

**News from
St Michael's
Community**

**December 2003
Volume 18**

Services Timetable

Sunday Eucharist

*Saturday Vigil 5pm
Sunday 8am & 10am*

Monday 7.15am Cluny Convent

Tuesday 8am

Wednesday 9am

Thursday 8am

Friday 12.05pm

Saturday 8.15 am

**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
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Revelations

The Jesse Tree



Robert Tingey Photography

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ABOVE: St Michael's school leavers prepare for Advent by decorating the Jesse Tree.

There is more on this traditional Advent symbol on pages 2 and 6.

From our Parish Priest....

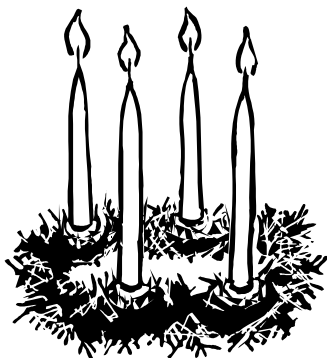
We live in a culture that bypasses Advent. Christmas tends to be celebrated from mid-November to Christmas Eve. But we need the time of waiting. We need time to ponder the event. We need time to celebrate Reconciliation. The Masses and other services shown on these pages will help us all to wait, to prepare.

May our Advent waiting enable us to bring Christ to birth in our lives a little more deeply this Christmas 2003.

(Monsignor) Brian Arahill

AT TABLE DURING ADVENT

A Blessing Before Meals



Candles on the Advent Wreath are lit as a family member says:

Blessed are you, Lord,
God of all creation:
in the darkness and in the light.

Blessed are you
in this food and in our sharing.

Blessed are you as we wait
in joyful hope for the coming of our saviour,
Jesus Christ.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.

Come, Lord Jesus!
Come quickly!

Some interesting notes

On the first Sunday of Advent (30 November 2003) at the 10 am Mass there will be an Advent presentation “**The Jesse Tree: The Family Tree of Jesus**” by the pupils and parents of St Michael’s school.

On the same day at 8pm there will be a combined **Advent Service of Light, Carols and Readings** at St Mark’s Anglican Church, Remuera Road.

Reconciliation Services are held every Friday at 11.30am, and Saturday at 9.30am, and also on Sunday 7 December at 7pm, and on Sunday 21 December at 7pm when carols will also be sung.

During Advent you are invited to take a card from the **Christmas Giving Tree** and provide a Christmas gift for a child. You may also bring a contribution for the food parcels that are distributed during the week before Christmas.

On Sunday 14 December at 7pm there will be a **Youth Mass** at St Michael’s church

St Michael’s school have a special mass in the church on Monday 15 December at 7pm.

The Vigil Mass of Christmas at 7.00pm on Christmas Eve is particularly suited to families with young children. It is always well-attended.

The **First Mass of Christmas** commences at 11.15pm on Christmas Eve with a carols and readings. Come early to get a seat.

The **Holiday Timetable** will be effective from Friday 26 December until 24 January 2004. All weekday Masses/Services of the Word will be at 8.15am.

The usual 5pm Saturday Vigil and 8 and 10 am Sunday Masses will continue during this period.

STOP PRESS:

WHERE HAVE ALL THE CATHOLICS GONE?

During November Bishop Dunn asks that a count be taken of those at Mass. It helps with future planning and the number of Masses needed in each church.

At St Michael’s those attending Mass has gone down.

The average attendance for the first two Sundays of November was 455. We used to have over 600 at Mass.

At the rate we are going we will only need **one Sunday Mass!**

Advent & Christmas at St Michael's

SUNDAY 30 November	MONDAY 1 December	TUESDAY 2 December	WEDNESDAY 3 December	THURSDAY 4 December	FRIDAY 5 December	SATURDAY 6 December
Blessing of the Advent Wreaths <i>8am: Mass</i> <i>10am: The Jesse Tree:</i> Family Tree of Jesus. <i>8pm: @St Marks Anglican Church</i> Service of Light, Carols & Readings	<i>7.15am: Mass @ Cluny Convent</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>9am: Mass</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>11am: Holy Hour</i> <i>Noon: Benediction</i> <i>12.05pm: Mass</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass</i> <i>9.30am: Reconciliation</i> <i>5pm: Sunday Vigil Mass</i>
SUNDAY 7 December	MONDAY 8 December	TUESDAY 9 December	WEDNESDAY 10 December	THURSDAY 11 December	FRIDAY 12 December	SATURDAY 13 December
2nd Sunday of Advent <i>8am: Mass</i> <i>10am: Mass</i> <i>7pm: Reconciliation</i>	<i>7.15am: Mass @ Cluny Convent</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>9am: Mass</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>11am: Holy Hour</i> <i>Noon: Benediction</i> <i>12.05pm: Mass</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass</i> <i>9.30am: Reconciliation</i> <i>5pm: Sunday Vigil Mass</i>
SUNDAY 14 December	MONDAY 15 December	TUESDAY 16 December	WEDNESDAY 17 December	THURSDAY 18 December	FRIDAY 19 December	SATURDAY 20 December
3rd Sunday of Advent Blessing of the Crib <i>8am: Mass</i> <i>10am: Mass</i> <i>7pm: St Michael's Youth Mass</i>	<i>7.15am: Mass @ Cluny Convent</i> <i>7pm: Celebration Mass for St Michael's School</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>9am: Mass</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>11am: Holy Hour</i> <i>Noon: Benediction</i> <i>12.05pm: Mass</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass</i> <i>9.30am: Reconciliation</i> <i>5pm: Sunday Vigil Mass</i>
SUNDAY 21 December	MONDAY 22 December	TUESDAY 23 December	WEDNESDAY 24 December	CHRISTMAS 25 December	FRIDAY 26 December	SATURDAY 27 December
4th Sunday of Advent Placing of the figures in the Crib <i>8am: Mass</i> <i>10am: Mass</i> <i>7pm: Reconciliation With Carols</i>	<i>7.15am: Mass @ Cluny Convent</i>	<i>7am: Mass</i>	<i>9am: Mass</i> Christmas Eve <i>7pm: Vigil Mass for Christmas (Family)</i> <i>11.15pm: Carols and Readings</i>	<i>Midnight: Mass of Christmas</i> <i>8am: Christmas Mass</i> <i>10am: Christmas Mass</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i> <i>5pm: Sunday Vigil Mass</i>
SUNDAY 28 December	MONDAY 29 December	TUESDAY 30 December	WEDNESDAY 31 December	THURSDAY 1 January 04	FRIDAY 2 January 04	SATURDAY 3 January 04
<i>8am: Mass</i> <i>10am: Mass</i> <i>Continues until 24 January 2004</i>		<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i> <i>Continues until 24 January 2004</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i> <i>Continues until 24 January 2004</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i> <i>Continues until 24 January 2004</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i> <i>Continues until 24 January 2004</i>	<i>8.15am: Mass/Service of the Word</i> <i>5pm: Sunday Vigil Mass</i> <i>Continues until 24 January 2004</i>

