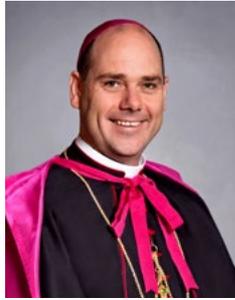


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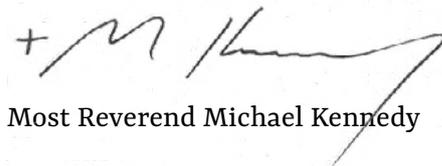


WELCOME BACK

After a 12-month hiatus triggered by the 2020 COVID lockdown I am pleased that Catholic Viewpoint is back. It will now be a slimmed down publication focussing on key events around the diocese and providing me the opportunity to keep in touch with you wherever you may be. The new format also allows Catholic Viewpoint to be easily provided both digitally and in paper copy. Take a look and you will see that the first few months of 2021 have seen a number of very significant events in our diocese. You will also find a reflection on Good Friday and Holy Saturday (Easter) as we enter into Holy Week.

As we prepare to publish, many people in NSW are hurting because of the floods. Thank God, most of our Diocese is spared but my prayers are with our suffering neighbours and the people in the West of the Diocese, particularly in and around Moree. May our Patroness Our Lady of the Rosary intercede for you and keep you safe.

Yours in Christ,

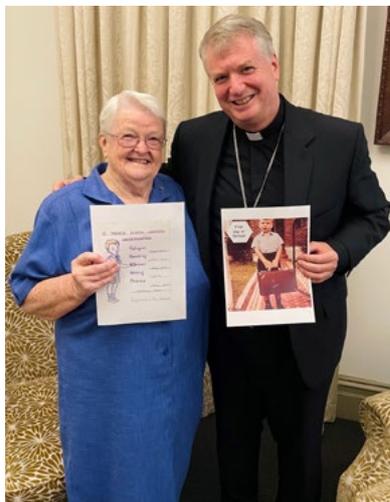


Most Reverend Michael Kennedy

A SWEET REUNION

While in Armidale for the Bishop O'Mahony Sesquicentenary Events, Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP took time to meet up with his Kindergarten teacher, Sister Judy Ellis from St Therese School in Lakemba.

Sister Judy has retired to Armidale and plays an active role in the Cathedral Parish. We're happy to report that not only was Archbishop Fisher a kind student, he was much of a scholar achieving a "Very Good" report in Religion, Reading, Writing and Mathematics.



BISHOP O'MAHONY SESQUICENTENARY EVENTS

150 YEARS SINCE THE INSTALLATION OF ARMIDALE'S FIRST BISHOP

*A evening of Sacred Music & Oration
by Most Rev Archbishop Anthony
Fisher*

9TH MARCH 2021

*"A glorious future for the infant Diocese
of Armidale"*

The Diocese of Armidale was treated to an Oration by the Most Reverend Archbishop Fisher DD on Tuesday 9th March.

His Grace outlined the history of Bishop O'Mahony and the journey to Armidale receiving their first Bishop in a six part Oration celebrating this momentous occasion.

Please enjoy this excerpt of His Grace's Oration, the full version can be found on our [wesbite](#).

“32 years they had waited for a priest. Sure, a convict priest (Fr James Dixon) had been permitted to celebrate Mass for ten months in 1803; a renegade priest (Fr Jeremiah O'Flynn) conducted a semi-public ministry for six months in 1818; and other convict priests and passing ships' chaplains engaged in clandestine ministry from time to time. But it was only with the arrival of Frs Philip Conolly and John Joseph Therry in 1820, as official Catholic chaplains to the colony, that the Catholics of Australia were guaranteed the sacraments and pastoral leadership going forward.

The faith and pastoral achievements of Fr Therry and the other clergy who came after him were

remarkable. But many of them were also what we used to call 'characters'. When Australia's first Dominican, Christopher Dowling OP, arrived in 1831 to take over as official chaplain, Therry locked him out of the presbytery. On one occasion Therry dragged Dowling from the sanctuary before coming to his senses and apologizing. On another there was a public tug-o-war over the collection box! It was also alleged he had three heavies beat Dowling up in front of St Mary's and steal his hat and watch! The meek Dominican then retreated to the relative safety of Western Sydney. When the first bishop arrived in 1835 he rewarded Dowling's patience by giving him care of everything North of the" Hawkesbury – including the region we now call New England! ”

The evening was not complete without the beautiful music provided by the talented Sarah Adeney and Warwick Dunham who filled the cathedral with the beautiful sounds of sacred hymns.



