



# OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH

50th Jubilee

1951-2001

The task of compiling a complete and accurate history of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish is an enormous one. All care has been taken to include as much as possible of significance, and efforts have been made to check the accuracy of certain historical information. We apologise, however, for any errors or omissions that may have occurred.

Parish Office

[lol.parish@bigpond.com](mailto:lol.parish@bigpond.com)

Ph: 4634 1453

## *Welcome*

*On behalf of Fr Quinlan, Fr Burke and the Jubilee Committee we extend a very sincere welcome to all past and present Bishops, Priests, Nuns, Teachers, Parents and Friends of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, and hope that our celebrations enable old friends to meet again and that it will be a day for all of us to remember.*

*It is a fitting occasion on which to remember what was, to dwell on what now is and to speculate on what might be for the future of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.*

*A very special thanks is offered to all those who have contributed so much to enhance our Parish Community and who consequently played an important role in the Parish reaching this 50-year milestone.*

*To those who have so generously given their time and effort in preparation of this Jubilee Celebration we owe a debt of gratitude.*

# *Introduction*

*Today we are celebrating 50 years of the Parish of Toowoomba West. The parishioners can recall with pride the contribution made by Bishops, Priests, Nuns and members of the public in developing a strong Christian community known today as Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.*

*From a humble beginning with limited resources, our predecessors have left us with a foundation to which each generation has added, to build the Parish into what it is today.*

*As you read this history booklet you will discover that this is a brief summary of the years since the Church-school was opened in 1940, through to the establishment of the Parish of Toowoomba West, to the dividing of that Parish down to the present.*

*It seems mostly to be about bricks and mortar. However, this is only part of the story. Very few of the many willing and generous parishioners over the years have been singled out.*

# Dear Lord

*When I think of you, Dear Lord*

*And all you've done and do,*

*I forget all the little disappointments*

*of my day*

*You've given us such a beautiful world,*

*Show us how to keep it,*

*Care for it, and make you glad*

*That you blessed us with it.*

*Thank you, Dear Lord, for today*

*And all its possibilities.*

*Bless our work Dear Lord*

*For all we do is done in your honour.*

*Help us to be worthy to do your work.*

*Among the hurry, worry and*

*Change in our lives,*

*Only your love is constant.*

*Your Spirit leads us in the right direction.*

*When we follow your path Dear Lord*

*You show us rainbows.*

## THE OPENING OF A NEW CHURCH-SCHOOL

Before the Parish was established Newtown came under the auspices of the Holy Name Parish. Just as the war commenced in Europe the Parish Building Plan had been commenced in Toowoomba and it was proposed to build a school in Lindsay St and another in the Newtown area. The first never was commenced, but the more urgent one was that in Newtown. There was no Catholic School or Church in that vicinity and a move was made to build the Church School at the corner of Ascot and Goodwood Streets. The building of a school in this area was the unrealised dream of Bishop Byrne, who had acquired the land for the school, but who died on the 11th February 1938, before construction could begin. The new school would be called "Our Lady of Lourdes", because the late Bishop Byrne died on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The building was erected by Mr John Sheridan at a cost of £2,035.00. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Roper on 26th November 1939, in the presence of many parishioners. Some £600 were subscribed on this day from the parishioners of Newtown and other parts of the city.

This was a rather remarkable function as it was the first foundation stone laid by the bishop, the first school inaugurated by the bishop and, as it was to be conducted by the Ursuline Sisters, it was the first time that they travelled so far from their convent for school purposes.

The opening ceremony was performed by the Bishop on 11th February 1940, the anniversary of Bishop Byrne's death and the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. A further £200 was donated on the opening day so over a third of the cost was in hand. In his address at the opening, Bishop Roper stated that the school "summed up everything characteristic in the Catholic people — The family and the children and the Priesthood and the Mass".

Sister Hildegard Nolan was the first Principal and was assisted by Sisters Pascal Lyons, Annunciata Haussener and Sr. St. Mark O'Sullivan. The four nuns who taught at Lourdes travelled daily to and from school in Mr Fred Lincoln's taxi, hired by the Parish for this purpose. They lived at the Ursuline convent, in Taylor Street, about a mile away.

At Bishop Roper's request, the pupils of the school were taught gratuitously by the Ursulines. And this arrangement lasted until, at the request of a later Parish Priest, Bishop Brennan made different arrangements in 1953.

The Ursuline Nuns who staffed Our Lady of Lourdes differed from the Sisters of Mercy in several ways. They were called "Mother" instead of "Sister" and the religious habit they wore was different. There was something about the Ursuline Nuns that deeply touched most. Students could never do enough for them. When their taxi-transport arrived each day, they were surrounded by eager helpers wanting to carry books etc. Students would try to outdo one another collecting their ports and other gear from the taxi and carrying them to their classrooms. The ultimate privilege was to be chosen to cycle to Saint Ursula's to collect the Sisters' lunches.

**Table 1: The first names of the Admission Register at Our Lady of Lourdes School**

	<b>Date of Admission</b>	<b>Pupil's name</b>	<b>Age: years/months</b>
1	6/2/40	Clare Keogh	
2	6/2/40	Josie Lloyd	
3	6/2/40	Edna Markham	
4	6/2/40	Eileen Reynolds	
5	6/2/40	Beth Jordan	
6	6/2/40	Marie Liebke	
7	6/2/40	Peter Nolan	
8	6/2/40	Keith Orford	
9	6/2/40	Kathleen Kling	
10	6/2/40	Valma Paulson	
11	6/2/40	Grace Bourke	
12	6/2/40	Irene Bourke	

13	6/2/40	Neva O'Neill	
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The Ursuline Sisters were here from day one and were responsible for the control of the school for forty-seven years. The parish is most grateful for all those wonderful years of dedication. The principals during those years were:

Mother Hildegarde	Mother Philomena
Mother Delores	Mother Pauline
Mother De Lourdes	Mother Bede
Sister St John	Sister Amy
Sister Loyola	Sister Loretta

Lourdes could be considered a contrast from some of the other established parishes. The building used for school during the week became a church on Sundays and thus it became a chapel of ease for the residents of Newtown, who were cared for by the priests from Holy Name Presbytery until Father McMorrow was appointed Parish Priest.

