West Wagga Wagga Catholic Parish Ashmont, Collingullie, Glenfield, Lloyd, San Isidore **The West Wagga Wag**

Issue 145

Coming Events

Junior Legion Tu	esdays 4pm
Rosary San Isidore	Wed 10am
Senior Legion	Wed 7pm
St Vincent De Paul	Thurs 7pm
Stations of the Cross	Fri 6pm
Ordination to the Diaconate Anthony Mary Oboshi and Reece Beltrame Tues 10	
Feast of St Patrick	Tues 17
Feast of St Joseph Husband of Mary	Thurs 19
Palm Sunday	Sun 29
Good Friday	April 3
Easter Sunday	April 5



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The date for submissions for the next Wag is: Sunday March 29th.

Soirée Musicale ~ A Great Success

March 2015



With the introduction of the new Allen Cf-8 Church Organ kindly donated to the parish, *All Organs Australia* showcased this new musical instrument with an excellent evening's entertainment. Godelieve Ghavalas, along with Jim and Carmen Cheong-Clinch performed a beautiful *Récital de Soirée*.

The night was thoroughly enjoyed by all with a repertoire from classical, contemporary and popular music, even Australiana. Several pieces were played as a duet, with Godelieve on the organ and Carmen on the parish piano. Various pieces demonstrated the variety of sounds from composer's such as Handel, Krebs, Dubois, Tchaikovsky and Grieg, to name a few.

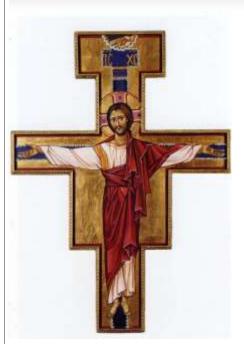
A camera captured a close up image of the musician's hand and feet movements which was projected through a digital projector onto the church's large screen. This added to the joy of the night and was very interesting to watch. At the end of the evening, a plentiful supper was provided by the San Isidore and West Wagga Refugee Committee and enjoyed by all.

The Quillo Raffle was drawn and won by Marge Cox, with second and third prizes going to Libby Murray and Oliver Taylor. Finally, a big and sincere thank you to all who attended and contributed to the Soirée. The Refugee Committee acknowledges raising \$2011 and are very grateful to all.

Happy Birthday, Fr Gerard!



There is one person who is really looking forward to March 15-22 and that is Father Gerard. What do these dates mark? Senior's week! Late in February, Father joined this select group of mature, wise and gifted people whose hearts are young, even if their bodies creak. Talented Mega Liesman decorated a cake appointed with priestly symbols. Many happy returns Fr G.



Compassion - the solution to indifference

Last Sunday throughout our diocese the Lent message of Pope Francis was read at all the Masses

Pope Francis wrote this message last year on the feast of St Francis. It was something he felt was very important to share.

He spoke to us about having hearts which are not indifferent but open to all. As Archbishop he wrote about the modern phenomenon of closed doors, locking others out and imprisoning us at the same time. This is a danger for modern hearts.

The Holy Father also wrote about being connected with the Saints in heaven and all those in need on earth. We should have one arm reaching to heaven in Faith and one reaching to our neighbour in Charity.

Sin divides (even the person in himself). Repentance, mercy, forgiveness - it is God Who by His grace unites. And the Church is all about unity, communion with God and our brothers and sisters.

I would like to echo Pope Francis by talking about

pastor's page

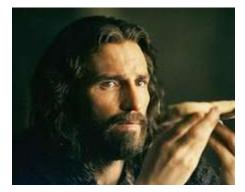
Compassion. He has given a constant example of compassion - feeling the sufferings of others and being moved by them.

Remember his embracing of the man with tumors? Pope Benedict felt this same sympathy when he embraced a man with leprosy.

In January this year Pope Francis went to Tacloban, Philippines. He had wanted to go there when they suffered the tragic devastation caused by Typhoon Yolanda. Even during this visit another typhoon came through and one of the Caritas workers was killed. Pope Francis was dressed in a yellow raincoat like everyone else. He surprised me by the opening words of his moving homily.

