



## TROUBLE IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**B**ishop Anthony wrote to the parish priests on Wednesday, concerned about the impact the trial ethics classes, organised by the St James Ethics Centre, was having on Catholic Scripture in New South Wales public schools. Parishioners may have read in this week's *Hills News* on page 7 that the *Compass* programme was at Baulkham Hills North Public School to film some of the ethics lessons. The article is very confusing about the teaching of Scripture and/or ethics in public schools and parallels the confusion among some shoppers whose views appear on the opposite page in the *Hills News*. The subject is very contentious.

It is made more controversial when the Anglicans have accused the St James Ethics Centre and the NSW Department of Education of being unethical in inviting children already attending Scripture to abandon their weekly Scripture class to attend the new ethics classes. Schools have been given a directive from the Department of Education, according to the Anglican newspaper, *Southern Cross*, to make the new ethics course available to all Year 5 & 6 children. It was also supported by the school administration on the basis that, to not send a letter to all children would be viewed as discriminatory!

There is a certain irony in this in that the Ethics Centre began its life in December 1988, founded by the Anglican parish of St James' in King Street. One Anglican bishop, Robert Forsyth, said that "his most substantive concern is that the Department of Education has been using its authority to encourage parents to ditch Christian SRE (Special Religious Education, that is, Scripture) in order to recruit more students for

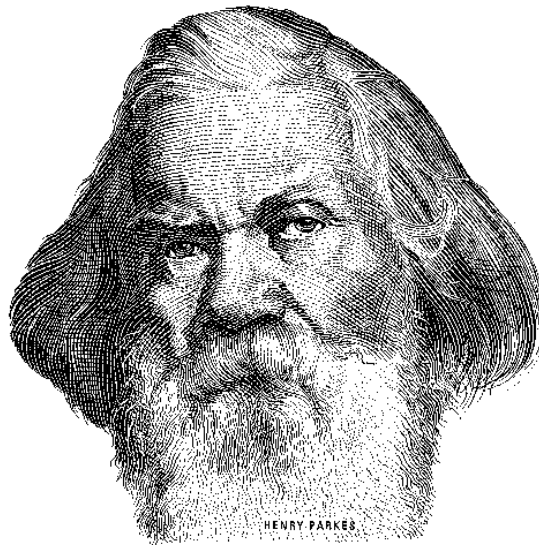
the ethics classes". He went on, "It proves that the P&C and St James Ethics Centre were wrong when they claimed they were merely providing an alternative to SRE for non-religious parents. This course is genuine competition for SRE. We are losing parents who claim to be Christians but are somewhat ambivalent and easily swayed by the directions given by school authorities. I am very concerned that it is the Government that is now affectively providing this competition."

The *Letters to the Editor* have been focused on this subject for some weeks. With the increasing number of children attending 'non-Scripture', and with the rise of a more militant atheism and

ubiquitous secularism, the claim is made that children are wasting learning time by reading in the library for an hour a week. You and I would think that this was a productive use of time and I would enjoy having an hour to myself to read, but apparently there is a view that, if a teacher is not instructing, children are not learning. The *Letters* writers view public schools as secular institutions where religion should not be taught. The argument goes that it is the government's job to

educate children and since the government is secular, so should the school be. This is wrong thinking. I believe the State educates children on behalf of parents.

Fully state-controlled and purely secular schools were formally condemned in 1864 by Pius IX in his *Syllabus of Errors*. The Australian bishops at that time saw that education must take place in, and be infused by, a religious atmosphere which would act upon the child's whole character of mind and heart. They were speaking against Henry Parkes' Public Schools Act of 1866, giving power to train, appoint and



**Sir Henry Parkes (1815-1896)**  
**Father of the Public School system**  
**In New South Wales**

dismiss teachers. It was Parkes' Public Instruction Act of 1880 which introduced compulsory, free, and secular education and severed connections between the church and the public schools.

When the bishops argued that it is parents' role to educate children, not the States', it follows that if parents want Christian values taught in schools, even public schools, they should be heard. It is the parents who should call the shots, not the government.

It is an old argument about who owns the child, the parent or the State. Sparta in the 6th Century BC is the historical example of where the State educated the child from the age of 7 because the State believed it had ownership of the child. Next door, the Athenians took a contrary view.

Today's thinking is that, where parents are Christian, the Government should not only make provision for their Christian education in the timetable but show respect for Christian parents by providing equal support for their choice.

