Child was taken in procession and placed in the manger.

That night, following Midnight Mass, and again following the Christmas Day Masses, the usual number of devout adults and curious children came to pray before the crib. In the quiet time of the mid-afternoon a visitor to the Blessed Sacrament stopped by the crib to say a prayer. Consternation! The alarm was sounded and soon the bamboo radio was broadcasting the news to the whole neighbourhood. The figure of the Christ Child was gone from the crib.

The parish priest, the sisters, the parishioners began with the right questions. Since the last morning Mass who had been seen entering the church? Word was soon passed to the priests. Four-years-old Ignatius Pak was seen riding around the local streets with the Christ Child lying on a small cushion in the dickey seat of his car.

When challenged, Ignatius was more than a little puzzled by all the excitement. His simple explanation was enough "I wanted a car so badly for Christmas" he said "I promised Baby Jesus that if he made Mommy and Daddy give me one I would give him a ride around the streets of Seoul." What a fuss grown ups make!

It makes you think. When I go out in my car do I take Jesus with me? My invitation could make His day.

Taken from "The Far East"  
December 1986

\* \* \* \* \*

Those who pray for a million dollars would get better results if they prayed for a strong back and a good pair of hands.

# A LITTLE BIT MORE NEWS

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S OUTREACH

A meeting for our young people was held at the home of Judith and Ron Gillan on 22 October. All those in attendance were thrilled with the number of people all with keen ideas for activities for 1988.

Ten parents showed their firm backing for our young people but let the twelve or so teens share their thoughts and ideas of what they would like to do. Top on the list of ideas was a weekend retreat and that was agreed on as a great beginning. Other ideas for discussion were:

Life around us - Getting together on 'our' ground - How God speaks to us today.

Maybe a mass planned by them sitting on cushions in front of the altar. We closed with a prayer, with another meeting planned for 10 December. This is to be held at:

29 ANTHENA DRIVE (off Sunset Road), 7.30 PM  
Everyone Welcome

Any enquiries to:

Sheila Baker 444-5320 or Judith Gillan 444-5705

## LADIES VISITING GROUP

As the year draws to a close and we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, the Ladies Visiting Group looks back on the 'goings and comings' which have taken place. We lost four of our members, two having made their homes in others parishes, one through illness and another for family reasons. Unfortunately we have not been blest with any replacements. Others have been on lengthy overseas visits.

We welcomed Jo Hughes back with open arms recently from six months in Germany and the U.K., and we look forward to Heather Dekker's return from Holland early in the New Year. Elma Taylor returns early December from a month's holiday in the U.S. In spite of all this, we manage to keep going albeit on a 'wing' and a 'prayer', mainly the latter.

Continued opposite ...

## Hospitality - is it practised in Glenfield?

Do you care enough to greet a stranger?  
Do you want to know them more?  
Do you smile and say 'You're welcome'?  
Or dash straight for the door?

Quite a few of us feel that there is plenty of the last mentioned happening, and not enough of the first. We know that years ago, when we met in a school hall, for Mass, the people were friendlier, and a beautiful spirit of community prevailed.

Through the Renew small groups and many individual comments, we are getting the message that we, as a people, are changing. Or are we? Once our church was built, many people who previously did not attend Mass in Glenfield, joined us, and at the same time, Glenfield as a parish continued to grow rapidly. Now, we actually have many visitors to our parish, especially over the summer months. It was inevitable that our community would change.

Practising hospitality is basic to our Catholic faith, and sometimes, when the numbers grow too big for us to know each other individually, we have to do something about it in a more organised way. That is why, at each Mass celebrated in our parish from now on, we hope to have one of the readers greet the people at the beginning of Mass with a welcome, and invite new parishioners to meet one of the readers or special ministers in the church porch afterwards. The reason these people were chosen is simply one of convenience - they already operate on a roster system, and they can be recognised by anyone new. Eventually, we would like to draw up a 'hospitality' roster. Any takers? It's over to you, St Thomas More parishioners.

Contact - Clare Russell

continued from previous page ...