He said, "We have a High Priest."

"We have a high priest who is capable of sympathizing with



our weaknesses but one who similarly has been tested in every way yet without sin. ... Jesus always goes before us. And when we pass and experience a cross, He passed there before us. In His passion, He assumed all our pain... I come to tell you that Jesus is Lord and He never lets us down... Jesus is Lord and the Lord from the cross is there for you.

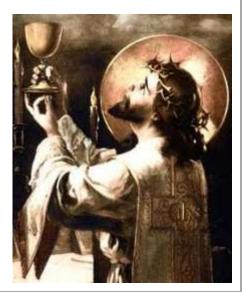
Therefore, He is capable of understanding us, as we heard in the first reading. In everything, the same as us. That is why we have a Lord who is capable of crying with us, capable of walking with us, in the most difficult moments of life. He understands us because He underwent all the trials that we, that you, have experienced. And beside the cross was His mother. We are like this little child, just there."

This message about Jesus as our Compassionate High Priest is at the heart of the spirit of our Confraternity of Christ the Priest. We wish to imitate the merciful love of Jesus who offers Himself as the victim; this is the absolute opposite of indifference. No greater love has any man than that he lay down his life for his friends".

Jesus the high Priest made our sufferings and our cause His own. As Isaiah prophesied, "By His wounds you are healed". But not only are we blessed and saved by Jesus' compassion; we share it, as by baptism we all share in his priesthood so we should share in His compassion.

Especially this Lent let's pray that in our parish we heed the message of Pope Francis, so that we may become an "island of compassion in an indifferent world", reaching out to those who are in need. We pray we will be inspired to become more like our trustworthy and compassionate High Priest, Jesus.

Fr Thomas Case



March Merries



Friend: Say, Fr, how is it that you're so thin and gaunt while your horse is so fat and sleek? Priest: Because I feed the horse and the congregation feeds me.

Father Teefer found himself wondering whether there were any golf courses in heaven. He even began to ask the question in his prayers. One day, in answer to his prayers, he received a direct answer from on high.

"Yes," said the heavenly messenger, "there are many excellent golf courses in heaven. The greens are always in first-class condition, the weather is always perfect, and you always play with the nicest people ."

"Oh, thank you," responded Father Teefer. "That really is marvelous news."

"Yes, isn't it?" replied the messenger. "And we've got you down for a foursome next Saturday."

If aliens ever attack, I hope they do it in rows of 8, going right and left directly above me. I'm very skilled at shooting aliens this way.

People who work on their tablets all day and play games all night are burning the Kindle at both ends.

A very upset minister walked into the fish market. "I want you to throw me four big fish," he said to the clerk. "Just toss 'em to me." "But why toss them to you?" the fishmonger asked.

"Can't I just wrap them and give them to you like everyone else?" "No, sir!" yelled the preacher. "Do just as I say. So if anyone asks me if I caught any fish today, I can truthfully say, 'Sure did. Caught four big ones!'"

What happened to the dog that swallowed a firefly? It barked with de-light!

My talking dog gave me a stick the other day and told me he found it 600 kilometres away. That's a bit far-fetched

A nearsighted minister glanced at the note that Mrs. Jones had sent to him by an usher. The note read, "Bill Jones having gone to sea, his wife desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety." Failing to note the punctuation, the cleric startled his audience by announcing, "Bill Jones, having gone to see his wife, desires the prayers of the congregation for his safety."

I can't believe I got zero percent in my Maths exam. That's about half what I was expecting to get.

I had an oddjob man in to help me do some work around the house. I gave him a list of 10 things to do. He only did numbers 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9.

Friend: Father, why did you fire your secretary? Priest: She couldn't spell. She kept

asking me how to spell about every other word while she took dictation. Friend: I suppose you couldn't stand the interruptions. Priest: No, it wasn't that. I just didn't have time to look up all those words.