Parishioners need to be aware that this debate has been going on for some time in New South Wales. It is the very reason why the Australian bishops, over a hundred years ago, went it alone and set up Catholic schools. The debate about State aid is reflected in the views about the rights of parents. The difference is that, this time around, more than half our baptised Catholic children attend state schools. Moreover, the St James Ethic Centre may sound Christian because of its name but it a secular humanist organisation with a corresponding philosophy and is being a little dishonest, and very unethical, in not declaring this. Moreover, the Centre has powerful allies in the media, the NSW Government and the Department of Education and Training.

I want to support our catechists who come into contact with over 100,000 young people each week in New South Wales. We have over 70 catechists in this parish who faithfully witness each week to the love of Jesus in our parish's public schools.

The depth of feeling about this issue goes against the perception being touted in much of the mainstream media that Catholic Scripture classes are of little value. It is my belief that, once a child is baptised Catholic, he/she has rights. One right is the right to a Catholic education whether that is supplied by a family, the local Catholic school or through a catechist in a local public school.

For the ethics class to be in competition with Scripture is in clear breach of the Department of Education's own policies. It must be stopped.

*Father John.*

## LITURGY CORNER

The celebration of the Ascension as a particular day developed in the vicinity of Antioch (where Jesus' followers were first called 'Christians') around 380AD. The Ascension marks the culmination of the resurrection gospel - the universalizing of Jesus' relevance to all aspects of human life, individual and global. It does not mark a loss of Jesus into the immensity of heaven but his more full immersion in the community of his disciples (on whom he pours out the grace of his divine love) as he is no longer limited to the spatial-temporal confines of Palestine. The Ascension points to the new beginning of the era- the Church must pick up the mission of Christ in the world - it is empowered to do so with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. (Kelly; Richardson & Bowden)



### Today's Readings

**First Reading:** Acts 1:1-11. Luke begins the Acts of the Apostles by going back to the end of his Gospel and to the account of the ascension.

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 1:17-23.

**Gospel:** Luke 24:46-53. Jesus instructs his disciples to await his gift of the Spirit who will empower them to preach in his name.

### Next week: Pentecost Sunday Year C

Acts 2:1-11, 1 Corinthians 12:3-7,12-13, John 20:19-23.

**HOLY HOUR** every Thursday from 8.00 to 9.00pm including Rosary, prayers, hymns & scripture reading. All welcome.

**REPARATION PRAYER GROUP** meets Wednesdays at 8pm in the Parish Office Basement. All welcome.

### A Word of Thanks from Fr Eugene to Parishioners

Many thanks for your support and sympathy at this time. I felt it especially at the Funeral Mass of my mother. Thanks to Margaret for the beautiful arrangements of flowers, Frances for putting together the very lovely booklet, Fred and Barbara for the music (there was a musician among my in-laws who commented on the excellence of the music and singing). Thanks to Marion and the Care Group for providing a superb spread in the hall after the Mass and I am very grateful for the attendance of so many parishioners at the Mass.

### RETIREMENT VILLAGES SCHEDULE THIS WEEK:

**Warrina** - Mass & Anointing of the Sick on Tuesday 18 May at 4pm in the chapel.

**Nuffield & Hopetoun** - Mass & Anointing of the Sick on Wednesday 19 May at 4pm in the chapel at Farrer Brown Court.

**Nordby** - Mass & Anointing of the Sick on Thursday 20 May at 4pm.

**Wirreanda** - Communion Service & Anointing of the Sick on Thursday 20 May at 11am.

**Brian King Gardens** - Mass & Anointing of the Sick on Friday 21 May at 2pm.

**DWF THANK YOU:** The DWF Appeal last weekend brought in \$25,830. Thank you all for your wonderful generosity. Envelopes are still available on the seats for those who were away. All donations are tax deductible.

#### **CELEBRATION OF LIFE LITURGY**

This is a simple, yet profound liturgy which offers time to ponder on the connection between life and death and celebrates the lives of those we love who have died. Come to the Church on Friday 28 May at 7.30pm. There will be supper in the Marian Centre at the conclusion of the liturgy. ... *The Grief Support Group*

**REFLECTION DAY FOR CATECHISTS** on Tuesday, 18 May at Marymount at 10.30 for 11.00am start. BYO lunch. RSVP to the parish office or to Christine Jenneke on 9484 1190

**ANNULMENT INFORMATION NIGHT:** The Diocesan Solo Parent Ministry and the Catholic Marriage Tribunal present an information night about the process of Annulment of a marriage within the Catholic Church at the Diocesan Assembly Centre, 1-5 Marion St, Blacktown on Tuesday 18 May at 7.30pm. RSVP essential on 9933 0205.

