



• *The Anzac Day commemorative mass.*

# St. Mary's Commemorates

**It is perhaps a sad similarity that everyone, no matter who you are or where you're from, can understand the pain of sacrifice.**

Though it is an act borne of love – for one's fellows, home, everything – it is still a loss, and losses hurt. As such, as a way for the living to both

honour those sacrifices and ease our own pain at the cost of them, commemorations such as Anzac Day are a way for people to both mourn lives lost and to celebrate the citizens and land that the Anzacs believed was worth their sacrifice in the first place.

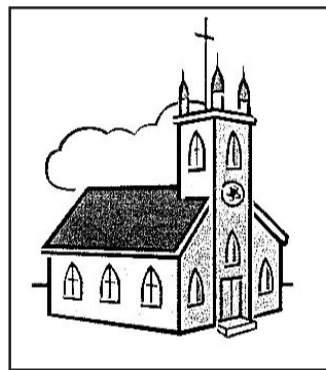
As everyone has personal traditions surrounding such a day, on the misty morning of April 25, Donald's Catholic Church saw a gathering of East Wimmera Parish attendees at 8.30 a.m., holding a special Anzac commemorative mass.

Being intimately familiar with themes of sacrifice, the service was conducted with the utmost respect. And with the interior of the church fit-

tingly outfitted with Australian flags, candles for the fallen, and poppies – the latter of which were lovingly crocheted by Jean Hogan – it truly was a memorial filled with deepest gratitude. Once everyone had taken a seat in the pews, Michael Flagg led the parish in the readings, before Fr Gerry Prunty took his place at the pulpit to speak.

To honour and pray for the souls of those who have served and died in wars, including members of the Catholic community; this service provided an opportunity for the parish to reflect on the sacrifices made by soldiers and to offer prayers for peace and reconciliation.

How come it seems as though love and loss go hand



in hand? It is a bittersweet feeling, truly. During the time for prayer and communion, it certainly would have been in the forefront of all attendees' musings. And for those of us who grew up in more times of peace than war, it could often be a notion far removed from us; this type of sacrifice a thought that rarely crosses our minds.



• *Fr Gerry Prunty leading communion, featuring Jean Hogan's hand-knitted poppies in front.*

History itself often only talks about war as a series of nameless faces, unless said individual played a major role in the conflict. This makes services such as Anzac Day even more important in small communities like Donald, as we are the ones left who remember the other names, the local names, and can only show our appreciation by continuing to remember them.

As such, following in the sentiments of Fr Prunty, let us give thanks to all who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of their land and fellows – you shall not be forgotten.

Let us send prayers to those who in the midst of fighting, in the hopes that it shall soon end and peace shall settle.

Let us be mournful of their passing, yes, but let us also feel honoured and humbled at the fact that they loved us – their people, their country, their home – so much, that they were willing to give their lives to protect it.