

Serving Faithfully

Newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services
Published by the Diocesan Curia. Editor: Brigadier Alan Hodges AM (Ret'd)

December 2018
Issue #31



THIS TIME OF HOPE



As we enter the time of Advent, and look forward and prepare to celebrate the great Feast of Christmas, one of the prominent characters in our story takes a central place in our thinking and reflecting. St John the Baptist was related to Jesus – Elizabeth, his mother, was related to Mary the mother of Jesus. In St Luke's Gospel we hear that John, perhaps conceived a few months before Jesus, 'leapt' in his mother's womb when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting on visiting Elizabeth after she had been told by the angel that Elizabeth was pregnant.

John the Baptist turned out to be a prominent herald of the presence of Jesus. He is described as a person who many then – and today – might consider to be a bit 'odd'. The Gospels tell us that he lived in the desert quite apart from the towns and villages, clothed himself in animal skins for protection against the desert cold, and fed himself on locusts and wild honey. Yet he attracted many followers who went looking for him to hear and be inspired. He pointed out Jesus and declared Jesus to be the one who would save Israel, which then, as frequently in history, was in desperate circumstances. He even encouraged some of his disciples to leave him and join up with Jesus. Perhaps part of his 'oddness' was his unqualified and courageous insistence on the truth and on repentance. He is described as being very forthright and clear in his language – a straight speaker and one who would not allow compromise of the truth. His mission was to draw God's Chosen People back to their fundamental relationship with their God by changing away from the 'political correctness' of their day back to a life based on the values that God has constantly laid before us from the very beginning. While many were moved by his exhortation and example of life, of course there were many who saw him as a threat to the comfort of 'peace and stability' and some even resolved to get rid of him. They seemed to be successful when he was martyred. The same cohort of those who sought 'peace and stability' at all costs were successful in having Jesus crucified too. But were they successful? Well, history over thousands of years seems to indicate otherwise.

When we are let down, when we become aware of the failing of our leaders, when the service we look for is corrupted, our response is often deep-seated anger. That feeling of anger can often be so overwhelming that it impedes our reason and colours all our other feelings and reactions. John the Baptist experienced it too from others in the extreme form of revenge, but his response was to remain steadfast to his mission.

In our own day we too have many challenges that confront us – both nationally and internationally. The debates on the economy, on trade relations, on climate change, on safe

transport, on safety in our streets, on reliable and trustworthy civil and church leadership, on the dignity of each person, on the freedom of religious practice and assembly, on the treatment of minority groups and refugees—these are but some of the matters that are unsettling and cause varying degrees of confusion. This instability increases when we become aware that those we have entrusted with our own future and that of our children do not seem to be reflecting the values we received. In recent times we have become more used to 'days' that seek to focus our attention on specific matters that seek public discussion, reflection on, and public action. Often it is the success of the campaigns launched – including by exciting adverse media attention – that has the greatest influence in forming public opinion. And, of course, there is the influence of the polls. It is always good to encourage debate and reflection, but for people of faith it is imperative that they do engage. Edmund Burke, the famous statesman said: 'The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to remain silent.'

One very serious challenge is the seemingly inevitable fact that, once again in human history, and for whatever reasons, the capacity of our religious community to be heard in the public domain is significantly diminished. More worrying is the fact that there are as many covert as overt initiatives to dismiss the relevance of religious belief and practice in public life and society. Perhaps we are experiencing yet another period like that felt by John the Baptist and indeed Jesus. This is the time for good people NOT to remain silent.

This Advent time of Hope gives us an opportunity to reflect on the goodness that is within every person. As a start, each of us needs to rediscover this goodness and treasure it in ourselves. At the end of the day each one of us will have to give a personal account of our lives before the Lord of us all. There truth will have no veil. The Lord Jesus was sent by the Father to share in our life so that we might be people who were assured of our place in the Father's House and be encouraged to live our life accordingly. Each one of us is responsible for each other through that sharing in the life of the Lord Jesus. Beginning from recognising our own individual goodness comes the mission to build a good community.

