

The Holy Spirit Province

CELEBRATING THE CENTINARY



Holy Spirit Province History 2c (1887-1928)



You will recall that Holy Spirit Province was founded in July 1922. Prior to that date, Australia was part of the Anglo-Hibernian Province of St Joseph. In 1921 the (English) Provincial Fr Malachy, wrote to the Melbourne Archbishop Daniel Mannix requesting a foundation. Mannix replied that Melbourne's needs were adequately met by existing religious orders. Mannix was approached four more times between then and 1946 without success. During the same time he admitted nine male religious orders to the Archdiocese, including communities of parish missioners such as the Oblates (1925) Franciscans (1930) Redemptorists (1935) and Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (1939).

Applications were made by Melbourne priests for missions and retreats, but archdiocesan authorities refused to grant faculties to Passionists. When travelling between Sydney and Adelaide, Passionists had no retreat at which to rest. If they accepted hospitality, they did not have approval to offer any ministry in return, and this was the cause of embarrassment and disappointment.

Daniel Mannix was president of the Irish national seminary (Maynooth from 1903 until 1912 when he was appointed coadjutor bishop of Melbourne. He became Archbishop of Melbourne in May 1917 and stayed in that role until his sudden death at age 99, in November 1963. His appointment was made because of the large number of Irish Catholic immigrants in Australia at that time.



Background history suggests that when the Passionist novitiate was transferred from Broadway, England to Enniskillen (The Graan) in Ireland in 1909, it was done with enormous difficulty. Daniel Mannix defended the rights of the Irish Bishops against the establishment of the novitiate - and lost. Some say that on that occasion the Passionists 'won the battle with Mannix, but lost the war'.



Justin Simonds was Archbishop of Hobart from 1937-1942. He was then appointed co-adjutor Archbishop of Melbourne Archdiocese and served in that role for twenty-two years, until Mannix' death in 1963. Simonds was opposed to many of Mannix' ideas including Church involvement in party politics and within days of becoming Archbishop he cancelled B. A. Santamaria's weekly contribution to a television programme.

It was only in 1963 that the Passionists were given permission by Simonds to make a foundation (Holy Cross Templestowe).



In 1921, the official Provincial visitor from England looked to the future when parochial work could be done by diocesan clergy, and exhorted the Australian Passionists to maintain the missionary spirit of the founder. Later that year the General, Fr Silvio Di Vezza, visited Australia to explain that before receiving canonical status as a Province, the Holy See demanded full observance of the Rule by the majority of the members.

'Full observance' meant choral chanting of the Divine Office (including 2.00am Matins) and this called for a change from the majority being involved in parish work to being at home to live 'the Rule'. Of course those living at home were able to 'go out' and conduct parish missions and retreats. At the time of the General's visit in spring 1921, Australia was a pro-Province which was canonically unusual and as far as we know, was never seen before in the Congregation. The pro-Provincial attended the three-yearly Chapters in England.

On 22nd February 1922 the General Council began considering the foundation of a Province in Australia and presented a request to



the Sacred Congregation for Religious which was responsible for the granting of such permission. On 11th July 1922, the Sacred Congregation for Religious granted the erection of a new Province and approved faculties to the General and his Council to appoint a new leadership for the Province.

On 30th October 1922 the General with his Council appointed Fr. Bertrand

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Mangan as Provincial. Frs Athanasius Ryan and Bede O'Brien were appointed Consultors and Fr James Lappin was appointed novice master. The superiors of the three communities were also appointed: Casimir Maguire in Marrickville, Reginald Lummer in Goulburn; and Bernard Mangan in Glen Osmond. The numerical



strength of the new Province was 3 houses, 26 religious (19 priests 5 brothers and 2 clerical students) and 4 novices and 9 pre-novitiate students. There were eight in St Brigid's Marrickville community, ten in Presentation Goulburn and eight in Glen Osmond, plus the novices and pre-seminary students.

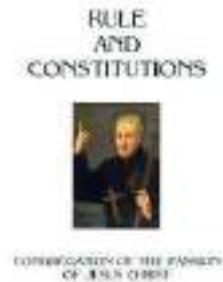


On 16th December 1922 the General wrote to the Provincial of St Joseph Province to inform him that the General Council had decided to put into effect the Rescript of Erection "separating the communities in Australia from their mother Province". With this final act the erection was fulfilled. The erection of the Province was a process, which started in July and finished in December, with the final

separation of the communities from St Joseph's Province.

In the Decree of Appointment of the new Provincial Council (see Bollettino della Congregazione, Dicembre 1922, pp. 353 – 356) Fr. Silvio Di Vezza states clearly: "Cum ex Rescripto S.C. de Religiosis, diei 11 Julii vertentis anni, Provincia Australiana pleno jure erecta sit...". (i.e. By the rescript of Sacred Congregation of the Religious, on 11th July of this current year, the Australian Province was fully erected by law). Therefore the official date of the founding of Holy Spirit Province is: 11 July 1921. Fr Silvio proposed the title 'Holy Ghost', the name given to the land by Portuguese seafarers 'Terra Austral do Spirito Santo'.

The new Province was charged with fuller observance of the Rule and unfortunately this called for the Province to relinquish the charge of the parishes attached to St Paul's retreat in Glen Osmond. St Paul's was converted into a monastic community. St Brigid's Marrickville would have had the same designation except for a huge debt on both the parish and monastery, that the Province felt obliged to repay. The Goulburn community had been erected without a parish so its status was unchanged.





The directive to relinquish parishes was passed on to the diocesan bishop of Adelaide who requested two years for this to fully occur because it would have left Adelaide with insufficient priests for its parishes. The instruction also left the community without an adequate source of income. The last parish for which the community had responsibility was St Raphael's, Parkside. It was surrendered to the diocese in 1925. It was joined with Glen Osmond parish seventy-seven years later in 2002, under the care of the Passionists.

Vocations

The establishment of the Province was an endorsement of the policy to attract native vocations, despite the unfortunate period when the novitiate and student house had been closed. The surrender of parishes to the Irish clergy in Adelaide was a reversal of this dream and several priests left the Congregation as result of this policy, because they saw the need for priests ('sheep without a shepherd').

Nevertheless, the traditional Passionist ministries of missions and retreats continued and with concentration now being on the home front, building programmes soon commenced. In 1927 there was a community of ten in



Glen Osmond, seven of whom were priests. Plans were announced that year for a new chapel which could seat three hundred people and a new adjoining monastery, at an estimated cost of 20,000 pounds. Despite the original monastery being unsafe for habitation, the community chose to complete the church first. Because the church in Kingswood was the official parish church of the district, the new church was known as 'the chapel'. It was officially opened in November 1928. The monastery was opened in September the following year.

In 1928, the 'Southern Cross' Catholic newspaper reported the laying of the Foundation stone of the chapel, and the Roman basilica style of the building. The paper reported that the monastery was to be pulled down and replaced by a splendid new monastery of imposing design. The site was originally the vineyard of Arthur Hardy and when part of it was sold to Mr J B Montifoire, he built 'the Glen' and planted a garden with trees and shrubs".



In 1929 a new religious house was begun at Marrickville and the students were transferred from Marrickville to Glen Osmond. The following year the Passionists took on pastoral care of Kapunda parish 85 kilometres north of Adelaide for two years.

There were six ordinations in 1935 and that same year, sixteen hectares of land were purchased at St Ives at a cost of six thousand pounds, for the establishment of a juniorate (a high school seminary) for postulants. Missionary activity continued in this period, including in areas of Western Australia and New Zealand.

We will explore more in **Part 2b (To be continued.....)**
 By Fr. Brian Traynor CP