Right: Most Rev Archbishop Anthony Fisher, Vocals and Organ by Sarah Adeney and Warwick Dunham, O'Connor Student, Meg Lawry with Bishop Michael Kennedy and Archbishop Anthony Fisher.





In memoriam

MOST REVEREND LUC JULIANUS MATTHYS DD

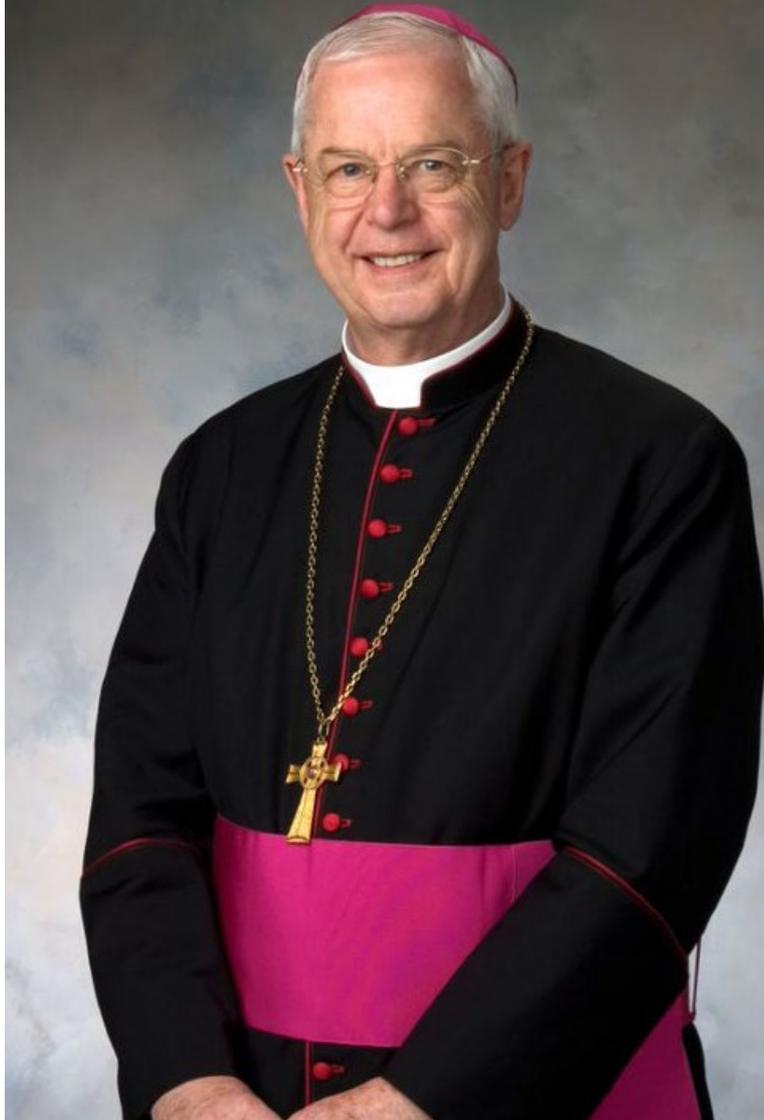
*9th Bishop of Armidale
1999 - 2012*

Bishop Luc Matthys was born on 3rd May, 1935 in Drongen Belgium to Antoine Henri Alfons Marie and Agnes Paulina Matthys nee Gheysens. He was the youngest of four children, with brothers Josef (Jef) and Marc and a sister Magda who passed away as an infant. His father was an engineer and his mother a teacher.

The Matthys family moved to Australia in what he called a “piecemeal” fashion - Marc & Kathleen in 1961, Jozef & Margaret in 1964 and Mr & Mrs Matthys in 1967. Bishop Luc was last when in 1976 he was accepted a priest in the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Bishop Luc was a family man. He cared for his parents and he looked after his mother when his father moved into care. He was a much loved brother and brother in law involved in their lives. He was part of the lives, both in Johannesburg and Melbourne, of 11 nieces and nephews plus 33 great and 10 great great nieces and nephews.

Within the Archdiocese of Melbourne Bishop Luc was an assistant Priest at Mount Waverley and Dandenong; Dean and then Parish Priest at Blackburn and his last Melbourne appointment was as Dean at Saint Patrick’s Cathedral. Whilst we know his appointments in Australia, when asked for a list of his appointments in 1999 he wrote “many in 37 years!”