The dividing doors that separated three classrooms were folded back each Friday afternoon ready for mass. On Sunday a Priest from Holy Name would come to hear confessions and celebrate mass at an altar in the main school. Some could not understand why their school had to become a church at the weekend and could not understand why they did not have priests living in the presbytery near the school.

Mass continued in the school until the opening of the new Church, the foundation stone of which was laid on 25th November 1951. The church, facing Holberton Street, was blessed and opened on 17th August 1952, by Bishop Roper.

## THE PARISH OF TOOWOOMBA WEST

The Parish of Toowoomba West was established on 15th July 1951. Father Patrick McMorrow was appointed as the Parish Priest of Toowoomba West, which is now commonly known as Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, and Father Frank Leonard, his assistant.

The Induction of Fr McMorrow, as Parish Priest of Toowoomba West, was performed by the Bishop at 8 O'clock mass on Sunday July 29. Toowoomba West included the Churches of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Anthony's.

In those years, before the building of the Church and Presbytery, Father McMorrow set up living quarters in a room under the school building. He enjoyed a midday meal with the priests at the Cathedral Presbytery. Other meals were at the homes of some very thoughtful and generous parishioners living close by, including Hitchens, Toomeys, Carroll's and Pedersen's. Father Leonard lived at the Cathedral Presbytery.

### A NEW PARISH

Next Sunday, July 15<sup>th</sup>, 1951 will be a very important day in the life of the church in Toowoomba. It will mark the official formation of the new parish of West Toowoomba in conjunction with the opening and blessing of the new Church-School in Justin Street and Memory Lane, Harristown.

In an editorial comment in last month's "Parish Notes" we referred to the many activities in the life of the church in Toowoomba over the past ten years. Many and varied "institutions" were set up and they all contributed something to parish life. We referred also to the large number of people of all ages and occupations who took an active part in parish affairs; and we strenuously denied any allegations that little or no progress had been made.

## A NEW PARISH (cont.)

To-day we would point out to our readers that emphasis over the past years had been laid on what we may call the "spiritualities" of the parish rather than on material progress; but that the time has come now when the people will be asked to look to the material advancement of the parishes to which they belong.

In our expanding community it was inevitable that the day would come when more church and school buildings would be required, and new parishes formed to cope with the growing congregations in ever extending suburbs.

The formation of the new parish of Toowoomba West on next Sunday marks the first step in this material advancement of the Church in Toowoomba. Other plans are being considered for the erection soon of a new church and presbytery at Lourdes (Newtown)—also in the parish of Toowoomba West—and of a Church-School at Hume and Jellicoe Streets in the Parish of Toowoomba.

That these projects will call for the generous support of the people is obvious to all. They will entail a great amount of work and sacrifice. Not since the opening of Lourdes Church-School in 1939 has any demand of this nature been made upon the Catholic people of Toowoomba.

It is true that during the war years—when church building was necessarily suspended—the people responded generously to many calls made by CUSA (the Catholic Auxiliary for the Forces), by the Papal Charities and similar bodies, as well as by other patriotic organisations; and since the war they have met with a measure of generosity the regular appeals of the numerous Catholic interests functioning in the parish.

### A NEW PARISH (cont.)

But on next Sunday a new phase in parish life will begin. It will require a combined and sustained effort probably for several years. There will be many problems and difficulties, and progress may be slow. But we feel very confident that our vigorous and flourishing Catholic community will meet these difficulties and surmount these problems with outstanding success.

We asserted last month in the "Parish Notes" that there was a place for all in the life of the Parish. The new activities called for in the days ahead will give us further scope and opportunity to prove our worth and to uphold our reputation as a sterling Catholic community.

(Taken from Toowoomba Parish Notes Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July 1951.)

## THE BUILDING OF THE NEW CHURCH

Soon after the Toowoomba West Parish was established the enthusiastic parishioners decided to proceed with the building of the new church. Plans for this church had been drawn up and approval given by the bishop. The estimated cost was £10,000.00. A permit had been procured from the Bureau of Industry. It was hoped that work on the new building would start in October. Mr Frank Hall, of Corinda was the Architect and construction was in the hands of Mr P.J. Gabbett, a well-known Toowoomba builder. Mr Gabbett was also responsible for the excellent renovations carried out at St Anthony's. The new church was to be a timber structure on a brick foundation, with galvanized iron roofing. When completed it would seat approximately 400 people. It would incorporate modern confessionals and other essential church furnishing.

Fundraising began in earnest and "Father Mac" was a master in this field. There were many and varied activities. A Parish Ball was held in 1952. Chocolate wheel spins were held every Friday and Saturday evenings in the back of a truck, generally Roy Toomey's truck, in front of Piggott's Department Store. On either side of the store were hotels—The Queens and The Central—long since gone. This location, no doubt, contributed to the wheels' success.

There were various games of chance, home parties and card parties. There was a Silver Circle Club with weekly draws. Jumble stalls were another source. One of the main fundraisers was the "Prince and Princess Competition" which involved several families, who worked for months leading up to the crowning night.

*A Bridge and Afternoon Tea Party*

AT RUSSELL HOUSE, MONDAY 17<sup>TH</sup>  
NOVEMBER

In aid of Jumble Stall for forthcoming Fete at Our Lady  
of Lourdes Church, West Toowoomba Parish

*For Reservation Phone 491 or 1066*

# MONSTER HOUSE PARTY

T.B.O.B.A. in conjunction with West Toowoomba  
Prince and Princess Competition

At

189 HERRIES STREET,

(Second down from Lauren Bank Park)

On

FRIDAY EVENING NEXT, 19<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 1951

Dancing - Games - Competitions - Cards - Community Singing - Supper

Come along and be in it.

