

## THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY 1964

*This is the text from a small 8 page booklet published and printed in 1964 for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary) of the parish. The cost to purchase was 2'. It was printed by the Catholic Press Newspaper Company limited 104 Campbell Street, Surry Hills, NSW*

Father J. H. Morris was appointed in May, 1914 by Archbishop Kelly to the parish of Maroubra, newly cut off from Randwick parish. The area, stretching out to La Perouse, was sparsely populated and of a sandy and swampy nature.

There was no church but Fr Morris found when he arrives that Mass had been celebrated once a month at the home of Mr and Mrs Pearsall of Boyce Road, Maroubra. He continues to use two large rooms in the Pearsall's home for Sunday Mass until other arrangements could be made. The first Sunday Mass celebrated had a congregation of 37 and the collection amounted to 8?-, but subsequent Sundays saw a steady increase in the congregation and consequently in the collection. The first Christmas dues, however, were less than £2! As the numbers grew Sunday Mass was transferred to a large room above Dudley's Building at Maroubra Junction, where the congregation was frequently distracted at Mass by large rats walking along the rafters!

Religious instruction was given by Mrs Gill, the mother of (later) parishioner Mrs Keir, in the early days of the parish, then by the Sacred Heart Sisters from Daceyville, until the establishment of the parish school in 1915.

Fr Morris was appointed chaplain to Long Bay Gaol and Prince Henry Hospital, and this became one of his major tasks.

Father Morris energetically set about establishing the parish, and a fortnight after his arrival purchased an acre of land for the purpose of building a church-school. Because of financial difficulties the building could not be commenced immediately, but permission was granted to make an appeal through the Catholic Press for donations. Through the generosity of Catholics and Non-Catholics, and particularly of members of the South Coast parish from which Father Morris came, the foundation stone was laid by Archbishop Kelly on December 13, 1914, and the church-school opened in March 1915. When Archbishop Kelly laid the foundation stone of the church-school a statue of Our Lady was presented to Mr and Mrs Pearsall in appreciation of their generosity. The Brigidine nuns were asked to open a school, and at Easter in 1915 Mother Paul and Mother Patricia, (later Patrick) enrolled 60 pupils. These devoted nuns travelled by tram every day and were to do this for the next 19 years before a convent was built. Indeed, for a period of some months during a tram strike they walked the distance!

The expenditure on buildings and land had become about £2000 but the debt was well handled and Archbishop Kelly once again visited the parish on December 1915, this time to lay the foundation stone of a presbytery. Until this was completed in 1916 Father Morris used a double-fronted cottage in Boyce Road – now number 116 – for his presbytery. Because the parish seemed constantly growing, the presbytery was built to accommodate two priests and this proved necessary immediately as work at the hospital increased because of an influenza epidemic, and the curate was appointed. This was Father F J Fitzpatrick, later to be parish priest, and he remained as curate from December, 1916, to December, 1919. Father Morris was moved from the parish in 1922. When he died in 1928 as Parish Priest at Hurstville, those who knew him in Maroubra were deeply sorry.

His successor, Father A McHugh, *\*(Footer –\* 'A suitable photograph of the late Father McHugh was not available')* in April, 1922. He showed great foresight in purchasing land at Maroubra Bay, a block adjacent to the presbytery and church-school, and a block at Long Bay, all of which have since been well used for churches and/or schools. He also had some improvements made to the presbytery, extensions made to the school-church and plans drawn up for a new church. The depression put a stop to these plans, and Father McHugh moved to Campbelltown parish before conditions had improved.

When Father Fitzpatrick returned in 1932 to succeed Father McHugh as Parish Priest he found a very different parish and during his time many now familiar buildings arose – the church at Malabar, the convent for the Sisters of the Brigidine Order, an infants' school at St Aidan's, and a small school-church at Maroubra Bay.

During the 19 years since it was established in 1915 the school had been steadily growing. Its enrolment had increased from the initial 60 to 340 in 1934. In 1933, since the nuns teaching at the Maroubra now numbered 8, it was thought to be advisable to build a convent. In December of that year Archbishop Kelly once again paid the parish a visit to lay the foundation stone. The nuns purchased the land from the parish for £3000 and the building itself cost £4000. The new building was completed by Easter, 1934, and at the end of the year a church-school at Maroubra Bay was built and

opened and blessed in 1935. The enrolment at St Aidan's was dropped to 277 when the Bay was opened with 90 children in attendance. Three nuns travelled from the new convent at St Aidan's to the Bay each day.

