

THE ROCK

The Community of the Sacred Name in Christchurch has had to share in all that the earthquake brought to Christchurch just over a month ago.



Sister Sandra CSN outside the condemned Convent buildings

Below are two excerpts from letters written recently to members of our parish.

From Mother Keleni CSN

Here are Greetings to you from the garden city. On behalf of the Sisters I would like to say thank you for your prayers kindness and support. Our brick building is badly damaged and I think it will [need to be] pulled down. We are still waiting for another visit from the City Council. We did manage to get out some stuff from the embroidery room and the office but we are still not allowed to go into the building. Some of our stuff is still in our bedrooms. The earthquake is still shaking and we can't sleep well at night. I don't know what the Lord is trying to tell us. Please pray for our future and God's plan

as we move forward; for God's will to be clear and for us to follow His plan. May God bless you.

And from Sister Anne CSN

We are all fine and now living in our Retreat House which is on our property – we are all comfortable in the more modern surroundings.

The quake was terrible and the shaking is still going on, but less frequently now. Our main brick house (1912) is a write-off but the Chapel and old part (1895) are perfect.

Some parts of Christchurch are badly damaged, and others not damaged at all.

We have so much to be thankful for. We did not lose power and the sisters were able to get down the stairs and through the falling bricks safely.

People have been very kind and helpful and we are just fine.

The Community of the Sacred Name was founded by Mother Edith. Here is her biographical entry written by Katherine W. Orr in *The Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*.

Edith Mary Mellish was born at Pailles in the district of Moka, Mauritius, on 10 March 1861. She was the daughter of Edward Mellish, an English banker and businessman, and his wife, Ellen Borrowes, an Irishwoman who died when Edith was a baby. Edith's youth was divided between Mauritius, England and Hong Kong. She was educated by governesses and attended

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boarding school. In 1864 her father married again, and his second wife, Sarah Waterworth, a former CMS missionary, developed an interest in Anglo-Catholicism which Edith grew to share. Sarah died, and Edward Mellish married Mary Coppin in 1878. After helping with her younger siblings' education, Edith took up parish work, and then followed her vocation at St Andrew's Deaconess Community in London. She was ordained deaconess and admitted to the community on 13 April 1891.

In 1893 William Temple, bishop of London, at the request of Bishop Churchill Julius of Christchurch, New Zealand, chose Edith Mellish to establish a religious community of women in Christchurch. She arrived in New Zealand in late August 1893 and began work with the assistance of probationer deaconesses admitted by Bishop Julius in 1892. New Zealand's first resident Anglican deaconess was five feet two inches tall, with blue eyes, a large mouth, brown hair and a square chin. She had a direct manner, a well-developed sense of humour and a generous and loving nature that attracted others.

Bishop Julius was the community's visitor and a keen supporter of the work of Sister Edith (from 1911 known as Mother Edith). He valued the community for its practical ministry to women in the Christchurch diocese. The sisters moved from St Catherine's Lodge, Gloucester Street, to a house in George Street and then, in 1895, Barbadoes Street. For some years there was also a branch of the community in Timaru.

The sisters undertook rescue work among unmarried women and provided

accommodation and assistance at St Mary's Home in Christchurch. The home closed in 1910 after the establishment of a similar government institution. After this, they ran St Saviour's Home for orphaned children at Shirley, and established St Agnes' Hostel for girls at Hokitika. In addition to overseeing these activities, Mother Edith personally cared for vestments and linen at Christchurch cathedral; visited hospital patients and parishioners; gave religious instruction at day schools, Bible classes and her own community; ministered to numerous visitors; and helped with church embroidery. She worked with the Mothers' Union, the Girls' Friendly Society, a mothers' club and a Sunday school teachers' association.

Yet Mother Edith, unlike her bishop, considered these activities to be of secondary importance in the religious life. She maintained that 'The root is the worship and service of God, in prayer meditation and self sacrifice.' She fought to preserve time for contemplation and prayer as the focus of the community, saying, 'Give our Lord time to make love to you.' In intercessory prayer, she emphasised the significance of 'holding those for whom we pray in the Presence of Our Lord'. Through the quiet days and retreats she conducted for those within and beyond the community, she spread the teaching of the Christian mystics.