I love bacon because I can wrap it around everything. Essentially, it's the duct tape of food.

My Grandad woke up with a puzzled look on his face..... He had fallen asleep on his jigsaw.!

When the traffic cop pulled over Father Johnson for speeding, the priest reminded the officer, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." The policeman handed the minister a ticket and quoted, "Go thou and sin no more." You know you're a bad driver when your GPS tells you "after 400 metres stop and let me out"

Fr Nick: I worry so much, I can't sleep at night and have terrible nightmares. Father Alphonsus: That's nothing. I'm sleeping like a baby. I wake up every three hours and cry.

"Waiter! This coffee tastes like mud." "Yes sir, it's fresh ground."

I want the job where you push scared skydivers out of planes.

Father Sampson was making visitation rounds on his trusty bicycle, when he turned a corner and came upon a young boy trying to sell a lawn mower. "How much do you want for it?" Fr

Sampson asked.

"I just need enough money to buy a bike," the boy explained. After a moment of thought, the priest asked, "Will you take my bike in trade for it?"

"Mister, you've got yourself a deal."

The priest took the mower and began to crank it. He pulled on the cord a few times with no reaction from the machine. The priest called the boy over and said, "I can't get this mower to start."

The boy said, "My dad says you have to swear at it to get it started." Father Sampson replied, "I am a priest and I cannot swear. I have been a priest for so long I don't even remember how to swear." The boy looked at him and said, "Just keep pulling on that cord, and it'll come back to you."

Did you hear about the guy who got crushed by fruit? he got berried alive



Stefan's calling hit 'like a semi-trailer'



SEVEN years ago, Stefan Matuszek had his life mapped out with plans including meeting his dream girl, starting a family and studying to become an engineer.

Obviously God had other ideas because on the evening of Thursday, February 12, in Lismore's St Carthage's Cathedral, Stefan will be ordained into the diaconate, a continuing step in his decision to become a priest. "For some the sense of vocation comes slowly and gradually, for others more quickly," the seminarian from Vianney College, Wagga Wagga, said.

His sense of vocation hit "like a semi-trailer".

"I was just doing what I normally did; minding my own business, and it hit me," Stefan said.

"The first day I thought I was a bit mad and tried ignoring it, but over a few days the sense grew so strong that I called a priest whose number had somehow made its way into my phone.

"I had no idea what else to do; I was pretty ignorant of basically everything concerning the priesthood.

"But he was very good, he helped answer questions I had, and even the questions that I didn't yet know to ask.

"He also suggested that I should start by telling my parents.

"It took me a few weeks to summon up the courage, although they had never put any pressure on me in regards to my future."

What the young man, who'd grown up with eight siblings in a good

Catholic family, discovered staggered him.

"Up until then I had never realised how much my parents had been hoping for one of their sons to become a priest," he said.

Stefan's six years of study have also included working in various pastoral areas of care and concern for others.

He undertook pastoral placements in primary and secondary schools, nursing homes, soup kitchens, hospitals, Wagga Wagga juvenile prison, six parishes in Lismore diocese, World Youth Days in Sydney and Madrid, pilgrimage and missionary work in Vietnam, and much more.

As he looks forward to his ordination, Stefan sums up the waiting experience in these words: "I don't imagine the priesthood to be an easy life, but if God is calling me to it He will help me to live it.

"Serving God and His people is its own reward.

"Please pray for me that I will always answer God's call to serve."

Article courtesy of Lismore diocese's website

I Find God in Suffering: The Fate & Faith of ISIS Captive Kayla Mueller

Images of children suffering in the early stages of Syria's civil war prompted Kayla to leave her home in Arizona, in Dec 2012, to help refugees.

Kayla found the work heartbreaking but compelling. She was captured on Aug. 4, 2013, in Aleppo, Syria, 10 days before her 25th birthday ...

In confirming her death, the Mueller family quoted a letter the young woman penned to her father on his birthday in 2011.

