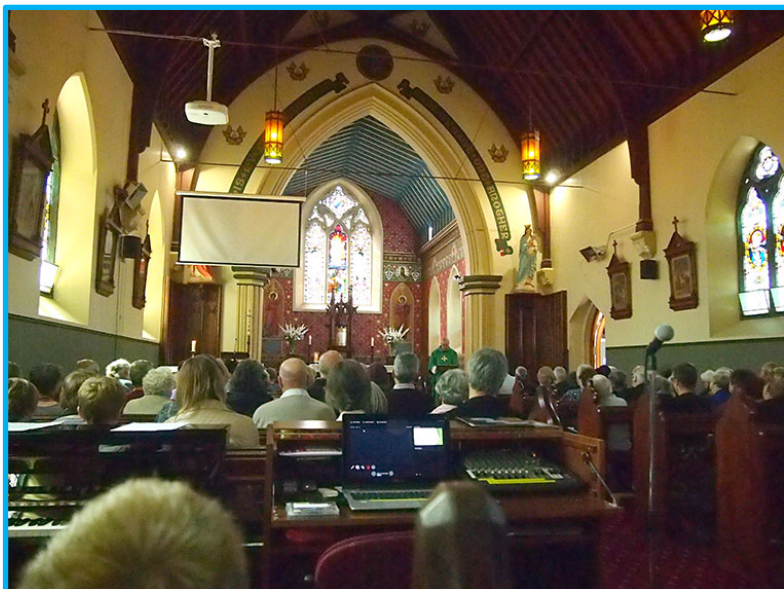




THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION CELEBRATION

On October 2, Fr Gary Jones celebrated his thirtieth anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood. Fr Gary was ordained Deacon on April 24, 1987 in St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat and was ordained priest of the Ballarat Diocese at Colac in October of the same year. Fr Gary has served the Diocese in the parishes of Colac, Ballarat East, Ararat, Timboon, Terang, Port Fairy, Swan Hill, Ballarat Cathedral, Ballarat North, Redan, Sebastopol, Daylesford and Creswick. In addition to his current role as Parish Priest of Creswick and Daylesford he is Canonical Administrator of the schools at St Patrick's Gordon and St Brigid's Ballan and provides ministry in the Parish of Gordon.

Celebrations began on October 2 with a luncheon with close friends and throughout the day Fr Gary received many expressions of congratulations and gifts from around the Diocese and beyond. On Sunday October 15, Fr Gary celebrated a special Mass at St Peter's Church, Daylesford, which was attended by many friends from Parishes in which he had ministered, as well as his immediate family members and local parishioners. Fr Gary presided with his usual grace and reverence and the liturgy was enhanced by the involvement of the principals of his four schools, together with student representatives and members of his family. During his homily Fr Gary expressed his gratitude to all who had supported him throughout his thirty years of priesthood. He especially thanked Mrs Leah Monaghan for her organisation of the celebration. After Mass all gathered for refreshments and Mr Laurence Righetti spoke in appreciation of Fr Gary's great work in the Parish.



Celebrations continued with a Creswick Parish dinner at the American Hotel held on Friday, October 27. At the dinner Mr Neil Doolan congratulated Fr Gary and expressed the gratitude of the Parish for his wonderful pastoral work and his leadership of the Parish.

Fr Gary is remembered by many, from the various Parishes in which he has served, as an extremely capable liturgist and in his role of Diocesan Master of Ceremonies he is quite remarkable with his attention to detail and precision in ensuring Diocesan Liturgies are celebrated with reverence and solemnity.

In reflecting on thirty years of priesthood, Fr Gary highlighted many aspects of his ministry, especially his passion for Catholic Education and the enjoyment he gains from his involvement with the Parish Schools. He is particularly grateful for the support of the dedicated principals, staff and parents of the schools.

Having baptised, married and buried hundreds, consoled the grieving, guided the lost and given witness to all by his life lived for Christ, he has well fulfilled his role of priest and pastor.

St. John Vianney, the patron of parish clergy, "Without the priest", he wrote: "the passion and death of Our Lord would be of no avail. It is the priest who continues the work of redemption here on earth . . . What use would be a house filled with gold, where there was no-one to open its door? The priest holds the key to the treasures of heaven: it is he who opens the door".

Congratulations and thank you Fr Gary Jones for thirty years of dedicated service to our Diocese and touching the hearts of so many people.