

March 17 was a big day at St Patrick's Parish in Camperdown this year. Not only was it the feast day of our patron saint, St Patrick, but it also hailed the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ordination for our parish priest, Fr Matthew Thomas.

It was a full day for Fr Matthew, starting with a St Patrick's School feast day Mass at 9.30am, a funeral at 1.00pm, a baptism at 5.00pm and his 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Mass at 7.00pm followed by a parish celebration and supper. In many ways, the day showcased the highs and lows of the role of a local parish priest.

Both the Anniversary Mass and the supper were well attended with around three hundred family, friends and parishioners coming together to say congratulations on ten years as a priest and also to say thank you for the wonderful contributions made thus far to all the communities he has served and to the Ballarat Diocese as a whole.



Fr Matthew began his tenure in the Ballarat Diocese at St Josephs, Warrnambool as a Deacon, then he moved to the Cathedral in Ballarat where he was ordained and was there for eighteen months before moving to Mildura for a further eighteen months and for the last 7 years he has spent his time ministering to the parishes of Camperdown, Cobden, Lismore and Derrinallum as Parish Priest.

Fr Matthew's ministerial work as our local parish priest has gone a long way to both improving life for our community, our parish and cementing friendships which will last a lifetime. We are certainly very much the richer for Fr Matthew and are grateful for the day he came to our town.

*Michael McKenzie  
Principal-St Patrick's School*