*Loving and merciful God,
we entrust Bishop Luc to your mercy.
You loved him greatly in this life:
now that he is freed from all its cares,
give him happiness and peace
forever.*

*Born
3rd May, 1935 Drongen Belgium*

*Ordained Priest
2nd December, 1961, Boksburg
South Africa*

*Ordained Bishop
14th May, 1999, Armidale*

*Passed Away
26th January, 2021, Tamworth*

On 17th March, 1999 Pope John Paul II announced that Father Luc Matthys had been appointed as the 9th Bishop of the Diocese of Armidale. His consecration took place on 14th May, 1999 with Cardinal Edward Clancy, the Metropolitan, the principal concelebrant.

In his time as Bishop he added confirmations, parish visitations, debutante balls, blessings of buildings and attending meetings within the Diocese and with the Bishops to his ongoing serving as a priest. He ordained to the priesthood in 2002 Father Anthony Koppman, in 2009 Fathers Stephen O'Shea, Roel Llave and Paul Aguilar, in 2010 Father John McHugh and in 2011 Father John Macdonald. In 2006 he ordained Peter Harrison to the Permanent Diaconate.

On reaching the age of 75 in 2010 he submitted his resignation to the Holy Father who in turn asked him to remain in the Diocese as the Administrator until his successor was appointed. This he did for almost two years until February 9, 2012 when he ordained Bishop Michael Kennedy as his successor, the 10th Bishop of Armidale.

Bishop Luc died on Australia Day 2021 in Tamworth Base Hospital after unexpectedly suffering a stroke the day before.

Bishop Matthys funeral was held on Friday 5th February in Armidale after a Vigil the previous evening. The Cathedral was full to Covid-19 restriction capacity and there were many notable attendees on the day including Archbishop Adolfo Yllana Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Archbishop Anthony Fisher,

Bishop Gerard Hanna and Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett.

Bishop Michael Kennedy delivered a homily at his funeral, the below is an excerpt from the day;

“The faith with which we gather today to bid farewell and pray for Bishop Luc is well summed up by Saint Paul in our Second Reading this morning: “We know that he who raised the Lord Jesus to life will raise us with Jesus in our turn.” It is at such times when a much loved and respected person dies that we make a conscious decision and effort to reaffirm this faith in our own lives, to embrace it in our heart, and to live by it with conviction. For, as Saint Paul goes on to say, “we know that when the tent that we live in on earth is folded up (he means our body), there is a house built by God for us, an everlasting home in the heavens.”

When Bishop Luc ordained me as his successor he said “Remember, that the people of the Diocese will pray for you by name at every Mass.” This always meant a lot to him – that you were praying for him, as he was praying for you. He would be glad to know that we are praying for him today. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. Amen.”



Top Right: His Excellency Most Reverend Adolfo Tito Yllana. Bottom: A Socially Distanced but full Cathedral

200 YEARS OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION

A Celebration of Catholic Education in the Armidale Diocese

19TH FEBRUARY 2021

On Friday 19th February, the Diocese of Armidale launched their celebrations of 200 Years of Catholic Education in Australia. Bishop Michael Kennedy led a prayer celebration in Our Lady of the Angels Chapel. Catholic Schools Director Chris Smyth reflected on the history of Catholic Education in our Diocese and across the nation. A small ensemble of CSO musicians provided a hymn. The prayer was followed by lunch in the Catholic precinct courtyard. Thanks to all those who joined us in acknowledging this special event.

An excerpt from Bishop Michael Kennedy's Homily.



A seed is planted; it grows; it produces its fruit; it is harvested. Then the planting comes again and the cycle repeats. A seed was planted in Australia 200 years ago. May 1820 saw the arrival in the colony of New South Wales of the first official Catholic chaplains, Philip Connolly and John Joseph Therry. Among Fr Therry's first decisions was to establish a school in Parramatta. It was a watershed moment for Catholic education in Australia. This first 'official' Catholic school was operational by January 1821 with 31 pupils. Interestingly, the school was not exclusively for Catholic children.

Our Catholic schools now educate around 770,000 primary and secondary school students, in more than 1,750 schools, with nearly 100,000 staff. In addition, six thousand Catholic catechists participate in the religious education of 200,000 children in government schools. It is an extraordinary achievement!"

... Catholic schools have long held that education should be directed not just towards personal enrichment for the individual student but also to community contribution. Many of its graduates have gone on to put their character, skills, and knowledge at the service of others. Many have gone on to be spouses and parents, establishing their home as 'a domestic church'.