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Huge Challenge Provides Rich Experience

*St Michael's parishioner **Collene Roche** (pictured below) recently retired as principal of Carmel College. In this article she reflects on some of the big issues in Catholic education.*

To work in a profession which has an influence on the shaping of others is an enormous privilege and responsibility. Teaching in such a career and having spent thirty-five years as part of the Catholic education system in New Zealand has been an experience which has left me much the richer.

The last nineteen years have been spent in senior management – six as assistant and deputy principal and the last thirteen as principal of a Catholic secondary school for girls. To be part of the national education system when there have been vast changes taking place in the qualification and curriculum areas and part of the Catholic system when so many parents are choosing to have their children educated in our schools has been challenging and rewarding.

Catholic schools have a very clear mission which has not changed. The schools provide education in a Catholic environment where gospel values are the key. Excellence is the response to the gospel call to use one's talents to the full and this creates the central thrust for any school, especially a Catholic school where excellence in all endeavors must be the key. Everything must be done to the best of the ability of the staff and students and management needs to provide the opportunity for this to happen. These sentiments could easily be written off as a cliché but must not be as they provide an enormous challenge.

In secondary schooling, which has been my particular area, the challenge to provide honest and worthwhile Catholic experiences and opportunities, to which young people can respond positively, has been huge. For many of the young people attending Catholic schools, the school is, in fact, their experience of Church and this creates even more responsibility for staff. There are several reasons for this, not the least being the decision of parents, for many diverse reasons, to stop their connection with the church, its community and regular practices.

The schools have a responsibility for evangelization – and all within the communities should have the chance to experience an environment which provides creative liturgy, support and an opportunity for outreach to others. Prayer and focused study, as provided through the national religious education curriculum, are essential. Many of our New Zealand schools were founded by religious orders and their founding principles have become important cornerstones for the education offered.

Catholic schools have always espoused educating the “whole person” - the spiritual, academic, social and

cultural facets of the person. Since a school's key responsibility is education, to incorporate all of these aspects is essential. One without the other would be depriving a young person of their right to Christian development.

The Catholic school system is in a state of growth and strength. For them to continue to develop there needs to be a supply of teachers committed to the mission. At present there are insufficient people keen to take up the profession. There are very fine courses available to provide qualifications in religious education teaching as well as courses relating specifically to teaching in Catholic schools.

We need to ensure that enough talented people are stimulated and challenged by the prospect of a career in teaching. What could be more important than the opportunity to stimulate a desire to learn in a young person who, through the influence of fine, committed teachers would move into adulthood as a well rounded person ready to make their mark as a person with integrity, strong faith and values?



Early morning blessing

What are these people doing in the new Auckland Hospital? **Libby Ellis** explains.

The picture shows a group of Ministers of Communion from St Michael's, responding to an invitation to Remuera parish to take part in the official blessing of the Auckland City hospital.

It's a bit cold at that time of the day, but the ministers were soon warmly received into the building with a powhiri (Maori welcome). They divided into small groups and each minister, armed with a vessel of holy water and a branch of totara, moved through level 3 blessing each room with the holy water and praying the following prayer:

"O God, may this be a holy and blessed place for all who may live and sleep here.

May your holy angels guide them and your continual blessing strengthen them

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen."



Pictured from left to right (back) are: Bob Coombe, Anthony Martin, Michael Buddle, Birgita Muller; (front) Dale Hern, Elizabeth Connell, Viv Coombe, Libby Ellis and Anthony Trenwith. The group's efforts were rewarded with breakfast and hospitality in the Marion Davis library.

Memory Test for Francis



Robert Tingey Photography

Francis Poon was born in Hong Kong and will be 27 in December. This is his fourth year of training to be a priest for the Auckland Diocese at Holy Cross Seminary. Francis has been playing a bit of leapfrog

between here and Hong Kong all his life, since his family immigrated to Wellington in 1984. They returned to Hong Kong in 1988, and Francis then came back to Auckland by himself in 1994 to complete a Bachelor of Commerce degree, before entering the seminary.

Francis will be working in Remuera until Christmas as part of his pastoral placement. He thanks Monsignor Arahill and the whole parish for the warm welcome he has received and he hopes to meet as many parishioners as possible while he is here. He would be delighted if those who have not yet met him would introduce themselves. He does not promise to remember all the names, but he enjoys the challenge - and the practice, and prays he will remember them one day. Meanwhile, he will remember all St Michael's people in his prayers.



Mission Sunday Celebration

This year's Mission Sunday Mass in October had an extra dimension with eighteen young people receiving Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion and thereby joining St Michael's community.



Organ scholars wanted

St Michael's is a popular venue for weddings. Many people from far and wide (even from overseas) choose to celebrate their marriages at St Michael's.

Donations for the use of St Michael's church for weddings are set aside to establish organ scholarships. Two scholarships are available each year. They provide free organ tuition for one year (25 lessons) with the obligation to be involved in the music ministry at St Michael's.