"I find God in the suffering eyes reflected in mine. If this is how you are revealed to me, this is how I will forever seek you."

In a letter written during her captivity in November 2014,

Mueller wrote to her family,

"Do not fear for me, continue to pray as will I ...

"I remember mom always telling me that all in all in the end the only one you really have is God. I have come to a place in experience where, in every sense of the word, I have surrendered myself to our creator b/c literally there was no else.... + by God + by your prayers I have felt tenderly cradled in freefall.

"I have been shown in darkness, light + have learned that even in prison, one can be free. I am grateful. I have come to see that there is good in every situation, sometimes we just have to look for



it. I pray each each day that if nothing else, you have felt a certain closeness + surrender to God as well + have formed a bond of love + support amongst one another...

"Please be patient, give your pain to God. I know you would want me to remain strong. That is exactly what I am doing. Do not fear for me, continue to pray as will I + by God's will we will be together soon.

"All my everything, Kayla"

7 Ways to Improve Your Marriage This Lent

by Danielle Bean

1. Give up negativity.

Do you whine and complain to your spouse? Do you criticize and judge too harshly and too quickly? It's okay to admit. Many of us do become comfortable in long-term, committed relationships and fall into the easy habit of venting regular negativity to our spouse. Some of this kind of venting can be a normal part of a healthy relationship, but negative words and attitudes tend to feed, grow, spiral downward, and rob you of joy.

For Lent, resolve: I will avoid making negative comments and observations to my spouse. I will seek out positive things to say and foster encouraging conversations we can enjoy together.

2. Be active together.

What do you and your spouse do after the kids have gone to bed or whenever you have downtime together? Do you silently stare at a flickering television screen? Do you retreat to separate corners of the house, each pursuing your own activities?

For Lent, resolve: I will replace some of our daily passivity and separation with an activity my spouse and I both enjoy. I will commit to spending regular time together, focused on common goals, and enjoying one another's company.

3. Do more than your share.

Do you nitpick and keep track of who does what around the house and how often? Do you feel like you are the only one who ever changes the toilet paper roll/empties the dishwasher/takes out the trash/ fill in this blank with your own pet peeve?

For Lent, resolve: I will stop keeping track of my spouse's daily contributions to household chores. Instead, I will look for ways to do extra work myself and take on tasks that are "not my job" with a spirit of cheerful generosity and out of love for our Lord.

4. Pay more compliments.

Can you think of a time when someone said something critical of you and it cut you to the core? Can you think of a time when someone complimented you and you felt over the moon? Words have real power and are an important tool we can use build up those we love ... or tear them down.

For Lent, resolve: I will pay my spouse a sincere and specific compliment at least once every day. I will look for ways to affirm my spouse as a parent, as a friend, as a worker, and as the most important person in my life.

5. Pray together.

Some couples avoid praying together because it makes them feel awkward or embarrassed. Others see it as too much of a time commitment. But there is no better way to unite yourself and your marriage to the Lord than by putting yourselves in his presence, together. For Lent, resolve: I will set aside time to pray with my spouse every day. I will overcome any personal reluctance I might have and commit to praying with and for my spouse on a daily basis.

6. Soak up the sacraments.

We Catholics have such a great gift in the sacraments! Because he loves us, Jesus gave us the sacraments as a means of attaining the grace we need to do God's will every day. The sacraments feed our souls, heal us, and fill us with God's own life. This all sounds wonderful, but how often do we take the sacraments for granted? Do we remember that our marriages themselves are a sacrament and ask God to give us the graces we need to grow in love together? Do we receive the Eucharist unthinkingly and avoid confession?

For Lent, resolve: I will find new ways to receive and appreciate the sacraments with my spouse. I will pray daily for the sacramental grace from our marriage and look for more opportunities to receive the Eucharist and sacrament of Penance together.

7. Speak healing words.

Pope Francis recently encouraged engaged couples to use the healing words "please," "thank you," and "I'm sorry."

