

PARISH PRIEST'S REPORT 2010-2011

Excitement tinged with regret was still palpable in both parishes when I arrived on the 7th February, a full week after Anthoni and Ben's farewell Mass. They'll continue to be greatly missed after such a long presence among you, nine and twenty-three years respectively. Bob and Peter Tran met me at Tullamarine and together with Peter Cantwell, all four of us dined that Monday evening at the RSL. I like to think that so began as lively and mutually supportive a little franciscan community at 1087 Whitehorse as the one it replaced.

Well, it's now a touch under four months since that day and what an introduction I've had to this exciting cluster of parishes that is St Francis Xavier and St Clare! The obvious faith and devotion evident at the weekday and weekend Eucharists is striking; the lively social activity; the efficiency coupled with a warm welcome that makes up the parish office team of Monique, Di and their generous volunteer helpers which, in every parish, is the hub of its life; the expertise, long service and interest evidenced in the finance committee members, education board members, pastoral councillors and the list goes on including especially Carmel Purdey and her staff and the beautifully-appointed school that is St Francis Xavier. I'm sure to forget to mention so many aspects of life in St Francis Xavier and St Clare that have made such an impression on me, but I can't neglect the obvious and well-founded expectation generated by Anthoni's planned renovations of the Box Hill Church and freshening up of that in Box Hill North and very soon to be realised.

You may remember the lector's first words at Mass on 1st May, the week after Easter: *"The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers"*. With these words, written around 80AD describing life in the little house churches of 35AD, Luke may well be describing the practice of the Christian community to which he belonged all those fifty years later. It certainly describes life in so many parishes including our own Box Hill cluster – **the brotherhood (and sisterhood) of mutual support and care, the central place the Mass (or breaking of bread) holds in our lives, the prayer-chair we'll be encouraged to slide into regularly, if not daily, with our favourite prayerbook, New Testament, Bible (or even just the humble daily Mass-sheet) and finally, you could number on one hand the parishes world-wide hosting a facility as brilliant as Yarra Theological Union in Bedford St within walking distance where all of us, especially those retired with time and interest, could deepen our knowledge of the teaching of the apostles,**

thereby kindling in our hearts the fire of love and devotion for Our Lord.

**Fr Peter McGrath ofm
Parish Priest**

ST FRANCIS XAVIER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

The SFX School Annual Report will be available at the Annual General Meeting and via the parish website.

**Carmel Purdey
Principal**

THE PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL REPORT 2010-11

It was with great delight that the Parish Pastoral Council PPC welcomed new Member Annie Setiawan in 2010.

While there were no members who retired since the last AGM in May 2010, we did farewell Liz Clark (our Pastoral Associate for the past eight years). To farewell Liz the parishes held a series of special masses, which were followed by morning tea.

There have been many changes and developments that have occurred over the past 12 months. Below is an outline of the major issues that the PPC have been engaged in.

The Parish Strategic Plan

At the 2010 AGM the Parish Strategic Plan was presented. The Strategic Plan outlined the systematic approach the PPC will be taking to the running of the Parish over the next five years. Specifically the Strategic Plan focused on the areas of:

- Community;
- Liturgy and Celebration; and
- Service and Outreach.

Since it was finalised in July 2010, the Plan has been constantly reviewed and updated. For those that are interested the Strategic Plan is now available on the Parish Website. Please visit: <http://www.scsfx.org.au/documents/BusinessPlanforStFrancisXavierv5.docforwebsite.pdf>

Name Badges

As a part of the Strategic Plan, and the importance the PPC places on developing a stronger sense of Community, names badges were designed to assist Welcomers. Name badges are available to all Parishioners, from the Parish Office, and everyone

is encouraged to participate and purchase (at a reasonable cost) a name badge from the Parish Office.

Naming of Buildings in both Parishes

With the St Francis Xavier School refurbishments completed in 2010 the need to name (and replace) some buildings was considered by the PPC, with the input from parishioners who completed a survey. The table below outlines the names the PPC determined.

Building	Name of Building
St Francis Xavier: Original Building facing Whitehorse Road	Sion Building – St FX.
New Library:	St Clare’s
Admin Block:	Admin Block
Hall:	St Francis Xavier’s Hall
Old Library:	Friar’s Room
Tuck Shop:	Kitchen
Parish House:	S, F.X Friary
Clota Avenue Building:	Clota Avenue Building
St Clare’s Parish House	Parish House
St Clare’s Old School Area, Quadrangle Meeting Rooms 1 and 2 BBQ Area and Basement	Parish Centre

Parish involvement in the St Francis Xavier School Fair

The PPC participated in the School Fair (November 2010), by way of a raffle. This proved to be a very profitable and rewarding project. A small sub-committee was formed and sought donations of goods suitable to raffle. Members of the Council sold tickets mainly after Mass on three Sundays prior to and on the day of the Fair.