There were now three new priests in the presbytery at St Aidan's. Father Fitzpatrick had drawn up plans for a new church to replace the church-school when he died suddenly in 1938. Father Denis Conaghan succeeded Father Fitzpatrick in April of 1939 and, although the unrest in Europe and the aftermath of the depression delayed matters, the first brick of the new church was laid in the Feasts of Peter and Paul (June) that year. The church was opened and blessed on May 5, 1940, and at the same time the foundation stone of the new primary school was laid. This was opened and blessed on September 22, 1940 and the children took possession on September 23.

Father Conaghan was made a Domestic Prelate, becoming the Right Reverend Monsignor Conaghan and he is well remembered by many of the parishioners today. His memory is preserved in the Church today as he represents the figure of Simon of Cyrene in the Fifth Station of the Cross. Monsignor Conaghan showed much foresight in arranging the purchase of a large Crown Land in Pagewood with the hope of building a school there. Unfortunately he died in 1954 before negotiations were completed. Father B Hudson, our present parish priest, was appointed on March 17, 1954, to succeed Monsignor Conaghan and he completed these negotiations. Today this land has on it the Pagewood Parish Church of the Annunciation, a boys' secondary school and the brothers' monastery.

As the population grew in the district and the Catholics increased, it became necessary to cut off sections of the original Maroubra parish and make new parishes. In 1939 Malabar was established as a separate parish and in 1940 Maroubra Bay. Some years later, in 1950, Maroubra Beach was established and Matraville was separated from Malabar. The last section of the original parish to be declared a new parish was Pagewood in 1960.

With the introduction of the intermediate at the school in 1936 enrolments steadily increased each year until today the total enrolment is about 840, some 310 being in the secondary school. Such an increase in numbers called for further accommodation and on October 4, 1953, the new wing of the school was blessed and opened by Cardinal Gilroy. A new wing to accommodate an increased number of nuns was added to the convent in 1957. Other improvements were made to the playing area around the school also. Permission was granted to take pupils to the Leaving Certificate in recent years and St Aidan's can now be regarded as a large district school attaining high standards in the academic field, in music and in Irish dancing.

In order to maintain the parish, Planned Giving was introduced in 1958, and because of this it was possible to open a boys' school on the Pagewood site on January 29, 1961. The Church of the Annunciation had been completed and opened a little earlier. Because of the reorganisation of Catholic education, the Pagewood School was now a secondary school, whilst the school at Daceyville is primary.

Other happenings in the parish in recent years have been substantial renovations to the old hall, made from money loaned by parishioners the establishment of an Enquiry Class for those interested in learning about the Catholic way of life, and the formation of the St Bernard Club for the over 21 group of the parish. Sodalities such as Holy name, Children of Mary, the Sacred Heart, give signs of the spiritual health of the parish and the Catholic Youth Organisation is a means of helping the young people of the parish to keep their sights on God.

The St Vincent de Paul Society has been active for many decades, commencing when the parish was in its infancy.

The sons and daughters of some of our parishioners have chosen a religious life, some in mission fields many thousands of miles from Maroubra. In one case two sons of the one family are priests, and the Brigidine Order have been favoured by many postulants.

#### THE CATHOLIC ENQUIRY CENTRE

Catholics throughout Australia who share in the work of the Catholic Enquiry Centre, the thousands of non-Catholics who avail themselves of the services it offers and a thousand converts and more who remember it as their first point of contact with the faith they now hold dear, will all rejoice in the Golden Jubilee of the parish of the Holy Family at Maroubra.

When the idea of a Catholic Enquiry Centre, which would advertise our faith throughout the nation, was no more than an idealist's dream the people of the Holy Family parish, particularly their parish priest and the zealous members of the Catholic Women's League, made that dream a reality, thereby associating the name of Australia's Catholic Enquiry Centre permanently with the parish of the holy Family at Maroubra.

