

Sunday, February 19 saw Fr Matthew Thomas celebrate his last Mass as parish priest for the parishes of St Brendan's Cobden, St John's Lismore, St Joseph's Derrinallum and St Patrick's Camperdown before leaving to take up his next appointment at St Mary's Swan Hill.

Mass was held at St Patrick's church in Camperdown and was a wonderful celebration, with a full church present to acknowledge Fr Matt's contribution over the last seven and a half years. A parish farewell BBQ and afternoon tea then followed where Fr Matthew was presented with an outdoor setting as a going away present. He spoke of his first appointment as a parish priest with great fondness, saying he was sad to be going away from the many friends he has made but he was ready for the next challenge in his life.



Fr Matthew's ministry as parish priest in Camperdown can be highlighted by a number of achievements. His ability to mix with all age groups and walks of life has meant he has been a real conduit to everyone in the community. His contributions to the wider community have enabled him to make many connections both within and outside of the parish. This involvement in a wide range of church, sporting and volunteer groups also means that he will be greatly missed by many of these groups too.



His huge work ethic has not only meant that he was able to accommodate our community's spiritual needs in all four parishes, but he was able to do so with passion, enthusiasm and energy. His devotion to St Patrick's School and Mercy Regional College has been outstanding and he has certainly energized our school communities through his teaching, his daily interactions, his participation in camps and excursions and through his overall leadership. He has certainly gone a long way to integrating our school and parish communities into a vibrant community.

Fr Matt will certainly be missed by everyone in Camperdown and districts, however we know he will continue to give of himself to the parish of Swan Hill and surrounds. We wish him all the best and look forward to his visits in the future and I am sure you will see many from the south trekking north as well to visit.

Michael McKenzie
Principal - St Patrick's Camperdown