



St Peter Julian's Church - Haymarket

The Blessed Sacrament Congregation's Sydney centre of Eucharistic life and spirituality

AUSTRALIA: LAND OF SPIRIT?

A passage in one of Andrew Hamilton's *Eureka Street* election post-mortems caught my eye. He observed that in this election "Australia" did not exist. We had no sense of a nation united by a vision of the common good. Instead, "Quite different groups of voters in different states, and in different regions of the state, were each dominated by their own interests and resentments. As a result any campaign that presupposed a uniform Australia and a set of broad Australian goals seemed bound to fail." The reality was that both major parties "played to strong local desires and resentments, focused on the attitudes of people in seats that were in play, ignored statements of vision or of general principle, and reduced leadership to the leaders' fellow feeling with whoever they were visiting. Any distinctively national policies were negative – against boat people and the unemployed."

These remarks triggered a connection for me with Mary MacKillop. In stark contrast to the absence of a national outlook during the election Mary boldly declared to Pope Pius IX in 1873, twenty-eight years before Federation: "It is an Australian who writes this." She stated this in a lengthy document she had written for the Pope about the Sisters of Joseph, the uniquely Australian religious community which she and Fr Julian Tenison Woods had co-founded. In a recent article in *The Catholic Leader*, Sr Margaret McKenna RSJ explains that Mary wanted the Pope to understand what made the Sisters of St Joseph different from communities in Ireland, England and the rest of Europe. It was "her experiences as an Australian [that gave] her an informed insight into the most effective ways to offer Catholic education in the rural settlements of her homeland." Sr Margaret goes on to give several reasons why Mary's claim to Australian identity in 1873 was radical at the time. Here's a summary of them.

When Mary wrote to the Pope, "Australia" didn't exist; what did exist were separate British colonies. She had lived in three of them – Victoria, South Australia and Queensland – and was well aware of their differences. She also recognised the similarities that needed a national approach to evangelisation. She knew and loved "Australia", accepted what made it distinctive, and had her finger on the pulse of the "emerging secular liberalism and the growing sentiment of democracy." Her sense of a nation-to-be long anticipated the vigorous debates of the last decades of the century that culminated in the Federation of 1901.

Mary began her statement to the Pope with a prayer, and then went on to observe that "the many wants of the Australian Colonies" could "hardly be realised by those who have not had some experience of them". Just a little later she staked her claim: "It is an Australian who writes this, one brought up in the midst of many of the evils she tries to describe, and who has over and over again heard pious priests and zealous bishops sadly deplore a state of things which they could not remedy; and later still known many of the same to declare that in the peculiar spirit of the sisterhood they saw at least the answer to their frequent sighs and prayers." Mary went on, as Sr Margaret observes,

to describe the difficulties faced by the ordinary Catholics of the day: the scattered nature of settlement, poor knowledge of Catholic beliefs, the lack of access to Mass and the sacraments and religious instruction, a sectarian environment, and public education policies. In sum, Mary wrote, all these influences have "produced (in many parents) a total blindness to all that concerns the religious education of their children".

Mary saw the need and discerned the remedy: a congregation of women dedicated to the education of poor and isolated Catholic children. Her mission transcended colonial and diocesan boundaries, her vision was prophetically national. The struggle she had to maintain this vision is well documented. Her choice of the religious name Mary of the Cross was itself prophetic. Her suffering was the stuff of heroic holiness. Mary's self-identification as an Australian is a humbling reminder of her breadth of vision and of her courageous commitment to its realisation. We Australian Catholics are rightly proud of such a feisty, determined, independently-minded and great-hearted woman. At the same time we may well feel she stands in silent judgement of us. Our efforts to bear witness to the gospel may seem quite compromised, confused and half-hearted by comparison.