Something for all – young and old

## THE "PRINCE AND PRINCESS" COMPETITION

To raise funds for this church a "Prince and Princess" competition has been inaugurated and is causing much excitement and friendly rivalry .in the new parish. This competition will conclude with a crowning ceremony of the winning "Prince and Princess" in the Town Hall on December 12th. If the pressure of the last month can be sustained during the remaining three months a considerable sum of money will be collected for the new church.

In the Competition there are seven "Princes" and seven "Princesses". Four pairs are in the Newtown district and three in the Harristown area.

They are as follows: -

**Newtown**—John Sheridan and Redmond Byrne; Glenda Hitchins and Pat Atkins; Margo Robinson and John Bergin; Gay Orford and Brian Benson.

**Harristown**—Noleen Sullivan and Tony Atzeni; Jan Hickey and Andrew O'Dwyer; Rosemary Walker and Melville Brosnan.

We wish the "Princes, Princesses" and their faithful committees and workers every encouragement and success in their noble work. We also promise them every support and help.

One last remark, if this report especially of the Newtown section of the Parish gives the impression that the parishioners are concerned, only with temporal things, that impression is mistaken. The enthusiasm shown by the parishioners in this competition is the outward expression of a great devotion; and a spirit of self-sacrifice. And this spirit of self-sacrifice will undoubtedly be a source of many blessings to individual parishioners, to the parish, and will considerably increase the greater external glory of Almighty God.



(Taken from Toowoomba Parish Notes, Sunday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 1951.)

# BLESSING AND LAYING OF THE FOUNDATION STONE

The Blessing and Laying of the Foundation Stone for the new Church was performed at 3.00pm on Sunday, 25<sup>th</sup> November 1951 by His Lordship, Bishop Roper.

It is interesting to note that the Church-School at Our Lady of Lourdes was blessed and opened by the Bishop of Sunday 26th November 1939.

Father McMorrow and the parishioners of Toowoomba West invited all Cathedral and Toowoomba North Parishioners to attend this ceremony stating that the parish had "shown a spirit of enterprise and enthusiasm in so quickly attempting such a big project so soon after the formation of the Parish".

## FOUNDATION STONE AT NEWTOWN

Sunday November 25th, 1951 was a Red-Letter day in the Parish of Toowoomba West, and indeed in the whole of Toowoomba, for it represents the blessing and laying of the Foundation Stone by His Lordship, Bishop Roper, of the new church of Our Lady of Lourdes at Newtown.

Between four or five hundred people assembled for this impressive and important ceremony. The gathering undoubtedly would have been much greater had the weather conditions not been so uncertain. The ceremony took place accompanied by thunder and lightning, and a shower of rain fell shortly after the whole proceedings had terminated.

The Bishop vested in the school and proceeded through a guard of honour of the school children to the foundations of the new church. He was assisted by the Parish Priest Rev Fr McMorrow and by Rev Fr Concannon parish priest of the neighbouring parish of Toowoomba North.

## FOUNDATION STONE AT NEWTOWN (CONT.)

The ceremony began at the Cross, which stood in the place where the High Altar is to be placed. The Bishop then proceeded to the foundation stone, which was blessed. The litanies were recited, and the stone was then put into position. The Bishop then encircled the foundations of the whole building, blessing them, and during this time Psalms were sung by the Chanters.

The conclusion of the ceremony took place at the Foundation Stone, after which the Bishop unvested at the school and proceeded to the specially erected platform for the address. Mr Harry Ryan, President of the Committee, for the Parish of Toowoomba West, welcomed His Lordship and he was supported in his remarks by Mr Des Carmichael.

Fr McMorrow then gave a statement to the Bishop and parishioners. He said that the church would be a wooden building, with a brick base four feet high in the front. The outside wall will be of chamfer-boards, the roof galvanized iron on steel trusses.

The inside walls will be of tongue and grooved boards to the window-sill, and the remainder of the walls and ceiling Masonite.

The overall length is 102 feet, the main body is 78 feet by 39 feet, and will seat 432 people. There will be a front porch with two side porches in which will be placed the confessionals, well removed from the body of the church.

Besides the High Altar there will be two side Altars, a priest's and altar boys' Sacristy, Pulpit and Baptistry. These are some of the main features of the new church.

The estimated cost is £12,500.00, but it is hoped it will be considerably less.

Fr McMorrow offered thanks to His Lordship the Bishop for his valuable help and advice in connection with the new church; to Mr Frank Hall of Brisbane, the architect, who was always patient and helpful; to the various building controls and to all who in any way assisted in arranging this ceremony. He particularly wished to thank

## FOUNDATION STONE AT NEWTOWN (CONT.)

Mr Neil Wagner who donated the foundation stone and made all the arrangements connected with its placing. Finally, Fr McMorrow read a list of subscriptions, which is published elsewhere in this "Parish notes".

Mr Duggan MLA addressed the gathering and expressed satisfaction for having been able to assist in some way with the new church.

In the course of his address, his Lordship expressed his pleasure in being able to bless the foundation stone of this new church of Our Lady of Lourdes. He himself purchased the ground on which the church is being built shortly after his arrival in Toowoomba, in memory of Bishop Byrne.

The Bishop referred to one prayer in the beautiful ceremony, where the prayer of the church asked God to grant health of body and peace of soul to all those who in anyway whatever assisted with the building of the new church.

After the conclusion of the Bishop's address, Fr Concannon moved a vote of thanks to Mr Ryan for presiding over the gathering.

We look forward now to the opening of the new Church sometime next year—the conclusion of a good work which has begun so happily.

