



CAMP

St Michael

Last December, Fr Leung and Fr Sofatzis, together with faithful from our Canberra, Parramatta, and Sydney apostolates, headed to Hillview Farmstay, Mt Andrah (45 minutes east of Wagga) for a weekend away for our first Camp St Michael (for fathers and their sons).

It was both a spiritually uplifting and very enjoyable experience—the accommodation was also a treat too! The theme of the Camp was “True Friendship with God,” which the priests explored during their talks. At the same time, however, recreational activities, such as games of Ultimate Frisbee and Capture the Flag; a scenic hike nearby; free time in the pool and on the tennis court; as well as roasting marshmallows and a game of Mafia round the Campfire, left us all with fond memories of our time together. We also were encouraged



to strive after virtue, upon hearing about the life and work of the young Bl. Carlo Acutis.

The Camp concluded with a Sung Mass on Gaudete Sunday; an appropriate finale to the weekend! We left, instructed by St Paul in the Epistle, to “rejoice in the Lord always” and to “have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4: 4, 6-7).



Priestly Fraternity of St Peter Newsletter

District of Oceania – Easter 2023

From the District Superior...



“Be not afraid!”

How often do we hear these words in the Gospels? We can easily become desensitised to their meaning, to their urgency. And yet they contain for us the key to our effectiveness as evangelisers.

“Be not afraid!” the angel said to the grieving women as they came to the empty tomb on the first Easter Sunday morning. There was much to be afraid

of: their master had died and been buried, the Jewish leaders had conspired with the Roman occupiers to crush the message He had preached, the good works He had performed, and the group of followers who had surrounded Him. Persecution may well be just around the corner for them and their families and friends as well. From a simply human perspective there was indeed much to fear.

And yet the message of the angel was the opposite of fear—Courage! And moved by that courage they were to “Go!” and “Tell the others!” And they did. Courageously and joyfully.

The message “Do not be afraid!”, given to the women on that first Easter Day, has been given to us as well. We too are to have courage. The courage which comes from knowing that Christ has won the victory. The victory of Life over

Death. The bodily resurrection of Christ has changed all things. Permanently.

And so now all things are possible for those who follow Him, since we have Hope. The Hope which comes from the Resurrection. And this Hope gives us confidence. The confidence to be courageous in our proclamation of the Gospel – The Good News. The courage which comes from knowing that no matter what the world may throw at us, with Christ at our side we can “do all things through Him who strengthens me.” (Phil 4:13)

Knowing this and confident of God’s power to work in our world, to work through us, we are then able to join with the women in the second part of the angel’s message – “Go!”. The Good News of the Resurrection and its consequences for us and for mankind are to be shared. Joyfully!

I hope that in this season of Easter joy you are able to find the time to share this joy of the Resurrection with your loved ones.

“Have confidence! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

May God bless you this Paschaltide.

Fr Michael McCaffrey FSSP
District Superior



The Paschal Mystery

The past three days have witnessed a continuous movement in our liturgical celebration of the suffering, death and resurrection of Our Lord, the momentum of which expresses very clearly the heart of our celebration – we have been celebrating, we are celebrating the Paschal Mystery, the Passover of the Lord, Our Lord passing over, moving on from life to death, and from death to life again. All this did not happen because Our Lord was the victim of circumstances. As He tells us in the gospel of St John, “I have the power to lay down My life, and I have the power to take it up again.”

Our Lord Himself willed that He should go through every event continuously – He kept moving on, from His Agony in the Garden to the Scourging, to the interrogations, to the Crowning with thorns, to the carrying of the Cross, the Crucifixion, and lastly to the descent into Hell, to the Limbo of the Patriarchs. No matter how tragic, how brutal, how demeaning, He kept moving on through His Passion, almost as if He were reaching for something, like an athlete, striving for the goal, for the trophy. And He did eventually reach the goal and seized the prize, the trophy of victory over death, over sin, over evil. He comes back to life, He who is the fulness of life, the Lord of life, the Son of the Living God.