Mother Edith's emphasis on prayer and her Catholic outlook influenced her guidance of the evolving community, as did the growing misgivings within the Anglican communion over the status of deaconesses. The community's first sisters were all deaconesses or waiting to turn

30, the minimum age for ordination. In 1901, however, the rules were changed to enable women who felt no call to the deaconess office to enter the community. The last sisters who were ordained as deaconesses were admitted to the community in 1914.

Mother Edith struggled with serious ill health from 1914 and this gave added impetus to her efforts to clarify the character of the community. She was considered 'popish' by some Christchurch Anglicans, and Bishop Julius repeatedly tried to discourage Catholic tendencies within the community. As the importance of the deaconess order in the community's life diminished, Mother Edith worked to remodel it along the lines of a traditional religious community. In 1919 she and the other sisters for the first time explicitly took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.



Edith Mellish died at Christchurch on 25 May 1922. She was a pioneer, struggling to introduce to New Zealand Anglicans the novel concepts of ordained ministry by a woman and the religious life. The name which she first chose for her community, the Community of the Sisters of Bethany, exemplifies the balance of contemplation and action which she sought to promote. In 1912, to avoid duplicating the name of an older English community, it was changed to the Community of the Sacred Name. The community founded by Edith Mellish has

endured, a testimony to the success of her endeavours.

The Wardens' Warble

Greetings to you all, has Spring arrived at last? The weather over the past week gives the impression that it may have but I never forget the words of a man who used to visit our family about 60 years ago who used to say, "In Dunedin, the snow is not all over until there has been a fall in October" and over the years it is amazing how often his words have been proven correct, let's see if it applies this year. If it does, I'll take great delight in saying, "see, I told you so"

For those of you who were at church on Sunday 3rd October you'll be well aware that Father Carl announced his retirement, to be effective early in the New Year and no doubt by now, those who were not at church will already have heard about it on the "grape vine"

Having been vicar of St Peter's for 25 years and with ongoing health issues we believe this is a timely decision Father Carl has made and we are'm sure that there will be an opportunity to look back over his time with us at a later date.

Now, what happens next? Without wishing to make it look as though we need to push Father Carl out now, we really do need to begin making plans for his replacement, after all, we can't just flick our fingers and expect a replacement vicar to fall out of the sky! Wouldn't it be nice if that could happen but at St Peter's we live in the real world and know that that is not the case.

There is a standard process to be followed, in the seeking and the appointment of a replacement vicar and the first steps in this process have been taken. The parish nominators and Bishop Kelvin will be working together jointly to find an appropriate replacement but that is something that is likely to take some time. St Peter's is "a bit different" and we are aware of this and our task will be to find someone who can continue leading our worship along similar lines as we have in the past and I'm sure that every effort will be made to achieve this.

Mean while enjoy the great weather and may God Bless you all.

Tubby Hopkins, *Vicar's Warden*

Joy Henderson, *People's Warden*

From the Vicar

I have been very grateful for the kind wishes expressed by the parishioners on hearing of my retirement in the new year. My prayers will be with you as you look for my successor.

Fr Carl

Suffer the Children

This is a report from the TV3 website about religious education in schools. Written by the mother of a five year old (whom she appears to actually call 'Five') and who observed a lesson while she was a parent help.

Is there room for a higher power in the classroom?

By Melissa Jack

On Friday I spent the morning in Five's classroom as a mummy-help. For some reason this is the highlight of his week, God

knows we don't see enough of each other anyway, but I digress.

Friday morning is when the Year 1's have religious education.

Our decision to 'let' Five attend was not based on our own religious beliefs. We are a pretty non-denominational household. My husband grew up in a God-fearing family in the southern USA, whereas my own Kiwi family had rather little to say on the matter. So, whatever floats your boat - it's all good with us really.

Despite my own vociferous protestations and refusal to attend bible study when I was young, Five's Dad and I decided that there are considerably worse things kids can learn at school than some stories about a guy named Jesus.

I was given the task of gluing poems into the kid's language books during the bible lesson, so my faculties were left relatively free to observe the kids. In short, they loved it. There was music, dancing, puppets, and a simple, interesting - to five-year-olds - story that involved the kids as participants and ended with a great lesson about how our value as people is based on what's inside - not on outward appearances. Seriously, what kid in this day and age doesn't need a little reminder about that now and then?

