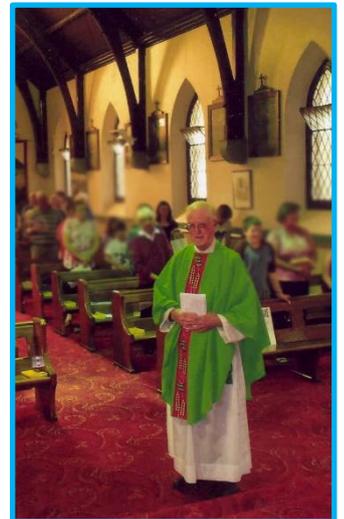


Fr Frank Madden, senior priest of the Diocese, died on April 20, 2017 at St John of God Hospital in Warrnambool. Frank was ordained in Ballarat on July 27, 1963. Born in Koroit on November 9, 1926 he was educated at St Columba's School Illowa and Good Samaritan College Koroit. After years of employment at what was then the Camperdown Butter Factory during which he obtained a Diploma in Accountancy, Frank commenced studies for the priesthood at Corpus Christi College Werribee in 1957 (age 31), and was ordained in Ballarat on July 27, 1963. He was appointed Assistant Priest at St Joseph's Warrnambool in January 1964 and served there until May 1968 when he was appointed Assistant Priest at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat where he served until May 1971. Frank was then appointed Administrator of St Aloysius' Redan from May 1971 until April 1976. During this time Frank also served as Vicar General.

Following six months sabbatical in India and the United States, Frank served briefly as Administrator of the Parish of Inglewood (October 1976 - January 1977). In January 1977, Frank was appointed to St Patrick's Cathedral Parish Ballarat to lead the ministry team which he did until his appointment as Parish Priest of Horsham where he served from June 1982 - April 1997. It was during this time that the award winning Church of Ss Michael and John was built. Frank's final appointment was to Peshurst where he served as Parish Priest from April 5, 1997- September 22, 2011 when Frank retired to Koroit. He continued to offer sacramental ministry to the parish of Mortlake (Caramut) and as a supply priest to the parishes of the southern region.

Many thanks to Fr Bill van de Camp and the parishioners of Koroit for their welcome of the many who came for Fr Frank's funeral Mass and for such generous hospitality prior to the Funeral Mass. Thanks also to Fr Kevin Arundell, who in his homily, captured Frank so well. Kevin spoke at Frank's invitation and that he was such a close friend, colleague and pilgrim companion was evident to us all and we thank him for his words. These can be read below.



Throughout his ministry as a priest of the Diocese, in addition to his parish ministry, Frank made an outstanding contribution in many areas and was a wise mentor to many and a source of sound advice. May he rest in peace.

Fr Justin Driscoll



Fr Kevin Arundell's Homily at Fr Frank's Funeral Mass

It won't come as any surprise to you that Frank Madden left instructions about how to organise this day and how to carry out his funeral arrangements. Nor will it come as a surprise to you that he said in his instructions "no nonsense and no eulogy". However, in my instructions it reads this way, "Kevin, for the Homily, keep it simple, you can say what you like, I'll hardly be in a position to object!"

A few months ago Frank suggested that I come to Koroit to talk about his funeral. That day he talked about his life-story, growing up in Tower Hill in the years of the Depression, going to school at Illowa with other local families – the Leddins, O'Tooles, Fitzgeralds and Lynches and meeting up at school with children from Southern Cross including the Bowmans and Haberfields and he talked about the debt he owed to his educators, the Good Samaritan Sisters.

Frank was sixth in a family of seven and his father died when Frank was only fourteen. It then became a battle to survive on the farm and to pay off the mortgage. These circumstances meant that Frank learnt quickly about life and death, both in the human framework, and in nature where the growing of potatoes and onions was important for survival and fodder for the cows so vital.

So, it's not surprising today that Frank chose these verses from John's Gospel that speak about the grain of wheat, it's death and the crop it produces – a reality that he saw demonstrated later in his life in the Wimmera and Mallee.

When Frank began his working life he was taken under the wing of Marty Bourke, a great man of this area and whose family is represented here today, and trained to be a secretary/accountant. In 1952 Frank went to work in that capacity at the Camperdown Butter Factory and was there for a period of four years. Two little events to mention here, firstly, Frank recalled how he and his brother, Dan, in the early 1940s, moved some cows to graze on the lake bed of Tower Hill and secondly, on March 1, 1957 Frank worked until lunchtime at the Camperdown Butter Factory and on that same day, he entered the Seminary at Werribee at 6pm to begin his training for the priesthood.

Frank never forgot his attachment to this area and to the people who live here, his own family and now his nephews and nieces, and the soil of this area and this part of the earth that shaped his outlook on life. So, it isn't surprising that he has chosen to be buried here and to be buried in a family grave. He said that when he enquired about his grave he found a message left on his phone that he regarded as a succinct Koroit response that said simply, 'there's room for Fr Frank'. We recently went down to the Tower Hill Cemetery and drove slowly along the lines of graves. Frank became quite animated, giving nicknames to many of the deceased, and then, after a while, in his own quiet way said, "you know, I know more people down here than I do anywhere else".

Toward the end of his life Frank really missed his sisters, Nell and Joan, needing them to verify the details of some event, or to help him recall the names of parents or grandparents of some of the local people.