Thanks to all those kind people who helped us in numerous ways throughout the year, also to those who offered help and may not as yet have been approached. We wish you and all our fellow parishioners a Holy, Happy and Peaceful Christmas. May God Bless you all.

Ladies Visiting Group

LETTER FROM FIONA

We continue with further extracts from Fiona's letter as she travels through Zaire, Africa ...

22nd Nov. A Zairean traffic jam!! A stuck truck in a deep road cutting, seven trucks (at last count!) coming towards us, and nine (in front of us) going the same way (including the English land-rover we met in Bumba, and a Danish one). Well, we had to camp there that night! About ten people slept in the truck, but we cleared a space in the bamboo grove and pitched ours there. Nothing like being snug in a tent while the rain lashes down. Needless to say the road turned into a river/bog, but luckily the water subsided next day. Got a photo of breakfast cooking on the road with everyone helping. That morning the Africans decided to put in a concerted effort to get out -- bailed out lots of water, filled the hole in etc. A real change in attitude from the previous evening when they were all drinking, yacking, cooking manioc and meat, etc. We gave them our sandmats and 24 hours later we got our truck through. A 24-hour experience that is truly Zaire -- glad it took no longer, but also glad it happened (and hope it doesn't again!).

23rd Stayed in the grounds of a Protestant mission in Titule, run by a NZ nurse who has been there since 1953. Unfortunately I couldn't talk to her as Dan and I were cooking. Dan had a bad cut on his foot and couldn't walk very well so I had to do nearly everything! Had peanut roast (from Taihoa Sth flatting days), rice and veges in sauce. For breakfast (amidst pouring rain) crunchy oat-meal cake, which I cooked the night before, topped by stewed fruit (pineapples, bananas and pawpaw) and rice pudding. Yum, and we got 10/10.

The next day was a national public holiday -- nothing was happening so we just travelled. At camp that night one of the locals turned up with a really hick home-made rifle complete with home-made cartridges. No wonder the Belgian army man said that the animals were safer than the hunters!!

We will continue Fiona's letter as space allows ... Editor

From a Dutch parishioner...

### C H R I S T M A S !    W H E N   I   W A S   Y O U N G

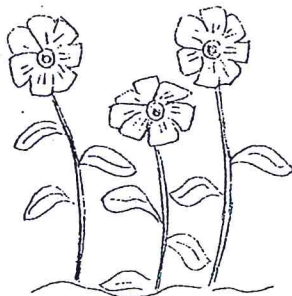
Christmas when I was young was quite a different experience from now. To begin with the weather on the other side of the world is always cold, very cold, at that time of year. Snow is quite likely. Secondly, Christmas was not the time for presents, they came much earlier in December on the feast of St Nicolas. So Christmas was purely a religious feast which for us children was very special because it was the only day in the year that we were allowed up at midnight and beyond. Part of this celebration I missed very much for many years here in New Zealand and that was the family Christmas breakfast at around 2 o'clock in the morning after Midnight Mass. Mum would prepare the table in the evening, making sure she accounted for everyone as we always had visiting aunts and uncles as well as our own family of five children. The table would be decorated with red ribbon and holly and piled up with typical Dutch delicacies (roast dinners were unknown in Holland). The atmosphere was always full of joy and fun.

The Mass itself, in our church about the size of St Patrick's Cathedral, was always beautiful with lots of singing, much of it Gregorian chant. As a child this was a wonderful training in patience as the end of any particular song seemed never to come! This type of music can be very repetitive. There was always a beautiful crib in the church with very life-like figures which I remember to this day. Of course we also had a crib at home under the tree. My father was very artistic and made a new one each year.

My memories of Christmas as a child are very full and happy and I know I'll never forget them.