As we prepare for our Christmas this year please let us join our gaze with that of the Blessed Mary into the infant eyes of her son Jesus and see in him the great depth of the Father's love for us. That is the source of our goodness and where our true value lies and is the promise of our hope for eternity.



Bishop Max Davis
AM, DD
Military Ordinary

... for people of faith it is imperative that they do engage.

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to remain silent.

News from the Diocese

Fiji Experience

Over the last two years ADFA Catholics and Friends (comprising cadets and friends at the Defence Academy) and the RMC chapel community have been involved in missionary works in Fiji. Contributions to the cause range from generous donations towards Fijian schools to those who volunteered their time and money to travel to Fiji and experience the country first-hand. One thing that can be seen, in both Australia and Fiji, is the sense of community.

The community in 2017 was looking to do more to spread the good works being done. Once Fiji was suggested, numerous donations and offers of support quickly ensured that those travelling to Fiji would be able to provide gifts to each community. The travellers to Fiji saw first-hand the abundance of joy and gratitude in which the gifts were received.



Chaplain Demien Ellis, Fr Joseph Tuimavule CM, LTCOL John Leggett (Ret'd), Officer Cadet Nicholas Eberl RAAAF, LEUT Emma Cook RAN, LT Xavier Vasta

In 2018, the RMC Chapel community rallied again to provide support over an extended period, setting up an almost completely different group to once again travel to Fiji. A more community-engagement focus saw the 2018 pilgrim group return to some of the same places as previously, but for longer, allowing deeper cultural immersion.

Fijian townships measure the size of their communities in terms of families, not individuals. The donations made by individuals from the Anzac Memorial of St Paul at RMC show the ability for the community to achieve things far beyond the local area. While the two communities are vastly different, the last two years of engagement has seen both communities grow, connected not by borders but by shared acts of kindness.

Fr Damien Ellis, Chaplain ADFA

POSTING OF CHAPLAINS FOR 2019



Fr Damien Ellis is posted from the Australian Defence Force Academy Canberra with responsibilities at St Paul's Catholic Chapel Royal Military College to Townsville in January 2019.



Fr Joel Vergara is posted from 2RAR to the Royal Military College Duntroon with responsibilities at St Paul's Catholic Chapel RMC in early January 2019.



Deacon Brenton Fry is posted from the Royal Military College Duntroon to Holsworthy NSW in January 2019.

The Diocese thanks Damien, Joel and Brenton for their valued ministries over the last two to three years. Their ministries are deeply valued.

Farewell to Fr Stéphane Sarazin



The Bishop of the Military Ordinariate of Canada has recalled Fr Stéphane Sarazin back to Canada for service in the Military diocese there. We are very sad to see Fr Stéphane leave us, given his nine years of excellent service not only to Air Force but also to our Military Diocese. Stéphane came to Australia as a lateral recruit from the Canadian Forces in 2009 serving at RAAF Base

Williamtown and RAAF Amberley over this time. Our Diocese has benefited from his expertise in Canon Law, working with the Bishop on several policy documents. Recently he was appointed Judicial Vicar for the Military Ordinariate of Australia. Thanks Stéphane for your great work and ministry over these years.

Thanks to Fr Robert Hayes



Fr Bob Hayes has been an Army Reserve Chaplain for over forty years in the Sydney area. A priest of the Archdiocese of Sydney and at present Parish Priest of Austral, Bob has contributed greatly in Army Chaplaincy as a very pastoral and responsible for chaplaincy recruitment in NSW. Over the recent years we have been fortunate to gain the services of several

priests in full time and reserve service due to Bob's influence, great example and devotion to Army. He continues to be an effective mentor to these chaplains. Bob has been extended in service well over the compulsory retirement age in recognition of his effectiveness, pastoral skills and value to Army Chaplaincy. He will retire from the Army Reserve this December, but will remain connected with our Diocese as he has recently been appointed to the Diocesan Consultors. Thank you Bob!

A Gift in Your Will

Making a gift to the Catholic Military Ordinariate is a meaningful way to fund the education of future priests and deacons and to support our clergy in providing spiritual guidance to our service men and women and their families.

To make a bequest, you should consult your solicitor or trustee company. It may be sufficient to make an addition or amendment to an existing will by adding a codicil.