If you are a music student or a mature person who would like to learn how to play the organ at Sunday masses and other parish liturgical celebrations, and would like to know more about the scholarships, please contact Monsignor Arahill.

A LIVING JESSE TREE

Jesus was born of “David’s line”. The Gospel writers sometimes refer to him as “the Son of David.” Jesse was the father of King David. Monsignor Arahill explains the family tree of Jesus.

The Jesse tree is a family tree that introduces us to some of the people who prepared the way for the coming of Jesus.

Advent for us is the time of waiting and preparing. We try to capture some of the spirit of waiting and longing for the coming of the Messiah that was so often spoke about by the Jewish prophets. We have all experienced what is to have to wait. We wait impatiently for friends who are late. We wait with some expectation for our next birthday, knowing we will be one year older! Families wait expectantly for the birth of a baby.

Symbols of our spiritual ancestors who waited from the time of creation are attached to a tree. There are the figures of Adam and Eve. Fairly early on in human history it became obvious that human beings often tried to take short cuts and create their own little world. People like Noah, Abraham and his wife Sarah tried bring reform. Joseph, great grandson of Abraham was sold as a slave into Egypt. But God did not forget his promises. Moses became the saviour leading the people from slavery to freedom in the Promised Land.

Ruth is an important person in the story. She was a Gentile, a non-Jew, who became, through marriage, a member of the Jewish race. Jesus had some pagan blood in his human veins!

Prominence of course is given to Mary and her husband Joseph. Mary. In particular, was very much part of the waiting people, one who waited and believed to such an extent that she was chosen to be the Mother.

And that brings the genealogy to Jesus, Son of God, Son of Mary. Christ the Jew was born to bring life to all people of all time – even us!

Come, Lord Jesus come!



SCHOOL PUPILS MOVE IN

The new classroom block at St Michael’s school has been in use since the start of term 4. Luanne Collins, chairperson of the school’s board of trustees, reports on this and other school projects.

The building is finally complete, with some landscaping and minor detail required to finish the project. The development is a credit to those who have put so much time and effort over recent years into the planning and construction. It has been a combined effort of the existing and previous school boards working in conjunction with the Diocesan Administration Board, which largely funded and managed the project.

The school roll has been closed for a number of years, so it is great to be in a position to offer Catholic education to additional Catholic children in our parish area, and wherever possible we are endeavouring to place applicants from within the parish community. Obviously, school growth has to be carefully managed, to ensure the existing culture and performance of our school is maintained.

Several working bees are planned to do tidy up work such as reinstating the Kings Lawn (now the temporary classrooms have been removed) and to plant and landscape the boundaries around the new classroom block.

The official opening will be on Sunday 29 February 2004, with Bishop Pat to preside at the 10am mass. Mark this date on your calendar as it will be a memorable occasion for the school and parish community.

Fantastic study environment

The new classroom block was designed by architects Ron Seeto, Murray Cockburn Partnership. They have done an excellent job and designed a building that St Michael’s children will enjoy for many years to come. It is a three up three down block with a floor area, including verandah and stairs, of 823 sq metres. The design takes advantage of views and sun and includes such special features as interesting window shapes, high stud ceilings and great indoor/outdoor flow. The classrooms are spacious open plan, have plenty of resource areas and are very serviceable, so we anticipate they will work well and create a fantastic study environment.

During the building process the board of trustees undertook to provide several “extras” to enhance the development. These additional works were financed by our property development fund, together with a generous contribution from the PTA. They are:

- Formed bleacher type seating on the top of the bank area
- Extra power, hot water and computer outlets
- Two additional outdoor drinking fountains



More to come

The new classroom block frees up a former classroom area in the main building. We want to convert this into much needed administration and resource space as soon as practical. The conversion does not have the same high priority in the Diocesan programme. However, we intend to proceed with the work and fund it by a building grant from the Diocese with the balance of the cost being met by the school community through the property development fund, fundraising and other grants.

We are very conscious that as the school roll increases, so does the need for a school hall. We are currently discussing a preferred site and some very exciting concepts with the Diocese. We consider the need to advance this project to be a major focus for 2004.

Moving on from bricks and mortar...

Three parents from St Michael's School were recently appointed to the newly formed Parish Council. Congratulations to Anne Duffy, Neil Little and Christabelle Matthews. We wish them well in their efforts for this special role, and have no doubt that they will foster the strong relationship between parish and school that exists in our community.

The board is grateful for the great support from Monsignor Arahill, who constantly reinforces the strong link between school and parish, and the dedicated, committed staff, well led by Mrs Jo Augustine, our principal since term 2. As a board and school community we intend to ensure that St Michael's continues to move in a positive direction. We are committed to meeting the aims of our vision statement:

...to create a loving, caring and joy filled environment, inspired by Jesus Christ and gospel values, a place where children are challenged to attain the highest possible standards in all areas of life within a community of family, school and church.



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New council members share their vision and talents

Legally, the parish pastoral council is an advisory group, but at St Michael's it is about people. The nine newly elected members are talented professional people who between them share more than many years of St Michael's parish life. In this article by **Katharine Fenton-Wells** they share some thoughts and readings that influence their lives.

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" Matthew 7:12 is a favourite of **Susy Bell**, who, with son Ryan, has been a St Michael's parishioner for the past five years. As a consultant with a business background in project management, tactical and strategic planning, Suzy has been involved in various leadership committees, charitable organisations and boards. Her experience and ability to work within a team are talents she is able to offer to the council as well as a desire to see St Michael's build an even stronger sense of community within the parish.

Anne Duffy and her husband Mike have a real estate business in Newmarket - Anne is the administration manager. They have been in the parish for six years. Their son Sean (9) attends St Michael's school. Anne brings to the council communication skills, a desire to contribute in a positive way to the life and growth of St Michael's - and a sense of humour. She is already involved with the school quite closely through the PTA.

The Prayer of St Francis is important to Anne: *Lord Make Me An Instrument Of Your Peace*. She tries to use this as guideline for the way to live her life, and places particular weight on the phrase, "it is in giving that we receive" because she feels it is important that we treat others as we ourselves wish to be treated.