These are everyday words we often use with others, but sometimes neglect to use enough with those we love most. Lent offers us an opportunity to think about the healing power of everyday words and use them to build our marriages and communicate love, appreciation, and humility to our spouses.

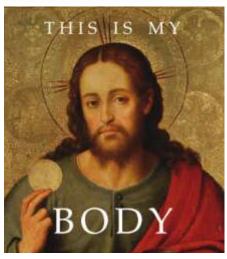
For Lent, resolve: I will use healing words (please, thank you, I'm sorry, and I love you) every day. I will look for new opportunities to love, appreciate, thank, heal, and build up my spouse through small words and phrases.

Pope Francis reminds us that, like the wedding at Cana, our marriages are meant to be a celebration of love. By making some small changes, sacrifices, and commitments to improve your marriage this Lent, you and your spouse can enjoy a celebration of love that will reward you with a stronger, happier, more satisfying, and Christ-centered marriage for Easter.



Use Son screen to prevent sin burn

Is the Eucharist Really Just a Symbol? 5 Convincing Proofs that Say it is Not



equippinggodlywomen.com

The first blow to my old Protestant belief system was a big one, and one I wasn't expecting. As I was reading along in the book *Surprised by Truth*, one section jumped right off the page and stopped me right in my tracks:

"Writing to the church at Smyrna, a major ..., Ignatius wrote "They [the heretics] even absent themselves from the Eucharist and public prayers [cf. Acts 2:42], because they will not admit that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ which suffered for our sins and which the Father in his goodness afterwards raised up again."

Now, I'd had Catholics tell me that Jesus's words "This is my body" and "This is my blood" were literal before, but not one of them could ever give me a single solid reason why I should believe it other than because that's what they *thought* the words meant. Well... that's not a very good argument. ...

You see, Jesus spoke in parables all the time, I reasoned. ...

Except that once I started researching further, I started to discover things I never knew before. And in the course of my research, I found five very convincing reasons why the Eucharist must be none other than the real body and blood. Maybe they'll convince you too?

1. The Early Church Believed It

I've always thought that if anyone had a chance of getting it right, it was the early church. After all, they were the ones who heard it straight from the source.

Take Ignatius, for example (author of the quote above). Ignatius was the first bishop of Antioch (the city were Jesus' followers were first called Christians) and he studied under the apostle John (the one that wrote the Gospel of John). I'd say he would probably be a pretty reliable source! And yet, here he was writing about the real presence of the Eucharist as though it were common knowledge only 10 to 15 years after the apostle John's death! That's not a lot of time to get the message mixed up.

You don't just have to take his word for it though. Apparently all of the early church fathers believed in the real presence of the Lord in the Eucharist. In fact, the doctrine was never seriously questioned until the 11th century. Hmmm.... Did not know that.

Given the choice between what my pastor says today and the beliefs of the first (and second, and third...) century church... well that's a pretty strong argument. ...

2. The Jews Couldn't Accept It

Another thing I never realized: The "this is my body... this is my blood" passage you read in Luke... it isn't the only time when Jesus talks about being the bread of life.

I won't retype the entire passage here, but I strongly encourage you to look up and read John 6:22-71. In it, Jesus has a lengthy discussion with the Jews in which he compares the manna the Israelites ate in the desert and the bread of eternal life that God offers today. The Jews are understandably very confused, but Jesus just keeps repeating the same thing over and over again.

"Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." –John 6:33

"I am the bread of life. ...; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." John 6:48-51

"Jesus said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."" –John 6:53-56.

But where it REALLY gets interesting is the Jews' reaction after the fact. In verse 66, it records that "many [of] his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him." Would they leave over a mere symbol? Seems doubtful. So I'm guessing that the Jewish people knew Jesus was being literal, even if they didn't really understand it.

3. Jesus's Use of the Greek Word "Trogon"

While having the ability to read the Bible in English is wonderful; it does come with some limitations. One of which is the fact that some things are lost in translation.