(Taken from Toowoomba Parish Notes Sunday, 9th December 1951)

## THE TOOWOOMBA WEST PARISH BALL

Over four hundred patrons at the Toowoomba West Parish Catholic Ball on Friday, July 18th, voted the Ball one of the outstanding social successes of the year. This was the first ball of the Toowoomba West Parish which has been in existence as a Parish for less than twelve months.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of twelve debutantes to His Lordship, the Bishop, most Rev. J. B. Roper, D.D. The debutantes who were presented by the matrons of Honour, Mesdames A. Ledbury and H. Pederson, were Misses Joyce Hannant, Theresa. Dwyer, Valmai Conway, Gay Shesgreen, Marie Crisp, Lynette Crisp, Patricia Kimmorley, Noela Jones, Yvonne Pierce, Joy Andrews, Janet Murray and Amy Liebke.

After the presentation of the debutantes the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. McMorrow, welcomed His Lordship to the Ball and expressed his appreciation to the Bishop for his patronage and his consenting to receive the debutantes. Fr McMorrow also welcomed all who were present and thanked all who had in any way assisted with the Ball.

The Bishop in his address congratulated the Priests and Parishioners of the Parish on the excellence of the arrangements and expressed his pleasure at seeing such a large crowd present.

The Debutantes were trained by Mr. and Mrs. Vic. Cleary and were a credit to their teachers in their special dance with their partners after the presentation.

The excellent sit-down supper, which brought forth many favourable comments, was the result of the untiring work of the ladies of the parish under the leadership of Mrs. P. Bergin and Mrs. W. Sullivan.

Mesdames C. Bowdler, D. Byrne and O. Hickey were the hostesses who received the official guests.

## THE TOOWOOMBA WEST PARISH BALL (CONT.)

The committee, which had Messrs. D. Byrne, P. Crotty and E. O'Dwyer as Vice-Presidents, and Messrs. H. Pederson, R. Belz and J. Haynes as other members and Mr. H. Ryan and Miss Connie May as joint secretaries, had every reason to be proud of the result of the Ball.

The receipts at the door were £160.00, and to the Committee and the ladies in charge of the supper, and all who in any way helped with the Ball, the Parish of Toowoomba West, and the patrons of the Ball, owe a debt of gratitude.

(Taken from Toowoomba Diocesan News July 1952)



PARISH OF TOOWOOMBA WEST  
CATHOLIC DEBUTANTE BALL

Memorial Hall, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> July

*O'Loughlins Orchestra – Sit down supper*

*Admission 7/6*

PARISH OF TOOWOOMBA WEST

*Solemn Blessing and Opening*

*of*

OUR LADY OF LOURDES NEW CHURCH,  
NEWTOWN

By His Lordship the Bishop,

**Most Rev. J. B. Roper, D.D.**

Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> August 1952, at 3 pm

# OPENING AND BLESSING OF THE NEW CHURCH

## OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

Opened on the afternoon of Sunday 17th August, after its liturgical blessing, this spacious edifice, seating 400 people, became the central church of the parish of Toowoomba West under the charge of Rev. P. McMorrow as parish priest and Rev. F. Leonard as assistant.

The interior of the church, designed by Brisbane Architect, Mr. Frank Hall, aims at an unobstructed view of the altar for every member of the congregation, together with clear audibility and ample air replacement. The seating accommodation and all the furnishings were made in Toowoomba. The altars constructed of the most modern material are unusual but dignified. An interesting fitting inside the northern entrance is a brass holy water font brought from Ireland by Bishop Tynan of Rockhampton as a present for this church.

Specially designed windows give the building a bright and devotional character from both interior and exterior viewpoints. The marble holy water font at the main entrance has been presented with a prayer for the soul of one of Toowoomba's good women and worthy poets, Alice Guerin Crist, concerning whose life and writings, a special article appears in this issue.

In 1939 the bishop opened the School of Our lady of Lourdes in the same grounds. This was a memorial to the late Bishop Byrne, first Bishop of the diocese, who had died on the Lourdes Feast Day in 1938. At that period the whole city of Toowoomba was included in the Cathedral Parish.

The Ursuline Nuns have done great work for the children in this, the newest of our parish schools, and the Bishop paid them a tribute of respect and gratitude when he spoke at the opening of the Church.

Noteworthy speeches on this occasion were also made by Mr. Frank Bowdler (chairman), Mr. Frank Noel, Hon. John E. Duggan (Deputy Premier), Mr. Reg. Schwartz (Federal member for Darling Downs), and Rev. P. McMorrow, P.P.

Father McMorrow mentioned that the cost of the Church furnished was almost £12,000.00, but so great had been the generosity of friends and the united efforts of faithful parishioners that little more than £1,000.00 remained to be paid.

A fine church and a magnificent financial effort in the new parish!

(Taken from Toowoomba Diocesan News August 1952)



**Figure 1: New Church in Toowoomba West, Our Lady of Lourdes**

The Presbytery in Holberton Street adjacent to the timber Church was blessed and opened by Monsignor McKenna, the Vicar General, on 4th October 1953. Mrs Agnes Hayes (nee Robinson) was the original housekeeper, having been coaxed from the Cathedral Presbytery by the ever-persuasive Father McMorrow.

During Fr O'Donoghue's time at Our Lady of Lourdes, he had extensions carried out at the Presbytery.



**Figure 2: Presbytery**

**Table 2: Priests Serving in Our Lady of Lourdes Parish 1951–2001**

Fr McMorrow	1951 Parish Priest
Fr Leonard	1952
Fr Isaac	1953
Fr O'Dwyer	1953
Fr Grundy	1954
Fr W. Hall	1958
Fr R. White	1959
Fr R Flynn	1960 Parish Priest
Fr Clancy	1963
Fr J. Madden	1968
Fr M. Skehan	1969
Fr N. O'Donoghue	1971 Parish Priest
Fr J. Ryan	1971
Fr K. Noble	1974
Fr J. MacGinley	1976
Fr F. Burke	1980 Parish Priest
Fr J. Quinlan (Present Parish Administrator)	1997

## RT REV MONSIGNOR PATRICK McMORROW



"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, he has anointed me and sent me to bring good news to the poor."