The net result was a donation to the School of \$2,210.00. This money has gone towards building the boundary fence.

Safe Community Policy

In line with modern practices the PPC prepared a Policy to ensure that St Francis Xavier and St Clare Parishes and School Community are a safe and enriching environment for people of all ages with

special concern for children, young people and venerable adults.

The policy will help prevent abuse by all members of the Catholic Community – parish personnel, employers, employees, volunteers, priests and religious. This Policy is available on the Parish Website – please visit:

<http://www.scsfx.org.au/documents/SafeCommunityPolicy.pdf>.

Reflection Day

On Sunday 20 November 2010 the PPC held its annual reflection day. The PPC was very fortunate to have Dr Peter Price facilitate the day and all the PPC Members attended. The theme of the reflection day was ‘Transition’.

The Farewell

The PPC discussed the best way to handle the departure of our Parish Priest Fr Anthoni of nine years standing and one of the Assistant Priests Fr Ben, here for 23 years. Both these men were loved and admired by all the Parishioners of St Clare and St Francis Xavier, so it was going to take a good deal of planning.

The result was outstanding, with over 400 Parishioners and friends attending a Farewell Mass of Thanksgiving with a BBQ lunch and presentations to Fr Anthoni and Fr Ben in the Hall.

The Welcome

Then naturally we had to welcome for Fr Peter McGrath our new Parish Priest and his Assistants Fr Bob Matthews and Fr Peter Tran. They were all welcomed at a Mass and Morning Tea on 13 February 2011.

Building for the future

The PPC and Building Committees at St Francis Xavier’s and St Clare’s are busy making plans and meeting with an architect over the refurbishing of the two Churches.

Troubadour

The Parish Pastoral Council Newsletter published four times a year has been well received with the hope that it keeps the Parishioners informed of the goings-on at both Parishes and in Council. It is now known as “Troubadour”.

It has been a busy 12 months and the PPC thanks all parishioners for their help and support. The PPC looks forward to continuing to build on the great progress that has been made over the next 12 months.

Peter Leonard

Co-chair

Parish Pastoral Council

Anthony Kennedy

Co-chair

Parish Pastoral Council

**FRANCISCANS IN PARTNERSHIP-
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER AND ST. CLARE PARISHES
BOX HILL
WITH ALAS AND FATUBERLIU PARISHES,
TIMOR LESTE**

After the Franciscan group returning from the visit to Timor Leste in 2009 our committee was able to fulfil the requests from the Reign of Peace Primary School to provide the funds to repair the windows and doors at the school. Through the Friars in Sydney we were able to transfer \$3,325.25 to cover the estimated costs of replacing the windows and doors that were in a very poor state. We received a receipt for the money, and work began on the school. In April 2010 we received a report from Sr. Petri Canisia CIJ with photos showing the progress they had made with the repairs. Unfortunately due to the cost of transport and the increased cost of supplies and labour they were unable to complete the project. They provided an itemised account of the costs involved in completing the building and requested a further \$3658.25 to enable them to do so.

During June 2010 we were able to transfer another \$6000 into the school's account so that they could complete their initial task as well as use the remaining money on their next priority. Sr. Petri had conveyed to us that they were unable as yet to begin work on the Kindergarten which they were very eager to begin. We again received a receipt for the money.

Over the last twelve months we have again been able to raise money to support the school in Weberek through fundraising efforts with the Christmas Gift cards, a very generous donation from the Parent and Friend's Association of over \$2000 from the proceeds of the school fete, and from a number of donations from generous Parishioners throughout the year.

Once we have make contact with the school again to establish their future needs we will organise to forward the money we have raised.

With thanks to all our parishioners for their generosity and support.

The Timor Leste Committee

FIRST FRIDAY COLLECTION

The First Friday Collection at the noon mass originated with the parish Sacred Heart Sodality, which collected among its members for a Sacred Heart Mission school in Sideia, PNG. Fifty years

ago, a boarding school – which became known as “Hotel Sideia” – was opened, by Father John McGhee MSC, because the potential students lived mainly on outlying islands and daily attendance was impossible. Financing the boarding school was difficult and Father John, a long-time principal, enlisted support from friends, relatives and, no doubt, Sacred Heart Sodalities. In the sixties and seventies each Box Hill sodality member contributed twenty cents a month, which went into a red bag, and records from the time show that \$40.00 was sent each year to support a particular student.

