

News from St Michael's Community

March 2005
Volume 22

Services Timetable

Sunday Eucharist

8am & 10am

Saturday Vigil 5pm

Monday 7.15am Cluny Convent

Tuesday 7am

Wednesday 9am

Thursday 7am

Friday 12.05pm

Saturday 8am

Adoration of Blessed Sacrament

Friday 11am

Benediction

Friday 12 noon

Reconciliation

Friday 11.30am

Saturday 9.30am

Revelations

is produced for the friends and
parishioners of

St Michael's Parish

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Auckland, New Zealand

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Revelations

From Ashes to Easter



Elizabeth Connell joins the children of St Michael's School on Ash Wednesday.

'We are Easter people!' What a marvelous affirming statement. To become Easter people we travel from ashes to Easter! It is a journey that we take over and over again, for as long as it takes. Journey's end is when we are, to quote from a recent parish bulletin, "reborn with Him to everlasting life." We know where we are going. We are going from the self-denial and sacrifice of the Lenten season, to the joy of the Easter renewal of our Baptism promises. But how do we get there? Is there a map? Are there signposts along the way?

This year I had the privilege of beginning my journey from ashes to Easter in St Michael's Church, along with the delightful children, and their teachers, from years 1 and 3, at St Michael's School. Perhaps they had the map? Luckily there were some signposts in the church. Good! The altar steps were decorated to look like a path through the desert, reminding us that at the start of His journey to Easter, Jesus retired into the desert to pray. The church looked quite sombre. There were none of the usual floral arrangements, and large purple banners had been hung behind the altar and tabernacle. Monsignor told us that the church uses purple to show us that this is a serious season. (Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

A placard proclaimed, "Now is the Favourable Time!" Always good to know that the time is right when one sets out on a journey! Some of the children brought forward more signposts to mark the journey ahead: a purple cloth: to remind us again of the serious nature of our journey.
a lighted candle: Jesus, the light during Lent.
a Bible: the Good News to guide us.
a crucifix: to remind us of Jesus' sacrifice for us.
And finally, a box for almsgiving: a reminder to help others.

The summer sun glinted through the stained glass windows as the children read from the Bible and recited prayers in clear young voices. (I doubt that many adults could have managed better. Truly we are in good hands for all our journeys ahead if these children are the benchmark of current Catholic education.) Monsignor clarified the passages the children had read. This was the map! Pray! Use and appreciate the gifts that God has given us. He forgives us. We should forgive others. Help others. And lastly fast. Don't eat so much. Monsignor then blessed the ashes with Holy Water from the Baptismal font. Each child came forward to receive their ashes with the sign of the cross and the words "Turn to Christ and believe the Gospel."

Some were slightly bemused with the dark smudge on their classmate's forehead, but most seemed to appreciate the seriousness of the occasion. We sang Michael Mangan's song "Out of Ashes". One line goes: "Start a fresh new life right here today, in the ashes, from the ashes, out of ashes." I walked out into the summer sunshine; the children went back to school. Our journey from ashes to Easter had begun.

Easter a confirming experience

Anna Friis meets those "Becoming Catholic" this Easter.

Another large group of adults is gathering each week at St Michael's as part of their journey towards becoming Catholic this Easter.

Everyone's reasons are different, but overwhelmingly the feeling that "it was just the right thing to do" has drawn the group of eight women and one man together each Thursday evening to study under the tutelage of Jennifer Spencer, Tim Gasson and Sister Francis Kelly.

The group has been gathering since last September and will officially be received into the Church at Easter.

Several women in the group have been going to Mass for a great many years, bringing up their Catholic children, as the wives of Catholic men. For them, it was a matter of formalising something that had for so long been an important part of their lives.

For others, it was simply just "time and place".

The group will formally become Catholic on Easter Saturday and will be confirmed by Monsignor Arahill.

We welcome, pictured below:

Simone Fraser, Janet Hollier, Kaye Batterton, Nicky Foreman, Deb Hollier, Catherine Husheer and Mark Lunt.





Visitor file

Anna Friis introduces visiting seminarian Thomas Bauer

St Michael's and Monsignor Arahill, in particular, have long been valued sources of inspiration and support for priests and those studying towards the priesthood.

Over the last few weeks parishioners of St Michael's may have met Thomas Bauer, the latest student to stay in the Parish House. He is studying towards the priesthood at a seminary in Munich, and currently on overseas experience.