The lesson ended with a little prayer where those children who wanted to could stand up and thank God for anything they felt was important. This was where I was truly dumbfounded. Children stood up, scrunched their eyes closed and clasped their hands together and gave thanks for all their wonderful friends in their class, for having houses to live in, for being taken care of and for the smiles of their teacher. I swear I'm not making this up - even I was moved!

This can be a really divisive subject for many people, but after observing the lesson, I was left wondering what all the fuss was about.

We have never taken Five to church or read to him from the Bible, and perhaps we never will, but the lessons he is learning in this short half-hour a week are more akin to awareness of his place in the world in relation to his peers, and seem to be encouraging empathy and kindness in the children present. There was neither sign of 'brainwashing' nor any religious zealots handing out pamphlets (much to my relief!).

My perception of these classes has been proved totally wrong and misguided. I don't consider them life-changing or offensive at all and wonder how many people really would, if they took the time to sit in on a lesson before making the decision not to allow their child to attend?

There is also the added bonus of Five's interpretation of what he learns; in short his understanding is nothing short of hilarious. As I was tucking him in tonight he told me how God has us in his pocket 'cause that's where the good people are. The bad people, he assured me, get to hang out in God's nose and socks and other equally bad places. Heaven forbid!

St Francistide

St Francis of Assisi has traditionally been associated with the welfare of the Animal Creation, and as his feast-day falls on 4th October this month has been seen as a time to give special thought to our 'Lesser Brethren.' The following article is about the work of the local branch of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

The SPCA stands for the "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals". It is a voluntary organisation set up by the people in the community who are interested in, and want to do something about, the welfare of animals.

There have always been people who like animals and treat them with the respect and thoughtfulness they deserve - this has happened in all times and in all countries. But, there have always also been people who have treated animals harshly and thoughtlessly. It is the latter people who have brought about the need for the SPCA.

The New Zealand SPCA is modeled on the Royal Society for the Prevention Of Cruelty to Animals in Britain. This British society was founded in 1824 by the Rev. Arthur Broom, during the time of great animal use - horse trams, coaches, animals working as part of factories like machines, animals working deep under the ground in mines, and so on. In 1840, Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, permitted the use of the prefix "Royal" and from this time onwards the British SPCA became increasingly powerful.

In New Zealand the SPCA is headed by the Royal Federation of SPCA's. This is a group of people selected by all the SPCA organisations, who meet every three months or so to deal with matters concerning SPCA which have been brought to their notice by the societies throughout New Zealand. It is up to them to bring to the notice of the government, laws which need to be improved or made for the prevention of cruelty to animals in New Zealand.

New Zealand is covered by approximately 50 societies from North Auckland to Southland. Each of these societies does its

best to oversee the welfare of the animals in the area it serves.

The main objective of the SPCA is perhaps contained in its motto - "we speak for those who cannot speak for themselves". The people involved try to promote kindness to animals and prevent or suppress cruelty to them. They do not ask people to treat animals like human beings, but they do ask that people who have animals, whether they be in the country on farms, or in the cities and towns, whether they be domestic pets or farm animals, provide and care for them to the best of their ability.

An animal taken by a person, often from its natural and wide surroundings, then becomes completely dependent on that person for its food and shelter. Thus, it is up to the person to make it their business to see that the animal is fed and housed properly and adequately. Because people will often not face up to their responsibilities over animals, an SPCA becomes necessary.



The SPCA runs completely on charitable donations and money from fund raising. Some societies, especially the bigger ones are more financial than others and therefore can afford to pay some wages. Such money is usually used for Inspectors, Animal handlers, Administrative staff and Education staff. The number one priority is always the animal's welfare; their care and costs usually coming before those of the staff. For this reason most societies cannot afford to pay some people who help them. That means

that the people who work for it do so because of their interest in the welfare of animals-not for money. This is why volunteers are such important team member, their help is invaluable in the day to day care of so many animals.

Intercessions

Ever wondered about people listed for intercessions in our 'Pebble' and prayed for specifically at 10 30 Eucharist? Well, here is the background of one of them - Hannah.