Mark Jeffaries hails from Blenheim and has been a part of St Michael's for the past eighteen months. With an ability to keep things in proportion and a desire to convert problematic mountains into molehills, he brings experience in youth leadership to his role on the council. As an engineer his practical aspect on life and ability to negotiate solutions in difficult circumstances are skills he would also like to contribute.

Mark shared Lazarus' resurrection as his reading of choice: "It is pretty gritty stuff, full of emotion, grief, inspiration, hope, power, love. I have a print of Colin

McCahon's version on my bedroom wall. I like especially 'Loose him and let him go'. Although we are brought to life through baptism, we need help to throw off those things that belong to the old us."

Neil Little is married to Angela, chairperson of St Michael's PTA. They have two of their three daughters - Madison {8} and Hannah (6) and Ella (4) - at St Michael's school. Neil is a funeral director for Davis Funeral Services and has been a parishioner for nearly five years.

Neil is open minded and receptive to new ideas and suggestions, trying to adopt a common sense approach to most things in life. He believes in a strong sense of family and sees the church as playing an important role in life. His occupation requires good communication skills and the ability to empathise with others, to ensure their feelings and concerns are important and being taken seriously.

"St Michael's school is also very important to me. I have a good understanding of school life and hope

to work to foster a closer relationship between church and school. "

Neil's reading is Ecclesiastes Chapter 3:1-8. "Ecclesiastes is concerned with the purpose and value of human life. This reading helps me to remember that many things in life that concern and stress us out are beyond our control. There is little point in dwelling on them. It helps me to remember in difficult times that things happen for a reason and whilst the reasons may not always be clear we can waste a lot of precious time focussing on the negative."

Christabelle Matthews is a travel consultant for Air New Zealand and is married with a daughter, Rhea, who is in year six at St Michael's school. Chris has been a member

of the parish for nearly three years. She comes to the parish council with an open mind and heart and is willing to learn new talents while offering her time and energy to the community that has been so supportive..

Chris' favourite reading is Psalm 23, The Lord is my Shepherd. "I get a lot of strength and comfort from this psalm. God's love and mercy is all encompassing, and this had made me realise that daily trials, rejection and disappointments are not to be dwelled on. We have a loving father to help us through. 'He restores my soul, he leads

me in the path of righteousness...Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.'" I have just read this psalm again and it has renewed me."



Neil Little and Susy Bell



Anne Duffy and Mark Jeffaries

Alicia Murray has been a member of St Michael's parish all twenty three years of her life. She is the eldest of six children and a law graduate ("almost a lawyer") having finished her law degree last year and to be admitted to the bar in January next year. Alicia has a strong understanding of the parish and school, an ability to speak her mind and good listening and analytical skills. She has a desire to be a part of the Church moving into the future. Alicia sees life as:

"Jesus telling his followers to look at the flowers and to trust that if God can clothe them so splendidly then He will certainly look after his own."

Giles Potter, his wife Sonja and their children Terence (10), Gregory (8) and Madeleine (4) have been members of the St Michael's parish for the last four years. Giles is the managing director of Great Outcomes Limited, a call centre consulting firm that manages projects to improve the call centres of organisations. He thinks his communication skills will be of most use in informing others of what the parish council is doing and in encouraging parishioners to be actively involved and to enjoy being part of the Church. For his favourite bible reading Giles selects John 12:45: *"I have come into the world as light, so that no one who has faith in me should remain in darkness."*

Jessica Spencer is the sixth of seven children to Bryan and Jennifer Spencer. Her family has been a part of the parish for the past 39 years with all of the Spencer children educated at St Michael's school and Jessica completing her schooling at Baradene. Jessica (24) is a primary school teacher at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Epsom. She would like to contribute to the parish council a voice for young parishioners of her understandings, experiences, beliefs, and open mindedness to the inevitable changes that the church faces.

Jessica's favourite bible reading is 1 Corinthians 12:12-24, 26-28 - *'One body with many members'*. "This reading is a reminder to all of us that we are unique and special. We are called to share our special gifts with others in order to make the body (our community) whole. Without each other we are not whole and do not experience the fullness of Christ. This reading is also a challenge to us - to embrace and accept the differences in others, to be open minded to their contributions without judging or finding fault. (*'If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored all rejoice together*



Robert Tingey Photography

Giles Potter and Alicia Murray



Robert Tingey Photography

Peter Zink and Christabelle Matthews



Robert Tingey Photography

Jessica Spencer

with it.' 12:26). Our actions not only affect ourselves but others also. We must carefully discern the choices we make in all aspects of our life."

Peter Zink is a general medical practitioner in Royal Oak, is married to Lynette, and has a son Michael. After three and a half years as a parishioner he would like to facilitate communication between members of the parish and the council, so that peoples' voices are heard and that decisions made on their behalf are communicated in the most

efficient and clear way. This is especially so for those who are less able to communicate. As a GP who works with the aged and in terminal care institutions, he sees many areas of human need that can be improved. "As secretary of the parish pastoral council, I have an obligation to consolidate discussions amongst the members and distribute the information as accurately and clearly as possible - in order to best serve parish members. In this age, the use of electronic media (e.g. email and internet) makes the task of communicating easier - especially as we all seem to lead such busy lives. Lynette's studies at Good Shepherd college give me a little insight into the good work and good people there who are educating our future church leaders."

The beatitudes (Luke 6 or Matthew 5) are a favourite of Peter's. "These passages convey teachings and instructions by Jesus to all of us on how we should conduct our lives, our thinking and actions - how to live a pure and godly life. These teachings can be used as a reference-book or framework on adopting the correct attitude to our communication and thinking about self and others, and the consequences of good or bad actions."

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Finance Council Report

The parish finance council consists of Monsignor Arahill, Phillip Bell, Kevin Pickworth, Bob Coombe, Nicola Judd, Mike Going, Carey Pearce and Pat de Zoete. It meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month. The council welcomes the return of Bob and the recent addition of Nicola.