In commemorating Mgr Patrick McMorrow's Diamond Jubilee of Priesthood in 1993, Bishop Edward Kelly highlighted these words from the prophet Isaiah. It certainly was in the power of the Spirit that Paddy McMorrow lived out his years as a Christian and a Priest. One of six children of John and Anne

McMorrow, Patrick was born to a poor home at Geevagh in Ireland on 12th April 1909. His early education included Summerhill College in Sligo and Seminary studies were fulfilled at All Hallows in Dublin. He was ordained for the priesthood on 25th June 1933. Six of his class of 20 eventually came to Australia. Father McMorrow, originally ordained for the Ballarat Diocese, arrived in December 1933. He was appointed assistant at Hamilton parish the following year but suffered serious health problems. He came to Toowoomba to convalesce at St Vincent's Hospital in 1938. On leaving there a year later he relieved in Stanthorpe before being appointed Assistant at Holy Name parish in 1940. He never looked back in health and was incardinated into the Toowoomba Diocese in 1944.

His years of personal illness and various hospitalisations always fashioned him to be deeply concerned for the sick. He later served in Warwick from 1948-49 and then St Patrick's Cathedral until 1950. During the 1950's he was appointed Parish Priest at Our Lady of Lourdes, Toowoomba and in May 1960 was appointed to St Anthony's. For 32 years he remained in that Parish. In 1981 he was named Honorary Prelate, with the title Monsignor. He was also the moving spirit behind the initial construction and further development of Lourdes Home for the Aged, where he retired in 1992, and where part of the complex has been named after him. Dedicated to his priestly vocation and the high ideals it stood for in Faith and discipline, Mgr McMorrow was a man rock-solid in his Faith. He was an inspiring friend of the sick, the dying and the poor, a trusted and compassionate confrere to his fellow priests. Extraordinarily gifted in financial matter, management and administration and a true and loyal Missionary of Christ.

The gift of Mgr McMorrow's life was celebrated at St Anthony's Parish and he was interred in the Toowoomba Garden of Remembrance.

(Ref. Archives)

## REV ROBERT JOHN FLYNN



Robert John Flynn was born at Ipswich on 23rd February 1902, one of five children, to Dr John and Jane Flynn (nee Frances). He was baptised at St Mary's nine days later; Fr Matt Ryan was his Godfather. His parents originally wished to call him John, but Archbishop Robert Dunne (a close family friend) thought otherwise and Dr and Mrs Flynn complied with his wishes and compromised calling him Robert John. The family home was treated as an auxiliary presbytery in Ipswich. It had been blessed by Cardinal Moran and Father James Duhig used to come to read the Bulletin as his PP banned it from, the 'main' presbytery. Fr Flynn attended the Mercy Convent and St Mary's' CBC, Ipswich. His Seminary training was at Springwood and Manly, where he was a fellow student of Sir James Freeman. He was ordained at St Mary's, Ipswich on 22nd December 1927, by Archbishop Duhig. His appointments were: Nanango (1928); Dalby (1928); St Vincent's Hospital, Toowoomba (1931); Tannymorel (1933); Goondiwindi (1934); Tannymorel (1935); Chinchilla (1936); Charleville (1936); Mitchell, as PP (1939); Killarney, as PP, (1953) — he created havoc when he shifted the presbytery from Tannymorel (Irish district) to Killarney (Protestant town) during this period. In 1957 he was selected to be a Chaplain to an Australian group of Young Christian Workers who attended an International Conference in Rome. In 1959 he was appointed to Helidon, followed by Newtown (1960); Allora (1971). He retired to Toowoomba and died in 1980. Throughout his life, Father Flynn was able to mix easily with all classes and ages of people and was particularly sought out by young people for advice and counsel. As a young Deacon he was full of Zeal and enthusiasm.

(Ref Clerical CV, Aust. Catholic Directory and Fr B Kane)

## REV NEIL J. O'DONOGHUE



Neil John O'Donoghue was born at Mudgee NSW, on 22nd September 1917, to John and Effie O' Donoghue. He attended St Matthews' s Convent School at Mudgee. He worked for some time as a porter in the NSW Railways Department after leaving school. He graduated from his Seminary training at Pius XII, Banyo, and was ordained at St Patrick's Cathedral, Toowoomba, on 8th December 1948, by Bishop Roper.

After ordination he ministered in the parishes of Warwick in 1949 followed by St Patrick's Cathedral (1950-1952); Pittsworth (1953-1955); The Cathedral again, in 1956; Wallumbilla in 1957; Inglewood, as PP, in 1970 and Newtown as PP from 1971-1978. He died in St Vincent's Hospital, four months after discovering that he had terminal cancer.

Bishop Kelly MSC, of Toowoomba who was chief celebrant at a concelebrated Mass and preached a homily in St Patrick's Cathedral on October 1, 1980, said Fr O'Donoghue had been contented with his lot and a great inspiration to those who knew him in his final weeks. "He knew he was dying, but there was never a word of complaint," Bishop Kelly said. "I once asked him how he coped with the cancer and he pointed to a crucifix on the wall and said, 'He tells me how to take it'. "Today may be my day to die. It is hard to pray now but (with an obvious smile), when I breast the tape, as St Paul would say, I will pray for the Diocese of Toowoomba and for vocations. I have never done this before, this dying business (another smile), so I had better do it well."

Fr O'Donoghue was buried on 29th September 1980 at the Garden of Remembrance Cemetery, Toowoomba.

(Ref Clerical CV, Brisbane Archives and Aust. Catholic Directory and Catholic Leader)

## FATHER O'DONOGHUE

Fr O'Donoghue was a warm, kind person. He encouraged many in the Lourdes Parish with a joke and a cheerful word. On one occasion I went to the church to deliver planned giving envelopes. I was greeted by Father with his customary big smile and his words "you are welcome as the flowers in May".