His stay at St Michael's comes after stints at parishes in Wellington, Tonga, Fiji and Samoa. He will spend time here in Remuera and then continue his travels before being back in Europe in time for

World Youth Day, this year being held in Cologne.

Thomas says there are 24 fellow students studying with him at his seminary. All going to plan, Thomas will be ordained priest in 2009.

It's good to be back

Monsignor Arahill talks to Anna Friis about his recent time away from St Michael's.

For the first time in 47 years, Monsignor Arahill did not preside at Christmas Mass last December. That, and missing out on end-of-year activities with St Michael's school students, was one of the hardest aspects of his sudden departure late last year suffering from heart problems.

He's back and, while still officially convalescing, says he's feeling a whole lot better and very grateful for the huge support he had from a great number of people following his operation to renew an aortic valve in November.

Monsignor spent part of his convalescence at St John Vianney House, a priest retirement centre and recuperation unit in Vermont St, Ponsonby, before heading off to Hawera to stay with his sister for Christmas.

St Michael's parish Christmas and Sunday masses were taken by Fr Stephen Berecz and Fr John Allardyce.

Monsignor says the suddenness of his condition, made visible by his collapse while saying Wednesday morning Mass, caught him by surprise.

"In truth, I had not been feeling well for most of last year, but was still very unprepared for what happened," he says.

"I am left in complete awe and gratitude at the skill of the surgeons involved, as well as at the great support I received from everyone. It was a difficult time for me personally, but I was carried by the love and care of so many people.

"I am very happy to be back."

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Zipper club of the soul

An Easter poem for the Parish Priest

Parishoner Mark Casey offers this Easter Poem...

They call it the Zipper Club
he said with a grin:
it's pretty exclusive...
pretty hard to get in.
The first thing you need
is a heart that is broken;
and then it gets worse...
they cut you wide open.
But they rebore your engine
and sew up your hide;
and then, best of all,
you wake up alive.

But that's not so exclusive
that's who we all are...
the broken of spirit,
the broken of heart.
We stumble in darkness,
stare death in the face;
'til we humble ourselves
to ask for His grace.
Then He reaches inside us
and remakes us whole
as new members of His
Zipper Club Of The Soul.

That's the meaning of Easter...
the death that brings life;
the rebirth of spirit
from dark into light.
But it must have been lonely
hung on that cross
dying to save
a world that was lost;
for He was after all
both a carpenter's son
and the Son of a Father
whose will must be done.



Teachers at
Religious
Education
training day

Why teaching in a Catholic school is special

Anna Friis reports.

Most children learn best first thing in the morning – so that's when Religious Education is taught at St Michael's School.

It's that commitment to teaching Religious Education well which every teacher at St Michael's holds dear.

“Ongoing professional development in teaching Religious Education is part and parcel of every teacher's commitment when they join this school, Jo Augustine, principal of St Michael's School says.”

Jo continues, “We are also fortunate in that we have a parish priest who is very visible around the school and available to teachers and students whenever they need him. That, and the fact that the school is immediately adjacent to the church building, and we are all in it a lot, means that the Catholic character of St Michael's is very obvious to all including children, teachers and parents.”

“While numeracy and literacy are also a priority in our school, Religious Education and our values as a Catholic school, underpin everything we do. We think that is why parents choose St Michael's for their children. “

(A number of magazines come my way. I would like to offer my “quotable quote” **Brian Arahill**)

It's free and it works

(From “America” The National Catholic Review)

A teacher asked her pupils to attend a Catholic Service and reflect on “Who is Jesus Christ for these people?” She comments on the answers. “To my surprise, my 20 something students' basic satisfaction with the liturgical services did not depend on the quality of the music or the preaching, which only received mention when they moved towards one extreme or the other (“fabulous” or “awful”). They also did not discuss the inadequate sound systems. The practice that to the greatest extent determined whether

or not they considered their experience to be positive was **simple hospitality**. If they were greeted at the door and handed a worship aid, if the people they sat with smiled at them and moved over for them, if they could see that the members of the community enjoyed being with each other before and after the service (even if no one spoke to them, because they were strangers) – these things made all the difference.