#### **VIVA LA FIESTA!!!!**

**Next Weekend!**

**Pentecost Sunday 23rd May 11:30am - 3:30pm**

All parishioners are invited to this parish event to help celebrate the Year of the Priest and get to know each other. As part of the celebration we will be having entertainment, games and activities for the kids and family, and an international food fiesta. PRE-PURCHASE your coupon booklet to the International Food Fiesta after ALL MASSES THIS WEEKEND! Booklets cost \$10.

**ST BERNADETTE'S PLAYGROUP** welcomes families with children 0 – 5 yrs in the Lourdes Centre (entry via Brisbane Rd) Mondays from 9.30am and Thursdays from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon during school term time. The cost is \$15 per family per term and craft is supplied. For more information contact Carolyn Lincoln 0411 547 285 or Suzanne Waldon 9614 3403

**CONGRATULATIONS BROTHER DAVID:** Brother Ken, Principal of Oakhill College, has announced the appointment of Oakhill's Assistant Principal, Br David Miller, as Principal of De La Salle College, Auckland, New Zealand. The appointment will take effect from July. Br David will be a loss to St Bernadette's Parish Community because he has been a real leader in his encouragement of the students at Oakhill to forge links with the parishes. He has been instrumental in developing the spirituality of the students and we will miss his cheerful and prayerful presence. Priests and parishioners wish him well in his new ministry in Auckland.

#### **SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME**

The next meeting will be this Tuesday 18 May at 4.00pm or 7.30pm or Saturday 22 May at 3.30pm in the Parish Hall for children (and their parents) who be will receiving first Eucharist.



#### **Youth & Young Adults Ministry**



#### **Special Invite for all Mums**

**LIFE Nights** presents "Meet the Real Madonna" (For Grades 9 to 12 and bring a friend & Mums). Tonight (Sunday) after the Youth Mass, in the hall under the church till 8:30pm. Bring \$2 donation for food & drink Don't forget to bring your mums.

The next LIFE Night is **It's All Good!** on May 30.

**Into LIFE** this Monday 7 - 8.30pm in the parish hall. Bring \$2 donation for food & drink. All in Years 7 - 8 are welcome to attend.

**Young Adults** (ages 18-35yrs) presents '**Soul Food**' Join together with other Young Catholics for a beer, a bite to eat and to be inspired in your Catholic Faith by great speakers: When? 25th of May from 6.30-9pm @ Castle Hill Tavern 25 Victoria Ave, Castle Hill.

Keep a keen eye online at [www.lifeteenaustralia.com](http://www.lifeteenaustralia.com)

Need some inspiration or some faith facts? This fantastic web site is for you – [www.lifeteen.com](http://www.lifeteen.com).

**ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS** are available from the Parish Office, Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. Parramatta books: \$60. North Sydney and Sydney books: \$65.

**ST BERNADETTE'S CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP** meets in the Lourdes Centre, 31b Brisbane Rd, Castle Hill Thursday evenings 7.30-8.30. Course for beginners in progress. Please see the noticeboard for details. Call Marilou 9680 4531, Lesley 9873 1321.

**AN EVENING WITH CHIEF DAN DALEY:** On 11 September 2001 Chief Dan Daley of the New York City Fire Department, responded to Ground Zero. What he saw on that day and the days to followed changed his life. The Passionist Family Group Movement has invited Dan to speak at St Bernadette's Parish on Thursday 27 May at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall. Email Maureen Scully on [maus.scully@optusnet.com.au](mailto:maus.scully@optusnet.com.au) if you would like to attend. Payment by donation.

**VINNIES** thanks all donors for their generosity. The end of the Financial Year is now very close so please remember that donations over \$2 are tax deductible. A receipt will be provided if you provide your name and address.

**POSITION VACANT:** Administration Assistant in the Diocesan Office, Parramatta. Full-time. Please see the noticeboard for details or the Diocesan website [www.parra.catholic.org.au](http://www.parra.catholic.org.au).