The purpose of the council is to advise Monsignor on financial matters, to monitor the financial health of the parish against budget projections and to discern and implement appropriate actions to safeguard the financial assets of the parish. The finance council also works to ensure the necessary funds are available to fund the pastoral needs of the parish.

This year there has also been a focus on finding ways to incorporate a sheltered gathering space in front of the church. A design team of specialist architects has been requested to explore the possibilities and make recommendations in keeping with the requirements for a scheduled heritage building. The development of a conservation plan for the future care and enhancement of the church building has been commissioned from Dave Pearson Architects. This work is progressing well, with the draft expected at the end of October.

Operating income received during the nine months totaled \$189,476 (forecast \$194,245) the majority of which was received through pledged giving (\$158,973) and loose cash donations (\$28,231). (*New parishioners can join the*

pledge programme by contacting Pat in the parish office phone on 520 1226.)

Expenditure of \$111,118 (budget \$142,850) has followed a predictable pattern throughout the nine months, the variance between actual and budget reflecting maintenance items yet to be completed.

The parish rental properties have been fully tenanted during the year, resulting in rental income after management fees of \$65,257 against a forecast of \$57,000. A firming in the rental market this year has resulted in an improved income in this area.

Maintenance of the parish plant continues to be a significant commitment. The council has increased the capital reserve fund to \$65,000 to cover unexpected expenditure in this area.

We continue to service the debt on the MacKillop Centre, for which we received a diocesan loan of \$375,000 at an interest rate of 5% pa, payable monthly. During the year principal reductions of \$18,000 have been made. The loan balance at 30 September 2003 was \$271,000

Full copies of the parish accounts are available to parishioners from the parish office, and members of the council are happy to answer any questions. Additionally, parishioners may attend council meetings and raise issues - or they can be passed on to a council member for inclusion in the meeting agenda.

The council is grateful for the generosity of those who support the parish financially and also provide expert assistance to the council on specific projects.

Honour for Parishioner



Collene Roche was appointed as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the Queen's Birthday honours. The award was made in recognition of services to education. The citation noted that Collene had been principal of Carmel College from 1991 to 2003 during which time she had championed excellence in schools and Carmel had received consistently positive reports from the Education

Review Office. The citation also recorded Collene's services with the Ministry of Education principals' group, the Auckland Secondary Schools Principals Association and as president of the Auckland Secondary Schools Heads Association.

Collene is well known at St Michael's as a cantor and reader. She is a past member of the Liturgy Committee.

The photo shows Collene being invested by the Governor General, Dame Silvia Cartwright, at a ceremony at Government House, Wellington.

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Christmas Thoughts and Blessings

Some prayers for the season from recently elected members of the parish pastoral council. More about them on pages 8 and 9.

■ Christmas is a time of family, peace and celebration. I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas, filled with light, laughter and love. *Alicia Murray*

■ Christmas is a time of sharing, a time of family celebration, a time for being grateful for our blessings, a time for reflection and thanking the Lord for all he does. God protect us and grant us humanity and understanding towards one another. May we be blessed with peace in the world and be of comfort to those in need. Bless us with good health, happiness and an abundance of love from our family and friends. *Susy Bell*

■ Christmas, the celebration of Jesus' birth, is a time for us to contemplate our own reasons for being born and being here on earth. This is preferably a time of more quiet, of the world slowing down a little from the fast pace we often sense. This then should allow us to spend more time thinking about Jesus' messages that he would want us to take in, and thinking about how we can improve our thinking and our living to one more like Christ would have wanted. May this season be peaceful, prayerful and loving. I would wish all of us at St Michael's would think and ponder about what we could all do a little more to contribute to the betterment of ourselves in some way and what we could do a little more to help others in the community – in a Christian way. Perhaps this is simply taking a few moments to pray for someone in need, or greeting someone new at the next opportunity, or telling one of the new parish pastoral council members your wishes or concerns or how we can help the parish in some way. May this season be peaceful, prayerful, and loving. *Peter Zink*

■ The Holy Family and the birth of Jesus are a focus during the time of Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of Christ through the rituals and traditions of the Church and through those of my family. It means gathering with those close to me around the family table, sharing in a meal and sharing gifts. During this time of sharing we remember the most special gift given to all of us...Jesus. My prayer is that all parishioners will experience the love of Christ through the special celebrations, traditions and rituals of the Christmas season. Loving, sharing and caring will spread the Christmas message beyond the boundaries of our parish and in so giving, may we receive and understand the true meaning of Christmas. *Jessica Spencer*

■ Christmas for me means family. As we grow older our families can become further apart for a number of reasons. It's easy to get caught up in our own smaller family units. It is the time of the year we all try to come together one way or another and celebrate together. *Neil Little*

■ Roast pork, crackling and kumara, dry Marlborough heat, and the bach. Christmas is a big celebration. The preparation and anticipation of advent makes it a special climax. We celebrate with family meals and it is the year's special opportunity to relax, and reconnect with family and old friends. Lord Jesus Christ, this Christmas, may you bless us with a new awareness of your presence in our lives and an awareness of your presence in the people we meet, no matter who they are. *Mark Jeffaries*

■ For Christmas, I would like to wish the parishioners a peaceful and joyous season. A time to appreciate your families and remembering the Holy Family and its significance in our times - love and guidance. For parents to appreciate and encourage your children, to be there for them in their time of need. For children to love their parents and accept them for their faults and shortcomings, knowing that they only want the best for you. Christmas is a time of hope and healing, to start out afresh. To forget all the grudges, arguments and failures of the past year and to look forward to a new year a new beginning. Remembering the Christ child and the hope he brings, of a better life. *Christabelle Matthews*

■ My message to St Michael' parishioners for Christmas: may the joy and peace of Christmas be with you all. I hope you have a safe and happy holiday season. For me Christmas is a time of thanksgiving and rejoicing for the birth of Jesus. It reminds me of the special family of Mary Joseph and Jesus, and that we are all part of the family of God. That is why being with family is a particularly important part of Christmas for me. *Anne Duffy*

■ In our household there is great anticipation about Christmas: will we attend Midnight Mass? what will the music be like? who will lead the preparation for the children's liturgies? The children surprise with questions: "why did Jesus' parents have to return to Bethlehem?" "what if the donkey couldn't walk fast enough, and Jesus was born on the way?" "where was I born?" Observing the differences between Christ's life and ours 2003 years later is one way we remember who we are, why we do what we do, and the part that Christ's birth plays in our lives. My family and I wish all parishioners a blessed Christmas and hope that we allow time for Christ to be in our lives, our homes and among our families. *Giles Potter*

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WUSS delegates Sarah Hart, Alice O'Neill, Louise Campbell, Louise Porter and Jennifer Fox

WUSS We Impressed?