Fr O'Donoghue went for his holiday to the coast every year. Although he did not swim or surf, he said he would "take in the breezes".

As a hobby Father O'Donoghue had a cattle property at Inglewood. It was called "Marylands" Although he left the day to day running of the property to Joe White, every month he would drive over to Inglewood with Bill and John Cronin to inspect the herd and chop out some wattle trees. He was a great one to delegate his authority. On one occasion Father and Bill were walking through the scrub when he saw something, like a small white egg on the ground. Father took a step backwards and poking the egg with a stick he said, "See what that is Bill." When Father went to "Marylands" he took with him a picnic lunch prepared by Doll Conroy or Vilie Doyle. They forgot nothing. There was corned beef, pickles, fresh bread, cake, biscuits they had baked themselves and serviettes.

Every Sunday Doll would have Father up for Sunday dinner with herself and Charles. In all her caring, Doll was just like a mother to Fr O'Donoghue.

By Jim Cronin

## REV FRANK BURKE



On July 25th, 2001 Fr Frank Burke will celebrate 52 years of priesthood, having been ordained in 1949.

Born at Gowrie Junction in September 1924, Fr Burke was the second youngest of eleven children of Molly and Jim Burke. His early education was at Gowrie Junction and Biddeston State School. He would ride a pony to school after milking the cows and doing other tasks about the farm.

He attended St Mary's CBC and completed his secondary education at Downlands College.

Upon leaving school, he entered the Pius XII Seminary at Banyo, encouraged by his old brother, Fr Dominic Burke. An older sister, Mary also joined the religious life as a Sister of Mercy. Classmates at the seminary included Fr Pat Campbell, Fr Underwood, Fr Bergan and Fr Frank Leonard, with whom he enjoyed many games of golf over the years. Fr was an excellent golfer, once winning the Gavin Wald Cup with an excellent score of 65.

Fr served in many parishes on the Downs, where his talent for building is evident in the church at Taroom, the presbytery, 4 classrooms, preschool and convent at Oakey, the additional school wing at Our Lady of Lourdes, Toowoomba.

The completion of the present Our Lady of Lourdes Church, which was opened Debt Free, testifies to his marvellous business acumen. Up until a few years before his retirement Fr Burke's commitment to visitation of his parishioners was well known. Even in retirement he continues to say the weekday 10am Masses and a Sunday Mass.

Fr Burke is an extremely well-read person in every aspect of knowledge, including theology. He is a man who has very clear convictions of the many problems besetting the Church and his complete commitment to the service of his people is an inspiration to many, including many of his fellow priests. Fr Burke has served under four Bishops with committed loyalty, but this never at any time has prevented him voicing opinions that he regards as essential to Catholic orthodoxy.

A very private person, Fr Burke is best known, to those who have experienced hardships or problems. His absolute sincerity and quiet consideration for those experiencing difficulties endear him and earn one's profound respect.

(Written by parishioner)

## REV FR JOHN QUINLAN



Fr John Quinlan was born in Toowoomba to Jack and Mary Quinlan. He attended school at Holy Name, then St Mary's CBC, before entering the Pius XII Seminary at Banyo in 1960. Fr John Quinlan was ordained at St Stephen's Cathedral Brisbane on 29th June 1966. During Fr Quinlan's ministry, he has served many parishes throughout Australia.

1966-1967	St Patrick's Cathedral Toowoomba
1967-1971	Goondiwindi
1971-1974	Diocesan Chaplain Y.C.W, Y.C.S. Director Propagation of the Faith Chaplain to D.D.I.A.E.
1974-1978	Army Reserve Chaplain Oakey/Cabarlah Chaplain to D.D.I.A.E.
1978-1982	St Patrick's Cathedral Toowoomba
1982-1983	Tara (Parish Priest)

1984-1988	Army Chaplain Royal Military College, Duntroon and Australian Defence Force Academy
1989-1992	Holsworthy
1992-1993	Townsville
1993-1995	Senior Chaplain Victoria
1995-1996	Senior Chaplain Queensland
1996-1997	Kapooka
1997-1999	Our Lady of Lourdes Parish (Assistant Priest)
1999-present	Our Lady of Lourdes Parish (Parish Administrator)

The new Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church will be officially opened by Bishop Kelly tomorrow afternoon.

Denis Maloney from D.J. Brown and Partners Pty Ltd, who designed the project, said the building took about five months to complete at a cost of \$400,000.

Mr Maloney said one of the features was the use of quondong timber throughout the church as a decorative highlight.

He said the two stained glass windows in the chapel and foyer "actually came from the old church itself."

"It would seat about 310 normally but it could fit up to 400 people".

He said the project was a medium-sized-one compared to other buildings his firm had completed which cost up to \$3 million.

A spokesman from the Lourdes parish said the "funds for the church came from the pockets of working-class people."

He said the old church would be used for Lady of Lourdes school indoor sports, theatre productions and "for anything the parishioners may decide such as wedding receptions.

(Taken from Toowoomba Chronicle 11<sup>th</sup> February 1989)



## THE BUILDING OF THE NEW CHURCH

Our New Church of Our Lady of Lourdes Goodwood Street was officially opened and blessed by Bishop Edward Kelly on Sunday Afternoon 12th February 1989, at a special 5.30pm Mass.

The land it is built on had been acquired during the 1970 's and 1980's.

Properties were purchased in Goodwood Street, to increase the playground area and to provide area for a new Church to be built in the future. We, the parishioners, owe a debt of gratitude to the foresight of Fr Neil O'Donoghue and Fr Frank Burke in purchasing various parcels of land on Goodwood Street.

The Church building was opened "Free of Debt" due in no small way to Fr Frank Burke's financial expertise. The cost of the fittings and finishing touches were still to be met at the time of opening but due to the generosity of Priest and People this debt was soon overcome.

The builder was Rick Taddio of A & J Taddio's Constructions and the design was by Dennis Brown of DJ Brown and Partners Pty Ltd.