The property, which is now the national headquarters of the Catholic Enquiry Centre (259-261 Maroubra Road) was acquired originally by the Catholic Women's League at Maroubra and made available some years later at a very nominal rent to the Catholic Enquiry Centre. Later still it was transferred at a very low cost to the Catholic Enquiry Centre to become its national headquarters.

In four and a half years at this Centre we have enrolled more than 15 000 non-Catholics for our six months' religious correspondence course. We post from four to five thousand prepared lessons or personal letters to our students each week. Catholic Sponsor Groups and individual benefactors from every diocese and almost every parish in Australia help to make this work possible, but visitors to the Centre and day of the week see ample proof of the unique part that is being played in this work by so many generous voluntary workers from Holy Family parish. Recently we estimated that in four years voluntary helpers from the parish had stamped and sealed one million envelopes. One visitor with a touch of humour commented, "That takes some licking."

The immediate aim of the work of the Catholic Enquiry Centre is simply to help more of our fellow Australians to see the Church for what it really is, not what so many mistakenly think it to be. This course, is only a means to an end. The ultimate aim is to win converts to the True Faith. When they see the truth of Catholicism for what it is they will, by the grace of God, embrace it. We would do no service to the cause of truth if we made any attempt to hide our real aims. We long for the day when all men of good will are united "in one fold under one shepherd." But we must never misunderstand the reason why we so earnestly desire the conversion of all to the Church. Christ came into the world to serve mankind. The Church is His Mystical Body still living and working in the world. It must forever seek to expand, not to increase its power but rather to increase the scope of its service to mankind. This is the sincere good wish and blessing that comes from us all at the Catholic Enquiry Centre to the parish of the Holy Family on the great occasion of its Golden Jubilee. May it ever increase the scope of its service to mankind. May it advance 'in wisdom and age and grace' even as the Christ-child himself advanced in the Holy Family of Nazareth under the loving and tender care of our Holy Mother Mary.

THOMAS A WHITE

Director

Catholic Enquiry Centre

THE PARISH OF THE HOLY FAMILY,

MAROUBRA

PARISH PRIEST: REV B HUDSON, PP

ASSISTANT PRIESTS: REV G RUSSO, REV S HYNDES

PRESBYTERY: MAROUBRA ROAD TEL 34-1198

AT AIDAN'S CONVENT: MAROUBRA ROAN TEL: 34-1128

BOYS SCHOOL: BUNNERONG ROAD AND FITZGERALD AVENUE TEL: 34-3726 Secondary School conducted by Marist Brothers

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ASSISTANT PRIESTS AT MAROUBRA SINCE 1916 Father F Fitzpatrick, deceased.

Father A Bradstreet, now assistant priest at Hurstville.

Father E J Quinn, deceased.

Father J J Massey, deceased.

Father A Hills, now Parish Priest, Daceyville

Father J Glynn, now Parish Priest, Bowral.

Father F Fuhlendorf, now Parish Priest, Moruya.

Father P Carr, now Parish Priest, Belfield.

Bishop Cullinane of Goulburn.

Father G Wallington, now Parish Priest, Belfield.

Father M J Kiely, now Parish Priest, Enmore.

Father C G Sexton, now Parish Priest, Dover Heights.

Father W Canavan, now Parish Priest, Springwood.

Father F J Brouggy, now assistant priest, Blacktown.

Father J Kerrisk, now a Parish Priest, Toronto.

Father J E Morreau, now a Parish Priest, Rooty Hill.

Father M Howley, now in Boston, USA.

Father M P Clements, now Administrator, Mosman.

Father J P Walsh, now Parish Priest, Baulkham Hills.

Father D Lyons, now assistant priest, Balmain.

Father M O'Byrne, now assistant priest, Liverpool.

Father J N Carson, now Carrington, Maitland.

Father E J Barry, now assistant priest, Lidcombe.

Dr P Crittenden, now Professor, St Patrick's College, Manly.

Father M J Crittenden, now assistant priest, Enfield.

From Dick

In its 100 years existence has had relatively few parish priests – in fact there have been only 8 Parish Priests, Fr J H Morris, One of his roles chaplain of Long Bay, a role which Fr Bill also did

FR A McHugh took over in April 1922, so Morris was May 1914

As a matter of interest – presbytery foundation stone also on the new one (great tough)

Foundation stone was laid in December opened in March because the walls were already constructed, which was most unusual.

McHugh idea of new church