... We seek to ensure our young people have a personal encounter with Christ, develop an enduring relationship with God and the Church, and have a genuine apprenticeship in the Christian life.

We also have great confidence in our young people: that inspired by their encounter with Jesus Christ and nurtured by a Catholic education, they will be young women and men of character and ideals, and will contribute as leaders and disciples in our world. And we have great confidence in our education leaders and staff: that in charting the course for Catholic education in Australia in its third century, you will help us imagine how our schools can be schools in a deeper faith and humanity, and ensure that this dream is realised. »

- Bishop Michael Kennedy



Photo: Tahnee Denton & Kate Frazier.
Supplied, Catholic Schools Office Armidale

*“Father, into your hands
I commend my spirit”*



EASTER REFLECTION

Good Friday: the greatest day of hope

We have gazed upon Jesus and his countenance marked by pain, derided, outraged and disfigured by the sin of humanity; tomorrow night we will look upon the same countenance full of joy, radiant and luminous. From the moment Jesus goes into the tomb, the tomb and death are no longer a place without hope where history stops in the most complete failure, where man touches the extreme limit of his powerlessness. Good Friday is the greatest day of hope, come to fruition upon the Cross, as Jesus dies, as he draws his last breath, crying out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” (Lk 23:46). Entrusting his “given” existence into the Father’s hands, he knows that his death is becoming the source of life, just as the seed in the earth must be destroyed that a new plant may be born: “If a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (Jn 12:24). Jesus is the grain of wheat that falls to the earth, is split open, is destroyed and dies, and for this very reason is able to bear fruit. From the day on which Christ was raised upon it, the Cross, which had seemed to be a sign of desolation, of abandonment, and of failure, has become a new beginning: from the profundity of death is raised the promise of eternal life. The victorious splendour of the dawning day of Easter already shines upon the Cross.

Pope Benedict XVI Good Friday 2nd April, 2010

Holy Saturday: immortality does exist

What is new and exciting in the Christian message, in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, was and is that we are told: yes indeed, this cure for death, this true medicine of immortality, does exist. It has been found. It is within our reach. In baptism, this medicine is given to us. A new life begins in us, a life that matures in faith and is not extinguished by the death of the old life, but is only then fully revealed.

Indeed, the cure for death does exist. Christ is the tree of life, once more within our reach. If we remain close to him, then we have life. Hence, during this night of resurrection, with all our hearts we shall sing the alleluia, the song of joy that has no need of words. Hence, Paul can say to the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice!” (Phil 4:4). Joy cannot be commanded. It can only be given. The risen Lord gives us joy: true life. We are already held for ever in the love of the One to whom all power in heaven and on earth has been given (cf. Mt 28:18). In this way, confident of being heard, we make our own the Church’s Prayer over the Gifts from the liturgy of this night: Accept the prayers and offerings of your people. With your help may this Easter mystery of our redemption bring to perfection the saving work you have begun in us. Amen.

Pope Benedict XVI Easter Vigil 3rd April, 2010

IMPORTANT DATES

- 1 SUNDAY 18TH APRIL**
500 years of Christianity in the Philippines Mass
- South Tamworth Parish
- 2 SUNDAY 25TH APRIL**
ANZAC Day
- 3 MONDAY 24TH MAY**
“National Mass”
for Bicentenary Catholic Education

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CATHOLIC
VIEWPOINT

ANNUAL MASS FOR RELIGIOUS

*Mary Help of Christians
Church, South Tamworth*

19TH FEBRUARY 2021



On Friday 19th February, the Annual Mass for Religious was held at St Edward's Parish South Tamworth. Please enjoy an excerpt from Bishop Michael Kennedy's Homily from the day.

“Today as we acknowledge and pray for you, the consecrated Religious in our diocese, we recall that through your vows you have a particular relationship with Jesus Christ the Word of God made flesh.

He is the centre and beating heart of your life. Through you – through all that you say and do; through your lives of chastity, poverty and obedience; through who you are in your very being – you yourself are a proclamation of Jesus Christ the Word of God to the world.

As long as you are sincerely trying to conform yourself ever more fully to Him

and relying on his grace, “The word that comes forth from God does not return to him empty, without carrying out His will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.” (Cf: Isaiah 55:11)

Bishop Michael Kennedy

*“The word that comes forth from God does not return to him empty, without carrying out His will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.”
(Cf: Isaiah 55:11)*