Louise Porter was one of a group of St Michael's parishioners who recently attended the 2003 Liturgical Music Conference. This is her report.

One would never think that the act of a parish sending a group of musicians and cantors to a liturgy conference would result in subversive musical activities!

No-one except the parishioners at 8am mass on the Sunday after I went to the "Worshipping under Southern Skies" (or WUSS) conference.

This probably doesn't make a great deal of sense to readers who weren't at that mass. As the cantor, I departed very boldly from singing the set (turn of the century) hymn to teaching the congregation a West African call to worship. It's a rousing chant ("Come all you people") with a basso profundo ("Ahom") for the men of the congregation. Congratulations to those who sang with great fervour! Apologies to those who took exception to such music, but it gives an idea of the impulse to action of WUSS held at Sacred Heart College, Auckland in the September holidays.

The conference introduced us to a wide range of liturgical music - from the Gregorian chant to the uplifting and moving whole-body liturgical dance. It also gave us the chance to spend time and share ideas with fellow musicians and cantors.

Liturgy comes from the Greek word *liturgos* meaning "a public work done by a few on behalf of others". Fr Joe Grayland provided us with a thought provoking lecture entitled "Singing the Liturgy". We learnt about *doxology* (glory of the word), *anamnesis* (always remembering, the opposite to amnesia), *epiclesis* (calling the Spirit, unifying) and *incarnational* (God always with us).

Marty Haugen was the drawcard speaker. Many will be familiar with his compositions, such as the "Creation" Mass and "Gather Us In". He is a prolific composer of wonderfully accessible liturgical music. He is an entertaining speaker, with very humorous and apt stories about Church musical endeavours and the human frailties of church musicians.

I loved Marty's dialogical method of praise song; it so completely involved us all. He drew everyone into this prayerful singing with very musical accompaniments. No one would deny his fervent belief that "good celebrations nurture faith"

I had signed up for other workshops but Marty was too good to miss. His advice to anyone preparing liturgies is to pray together, to read and discuss the scripture, basing music choices around the liturgy - not just "the first hymn will be...." We are keen to incorporate Marty's wonderful music into our liturgies, especially his Santo Mass setting which is based on an Argentine folk melody.

Many conference moments filled us with inspiration. One was the opening *Powhiri* led by young singers from the Far North who guided us beautifully in song. The *Morning prayers* gave us the daily opportunity to gather in the Sacred Heart Chapel for half an hour of prayer and praise. Each morning the diversity of New Zealand was reflected in the diversity of liturgy.

Encountering God's spirit in Aotearoa was presented by two very eloquent women, Rangi Davis and Helen Bergin. They examined the challenges and opportunities of facing God as one diverse community. The comparison of the Maori and biblical creation story was made; there are so many common threads in our story.

Touching the spirit of God with dance was my final workshop. Our group learned a most expressive dance which was a very new experience for me - worship through dance and movement.

Sarah Hart led the discussion in the new initiative of setting up the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Pastoral Musicians (ANZAPM) an association for all people involved in music and liturgy. This is an exciting initiative which will help liturgists all over NZ network and share ideas for vibrant liturgies.

At the final evaluation a young man challenged to come back next year and bring someone under the age of 20. Our liturgies must be reaching out to the young, and that's the way to go.

We sang a Gregorian anthem: in the last bar was written the letters *EUOUAE*. These stand for *Saeculorum, Amen*. (Forever and ever, Amen.)

We are what we sing, we sing what we believe. *EUOUAE*

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A Time for New Beginnings

Lyndsay Freer, director of Catholic Communications for the Auckland diocese, reviews some programmes available to Catholics through the diocese

“For everything there is a season,
and a time for every matter under heaven....
a time to weep, and a time to laugh
a time to mourn, and a time to dance ...
a time to seek, and a time to lose...”

Ecclesiastes 3:1

It has been truly said that the only constant in life is change. And never can we live through long periods in our lives without having to adjust to change of some kind, whether relatively minor or of such magnitude that our lives are overturned. Whether they are small or large, life is made up of a series of new beginnings.

Loss is a major component of change; loss of health, loss of income or of a job, loss of a loved person, loss of faith, loss of self-esteem through rejection or failure.

Understanding and managing these experiences can be painful and confusing.

How might the Church here in Auckland help us in those difficult times when we are facing loss or change? There are a number of options.

Seasons for Growth is a programme which was developed in Australia, and now is offered through the Auckland diocese. Programmes are structured for children or adults who are facing the trauma of loss. They are based on the principle, described so beautifully above in the Old Testament, that change, loss and grief are a normal and valuable part of life, and that grief involves a number of stages.

The programme is for people who would like help dealing with death, separation, divorce, relationship breakdown, unemployment, illness or other significant life events. It was developed initially in 1996 as a peer support education process to assist young people aged 6-18 years to understand and manage change, loss and grief. The programme for adults has been built on the strengths of the young people's programme.

It is not a counselling programme. Using the imagery of the four seasons, it is a safe and proven way to help people to come to terms with their life-changing experiences. For more information about Seasons for Growth, contact Pompallier Diocesan Centre (378 4380) and ask for Sr Mary or for Delia.