What you DON'T notice when reading the passage above is that when Jesus talks about eating, he is actually using two separate verbs. At first, he uses the Greek word "phagon" which is the normal Greek word for "to eat." Part way through the passage, however, he suddenly switches to the word "trogon," which literally means to crunch or gnaw.

Jesus wasn't telling them to "partake" or "consume." He was saying they literally had to crunch,

5 Convincing Proofs Continued

gnaw or chew. (Kind of hard to "crunch" on a symbol... but you can try!) Furthermore, the tense of the word "trogon" implies that this is an action that will take place continuously over time—not as a one -time event.

4. The Eucharist Comes with a Strong Warning

Fast forward to 1 Corinthians, and you'll find this strongly worded passage:

"Therefore, whoever eats the bread

or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord... For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgement on himself. That is why many among you are ill and infirm, and a considerable number are dying." –1 Corinthians 11:27, 29-30 Since when do mere symbols come with death penalties?

5. Eucharistic Miracles

Before a few weeks ago, I never even knew there was such a thing as Eucharistic miracles. At first I was very skeptical-because how could you even prove something like this? But from what I can tell at least SOME of the miracles are VERY well documented, scientific and hard to dispute.

Well, there you have it, folks. These aren't the only reasons–I actually came up with a few more–but if you believe in the Bible and these arguments don't convince you (or at least cause you to question!), then I don't know what will!

Regular Confession for the Family

Raylan Alleman, 2/10/15

For whatever reason it seems in many Catholic Parishes the practice of regular Confession has become a thing of the past and that's unfortunate. It may be somehow due to a minimalist concept of just doing what is required as prescribed by the precept of confessing one's sins at least once a year. But possibly what may have happened in the meantime is a bit of a dulling of the conscience and a lacking in confronting one's faults to the detriment of countless souls.

It is almost as though one isn't expected to go to Confession unless he has killed someone or stolen something. A few generations ago, it was a common practice for families to go to Confession on a regular basis, and you'd often see long lines every weekend at Parishes where families had arranged to do so. Fortunately, we belong to such a Parish. I was reflecting on it this evening while praying before Mass as I heard the door to the Confessional repeatedly open and close. What a beautiful sound.

Like many things in the Church today, it appears the pendulum is swinging back in the right direction, and we're seeing a revival of regular Confession. I've heard several people tell me that they've noticed this in Parishes where they attend as well, especially where there are younger priests serving. As parents, this should be part of the education and formation of our children.

Obviously they should be prepared to make their First Confession BEFORE receiving their First Holy Communion. They should be trained in the proper method of making a Confession with the proper prayers to say, etc. Then we need to take the approach of this being a part of our Catholic way of life making regular use of the Sacrament. We must avoid the contemporary innovation of rarely having our children go to Confession.

Regular examinations of conscience and Confessions help to keep us aware of our faults and conscience of the work we need to do in continually resisting temptations. So first of all, we need to set the example as parents by making regular use of the Sacrament ourselves.

In addition to being the reception of a Sacrament it is also an exercise in humility that our children will come to recognize more and more the older they get. When they see us going to Confession, especially the dads, they see that we are admitting our faults and weaknesses and that we are submitting to a higher Authority than ourselves. It is a good practice to regularly have an examination of conscience as part of family prayer where the family members silently reflect on the sins they may have committed that day.

Then the children should be given the opportunity to regularly receive the Sacrament themselves. A good practice for children is once per month Confession at least, and more often as needed. This may require us as parents to bring them to Church at times when Confession is offered. They should see this as a priority and us making it a priority for them.

The season of Lent is [here]. It may be time for our families to make a better effort at refining our practice of regular Confession. It goes a long way in keeping us "clean" and strong in order to resist the temptations that are surely to come. In addition the graces received from the Sacrament fortify us further to resist the tactics of the Devil. What a beautiful Sacrament we have in the practice of Confession, a valuable tool in our quest for sanctity.

God bless you+



