

*Words of Thanks from Fr William Lowry & Fr Matthew Restall
at their Ordination to the Priesthood Mass
Ballarat, July 22, 2022*

Glory to God in the Highest and peace to people of good will! Thanks be to God.

What a joy it is to be standing here before you all this evening. I know I can speak for Fr Bill when I say, it has been a long journey, but it has not been one travelled alone.

All of you here present and so many who cannot be here this evening have been part of our journey in preparation for the Priesthood, whether it be through your words of encouragement or rebuke, whether it be through your prayers and petitions.

Thank you for being part of this journey- to help us make Christ truly present in the Diocese of Ballarat.

Bishop Paul, neither Fr Bill or I initially joined the Seminary for the Diocese of Ballarat - thank you for accepting us to help you in your responsibility as Shepherd, to announce the Good News of Christ risen and the joy that comes from living a life in Christ - a life rooted in our baptism.

Fr Denis Stanley, and all the staff of Corpus Christi College past and present. Thank you for your guidance and patience, your gift of self and support.

In preparation for this evenings Mass, enormous work has been conducted by Julie Boyd and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, Djurdja Klaric in Bishop Paul's office, Fr Ed and the Cathedral staff and volunteers - to all of you, thank you!

Vincent Sully, our conductor this evening and his team of talented musicians! Your dedication, time and commitment have not gone unnoticed, and the result of it has been made clearly evident this evening. Thank you!

Fr Gary Jones, Cay Trinh, altar servers, sacristans and those who prepared the cathedral decor, thank you for making the Liturgy this evening beautiful, reverent and prayerful. Glory has been given to God through your work and care.

Sally Morris has prepared a lovely supper for us in the hall this evening, Tim Ribecchi has livestreamed the Mass for those who couldn't join us and Andrew Vaccaro has taken photos to remember this wonderful occasion - thank you to each of you!

To our brothers at the seminary, thank you for your generosity and commitment to the people of God – keep the faith brothers!

Our final words of thanks need to go to Fr Bill's family and mine.

Tracey, Grant and Elsie, Bill loves you so much- he is tremendously grateful for your love and the quality time he spends with each of you. Thank you for raising him and continuing to love and care for him.

Mum and Dad, Henrietta and Joe, Josie and Ben, Chris, James, Madeleine, Julia, Benjamin, Gabriel, Thomas, William and Clara - thank you for your love, encouragement, interest and care. I don't see any of you as much as I would like, but love every moment that I do.

Fr Bill and I today join another family, that of the Presbyterate, and so finally I would like to thank the priests present here this evening and all those who would have like to have been here. We look forward serving in Our Lord's vineyard with you. Reaping where we have not sown. Seeking the lost, bringing back the strays, binding up the wounds of those injured and strengthening the weak.

And in doing this, we pray with you all now, Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Words spoken by Fr Matthew Restall on behalf of Fr William and himself.