The Beginning Experience is offered here in the diocese especially for those who have lost a loved person, through separation, divorce or death. Many people who have suffered such a loss feel left out, even within the Church community. They may feel uneasy around married friends,

unsure of themselves and uncertain about their future. *The Beginning Experience* is a weekend programme to help grieving single-again persons move into a new stage of life with renewed hope. It helps deal with the natural grief process and offers an opportunity, through faith, for turning the pain of loss into an experience of positive growth.

Although rooted in the Catholic tradition, it is open to those of all faiths. Sister Mary Thomas, based at Pompallier Diocesan Centre at Ponsonby, co-ordinates this programme, which has been developed by respected professionals in grief psychology and ministry.

Anyone who feels nervous about making an approach can be assured of a gentle response from Sr Mary who can be contacted by phone, 378 4380 or 360 3054, or by email maryt@cda.org.nz

Some comments from participants....

Seasons for Growth

“It was such a relief to know I wasn't going mad, I was grieving – and that is normal.”

“A man can feel safe ... to express his painful difficulties and emotions in a confidential and accepting, non-critical atmosphere.”

The Beginning Experience

“I found people all around who accepted me without judgment and cared for me.”

“It was a time just for me, to explore where I've been in my life and where I'm going.”

“It was the best gift I ever gave myself.”

Inviting Catholics Home is a programme offered right here in our own parish of St Michael. It is a gentle, non-judgmental opportunity for Catholics who have been away from the Church to take a fresh look. “No matter how long someone has been away, or for whatever reason, we would like to answer their questions and make them feel welcome,” says Monsignor Arahill.

Programmes such as *Inviting Catholics Home* are likely to be repeated at St Michaels and are also available in other parishes. Monsignor Arahill is happy to give details. He can be contacted at 520 1226.

The Catholic Enquiry Centre (CEC) is an agency of the NZ Catholic Bishops' Conference. It answers questions about what Catholics believe, and over the years large numbers of people who have lost contact with the Church have re-discovered their Catholic roots after making contact with CEC. Lots more information is given on their website: www.cecnz.org.nz

Hunting for Wildlife in St Michael's

Sylvia Keenan explores the rich and varied depictions of animals and other creatures in the decoration of our church. This article is adapted from a talk given earlier this year to the Catholic Women's League.



The first animal we notice is on the front of the Mass altar. This is the lamb symbolising Christ being adored by all the saved creation at the end of the world. This is from the Apocalypse or Book of Revelations. The same lamb repeated in the centre of the baldacchino.

At the front of the Blessed Sacrament altar we see two peacocks beautifully and deeply carved into the marble, each with one leg holding the PX symbol, the Greek sign for Christ. The peacock is the symbol of immortality in church symbolism because of the myth that the peacock's flesh does not decompose.



Proceeding left we see the stained glass window of St Mark which has a lion as his symbol.



At the northwest rose window we see in the centre the Dove. Whenever we see a dove with wings outstretched, this means the Holy Spirit, third person of the trinity. Also in the rose window is the very handsome rooster at 20 past 4, if it was a clock. This refers to Our Lord saying to St Peter at the Last Supper, "Before the cock crows you will deny me three times."

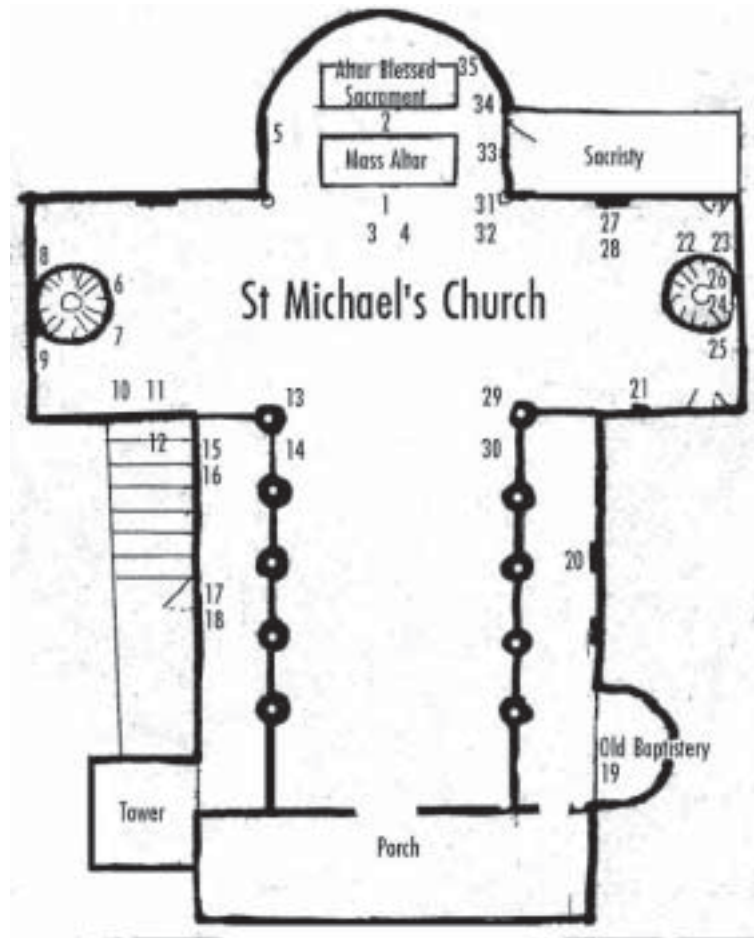
Below the rose Passion window there is the stained glass window of the Annunciation with the Holy Spirit symbolized by the Dove.



Next to that is the Window of the Visitation of Our Lady to her cousin Elizabeth. It also shows the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil with a lot of ripe pretty apples on it. At the foot of the window is the snake from the Garden of Eden. The snake represents evil and the devil.



Opposite the Sacred Heart statue is the painting donated by the Sisters of Cluny depicting a New Zealand fantail. This symbolizes the Sisters' readiness to flit, like the fantail, here



there or anywhere in the world to do the Lord's work.

There is a very indistinct Dove on the crucifix by the picture.

