

A CELEBRATION OF TWO OUTSTANDING JUBILEES

27th May 2018

Welcome to this ceremony for our Brothers Julian Watson and Christian Moe, both 96 years old, celebrating their 'Oak' anniversary of 80 years since they first received their religious habit just before the Second World War.

At the height of the Australian and world depression in 1935, Brothers Julian and Christian, both from **Saint Ignatius** School Richmond in Melbourne, came to the newly-opened Junior novitiate at Castle Hill to begin their training as Brothers. They were 13 years of age. In the next three years they finished their secondary school education and made their novitiate together from 1938 to 1939.

Julian's tour of duty over the next 7 years took him in New South Wales to Marrickville, Orange, Cronulla and then to Malvern where, after teaching every class of the school day, he took his Bachelor's degree by part-time evening study at Melbourne university 1947-1951. Then in 1953 we find him for the next 19 years in New Zealand, first opening and directing the new foundation of Saint Mary's Blenheim, later in Auckland working at and later directing De La Salle College, Mangere East, and next teaching and later directing the Francis Douglas Memorial College, New Plymouth until 1971. In 1972-1973 he attended the International Lasallian Centre renewal programme in Rome. On his return to Australia he directed the boarding school at Scarborough, Queensland from 1973-1975 before returning to Malvern where, except for one year in Adelaide and another year in Mentone, he has since lived until today, Director of the community 1976-1986 and then again in 1989-1992.

With his knowledge and experience of the French language, Brother Julian has been involved over many years in the English translation of at least four important Lasallian books edited in Australia as well as a great deal of material sent him regularly from the Mother House in Rome. For many years after his formal retirement from teaching, he had a desk in the staff room at Malvern where his quiet inner calm made him friend and counselor to generations of teachers.

Peter Houlihan, Principal of De La Salle Malvern, writes about celebrating Julian's 96th birthday: *On the afternoon of Wednesday 21st March ...After the formalities and cutting of the celebratory cake, Br Julian spoke to the staff and guests. It was terrific to hear a man of such an impeccable career of service, dedication, faith and leadership reflect so humbly. Julian wondered if it was really him we were speaking about when listening to his record built up over eight decades...*

But that is the Julian whom we are pleased to honour on this day!

Brother Christian Moe's tour of duty is more complicated. After the novitiate he was asked to serve on the staff of the Junior novitiate at Oakhill for some time before his first school appointment at St Bede's Mentone for one year. Then he taught in both Marrickville and Ashfield before four years in Malvern where he

completed his Bachelor's degree by part-time evening study at Melbourne university. He is remembered by many of his former pupils, including the present speaker, as a brilliant and inspiring teacher. From 1950-1957 he was assigned to the Scholasticate at the Training College at Castle Hill. Brother Aloysius Carmody's establishment of part-time university studies through correspondence with New England university enabled Brother Christian to play an important formation and tutorial role in the broader education programme then in place. He developed an extensive series of articles for the catechetical journal, *Our Apostolate*. It was in these years also that he first developed and published his High school text book on Ancient History, widely known and appreciated by generations of teachers and secondary school students. He also wrote and made available his notes on prescribed literature texts for senior classes in NSW secondary schools.

From 1958 to 1962, however, Brother Christian was selected to study theology with Brothers of similar non-clerical Congregations at the **Jesus Magister Institute**, affiliated with the Pontifical Lateran university in Rome. It was a time when the Institute, resolving to strengthen its historical role in religious education, had already founded in the 1950's a number of important and highly-influential religious education journals in different languages. One of these, *Catéchistes* in French, was important as the model for the series of Catechism Workbooks developed through the Australian journal, *Our Apostolate*. Brother Christian gained his Licentiate or Master's degree, and around the world I have met many of his fellow students who remember him for his scholarship and depth of culture. In the European summer period between lectures, Brother Christian served in various ways in the two Districts in Great Britain and as a teacher of English to French Brothers.

In 1963 Brother Christian returned to Castle Hill as Director of the Scholasticate when full-time university studies for young Brothers at Macquarie and other universities became possible, resuming his task as editor and author of the catechetical magazine *Our Apostolate*, teaching theology and responding to invitations for lectures from various groups. Generations of Australian Brothers owe their excellent foundation in spirituality and theology to Brother Christian. In 1968 and 1969, at the height and in the very centre of student revolt in France, Brother Christian continued further theological studies in Lyon. Returning to Australia, from 1970 -1972 he served on the staff of the novitiate at Burradoo. With the 1976 opening of the Catholic College of Education at Castle Hill, Brother Christian became a lecturer in theology and member of the Oakhill *La Salle House* community until 1981. Then followed missionary service over the next 11 years in various places in Papua-New Guinea, at Holy Trinity Mount Hagen, at the post-novitiate in Bereina and the inter-congregational novitiate at Maiwara, Madang. In between these assignments he lived and served as Director of a small community at Kingsford. After his definitive return to Australia he eventually joined the Mentone community, working a number of days each week from 1999 to 2011 with students in the Corpus Christi seminary, Melbourne, helping students with English and theology.

What do we celebrate here today? First of all, God's call and the generous responses to that personal invitation by two Brothers who have persevered in answering God's call, first followed when they were 13 years old. For many thousands of young men and women they have been teachers, older brothers and counselors. Many younger Brothers in many different parts of the world have been guided by the example of these men into understanding and living their calling as Brothers. Many people have come to know something of Christ's redemptive love through the lives and ministry of these Brothers.

Second, each one of these Brothers has lived his life as a member of a brotherhood, something he has received as a gift, shared abundantly with others who were not part of his original birth family, and then given away through sharing it through the mission he received according to the very words he pronounced before witnesses at his final profession, *"I promise to go wherever I may be sent, to do whatever might be asked of me by the body of the society to which I belong."*

Here indeed we are in the presence of the mystery of each of these unique individuals, whose lives have reminded us of values beyond the material, demonstrated and faithfully lived out through quiet, daily unselfish achievements. Both would probably agree that they have been privileged to live out Saint Augustine's words that "everything is grace." They have certainly been "instruments of grace" for so many others whose lives they have touched. **We** are both inspired and enriched by their example just as have been the many generations of people, young and adult, whom they taught and the Brothers with whom they lived.

Live Jesus in our hearts! Forever!

Brother Gerard Rummery, 27th May 2018