



Diocesan e-News

CELEBRATING SILVER JUBILEE OF ORDINATION

Fr Gregory (Greg) A. D. Tait celebrated the Silver Jubilee of his ordination with a Mass at All Saints Parish Church, Portland, on Sunday, August 27. Participating in the occasion were a number of members of his immediate family, as well as friends from throughout the Diocese and beyond, and a church full of parishioners from Portland, Heywood and Dartmoor. Hymns were beautifully led by the All Saints Parish choir accompanied by the church organ. After communion Fr Greg was thanked, on behalf of current and former parishioners, for his role as a servant to many Christian communities, to individuals in times of joy and sorrow and as a guide to those suffering a crisis of faith. Thanks were also expressed to God for his vocation and that of the other priests of the Diocese. He was presented with a gift from all parishioners. Prior to the Dismissal, the choir provided a special 'a capella' rendition of "Dona Nobis Pacem", as an acknowledgement of Fr Greg's particular interest in liturgical music.



Fr Greg was ordained in 1992 on August 28, the Feast of St Augustine of Hippo, whom he adopted as his ordination patron saint. In his homily Fr Greg spoke of the themes which had guided his ministry. He referred to the Gospel of St Matthew (21st Sunday in Ordinary Time) in which Jesus tells Peter that He will give him the keys to the Kingdom of heaven and names him as the rock upon which He will build His church. Fr Greg made the point that the original Greek version of the Gospel used the term "ecclesia", which has since been interpreted in English as referring to "church", but that "ecclesia" in the Gospel usage was more likely to be referring to an assembly of like-minded people, being the Greek word used to refer to the popular assembly of ancient Athens. Church, in this latter sense, really meant the Christian community of believers, rather than a building or an organisational structure. Jesus was, therefore, indicating that he would use Peter as the rock on which He would build His community of like-minded people, or believers.

Fr Greg observed that, in common with other Diocesan priests, he had been continually inspired throughout his priesthood by the members of the various Christian communities, in the Diocese of Ballarat, elsewhere in Australia and overseas, with whom he had been associated. These communities, although differentiated by place, consisted of like-minded people, united by a common faith and purpose.

The very beautiful and movingly sung communion hymn, "Will you come and follow me" by two leading members of the "Iona (Scotland) Community", John Bell and Graham Maule, perfectly expressed the last of Fr Greg's themes: response to the call of God. This response is one which, as leaders and members of the community of believers, we all make. The fact that the writers of the hymn belong to the current Iona ecumenical community, re-established in 1938, but originally established as an abbey by the great Irish missionary St Columba in 563, served to strongly



emphasise the endurance and fidelity of like-minded Christian communities, both inspired by their faith and responding to the call of God.

After Mass the congregation gathered in the Bayview College library for lunch. College students and parishioners had very kindly prepared a buffet lunch which was greatly enjoyed by more than eighty of Fr Greg's family, friends and parishioners.