Gemma Nobilo

-----oOo-----  
One does not fall  
in or out of Love ...  
one grows in Love

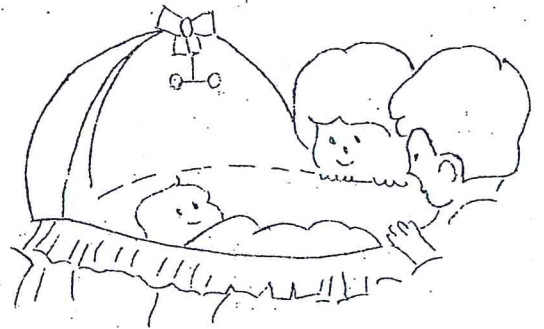


"MORE BABIES"

Jessina Constance WILLIAMS

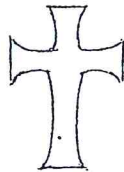
Katie Anne STRETTON

Catherine Jane SOMMERS



THE COMMUNITY OF ST THOMAS MORE  
WELCOMES THESE CHILDREN WITH LOVE

\* \* \* \* \*



DEATHS

Anna May PERCY

May she Rest in Peace

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FEAST DAYS FOR DECEMBER

- 3rd St Francis Xavier
- 7th St Ambrose
- 8th The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 11th St Domascus
- 12th St Jane Frances
- 14th St John of the Cross
- 25th The Birthday of Our Lord
- 26th St Stephen
- 28th The Holy Innocents
- 29th St Thomas Becket

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FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

October 18th was a very special milestone in the lives of 21 of our young parishioners when they received Our Lord in Holy Communion for the first time.

The manner in which they were turned out and conducted themselves was of great credit to Michelle Kemp who had done a wonderful job in preparing the boys and girls for their special day. The joyousness of the occasion was reflected perfectly by the music, hymns and beautiful singing of Gemma Nobilo. Afterwards, the first communicants and their families enjoyed a get-together and communion breakfast in the presbytery basement.

The children who received First Holy Communion were:

Graham ALTHAM	Hayley McFADDEN	Peter PETI
Joseph ALTHAM	Jacqueline McKAIN	David ROBERTS
Gemma CASSIN	Robert McKAIN	Regan TAYLOR
Melanie DAVIS	Melinda MILES	Darren VEDDER
Matthew EASTON	Yodette NEVILLE	Melissa VEDDER
Emma GOODISON	Andrew O'LOAN	Andrew WILLIAMS
Louise HAMBROOK	Kevin O'MALLEY	Shane WOLFGRAM

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A Special Ordination continued ...

let their inhibitions go and mingled freely introducing themselves to everyone. I felt as if we were all drawn together by this joyous occasion. The hall was filled with laughter, warmth and the love of the Holy Spirit.

It was sad to see the night end. I still feel very privileged to have been able to attend. Having thought about becoming a Catholic for quite a while, I was sure that sharing this occasion gave me the courage to make a definite decision, and I set about becoming a member of this community.

Our prayer this month was left with us by Mark, while serving God in this parish.

P A R I S H D I R E C T O R Y

PARISH PRIEST

Father N. Browne - 334 Wairau Road, Glenfield. Ph 444-8624

MASS TIMETABLE

SUNDAY MASSES:

Saturday - 5.30 pm  
Sunday - 8.00 am and 10.00 am

WEEKDAYS:

Monday - Thursday - 8.30 am  
Friday - 10.00 am  
Saturday - 8.30 am

First TUESDAY of the Month - 9.30 am Senior Parishioners' Mass  
First SUNDAY of the Month - 10.00 am Family Mass

RECONCILIATION: - Saturday, following Mass

BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS: - By arrangement with Father

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CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE

\* MASSES: CHRISTMAS DAY Midnight and 9.00 am  
\* NEW YEAR'S DAY 8.30 am and 10.00 am  
\* (Not a Day of Obligation)

\* RECONCILIATION:

\* SECOND RITE

\* Saturday 5 December 9.00 am  
\* Saturday 19 December 9.00 am

\* FIRST RITE

\* Saturday 12 December 9.00 am  
\* Saturday 24 December 9.00 am and 10.00 am  
\* 7.00 am - 8.00 pm

\* WEEKDAY MASSES DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY:

\* 8.30 am each morning, and 10.00 am Mass Fridays

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