Which brings me back to another Andrew Hamilton *Eureka Street* election post-mortem. This one was provocatively entitled "We're to blame for this election shocker." My immediate reaction was defensive dissent from this accusing headline but I read on. What I read didn't soothe or reassure me. Like all unwelcome truth it called for conversion, and who finds that comfortable? Here's a fair slab of what Hamilton had to say. Having named some of the major challenges that face us as a society – climate change, the treatment of marginalised minorities such as indigenous people and asylum seekers, and the humane use of our minerals-based prosperity – he declared it was self-indulgent to blame politicians for lack of leadership.

"If anything is to change," he wrote, "it must begin with Australian public opinion. That can change only if those who care for Australia's future keep an active interest in public life and participate in it in modest ways. We should ask to be offered leadership from the top only after we have committed ourselves to provide it within the small groups that form the basis of our public life. To involve ourselves in public life is less about acting and speaking visibly in public forums than about acting and speaking more deeply."

Referring specifically to climate change, he went on: "When we take seriously the need to make climate change salient in our lives, and so to change our own patterns of living, we inevitably become involved in honest conversation, and so able to influence others. Inevitably we find ourselves representing our views in more public circles, connecting with others who share our convictions, and becoming

involved in more public ways. As more people become similarly involved and connected, public opinion will be affected. Eventually it will be reflected in policies that politicians will ignore at their peril. Leadership will then naturally develop.

"The other large challenges that face Australia require the same continued involvement by ordinary Australians in public life. They require the same integrity in naming what respect for the human dignity of less privileged Australians entails, in becoming familiar with those different from ourselves, and being linked with like minded people by conversation and action that will eventually change public opinion."

Clearly we've all got work to do. Let me conclude with one person's account of the nitty-gritty task of influencing the political process. Just prior to the election, Frank Quinlan, Director of Catholic Social Services Australia, wrote a piece in *Eureka Street* called "Inside Canberra's Catholic lobby". He explained: ". . . the task of political influence seldom involves the linear path from Gospel values, to a careful understanding of the needs and aspirations of vulnerable people, to well conducted research, to sound and effective public policy expressed in effective and just social programs and better legislation.

"The real task of political influence is frequently undertaken late in the evening, when the House of Representatives or the Senate is sitting but the public galleries are empty.

"For those of us 'outsiders' seeking to influence the political agenda it is always an 'away game'. As visitors we are welcome enough, but we have no office, nowhere to gather thoughts privately, and frequently no colleagues with whom to discuss options and ideas. The opportunity to influence a new public policy can be fleeting. It can appear by chance, or follow an arduous and strategic build-up over months or years."

And the outcome is usually a compromise, as Quinlan went on to ex-

plain: "In a letter entitled 'Catholic culture for true humanism', Cardinal Giacomo Biffi, Archbishop of Bologna, points to some of the challenges that those seeking to bring a Catholic voice to the political process encounter: 'In this field the disciple of Jesus will be able to rejoice at times over unsuspected agreements with unbelievers, in the defence of an ethical principle or in a practical choice. Further, he will listen with respect and with sincere interest to the opinions of all because he does not forget that, as St Thomas repeated often, "Every truth by whomever it is said is from the Holy Spirit".' Cardinal Biffi goes on to say 'Politics, we are used to saying, is the art of the compromise.'"

Somewhat prophetically Quinlan went on: "Whoever is elected to government on 21 August, and wherever power rests between the major and minor parties in the House of Representatives and the Senate, it will be a compromise. No party has on offer the full suite of policies, programs and legislation that we would consider ideal. "[After the election] Catholic Social Services Australia and other agencies and advocates will recommence our task of diligently working with elected representatives to promote a fairer, more inclusive society that reflects and supports the dignity, equality and participation of all people, knowing that ultimately we will have to settle for less than we would hope."

The gospel of the day today has been the dramatic account of Jesus' messianic claim in the synagogue in Nazareth. There and then Jesus declared himself anointed with prophetic spirit to proclaim good news for the poor, new sight for the blind, liberty for captives, and a season of grace for all. If this promise is always being fulfilled "today", it is because enough of us, like Mary MacKillop, dare to look beyond our limited horizons, identify with a larger world, and put our hearts and hands to work.