It was the Sacred Heart Sodality which began the “Hour of Prayer for Priests”, which included midday mass, on First Fridays in the seventies and during the Hour the red bag went round the members for their contributions; very soon, other members of the congregation offered donations. In the late eighties the sodality lapsed but the Hour of Prayer for Priests was continued by Fr. Ben as a “Holy Hour”; we have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, we continue to pray for our priests and the red bag collection has continued, with the help of Imelda Bianco, Ivan Mahlstedt and Judy Reid and many generous contributors. Our contributions to “Hotel Sideia” are very gratefully received, as the families in the area have difficulty earning the money to pay for their children’s education. There must now be many people in PNG who owe their position in life to the schooling they received at “Hotel Sideia”.

The total collected for the financial year ending June 2010 was \$1,536.35. The total for this year (to March) is \$1,823 05. The money is put directly into the Mission bank account, so no expenses are incurred.

Imelda, Ivan, Judy

FOOD AT THE BARN (FAB)

Food at the Barn is a Box Hill ecumenical project that has been operating since 2000. Several local churches on a roster system provide a free two course lunch at the ‘Barn’ (Box Hill Baptist Church) every Wednesday for people in need. There are usually between 40 – 55 people who use this service each week. FAB also has a dedicated team of 5 people who offer pastoral support.

The FAB group fund raises during the year to cover the overheads of app \$2000 pa plus any new equipment that is needed. The FAB group are involved with the Whitehorse Community Chest doorknock and letterbox drop for fundraising.

Each Church funds their own rostered meals which is between \$120- 150 per week or \$3 per head app.

If you would like to help or make a donation, please contact the Parish Office.

FRANCIS/CLARE CHARISMATIC PRAYER COMMUNITY REPORT

Meets St Clare's Parish Hall
Monday(School Term) 10.30am to 12.00noon

"I love this family of God, so closely knitted into one,
they've taken me into their hearts, and I'm so glad to be a part,
of this great family."

This is just a simple little song we sing at the Prayer Group, which sums up the essence of who we are, coming from various surrounding parishes.
Each Monday morning, whether we number 14 or 30 plus, to honour Jesus as Lord, we sing our songs of Praise and Worship with great enthusiasm, carried along by John Parkers keyboard excellence.

Each year we try to have gifted speakers come to speak on different aspects of our Catholic faith. Last year we had three speakers from the Schools of Evangelisation, and this year we are making plans for a 6 weeks series on the Mass. This will be advertised and we invite you to join us.

Olive Hammill 9878 4103

LEGION OF MARY

We have 7 active members and 6 auxiliary members. The main work of the Legion is to visit the hospital, the homes for the aged and visiting the elderly people who live alone in their own place, who are lonely and feel empty. We welcome all men and women who want to be a legionary.

Elizabeth O'Connell

AUTUMN FRIENDSHIP CLUB 2011

During the past year, the Autumn Friendship Club has continued to pursue its goal of providing companionship, support and occupation to the older members of the parish and the Whitehorse community.

Our "at home" activities included fund-raising afternoons and lunches, several musical afternoons, Bingo, clothing and jewellery sales, Oaks Day lunch, gentle exercises, a day of reflection with Liz and Christmas Dinner provided by parishioners. We enjoyed an afternoon of recorded music, with Simon Clark; we had a talk on "Seniors' Rights"; a very enjoyable afternoon with "The Bellringers" who brought both bells and chimes and played music on them; and we were pleased to have a personal visit from Katie Blundy, when she returned to Melbourne recently.

Our excursions included a visit to St. Francis in the city for mass and lunch, film lunches, a picnic and lunch at various venues, usually to mark the end of each term.

Through lunches and raffles, we raised money for the Cancer Council and for Katie Blundy's work in a remote community in South Africa.

We were very grateful to receive a grant of \$250.00 from Whitehorse Council, which enables us to subsidise the cost of some of our activities e.g. coaches and cinema lunches.

We were very sad to farewell Liz Clark, when she retired from her position as Pastoral Associate, last July, and hope her retirement is rewarding. This year we have regretfully farewelled Father Anthoni and Father Ben, and welcomed Father Peter McGrath and Father Peter Tran.

We are most grateful for all the support we have received from the parish – from Fathers Anthoni, Ben, Bob and both Father Peters, from Liz Clark, Monique Waring, Di Hardy, John Short - who sets up the hall for our meetings - Marlene Coulthard, who gently encourages us to exercise, John and Therese Parker who entertained us with music and encouraged us to join in; and all who helped provide the wonderful Christmas Dinner and entertainment.

We are always looking for new members; and we welcome all parishioners and members of the Whitehorse community and their friends to our functions; and are always open to suggestions for further activities.

Judy Reid, Secretary

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The social committee was involved in and supported several functions over the last 12 months.