Perhaps this one is stretching the animal theme a little, but in the window of St George there is an exquisite dragon. I must have been going in and out of St Michael's for about fifty years before I saw this lovely window. The window is of St George, because when the Church was built it was to be dedicated to St Michael and St George. Somehow St George got left behind. To see this window it is necessary to walk right up to the Sacred Heart statue, turn round and look up. St George is facing the window of St Michael and the devil. From the Sanctuary the view could be even better. The Bishop who opened the church in Middleton Road was Bishop George Michael Lenihan. Our present church was dedicated to St Michael and St George, out of deference to this bishop.

The pillar on the corner has the lion twice - for St Mark.

(To be continued)

TOWARDS JUBILEE 2008

Monsignor Arahill looks forward to 2008, when the parish will celebrate 75 years since St Michael's church was built in 1933.

Jubilees are a time of celebration. Silver (25 years) of a marriage, Golden jubilee (50 years) or Diamond (60 years) are occasions for looking back (hopefully with gratitude) and looking forward to a future (sometimes uncertain).

But if you are going to remember, then you need to prepare in the present.

St Michael's church building is 75 years old in 2008. It was opened on 1 October 1933. St Michael's parish is much older of course. But 75 years of life for the building is a good opportunity to look back and look forward.

We will naturally remember with gratitude all the people involved in the building of the church 75 years ago. We will remember all those people who have come here during those years because they wanted to meet God in the worship of our Church and constantly ask the big questions (and seek answers for them): *why am I here, where I am going, and how do I get there?*

We will look forward and know that the Church of Auckland will be different as a community of disciples of Jesus. For one thing it will be more multicultural and that will bring changes in ways we worship. We will need to join with our bishop and plan for growth (or decrease) in the number coming to St Michael's.

And in the present? Our parish council will soon need to begin discussing and deciding how we will celebrate 75 years. Are there ways of renewing the spiritual life of our parish? What do we need to do to continue to make sure that those who come here will continue to say, "It is good to belong"? We will need to look at our liturgies? Are we a church who believes the celebration of the Eucharist is the summit of all that we do?

The church building itself needs to be looked at. A building, built during the depression of the 1930s, and now 75 years old, is the not the fresh building it was on the day of the opening. The parish finance council has asked Dave Pearson Architects to draw up a conservation plan for both the interior and exterior of the building. We are expecting this within the next month.

Plans for a piazza in front of the church and improved parking were presented to the parish at a meeting in October 2002. The meeting wanted a shelter in front of the church as a gathering place. (It does get windy and cold standing in front of the church!) This is being looked at right now. As well, ways of paying for these sizeable projects are being explored. Needless to say the parish as a whole will be kept fully informed and have the opportunity of sharing in decision making. Nothing will be done without consulting parishioners. More details to follow.

But, there is still plenty to do in the present!

MILESTONES

Marriages: blessings on...

Morna Frances **O'Brien** and Matthew **David Lloyd**
Rebecca **Navarro** and Anthony John **Cavit**
Marissa Jan **Bridger** and Jang **Chahal**
Tanya Rebecca **Ward** and John Maurice **Beckett**

Deaths: we pray for...

Malia Rita **Nixon**
Zena Helen Clarice **Davies**
Mary Josephine **Keats**
Petar **Djugum**
Ronald William **Barne**
Mary Josephine (Molly) **Dromgool**
Aileen Alice **Condon**
Elaine Pearl **Welch**
Desmond Owen **Robertson**
Greta Violet **Dunn**
Aynsley Anne **Sullivan -Taylor**
Sister Bernadine Anne **McSherry** RSCJ

Baptisms; the parish welcomes...

ParEllen Jane **Lawson**, daughter of Gregory and Lucy
Hannah Emily **Went**, daughter of Jeroan and Justine
Benjamin Matthew **Abel**, son of Christopher and Claire
Claudia Rose **Thwaites**, daughter of Gavin and Nicola
Tom Angus **Thwaites**, son of Gavin and Nicola
Maxwell George **Nicholls**, son of Justin and Sarah
Samuel Peter **Everitt**, son of Tony and Catherine
Madeleine Rose **Hollyoak**, daughter of Michael and Maureen
Mary Sophia Te Arawa **Barker Hay**, daughter of Andrew and Clare
Rhea **Creado**, daughter of Kevin and Rockshan
Harry James **Ladd**, son of Ian and Cathryn
Lilly Jean **Ladd**, daughter of Ian and Cathryn
Matthew William **Sybertsma**, son of James and Heida
William James **Sybertsma**, son of James and Heida
Kate Emma **Sybertsma**, daughter of James and Heida
Nicholas **Reynolds**, son of Sean and Michaelle
Liam **Reynolds**, son of Bill and Gaylene
Mackenzie Marie **Mariano**, daughter of Felix and Kim
Giorgia Grace Allegra **Henderson**, daughter of John and Sharon
Elizabeth Grace **Gane**, daughter of Edward and Pennie
Natalie Margaret **Gane**, daughter of Edward and Pennie
Andrew Wayne **Gardner**, son of Simon and Kristin
Sophie Marie **Lorenz**, daughter of Zeki and Kristin
Jessie Ella **Lovrich**, daughter of Paul and Carol
Millie Anne **Lovrich**, daughter of Paul and Carol
Max Marin **Lovrich**, son of Paul and Carol
Flynn Lucas Samuel **Poskitt**, son of Graham and Audrey



Robert Tingey Photography

Christmas stained glass windows at St Michael's church



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Viki Cullen

Caring Co-ordinator:

Kathryn Schollum

Youth Ministry:

Tim Gasson

Music Rosters:

Tony Vela

Secretary/Administration:

Pat de Zoete

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Christabelle Matthews, Alicia Murray,
Giles Potter, Jessica Spencer
and Peter Zink (Secretary)

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Kevin Pickworth, Bob Coombe
Carey Pearce, Mike Going, Nicola Judd,
and Pat de Zoete

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Jennifer Spencer, Kathryn Schollum,
Catherine Everitt, Betty Harrison,
Viki Cullen, Libby Ellis, Ruth Miller,
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