In this celebration of the death and resurrection of Our Lord, we realise that there is no moment of human experience that has not been illumined by the grace of Our Lord’s experience of life Himself. By being born, by living a life like ours, by suffering and dying, by rising again, Our Lord has shown us their true meaning, and given us the grace to live these events ourselves in faith. It is not that we shall grasp or see the meaning immediately, but rather, it is only when we have moved and walked through the night of tribulation with only the torchlight of perseverance and hope to guide us, that we pass through the darkness and arrive at the dawn, where the light of joy enlightens us, the light which shines on the face of Our Risen Lord. I conclude with the words of the author of the letter to the Hebrews (12:1-2):

“Let us cast off every encumbrance, every sin to which we cling, and run with resolution the race for which we are entered, our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom faith depends from start to finish: Jesus who for the sake of the joy that lay ahead of Him, endured the cross, making light of its disgrace, and has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of God.”

Fr Adrian Wee FSSP

Priestly ORDINATION

Rev. Mr Nathan Pospischil FSSP, from our Parramatta apostolate, will be ordained to the priesthood on Saturday June 24th in St Mary’s Cathedral, Sydney. All are welcome to attend the ordination.



YOUNG PRIESTS’ MEETING

In mid February, Fr Roger Gilbride FSSP attended the gathering for recently ordained priests of the Fraternity of St Peter at our seminary in Wigratzbad, Germany. During the week-long sessions, attendees participate in a number of seminars on topics relevant to parish ministry. Photo: Cologne Cathedral.



VOCATIONS DAY

A vocations day for young men discerning a call to the priesthood or religious life was held at Maternal Heart of Mary Church, Lewisham on Saturday March 18. The one-day retreat was attended by seventeen young men.

Ezechiel House: A brief history

Ezechiel House was canonically erected on June 8, 2004, as a house of formation for the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter in Sydney. It was erected by His Eminence George Cardinal Pell, following the approval of the then-Father General, Fr Arnaud Devillers FSSP and his Council. Ezechiel House was established to offer Australasian candidates for the priesthood the opportunity to make their vocation discernment closer to home and prepare for life at the major seminaries in the United States (fsspolgs.org) or Germany (fssp.org/en/seminaireW.htm).

Candidates from the District of Oceania spend a year at Ezechiel House being formed in the spirit of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter. This Year of Spirituality introduces the candidate to the life, spirit and mission of the Priestly Fraternity of St Peter. Studies in ascetical theology, chant, Latin, Catholic doctrine, sacred scripture, and the constitutions of the FSSP are combined with a schedule of prayer, manual labour and pastoral experience. Above all, the goal is to inculcate a deep spiritual life, which is the bedrock of priestly life.

At Ezechiel House, we strive to realise the object of our Society of Apostolic Life, which is “the sanctification of priests through



the exercise of the priesthood, and in particular, to turn the life of the priest towards that which is his *raison d’être*, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, with all that it signifies, all that flows from it, all that goes with it,” (Constitutions, c. 8). Our life and program is intended to form men of prayer and future priests who can be truly compassionate and effective fathers to the ecclesial communities that come under their pastoral care. They are also taught the importance of charity to all.

The formation of priests is a great enterprise that is labour-intensive, which means that we can usually only accept a maximum of three candidates. Limitations notwithstanding, many men from Australia and overseas have spent time at Ezechiel House. We have received candidates from Singapore, Malaysia, India, Hong Kong, the Philippines and New Zealand, who have visited for a time of discernment.

Seven priests who studied at Ezechiel House are now

working in Australia – three men from Australia, two from New Zealand, one from India and one from Hong Kong. We have two alumni working overseas. Currently, we have four alumni studying in the major seminary at Denton, NE. One is an Australian deacon in formation, and three are seminarians – two from New Zealand and one from Singapore. There are also currently three candidates at Ezechiel House – one from India and two from Australia.

I am very grateful for all the priests who have taught and formed the seminarians over the years at Ezechiel House, as they also carry a full parochial work load. I would also like to thank all our benefactors who have sacrificed so much over the years for the love of God. It is a grace of God that Ezechiel House is able to fulfil its small role in the formation of future priests, for we are ever mindful that “unless the Lord builds the house, they labour in vain that build it. Unless the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it.” (Psalm 127:1).

Fr Duncan Wong FSSP