

# HISTORY AB'S HISTORY CORNER

The Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict were founded by Bishop John Bede Polding in Sydney on 2 February, 1857. A good number of schools for girls were established by the order so students could be educated based on inspiration of the Rule of St Benedict, a spiritual treasure dating back to the sixth century.

The Sisters of the Good Samaritan served with excellence in South Yarra Parish from 1904 to 1939.

In 1906 the sisters purchased 1850's colonial property "Coblentz" (now Caroline House) in 74 Caroline Street which was used as a convent and a school named "Santa Maria".

In 1930's it was decided that a new school should be built in Northcote and it was opened in October 1934. Today there are approximately 900 students at that school.



## Did you know?

The first Council of Nicaea was held in 325 (1,700 years ago) in what today is Iznik in Turkey. Around 300 bishops met and agreed on the first version of the foundational statement of faith (Nicene Creed) still used today, set rules for church practice, including a unified date for Easter.

Andrew Balcerzak

### ANNUAL VOLUNTEERS CELEBRATION

On Tuesday December 2nd the SJOS & Parish Volunteers gathered for a most enjoyable evening to celebrate their various contributions to the life and service of the parish and community. Cindy Nguyen the current chair of SJOS gave us some fascinating facts related to the parish works. For example, this year there have been 3,100 visitors to the Food Store with 31,000 items of food being given out!

Our thanks to SJOS who provided delicious food for the celebration. May the generosity of all of our volunteers continue into 2026. New volunteers are always welcome!



Di Brebner

### NEW TO THE PARISH?

Welcome! New Parishioner Information forms are available in our churches to complete and return to the parish office or hand to the priest.

**THANK YOU** to the contributors to this edition: Fr Brian Buckley OSA, Andrew Balcerzak, Fr Dave Austin OSA, Benedict See, Narelle Ivers, Janet Maher, Steffy Coosnapa & Di Brebner (Editor)

### PARISH OF SOUTH YARRA

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secretary@parishofsouthyarra.org.au

#### Mass Times

**Tues-Fri:** St Joseph's 10am;  
St Thomas Aquinas: 12.45pm  
**Sat:** St Joseph's 9am & 6pm  
**Sun:** St Thomas Aquinas: 9am; St Joseph's 10.30am

### PARISH WELCOMES, CELEBRATIONS AND FAREWELLS

**Through the waters of Baptism**, the Parish has welcomed Frederic Denton, Sophia Orlando, Nicola Makkar & Evie Ruberto

**We rejoice that The Sacrament of Marriage** was celebrated by Anthony Somerville & Kate Price, Aydan Papac & Georgia Karambelas, Shane D'Souza & Melissa D'Souza.

**We farewelled** Ross Brownbill. **May he rest in eternal peace**



St Joseph's  
St Thomas Aquinas



Summer 2025  
Issue 16

### FROM THE AUGUSTINIANS

#### PASTOR'S REPORT

It is now six months since the election of Pope Leo XIV and we are becoming accustomed to his style as he begins to make a mark as our Pontiff.

He will preside in Rome over his first Christmas as Pope as this Holy Year draws to a close. Our own celebrations continue this Advent Season with themes from the Jubilee Year and the Time Capsule Project. We are also looking forward to an Advent treat in the form of a Christmas-styled concert called "Pastorale" by a group of period performance classical musicians who invited us to offer St Joseph's as a venue on December 7<sup>th</sup>. We also will conduct Advent Reflections on the Friday mornings through December.



Fr Luca reports that his time away, his sabbatical studies and pilgrimage have all gone well and he will be returning at the end of December. Sadly we can confirm now that Fr Marydas will not be returning to South Yarra but will take up a new assignment in the coming period. We have been fortunate during this time to have Fr Michael Sullivan OSA, a former parish priest present with us in the absence of Fathers Luca and Marydas. He will return to Sydney after Christmas.

The parish leadership team, comprising members of Parish Council and other committee representatives hosted the members of the Augustinian Provincial Council led by the Provincial, Fr Peter Jones, on the evening of October 28<sup>th</sup> as a part of their visit to South Yarra. It was a good opportunity to share views, vision, hopes and concerns as we look to the future of the parish and the presence of the Augustinians.

As a highlight of our plans for 2026 March will mark the official celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the installation of the first Augustinian parish priest and community in February 1986. The parish Council are putting together a program of events to acknowledge this significant milestone in our parish and Augustinian history.

We take this opportunity to extend to you and your families our greetings for a blessed and peace-filled Christmas.

From Brian Buckley OSA and the Augustinian Community, Frs Francis Park and Michael Sullivan.



### MASS OF REMEMBRANCE



This year on November 21<sup>st</sup>, we remembered our loved ones who have died at the annual Mass of Remembrance. At the end of Mass we gathered in the peace of the Tolentine Garden and celebrated

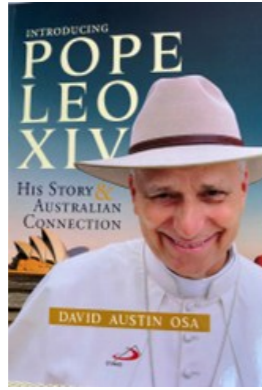
those we have loved in our families and our parish. May they rest in peace.  
*Di Brebner*



Nativity Scene in St Joseph's Church

## INTRODUCING POPE LEO XIV – The Australian Connection

Following the election of Augustinian Cardinal Robert Prevost to the Papacy, St Paul's Publications approached the Provincial Fr Peter Jones to invite an Augustinian to write a book about Pope Leo's connection with Australia.