As one student put it: “If anyone was taking the message of Jesus with them as they departed, they were doing so in their hearts. Everyone looked so refreshed and rejuvenated. There were smiles on their faces and there was happy chatter among the crowd as they were leaving church.”



The community of St Michael's as an experimental kingdom of God

Sarah Hart is a full-time violinist with the Auckland Philharmonia. Since returning to NZ she has contributed to the life of the parish in different ways. Sarah has a Master's degree in Biblical Studies. She writes:

My favourite visual representation of the Trinity is one where the heads of the three persons of the Trinity are carved around a column. All three heads are at the same level so each person can easily talk and listen, and I guess share other things such as ideas. In a similar social vein, Leonardo Boff writes of the relationships within the Trinity as community in one of his books.

As there are different representations of the Trinity so there are many models of the Church. Sometimes a vision and positive action for the church comes from lay people such as the Poynton family in the Hokianga in the late 1700s, or the restorative justice movement in Lyttelton, Banks Peninsula.

St Michael's has many parishioners experienced in leading and mentoring people in different professions in Auckland. Talents are trained and applied as much as possible in our professional contexts. Some of us are also fortunate to be trained as lay presiders or readers. Others participate in on-going faith formation, studying, reading the Bible, praying.

We could develop our Church gifts more if, for example, we regularly presided at liturgies, shared or spoke to the readings. Musicians would be available for funerals and baptisms if the community supported it. Or, do such ideas still need to be put into people's heads? I think our Church gifts are often left latent, sleeping, because we do not have the regular opportunity to practise them. Talents need practice to develop.

Perhaps sub-consciously, we are happy to leave many obligations to the parish priest or a small group of over-

committed volunteers. If so, this may be linked to our own sluggish Church growth. A community is only as vibrant as the sum of its parts. For each of us to grow more, I think we need to participate in the parish community more actively and develop a variety of talents within the Church.

Something seems to hinder this from happening. A couple of suggestions follow. Sharing and consultation are characteristics of a community that works and is alive. One of my hopes for St Michael's parish is that through consultation with the bishop and therefore in dialogue with the greater Auckland diocese we could find ways of increasing lay participation and sharing priests more generously. It seems to me that traditionally bishops tend to keep a 'good priest' in a 'wealthy parish,' wanting to retain influence with people well positioned within society. Removing a priest from an influential parish could be seen as a loss of important influence by the Church. But the parish of St Michael's is more than equipped to have a priest only a couple of weeks a month or even less.

We have all the prerequisites at St Michael's for a parish that could be almost completely lead and sustained by parishioners. Sharing our parish priest for some of the time and perhaps the majority of the time with say, a rural parish, might force us to become more responsible for our parish life. We could pilot a parish of living community where each of us lives out our priestly roles, and share a sacramental priest who comes less frequently.

Secondly, Auckland's contemporary diocesan context is one of few priests and many trained lay people. Lay people are in the service of the Church, at parish, diocesan, or inter-diocesan level. Many are highly trained and experienced, but often private income allows them to serve the Church with their gifts in a voluntary or part-time capacity. A young married person with a family may have a huge contribution to make, but is not often in a position to do so, because they simply cannot afford to give up a full-time job to work for the Church and provide adequately for their family. Besides, it may well be the pastoral assistants who are facilitating parishioners into training programmes to develop their priestly gifts. Appropriate remuneration for well qualified lay people in the Church should be available. I think it is more than time for a Foundation Trust to be established by lay people for lay people to create a financial basis for future payment of those in church service.

I suggest St Michael's as a community where priestly people serve one another and where a Foundation Trust is established to appropriately pay those who work to facilitate community alive.



Caring for our heritage

Pat de Zoete reports on behalf of the finance council.

An important element of belonging, is caring for our properties to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the community and are handed over to future generations in good condition. St Michael's parish has the added responsibility of caring for a scheduled heritage building (the Church and surroundings) of special value to the wider community. On the recommendation of the heritage team at the Auckland City Council and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, in 2003 the parish pastoral and finance councils commissioned Dave Pearson Architects Ltd to complete a Conservation Plan for St Michael's Church.

What is a Conservation Plan?

"A conservation plan is a way of working out what is important about an historic place, and a means to help in making decisions on the best way of using and caring for the place – essentially, how to conserve it." *Guidelines for Preparing Conservation Plans – NZ Historic Places Trust*

The conservation plan process involves a thorough investigation and assessment of the physical condition of the building and includes research of the history of the land and structures. Additionally, it addresses previous uses and takes into account wider issues such as the social, economic, political and spiritual factors that shape current and possible future use.