Tom Knowles SSS

Seventeenth Provincial Chapter of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation

During the week Monday 13 September to Friday 17 September daily Mass at St Peter Julian's will be at 7.30am and 12.10pm only. There will be **NO** 5.30pm Mass.

There will be **NO** Reconciliation during this week. The Church will be open from 7am to 5 pm. The shop will be open from 9am to 5pm. We ask for your prayers for a successful and life-giving Chapter.

"A New Wine and Fresh Skins" by Bishop Julian Porteous.

Bishop Anthony Fisher OP, Bishop of Parramatta, will launch the book at the Catholic Centre, 3 Keating St, Lidcombe on Tuesday, 14 September 2010 at 7.30pm. Supper will follow. RSVP to Maree on 02 9646 9010

Social Justice Sunday , 26 September .

"Violence in Australia: A Message of Peace."

The statement considers how the Christian values of forgiveness and reconciliation lead to peace and non-violent ways of addressing conflict and divisions. The Bishops highlight the role we all share in making a difference for peace as individuals, as a community and as a nation.

For further details about the Social Justice Sunday statement visit www.acsjc.org.au or call 02 8306 3499.

Institute of Counselling Courses 2011

- Graduate Diploma of Counselling
- Graduate Diploma of Counselling (Drug & Alcohol)
- Master of Counselling (Child & Adolescent)

High education accredited fee-help available.

Information evening: Wednesday 22 September at 6.00pm

Website : www.institutecounselling.nsw.edu.au

Email: in@institutecounselling.org.au. Phone: 02 9746 8800

Pregnancy Telephone Counselling

CatholicCare Pregnancy Counselling and Support Program

Monday to Friday

9.00am to 5.00pm

Guided Meditations on Scripture

Sr Elizabeth Crilley RSJ

Mary MacKillop Place, 7-11 Mount Street, North Sydney

Mondays 6th September and 13th September

Time: 11.00am—1.00pm. Cost \$10 per session.

Phone: 02 9929 7344. AH—02 9560 0721

St Peter Julian's Mass Times

1st & 3rd Saturday:	2.15pm (Indonesian)
Saturday Vigil Mass :	5.30pm
Sunday Mass Times:	9.30am, 11.00am (Chinese) 12.30pm, 3.30pm & 5.00pm (Korean)
Monday to Friday:	7.30am, 12.10pm, 5.30pm
Saturday:	12.10pm & Vigil at 5.30pm
Public Holidays:	12.10pm



The new Australian musical will premiere in Sydney in October as part of the Canonisation celebrations. The production features a cast and orchestra of 100+ people with opera singer Joanna Cole as Mary. 100% of the profits will go to the Canonisation Appeal.

Sydney Performances at the Seymour Centre, Chippendale
 Dates: 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9 October at 7.30pm
 Matinee on 2 and 9 October at 3pm.
 Tickets: \$45 adult, \$40 Conc., \$35 for groups of 7 plus
 Visit: www.mackilloptickets.org
 Phone: 0424 648 034

Writings of St Peter Julian Eymard

February 1, 1865—1st meditation—Eucharistic Vocation (OC V, 263)

It is the Most Blessed Virgin that has led me to our Lord, to weekly Sunday Communion through the "Laus" at 12, from the Society of Mary to that of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

March 11, 1865—1st meditation—The Most Blessed Virgin (OC V,340)

Today, Saturday, I meditated on the Most Blessed Virgin. I thanked our Lord for having given us a Mother so pure, so holy, so great; for having made her his divine Mother in order that as her Son he might give her to us with her merits and her graces. What love and gratitude I owe to this good Mother! So many good things have come to me through her! So many graces at the "Laus"! I owe her my safekeeping, my vocation and above all the grace of the Most Blessed Sacrament. She gave me to her Son as his servant, as her tenderly loved child.