She is her parent's only child.

Hannah is the granddaughter of my neighbour. From a very young age she had always been keen to learn to play the violin, and a relative gave her a miniature one on which she began to learn, graduating later to an adult instrument. She continued to study.

When her Grandmother turned ninety Hannah and a friend played a beautiful violin duet in Grandma's honour, at the party, which we attended.

She also gained her driver's licence, and it was when she was was driving back to Dunedin in

about June last year that she had a terrible accident from which she was not expected to survive. She was put in an induced coma for some time, but after that she remained in the coma for a long time. Her family visited her, sat with her, and talked to her, although she did not respond. At Christmas time they had dinner with her at her bedside in the hospital. She was herself fed intravenously. Her eyes wandered from family member to family member, but she could not otherwise communicate or move.

Earlier this year she was brought by her parents to visit her grandmother, She was helped out of the car, and could walk slowly with a walking frame. Taken to a close neighbour she was asked by her mother, "Who is looking after you?" to which she replied "Grandma !" Appreciative of the wonderful care from the hospital and

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associated departments, a few weeks ago she took part (albeit in a wheelchair)

This week she was brought over for her grandmother's ninety-third birthday. She still has to use a walking frame, but she can now have simple conversations. It is wonderful to see her progress. What strikes you most is the loving hope that emanates from parents and daughter, and the support of all around her.

Br David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, points out in his book 'Gratefulness the Heart of Prayer' that the 'hope' of scripture is an attitude, rather than for something specific. Perseverance, love, our presence and prayer do not necessarily produce the result we would wish, but we do not always realise the outcome of the power of these.

Thank you for your prayers; she and others still need them.

Rosemary Brown

The Ladies' Guild

At our September meeting we had Fr Carl as our guest speaker. He gave us a very informative talk on the various beautiful churches in Vienna and other lovely buildings. He was much moved by the Prinz Albrechtstrasse in Berlin with its reminders of both Nazi and Communist tyranny.

Tickets for the Raffle at the forthcoming Parish Fair will be available at our next meeting on Tuesday 12th October at 2pm in the Lounge.

Mary Barton, *Secretary*

Services

Sundays:

8am Eucharist.

10.30am Solemn Eucharist.

Sundays of the calendar month at 7pm:
1st and 3rd

Sung Evensong and Benediction

2nd and 4th

Compline (Night Prayer) by Candlelight.

First and third Tuesdays of the month:

11am Eucharist at St Barnabas' Home.

Wednesdays:

5.30pm Eucharist.

Thursdays:

10am Eucharist.

Fridays:

5.30pm Eucharist

*Father Carl Somers Edgar,
The Vicarage, 57 Baker Street,
Caversham, Dunedin (03) 455 3961
Parish Hall bookings (03) 479 0754.
The Parish Hall itself (03) 455 3851.*

Calendar

- Sun 10 +TRINITY19 *Ordinary 28*
Pot Luck Lunch
7pm Compline and Exposition
- Mon 11 Monday Club 10.15am in the Hall
- Tue 12 Ladies' Guild 2pm in the Lounge
- Thu 14 Meditation Group after the Eucharist
Games Night 7pm in the Hall
- Sun 17 +TRINITY 20 *Ordinary 29*
7pm Sung Evensong and Benediction
- Mon 18 LUKE
Monday Club
- Wed 20 Vestry 7.30pm in the Lounge
- Thu 21 Meditation Group
Games Night
- Sat 23 JAMES THE LESS
- Sun 24 +TRINITY 21 *Ordinary 30*
7pm Compline and Exposition
- Mon 25 Monday Club
- Tue 26 AAW
- Thu 28 SIMON AND JUDE
Meditation Group
Games Night
- Sun 31 +ALL SAINTS
7pm Compline and Exposition
- Mon 1 Monday Club
- Thu 4 Meditation Group
Games Night
- Sun 7 +ALL SOULS
7pm Sung Evensong and Benediction
- Material for the November Magazine is due**
- Mon 8 Monday Club
- Tue 9 Ladies' Guild 2pm in the Lounge
- Thu 11 Meditation Group
Games Night
- Sun 14 +DEDICATION
Pot Luck Lunch
7pm Compline and Exposition