Our Plan

Dave Pearson Architects Ltd began working on a conservation plan for St Michael's church in 2003. After three drafts which included consultation with the parish pastoral and finance councils, the heritage team at Auckland City Council and the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, we are now at the point where the final document is about to be printed.

What Does it Say?

The Church was assessed for aesthetic value (context, architectural, landmark), social significance (cultural, spiritual, symbolic) and scientific value (technological and functional) and was assessed to have exceptional (the highest rating) significance under historic, aesthetic and scientific criteria. Of great assistance to us is an audit of the physical state of the building which produced a list of defects in the three broad areas: the roof, the surfaces and the stained glass windows. It also provides suggestions for the remedial work that needs to be carried out over the next 5 to 10 years. The finance council is working with Dave Pearson Architects Ltd to prepare a Maintenance Plan, to ensure the necessary work is scheduled in a timely manner and provided for financially over the coming years. If you would like to know more, you can read the conservation plan which may be borrowed from the parish office. *The assistance of the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board in providing assistance for the conservation plan is acknowledged.*

Financial Report

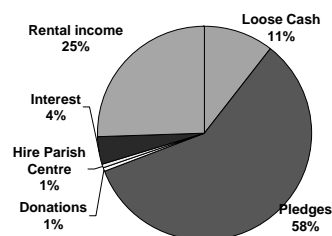
1 January – 31 December 2004

The parish finance council met monthly during 2004 and is pleased to report there were no financial surprises during the year.

Total operating income amounted to \$272,194 (budget \$268,760) and rental income \$92,815 (budget \$85,000). In line with diocesan guidelines, 25% of pledges and loose cash giving (\$64,289) was transferred to the house trust account (in lieu of a first collection) for the support of the parish priest, housekeeping for the parish house, an allocation for the support of the bishop's household and the balance contributed to the support and care of retired priests.

The graph below shows the sources of parish income.

St Michael's Parish - Income



Clearly, pledges (through both the envelopes and automatic payment options) provide the largest source of our funding, and are the most helpful way of ensuring the parish remains able to meet its financial commitments and plan soundly for the future. *(If you are new to the parish and would like information about planned support, please contact Monsignor or Pat in the parish office.)*

During the year special collections received and forwarded amounted to almost \$14,000. Around \$5,000 was the result of the Caritas Lenten Appeal, \$5,000 to the annual special collections of Peter's Pence, Maori Mission, seminary appeal, Mission Sunday and the Caring Foundation. The balance was spread between Monte Cecilia,

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Refugee and Migrant Services, Habitat for Humanity, Mensline, Catholic Enquiry Centre, Pregnancy Help and an additional donation to Caritas for the Tsunami victims of \$2,000.

Parish operating expenditure was in line with expectations, and amounted to \$193,378, the largest category being maintenance of the church, parish house and grounds (\$63,457) parish office (\$55,577) and utilities and rates (\$19049).

The loan from the diocese for the purchase of MacKillop House was reduced by \$24,000 this year – the balance outstanding now being \$243,000. We continue to reduce this loan by \$2,000 per month as well as meet the interest of 5% p.a. on the principal outstanding.

The balance of the Retained Bequest Account stands at \$285,382 and these funds are held on deposit with the Diocesan Development Fund.

The conservation plan commissioned by Dave Pearson Architects Ltd (refer separate article) and the Jubilee Projects (the gathering space and piazza proposals) commanded significant time and consultation during the year and will continue to be a major focus during 2005.

A full set of the parish accounts, prepared by Hargrave Accounting Ltd, is available to any parishioner on request to the parish office.

The finance council (Monsignor Brian Arahill, Bob Coombe, Carey Pearce, Phillip Bell, Pat de Zoete) meets on the 4th Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm in the parish house. Members welcome feedback, questions and ideas people have for the better use and care of our parish resources.

Parish Finance Council

February 2005

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MILESTONES

Baptisms: the parish welcomes...