The special stained glass inset window designed and crafted by Classic Stained Glass was a gift from the Parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes. The

Landscaping was carried out by Jim Dawson, assisted by a band of Volunteers. The marble Holy Water Font and the Church pews we use today are from the old timber Church in Holberton Street. The Church pews were painstakingly restored to their current condition by a group of volunteer men from the Parish who endured much hard work, over many days and nights for a period of approximately 4 months.

The Church was designed so that the entire congregation can be close to the altar and have a good view from wherever they may be seated. The site in Goodwood Street was chosen rather than Holberton Street due to heavy traffic problems of Holberton Street.

So now we, the present congregation, have the privilege of enjoying our proximity to the celebration of Mass and the surroundings are so peaceful and quiet. We are indeed very fortunate.

Some of the features of our new church are the Quiet Room, originally intended for Reconciliation and a peaceful area for parents and small children. It certainly serves well for this purpose, but it is also utilised for meetings of various groups including Liturgy, Prayer Group, Lourdes Ladies Group etc.

Also, the church has low wall lights at the sides, which can be dimmed for special occasions such as the Easter Sunday Vigil Mass. Fans and gas heating are well used and very much appreciated by the parishioners.

Included in the Garden was a rose patch to the memory of Claire Hanson, a young mother of four, who lost her battle with cancer at the time of the opening of the new Church.

A timber altar was designed and placed in the new Church but was eventually replaced by the granite altar from the old timber church at the request of some Parishioners.

Most recently, a small grotto has been placed near the entrance of the new Church. The Statue of Our Lady is from the original timber church in Holberton Street.

The new Church was blessed and opened by the Most Rev. Edward Kelly, M.S.C., and D.D., Bishop of Toowoomba on the 12th February 1989. Supper followed the opening—it was a very proud and joyous occasion. Fr Burke was positively beaming.

## THE CEREMONY

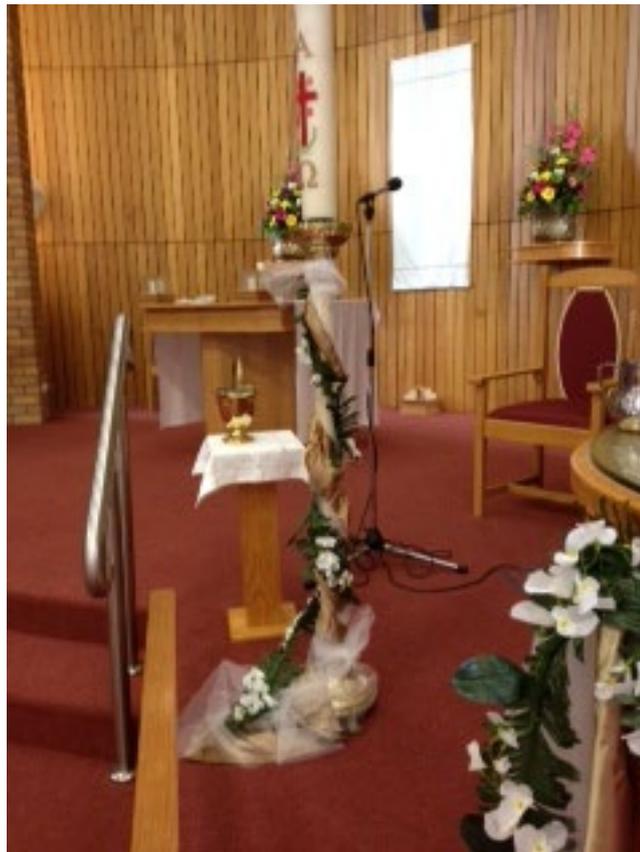
Already assembled in the Church, the congregation awaits the Bishop, concelebrants, and ministers.

The Bishop sprinkles with blessed water the people who are the spiritual temple, then the walls of the Church, the altar and the lectern.

The rites of the incensing, covering and lighting the altar express in visible signs the invisible work that the Lord accomplishes through the Church, especially its celebration of the Eucharist.

A special prayer of dedication is said.

The celebration of the Eucharist is the most important and the necessary one for the dedication of the Church.



# PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Father in heaven,  
Source of holiness and true purpose,  
It is right that we praise and  
Glorify your name.

For today we come before you,  
To dedicate to your lasting service  
This house of prayer, this temple of worship,  
This home in which we are nourished  
By your word and your sacraments.

Here is reflected the mystery of the Church.

The Church is fruitful  
Made holy by the blood of Christ:  
A bride made radiant with his glory,  
A virgin splendid in the wholeness of her faith,  
A mother blessed through the power of the Spirit

The Church is holy, you're chosen vineyard:  
Its branches envelop the world,  
Its tendrils, carried on the tree of the cross,  
Reach up to the kingdom of heaven.

The Church is favoured, the dwelling place of God on earth:  
A temple built of living stones, founded on the apostles  
With Jesus Christ its corner stone.

The Church is exalted, a city set on a mountain:  
A beacon to the whole world, bright with the glory of the Lamb,  
And echoing the prayers of the saints.

Lord, send your Spirit from heaven  
To make this church an ever-holy place;  
And this altar a ready table for the sacrifice of Christ.

Here may the waters of baptism overwhelm the  
Shame of sin; here may your people die to sin  
And live again through grace as your children.

Here may your children, gathered around your altar  
Celebrate the memorial of the Paschal Lamb,  
And be fed at the table of Christ's word and Christ's body.

Here may prayer, the Church's banquet,  
Resound through heaven and earth  
As a plea for the world's salvation.

Here may the poor find justice,  
The victims of oppression, true freedom.

From here may the whole world  
Clothed in the dignity of the children of God,  
Enter with gladness your city of peace.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, Forever and ever.

Amen

## MCMORROW FUNCTION CENTRE

When we moved over to our new Church there was much discussion about the best use of the old timber Church building. It was decided it would be very useful for Parish celebrations and a venue for wedding receptions and functions.