Of his nature, Frank was a shy and retiring person and never liked being the centre of attention, as a matter of fact, sometimes he went to extraordinary lengths to avoid being in the centre. On the occasion of his silver Jubilee of Ordination, for instance, he quietly left the country a week before the date. Yet, though such a private person, Frank made lots of friends wherever he went. We are aware today that he has chosen the reading from Romans that says simply, 'the life and death of each of us has its influence on others' so we are conscious of the many people that Frank influenced in the course of his life, and your presence here today is testament to that reality.

We are conscious, too, of those who have influenced his life and helped him to grow and mature. I acknowledge, with Frank's help, the goodness of so many people who have cared for him, loved him and supported him. I mention but a few but they are symbolic of many. I meet people like Peter Hindaugh and Pinky Whiteside who were friends with him in his days at Camperdown. I mention, with gratitude, the goodness of many people, the Marchesini family from Horsham, his friends Eugenia and Margaret, Kath and Peter and Dinny, John Fitzgerald and Shirley and Lawrence, Bill and Michael who invited and welcomed him every Sunday for lunch, to the Gleeson family over the road who cared for him, to Michael and Lawrence and Barry who offered him hospitality and friendship, and especially to Janet, Helen and Ray for their constant care.

Frank enjoyed sport, both as a participant and as a spectator. He was quite a good tennis player and talented swing bowler playing cricket. He really understood the game of football, and as in life generally, he could read the play and he knew what tactics were needed to change the direction of the game. However, there was just one instance where his planning came unstuck. In 1962, he became our teams tactical adviser in the biggest game of the College year. He came to me and suggested a way of combating a tall forward named George Pell. (You've probably heard that name!!) We adopted Frank's advice and put a man on George with the express tactics of 'knock the ball to the ground and you'll beat him every time'. Well, Graeme Howard did the job for ninety-eight minutes but in the last minute George took a mark and kicked the winning goal. It really stuck in Frank's craw and he never forgot it. Actually, the day after the game, we found this bit of doggerel on Frank's writing pad:

*One mark and kick for big George Pell
Was just before the final bell
A kick for George that won him fame
But lost for us the bloody game.*

Now, you will probably understand why Frank never became a poet!

In the midst of all his qualities and achievements, Frank enjoyed, more than anything else, the simple things of life: He enjoyed, for instance, having a stubbie with Ray Carey, after Ray had mowed his lawn, he enjoyed the phone calls that came his way from his many friends, he loved and enjoyed the people of Koroit and this area, for their goodness, their wit and their generosity, he enjoyed trying to pick a winner and he enjoyed his contact with teachers and the children at school, becoming their friend and confidant.

Justin Driscoll, in his words to priests of the diocese advising them of Frank's death, paid Frank a well-earned compliment. He said, 'throughout his ministry as a priest of the Diocese, in addition to his parish ministry, Frank made an outstanding contribution in many areas, was a wise mentor to many and a source of sound advice to those in need'. We are grateful for his care for the priests and religious. Frank had only one fault when he was Vicar General of the

Diocese, and that was that he was sometimes more popular than the Bishop!! Speaking on behalf of the body of priests, we are so glad that he came and made the retreat with us, just two months ago, giving us the opportunity to be with him at that delicate stage of life. We acknowledge, too, his tidiness of mind, his clarity and honesty in the way he responded recently to the questioning from the Royal Commission.

Frank also spoke recently about the benefit from his sabbatical leave in 1976 when he went, first, to India for a spirituality program, then to Boston College for summer school there and finally he had a month in South America where he visited Peter Murphy in Chile. Frank never forgot those experiences, and on his return, he took the role of Administrator at the Cathedral, then fifteen years in Horsham (which was a special time in Frank's ministry) before his final years in Penshurst and working with Paddy and John and Margaret in Hamilton.

It is good to remember that in 1963 when Frank was ordained the changes of Vatican II were just coming through. It was a time of great upheaval for many of the clergy as well as the lay people and this little story bears that out. A few of the clergy from this area, Frank included, left for a day at the cricket at the MCG. After an overnight stop at the Birregurra Presbytery we rose early for our first ever concelebrated Mass. Fr Mick Keogh was the Parish Priest at the time and said that he needed to be the main celebrant. He hadn't quite understood the theological dimensions of concelebration and the need to share the chalice, and at Communion time Mick picked up the chalice and drank the contents, an action that led Frank Madden to whisper in a loud voice, 'there goes our stipend'!

In coming together today we have had the opportunity to honour Frank Madden for his service and care for all of us, and the contribution he has made to the wider Church. We know and believe that God will honour him too, and we treasure the words of today's Gospel where Jesus says, 'If anyone serves me, my Father will honour him'. In a little while, down at the Tower Hill Cemetery, we will entrust Frank to the earth and soil that so shaped his life, knowing that God will welcome Frank to the fullness of eternal life.

Pope Francis has recently reminded us that we should treat the earth in a familiar way and as a friend, so, in that spirit, adapting the words that were said about WB Yeats (the Irish poet) at this burial,

We say to the earth of Tower Hill,

*Earth, today, receive an honoured guest
Francis Madden is laid to rest*

Fr Kevin Arundell