**St Bernadette's Parish Community**  
**Parish House, 367 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill, NSW 2154**

Telephone 9634 2622 Fax 9899 3511 Email: admin@stbernadette.org.au  
 Web page: http://www.stbernadette.org.au

**Parish Staff**

Fr John Boyle, Parish Priest  
 Fr Eugene Szondi, Assistant Priest  
 Sr Judy McLeod, rsm, Pastoral Associate  
 Mr Luke Hackett, Pastoral Associate (Youth)  
 Mrs Frances Gallagher, Office Manager  
 Mrs Monica Rubic, Parish Secretary (Finance: Mon-Thu)  
 Mr Darren Edwards, Maintenance

**Mass Times for this Week**

**Sunday** Sat 6.00pm  
 Sun 7.30am, 9.00am, 10.30am &  
 6pm Parish LIFE TEEN Youth Mass

**Weekdays** Mon 6.45 am  
 Tue 6.45am  
 Wed 6.45am, 9.15am  
 Thurs 6.45am, 9.15am  
 Fri 6.45am, 9.15am  
 Sat 8.00am

**Mass on Public Holidays at 8.00am**

**Reconciliation** Sat 8.30am-9.00am; 4.30pm-5.30pm

**Baptisms and Marriages:** By appointment only. Contact the Parish House. Please note the Church law: Parents are obliged to take care that infants are baptised in the first few weeks. As soon as possible after the birth or even before it, they are to go to the pastor to request the sacrament for their child and to be prepared properly for it. [Can. 867 §1]

St Bernadette's Parish School: Mr Paul Colyer, Principal 9634 2898

**Please pray for** Anne Szondi, Daniel Bryce, Kathleen Smith and Stella Pattison, who have died recently and for the anniversaries of Judith Johnson, June Macky, Adelia Bosotti, Henry Wajon, Rozamila Drcar, Januario Fernandes, Sr Gemma Stapleton and Severo Yu.

**Prayers for the Sick:** Adeline Chong, Marj Orioles, Rita Gatt, Elanora Poletto, Carmen Nazareth, Jim Tye, John Peters, Mrs Saminathan and Michael Dowson.

**ROSTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND – May 22 & 23**

ACOLYTES/ SERVERS	LECTORS	MINISTERS OF COMMUNION
<b>VIGIL</b> Michael Wilson S3	Kristine Murgatroyd Brendan McEntee Rod Burrige	Felicity Carvalho, Lourice Asmar, Patrick Bowie, Rod Boyd, Laura Burrige, Ignatius/Natalia Chui, Lynne Myers, Barbara Ortlepp, Mary McMahon
<b>7.30AM</b> Zeno Hong S4	Anne Parker Mary Ward Matthew Troy	Lina Josue, Alfred & Gladys Tsang, Colleen & Eric Woodhead, Jo Wickens
<b>9.00AM</b> Joe Josue S5	David Green Von Lulan Mike Lulan	Karen & David Askey, Christine & Hubert Jenneke, Cathy & Greg Piggott, Trevor & Joanne O'Shea, Lena Madry
<b>10.30AM</b> Budi Kawiadji S1	Bill Gleeson Elizabeth Fogolin Michael Puckeridge	Anita Christy, Pauline Camilleri, Dorothy Finucane, Elizabeth Fogolin, Philip & Yolanda Golamco, Margaret Hawkes, Winnie & Henry Li

**6.00 PARISH LIFE TEEN YOUTH MASS MINISTRY ROSTER - May 23**

Adult Servers	Extraordinary Ministers of Communion	Musos
	Belinda Lee Annalyce Hangan Chris Dogulin	<b>Bass</b> Erich Gracias Flor <b>Piano</b> Alice Bradshaw <b>Guitar</b> Daniel Ang <b>Horns/Strings/ Winds</b> Matthew Ashton
<b>Lectors</b> Vanessa Muscat Tina Muscat Brenda Clasquin		<b>Singers</b> Alison Wong Annabel Irawan Veronica Sahabu Sara Ang Bec Burrowes Darian Jessup- Lonsdale
<b>Altar Servers</b> S2	<b>Projectionist</b> Matthew Ashton	
<b>Gift Preparation</b> Jeremy Smith Mitchell Johnson-Green	<b>Ushers</b> Paul Musgrave Phillip Smith	<b>Welcomers</b> Ingrid Fizely Jana Fizely

<b>CHILDREN'S LITURGY</b> Karen Byrnes Pauline Andrew	<b>CHURCH HOUSEKEEPING</b> Maria Mochnik, Kathy Habek, Adelina & Ronald Tabila, Caroline Irawan	<b>COUNTING (2nd Collection)</b> Barry Halpin, Bernie Good, Stephen Dowd, Debbie Fang, Eugenia Fidel
<b>FLOWER ROSTER</b> Bernadette Logue	<b>COUNTING (1st Collection)</b> Howard Woodward Marie Woodward	<b>BOOKSHOP</b> Paula Boyd / Rose Huby / Jane Beard / Crystal Good / Giuli & Serge Dogulin