While it had never occurred to me to write a book of any kind, the proposed framework gave me confidence that the task would be relatively simple because it was about the Order, the Church and the people I know, including Pope Leo. I was not disappointed as the words often flowed freely.

I drew great energy from the journey that the Church has been experiencing with our new Pope Leo. In the first few days after his election, I had several interviews with diocesan communications offices, provided 'sound-bites' for Radio 2SM, and an article for the Australian Women's Weekly (July issue).

Finding enough information for each chapter was challenging though I was able to draw on Province sources. In addition, photographs and various other resources came very quickly from both Australia and overseas.

The sections on Pope Leo's life and his engagement with the Australian Province as Prior -General, were straightforward. The section on Augustinian Spirituality was the most challenging. It's one thing to prepare resources for group use, but providing a full, engaging and readable picture of Augustinian Spirituality is another.

In some respects, the overall experience was like making a retreat – spending time with what I love about the Order and the Church, finding new insights that offer fresh hope in the future of the Church and are worth sharing with each other.

The work was very worthwhile and those who attended the official launch in Manly Vale and promotions in South Yarra and St Clair have provided much positive feedback.

I hope that readers will enjoy the book and its content but also find it a means of seeing our Church with fresh eyes as

our friend Leo discovers new dimensions of ministry as Pope and engages with our beautiful though troubled world.

*Reflections by Fr Dave Austin OSA*

## PARISH BBQ – A Joyful Afternoon of Community and Fellowship

On Saturday, 23rd November, our parish community gathered at the Parish Hall for our much-anticipated Parish BBQ and what a wonderful afternoon it was! The hall and courtyard quickly filled with families and parishioners of all ages, creating a vibrant atmosphere of joy and togetherness.



The event was exceptionally well attended, with plenty of conversation, laughter, and friendly faces. Our volunteers worked tirelessly on the grill, serving up delicious food that kept everyone coming back for seconds. The aroma of a true Aussie BBQ certainly helped set the tone for a relaxed and enjoyable gathering.

A highlight of the afternoon was the generous selection of raffle prizes. From beautifully wrapped hampers to vouchers and treats, there was a sense of excitement as numbers were called and lucky winners celebrated. We are incredibly grateful to the donors and supporters who contributed to making the raffle such a success.

Adding to the festive spirit was the lovely live music that played throughout the event. The gentle melodies created a warm backdrop for catching up with friends, meeting new parishioners, and enjoying the simple gift of community.

A heartfelt thank-you to Rocky's Fruit & Vegies for their generous donation, the organising team, volunteers, and everyone who helped make the day run smoothly. Events like this remind us of the beauty of our parish family and the joy we find in coming together.

We look forward to many more moments of fellowship in the year ahead!  
*Stefphy Coosnapa*

## FAITH, FELLOWSHIP, AND A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

On 28 October 2025, the Parish of South Yarra welcomed the Augustinian Provincial Council for a visit. Members of the Parish, including some from the Parish Pastoral Council, joined them for an evening of prayer and conversation. We began with a prayer attributed to Saint Augustine, reminding us of the compassion and care at the heart of our faith. The discussion that followed was open and wide-ranging. We spoke about what it means to be an Augustinian parish today - a community that strives to be welcoming and inclusive, shaped by the gifts of the parishioners as well as the challenges we face. The Provincial Council shared their vision for the wider Augustinian family, while we shared our experiences at parish level. It was not a night for decisions, but rather, for listening and connection, strengthening our sense of belonging to a tradition that guides us in our faith journey.

A few weeks later, on 23 November 2025, parishioners gathered for the annual Parish BBQ. This joyful occasion brought together parishioners, friends, and newcomers, enjoying food and fellowship in the Leonine Hall. It was a simple event, but one of those that bonded our parish community



Looking ahead, the parish is preparing for a special project to commemorate the Jubilee Year of 2025: the creation of a parish time capsule, to be sealed in December 2025 and opened 25 years later. The aim is to leave a snapshot of our parish life for future generations who will continue the story of the Parish of South Yarra. We are inviting parishioners to contribute ideas — any items that capture who we are today as a community of faith during this Holy Year. We hope to receive suggestions by the middle of December 2025, so that the time capsule can reflect our story today.

*Benedict See & Narelle Ivers  
Parish Pastoral Council*

## CHRISTMAS MASS TIMETABLE

### CHRISTMAS EVE Wed 24<sup>TH</sup>

#### St Joseph's

6.00pm Family Mass  
8.30pm Carols  
9.00pm Night Mass



#### St Thomas Aquinas

7.00pm Family Mass

### CHRISTMAS DAY Thursday 25<sup>TH</sup>

9.00am Mass St Thomas Aquinas'  
10.30am Mass St Joseph's

#### NEW YEAR'S DAY

9.00am Mass St Thomas Aquinas  
10.30am St Joseph's

#### SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturdays 5.15 to 5.45pm St Joseph's

## PROGETTO CORELLI IN CONCERT

A small but appreciative audience was entertained on Sunday afternoon 7th December with a concert of late Seventeenth/ early Eighteenth Century music in St Joseph's Church. The concert, presented by Progetto Corelli, consisted of several works in the Pastoral style appropriate to the Nativity season composed by Corelli and some of his contemporaries. The chamber music group made up of strings, woodwind and harpsichord continuo, demonstrated great skill and versatility in their thoughtful interpretations of these ensemble works. The harpsichord player demonstrated his talents at the keyboard by ascending to the organ loft in the church to perform a work by J S Bach, something particularly enjoyed by those members of the Parish who were present and who rarely get the chance to hear such works on our lovely organ.

*Janet Maher*