And so many graces since 1856: graces of perseverance in spite of heartbreaks and the like; grace of unity in spite of influences to the contrary, for I was not enough of a centralizing force through my own fault, through my lack of outward appearance; personal grace against temptations; then all the graces granted to the Society as such.

What shall I do? What she did at the service of Jesus and for his glory.

March 17, 1865—2nd meditation—The Most Blessed Virgin (OC V, 360)

I meditated on the Most Blessed Virgin's love for me since my childhood. I blessed Our Lady of the Laus and the day I took her for my Mother when my dear mother died. Since then, so many graces!

At her feet in the chapel of St. Robert I prayed that I might one day become a priest. She alone led me by the hand to the priesthood, and then to the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The Most Blessed Virgin has been so good to me! I shed tears of tenderness over it, tears also of regret over my having loved her so little especially since the grace of the Most Blessed Sacrament. I should have done a hundred times more.

March 26, 1865—1st meditation. The Most Blessed Virgin's adoration of the Word Incarnate (OC V,382)

Oh! How I should like to adore our Lord as this good Mother adored him! I asked our Lord for a great grace, that of giving me the adorer that was the Most Blessed Virgin for my real Mother, of granting me something of her grace, of her state of continual adoration while she carried the Word Incarnate in her womb so pure, in that heaven of virtues and of love so great.

I feel this would be one of the capital graces of my life. Today I will make all the acts of the four quarter-hours of my adoration in union with this Mother of adorers, the Queen of the Cenacle.

YEAR OF EYMARD

The worldwide Blessed Sacrament Congregation began celebrating a **Year of Eymard** on **4 February, 2010**.

This will conclude with the bi-centenary of his birth on **4 February 2011**.



DIARY DATES ~ SEPTEMBER 2010

LITURGY

Sundays: Year C

September 5 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
 September 12 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
 September 19 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time
 September 26 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Memorials:

September 3 St Gregory
 September 8 Birth of the Virgin Mary
 September 13 St John Chrysostom
 September 14 Triumph of the Cross
 September 15 Our Lady of Sorrows
 September 16 St Cornelius
 September 20 St Andrew Kim Tae-gŏn
 September 21 St Matthew, Apostle
 September 23 Padre Pio of Pietrelcina
 September 27 St Vincent de Paul
 September 29 Michael, Gabriel, Raphael
 September 30 St Jerome

Mass celebrated in **INDONESIAN** ~ *Misa Bahasa Indonesia* ~ with the CIC/SPJ Community on Saturdays, 4th and 18th September at 2.15 pm.

All members of the Indonesian community are especially welcome.

Information: <http://www.cicspj.org>

Mass celebrated in **CHINESE**: In Cantonese every Sunday at 11.00 am.

Information: www.chinese.sydney.catholic.org.au. Contact John Wong.

Mass celebrated in **KOREAN** every Sunday at 5.00 pm. Contact Esther Kim—0416 100 499.

Holy Trinity Prayer Community at St Peter Julian's

The Community gathers for Eucharistic Adoration on the 2nd & 4th Saturday evenings of each month at 6.45 pm at St Peter Julian's after the Vigil Mass.

Next dates - September 11th and 25th

For more information please email - holytrinity@catholic.org.au

The next gathering of **The Associates** of the Blessed Sacrament Congregation will be on Saturday 11th September, 2010 at the 12.10pm Mass. Program to follow.

Contact person: Fr Marcellus Glynn SSS (Director) 02 9211 4100

St. Peter Julian's Altar Auxiliary

The 12.10pm Thursday Eucharist is offered for the Members of St Peter Julian's Altar Auxiliary. For information on becoming a member please speak to the Receptionist.

The **Filipino Community** monthly Community Mass on 1st Sunday—5th September at 1.30pm.

All members of the Filipino Community are warmly welcome.



Contact us:

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Community Leader:

Reception & Community

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