The Annual Senior Christmas Luncheon was once again a huge success with app 110 people attending. This is a great opportunity for the 'seniors' of our community to gather with friends and parishioners, share a meal, sing a song or two, and enjoy the hospitality of the parishes. The social committee is privileged to support this great pastoral Parish event.

The Chinese New Year / Australia Day celebration was also a great day to take part in.

Earlier this year we coordinated the farewell lunch for Fr. Anthony & Fr. Ben. This was held after a combined Mass at 10.30. The day was extremely hot but also very well attended by approx 500 parishioners who shared in the BBQ lunch. Speeches were made, a visual presentation of photos and farewell gifts presented. Ben & Anthony both had a great day with of course Fr Ben having the last word.

We wish to extend our gratitude to the many people who have assisted in any way to the activities and especially to parishioners who attended the functions; we have had a lot of fun arranging them for you. It is great getting the community together for some social interaction and we hope you will support our efforts.

We would love to have some new faces & so we extend an invitation to anyone wishing to join us, we only meet when necessary and the meetings are very social. Please contact the Parish Office if you would like to join the committee or have some ideas for some activities.

'GIRLS DRINKS'

Since 2005 'ladies' from the Parishes have gathered for an informal chat over a coffee or glass of wine. We get together on the 2nd Friday of the Month from 5pm to 6.30pm at Box Hill RSL. Come along & catch up with some new friends & old friends.

We would love to see you there.

All Welcome!

ST. CLARE'S KIOSK - ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2011

Our Parish Kiosk, *located beside the garage of the Parish House*, is open on the SECOND SUNDAY of the month following the 9.00 am Mass (February to December).

Kiosk patronage is good, supported by a core body of faithful stalwarts on all occasions.

We would love to welcome additional members of our parish to join with us for this short but enjoyable occasion each month.

If you have not tried the Kiosk please do so and, with your cup of **Tea, Percolated Coffee or a cordial** enjoy a brief chat with old acquaintances or meet some new friends.

To our wonderful, friendly group of volunteers who staff the kiosk we say **"THANK YOU"** on behalf of the Parish Family.

Kiosks volunteers, usually in groups of two or more, consist of individual families, a couple of relatives or two friends or parish acquaintances.

On occasions some of these great people surprise us with homemade delicacies much to the delight of those attending the kiosk.

Additional volunteers are always welcome.

John Jesse

Tel: 9898 5708

ST CLARE'S FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

The Parish Finance Committee is an advisory body to the Parish Priest. The Committee assists the Parish Priest in his task of administering the parish finances, maintaining the parish properties, planning the future capital works and raising the necessary funds. The committee meets each quarter or more frequently at the discretion of the Parish Priest.

The Financial Statements, as at 31 December 2010, show a small deficit. Over the past two years there has been significant expenditure on necessary repairs, maintenance and capital items. It is anticipated that there will be a decrease in expenditure on these items over the next few years.

Sincere thanks are extended to parishioners for their faithful and generous contributions to the Thanksgiving Campaign. Over recent years there has been a steady decline in income from this

source, a decline greater than that anticipated in budgetary forecasts. Clearly, a number of factors can impact on income from this source. A Renewal Campaign in the near future is indicated to arrest further decline in Thanksgiving income.

A cordial invitation is extended to all parishioners to contribute to Parish Thanksgiving. Envelopes may be obtained from the Parish Office.

The assistance of the Parish Staff in the work of the Parish Finance Committee is appreciated. In particular, the Committee acknowledges with gratitude the excellent work of Elizabeth Foster, Parish Accountant, in the day-to-day management of parish finances.

Kevin McMahon
For Finance Committee

SFX FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2010

The 2010 Financial Statements show that the decrease in Mass collections, the Parish's main source of income, has slowed. The reduction in income was 4% when compared to 2009 collections. Stringent cost control and an increase in other Parish income has enabled the Parish to maintain a surplus for the year.

The highlight of the year was finishing the renovations to the School and Parish Hall. The next stage of the Parish development is renovating the Church and converting the old school library into a new Parish Centre. Work has begun on this with the Building Committee meeting with the Architects and consultants to revise the renovation plans.

To assist in the funding of this project a Thanksgiving renewal campaign will be conducted February/March 2012.

As the end of the financial approaches I appeal to parishioners, who contribute to Thanksgiving, to ensure that their contributions match their pledged amount. I also appeal to Parishioners, who do not participate in Thanksgiving, to become involved. Funds can be contributed at Mass, by direct debit or credit card. Please contact the Parish Office if you wish to join.

I wish to thank the Parish staff and all the Parishioners for their generosity with the giving of their time, talents and funds in support of the Parish.

Greg Kitch
Finance Committee