Christopher Nicholas **Buysers** son of Tanya
Jacob Michael **Wells** son of Stuart and Annabelle
Danielle Marquita **van den Anker** daughter of Mark and Teresa
James Nicholas **Wilson** son of Mark and Kate
Isabelle Grace **Muir** daughter of Oliver and Rachel
George Andrew Llewellyn **Barker** son of Andrew and Wendy
Samuel Michael **Clegg** son of Michael and Kylie
Timothy Joseph **Barker** son of John and Ashley
Marion Luke Gavril Enriquez son of Michael and Ludy
Innes Marie Isabella Rangikawhiti **Morais** daughter
of Michael and Lauren
Katherine Mary **Yovich** daughter of Gregory and Marie
Jessica Jane **Guerin** daughter of Barry and Jane
Kruno Williams **Marsich** son of Gorran and Lisa
Dominic John Köszegei **Ryan** son of Peter and Rachel
Kyra Maria Jane **Bellingham** daughter of John and Josephine
Attilio Dermot **Murphy** son of Giordano and Nicola

Marriages: blessings on...

Amber Monique **Pamplin** and Emil **Milostic**
Pouiva **Lamusu** and Anthony Mark **Vuletich**
Bernadette Mary **Carpenter** and Mark James **Orman**
Brigid Emma **Strevens** and Stephen Russell James **Coyle**
Mara Ermina **Djugum** and Aaron Richard **Bhatnagar**
Elizabeth Margaret **O'Halloran** and John Antony **Cao**
Narelle Susanne **Johnston** and David Francis **Leach**
Sarah Eilis **Jackson** and John Paul **Enright**
Sarah Louise **Nicholls** and Jonathan Bernard **Fitzgerald**
Tania Isobel **Muller** and Marin Joseph **Sinovcic**
Paula Lorraine **McChesney** and Michael Peter **Raynes**
Tanya Maria **Posa** and John Anthony **Urlich**
Keri Marie **Neilson** and Alexander Edward **Milich**
Heba **Al Hilali** and Maurizio **Cozzolino**
Rebecca Jane **Patchett** and Simon David Kerrigan **Brown**
Bridget Catherine **Neiper** and Anthony Eduard Jan **Kleyne**

Deaths: we pray for...

Winifred Ethel **Schulze**
Doris Eileen **Patterson**

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Holy Week Timetable

Palm Sunday 20 th March	All Masses 7.00pm	Blessing of Palms Reconciliation
Monday 21 st March	7.30 pm	Chrim Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral
Tuesday 22 nd March	7.00 am	Mass
Wednesday 23 rd March	9.00 am 7.30 pm	Mass Reconciliation
Holy Thursday 24 th March	7.30 pm	Mass of the Lord's Supper Watching and Praying until 10.30pm
Good Friday 25 th March	10.00am 3.00 pm 7.00 pm	Family Way of the Cross Good Friday Commemoration Taize Prayer around the Cross
Holy Saturday 26 th March	9.30 am	Reconciliation <i>Note: No 5.00pm Mass</i>
Easter Sunday 27 th March	6.00 am 10.00 am	Celebration of the Easter Christ and First Mass of Easter Easter Mass <i>Note: No 8.00am Mass</i>



St Michael's Contacts

Parish Priest:

Monsignor Brian Arahill
bfarahill@clear.net.nz

In Residence:

Father Stephen Berecz

Religious Education:

Sister Francis Kelly

Family Ministry:

Sister Francis Kelly

Caring Co-ordinator:

Kathryn Schollum

Youth Ministry:

Tim Gasson

Music Rosters:

Tony Vela

Secretary/Administration:

Pat de Zoete

Parish Office:

9am-1pm Monday-Friday
Telephone: 520 1226

Parish Council:

Monsignor Arahill, Susy Bell, Anne Duffy,
Mark Jeffaries, Neil Little (Chairperson),
Christabelle Matthews, Alicia Murray,
Giles Potter, Jessica Spencer
and Peter Zink (Secretary)

Finance Council:

Monsignor Arahill, Phillip Bell,
Kevin Pickworth, Bob Coombe
Carey Pearce, Mike Going
and Pat de Zoete

Liturgy Committee:

Monsignor Arahill, Margaret Garrett,
Patricia Kessler, Jennifer Spencer,
Catherine Everitt, Viki Cullen,
Ruth Miller, and Peter Ravlich

Revelations Team:

Elizabeth Connell, Anna Friis,
Frances Hay-Mackenzie,
Christabelle Matthews, Anthony Martin
and Robert Tingey

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