Some alterations and additions took place and improvements along the way and it came to be known as the "McMorrow Function Centre".

The impressive interior, with high ceilings, stained-glass windows and a timber dance floor are some of the features of the McMorrow Function Centre.

It is used. for a variety of social functions such as Christmas Parties, Social Club Functions, and Fund-Raising Events for the Church and School, Fashion

parades, luncheons, wedding receptions etc. Catering and full bar facilities are available.



## PROVISION OF RETIREMENT UNITS

In 1992, "Assisi Court" in Rome Street was officially blessed and opened by Bishop E. Kelly. This very attractive complex of eleven units for retired people is close to Our Lady of Lourdes Church and other facilities. Much thought went into the design and position of this project.

The venture was so successful, and the demand there, that another block of eight units was built in Hill Street. Known as "Kilkivan", they were built on land where the home of a former parishioner, Kev Watterson, had been located—not quite as close to Our Lady of Lourdes as "Assisi Court". They are very convenient to essential facilities. These units were blessed and opened on 28th February 1995, by Bishop Bill Morris.

"Avila Lodge" was another project, which was not as successful as the two previous complexes. An established block in Ascot Street, close to the church, was purchased and refurbished. Whereas "Assisi Court" and "Kilkiven" were for people who enjoy an independent lifestyle, it was planned to give assistance and provide some meals to those in "Avila Lodge" when needed.

As there was not the demand for this type of accommodation, the lodge was later sold.

## SNIPPETS FROM THE SCHOOL

In the early years a move was made to build the Church-School at the corner of Ascot and Goodwood Streets. The building of a school in this area was the unrealised dream of Bishop Byrne, who had acquired the land for the school, but died on the 11th February 1938, before construction could begin.

The new school would be called "Our Lady of Lourdes" because the late Bishop Byrne died on the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

The building was erected by Mr John Sheridan at a cost of Two Thousand and Thirty-five pounds. The foundation stone was laid by Bishop Roper on 26th November 1939, in the presence of many parishioners.

The completion of this bricking-in under the school and brick stairways replacing the timber stairs was carried out in 1956.

By early 1970's accommodation at the school was at a premium. Suggestions were made that a building, which had been part of the complex of the Freneau Park School, operated by the Sisters of Our Lady of Sacred Heart and now closed, might be relocated to Lourdes. This did not prove feasible however, and only some flooring was used in the brick building on the Ascot-Holberton corner of the grounds, which was built in 1970-1971.

Also, during the 1970's a small timber building was moved from the Baillie Henderson Hospital precinct to Lourdes School. It served as a preschool, and later, a storeroom. About two years ago it was moved away and is experiencing a third phase as a private residence.

During Fr Burke's time much building has taken place. The first was a school block parallel to the Church, opened on 5<sup>th</sup> February 1984.

The refurbishment of and alterations to the 1940's and 1970's blocks at the school, and the provision of more covered areas was carried out in two stages,

1996-1998. On 23rd March 1998, the Hon. Mr Mike Horan M.L.A. Minister for Health officially declared the buildings open, and Bishop William Morris performed the blessing.

It was in February 1940 that the people of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish welcomed the Ursuline Sisters in our midst One can't help but wonder if the Sisters or people present that day realised how much we would come to know, love and appreciate them.

It seems that a school away from their convent base was a new and big responsibility for the Ursuline Sisters. At this time the Ursuline Sisters belonged to an enclosed order. Suffice to say they accepted the challenge and made a wonderful success of their years at Our Lady of Lourdes.

There are many wonderful memories of all those years. It was indeed a sad day when the Ursuline Sisters were no longer part of Our Lady of Lourdes School.

However, this story would not be complete without mention of the devoted lay staff that have also been part of the school of Our Lady of Lourdes for most of the time. In earlier years lay people were very much appreciated teachers working with the Ursuline Sisters, and in more recent years the school has been and is fully staffed by lay teachers and Principals.

In 1987, the first lay Principal was appointed at Our Lady of Lourdes School and in August 1994 he was succeeded by the present Principal. The enrolment of the school at present is 350 pupils for the year 2001.

All teachers both past and present, Ursuline Sisters and lay staff ought to be congratulated on their efforts in building the school into the well reputed Catholic Primary School it is known as today.

## Notes from a mother of four past pupils

The white chrysanthemum presented to Mothers at the Mass for May school holidays break-up. They would be gift-wrapped so beautifully especially for Mothers' Day the following Sunday. This was organized by the Mother Principal of the time and all the mums loved her for it.

The help given to a very inexperienced catechist back in the 70's by a very kind young sister at that time. The catechist 's first problem was settling the class. Sister's advice was to ask them to draw something that God made which they saw on their way to school. Her advice worked!!

(Written by parishioner)

## TOWARDS THE FUTURE OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH

Like the rest of society, the Church has undergone many changes over the past 50 years. Change continues at a rapid pace, bringing with it a feeling of uncertainty about the future.

While a shortage of ordained clergy has now forced Parishes into restructuring, it could be argued that the main reason to engage in this activity would be because of our developing understanding of the call to ALL the baptised to advance the mission and ministry of Jesus in our world.

The Parish Community has been and will continue to be the centre of the Church's life. The continuing existence of any individual Parish, ours included, depends not upon the appointment of a resident priest but upon the ability and willingness of its members to work with the ordained clergy to provide appropriate leadership and to minister to the needs of the Parish,

either working alone or in collaboration with other Parishes. Recent developments in both areas within the Parish, gives us every confidence that the future of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish will be as rich as its past has been.

(Written by Michael Cash – Toowoomba Diocesan Representative)

Our present Parish consists of many dedicated groups, carrying on the great traditions of the past. We look forward to the continued support of the Clergy, our fellow Parishioners and Community members, as we embark on the journey into the next 50 years of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.