News from the Diocese

Another Chapter for Monsignor Glynn Murphy OAM



Mons Glynn Murphy, with the conclusion of his tenure as Director General Chaplaincy – Army in 2017, moved to the Army Reserve continuing his ministry as Principal Catholic Army Chaplain. This year offered Glynn the opportunity for some well-deserved down-time, a sabbatical and travel. He has been very active with reserve chaplaincy throughout the year. As of 23 November, he commenced another chapter in his priestly life by moving back to his diocese of incardination and

taking up ministry in the Parish of Warracknabeal in the Diocese of Ballarat. He will continue as Episcopal Vicar – Army and Principal Catholic Army Chaplain. The town of Warracknabeal will never be the same again with a likeable character like Glynn being one of its prominent citizens! Watch this space!



During the Annual Chaplains' Retreat Bishop Max installed Pastoral Associate Joseph Moloney into the Ministry of Acolyte. Joe is currently chaplain at Bonegilla VIC. Previously, while serving as an army officer, he undertook the ADF In-service Training Scheme for chaplaincy. Joe is married with five children.

The deacon assisting is Mick Flew, who is posted to Holsworthy NSW.

Annual Catholic Chaplains' Retreat



Bishop Max Davis with his chaplains at the conclusion of the Annual Retreat at Mittagong in November

The chaplains gathered at the Marist Brothers Hermitage, Mittagong NSW for their annual retreat 11-16 November. Some 25 full-time and part-time chaplains were present. This represents the largest number for some years. Fr Paul Stuart RAN was unfortunately absent due to his commitments with the Fleet.

It was the first Diocesan Retreat as chaplains for Fr Giles Atherton RAN, Fr Raphael Abboud (Air Force), Br Brendan Quirk (Army), Fr Xiang Feng (Army Reserve) and Fr Kene Onwukwe (Army Reserve).

The retreat program had three aims: importantly providing spiritual renewal over four retreat days; opportunities for building fraternal bonds and social connections; and a time for Diocesan business and professional development.

Honour their Spirit

Two Victorian fibre artists and sisters-in-law, Lynn Berry from Melbourne, and Margaret Knight from Phillip Island, decided to crochet 120 poppies for 'planting' in the surrounds of the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne for Remembrance Day in 2013. These poppies were in honour of their fathers who served in World War II.

This simple tribute of love and honour struck such a chord that there have been over 50,000 people throughout Australia, New Zealand and beyond who have made hundreds of thousands of poppies.

In March 2015 there was a stunning tribute garden of 5,000 poppies at the Melbourne Flower and Garden Show. Shortly thereafter, to commemorate the Centenary of Anzac, there was a spectacular tribute of poppies on the steps of Melbourne's Federation Square and on Princes Bridge.

Lynn and Margaret had a vision of having 5,000 poppies made by a number of people. Lynn said, 'They had no idea what impact it would have on the community at large, all over the world, not just in Australia.'

In May 2016, 2,000 square metres of 300,000 poppies were displayed at the Chelsea Flower Show in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea, home of the iconic Chelsea Pensioners. The poppies were flown to London by Qantas where they filled half the cargo hold of an A3 Airbus.

In July 2016, 26,000 stemmed poppies were 'planted' at the Cobbers Memorial in Fromelles France to commemorate the Centenary of the Battle of Fromelles. Additionally, 3,000

poppies were provided to the Australian Ambassador in France to use for significant Western Front commemorations.

From 5 October to 11 November this year, 62,000 poppies, each representing an Australian lost in the First World War, were placed around the Sculpture Garden on the Australian War Memorial's western grounds

The modestly-titled '5000Poppies' website at 5000poppies.wordpress.com provides a wealth of information about the project, including numerous detailed patterns for making poppies.

Some of the patterns used can be seen in the photos below.



Photo: Kerrie Brewer, Canberra Weekly



Part of the display of 62,000 poppies on the AWM lawns



Honour their Spirit



The relationship between many of the poppy makers and those who served in war is not apparent. Some details of the soldier to which the poppy (left) is dedicated are from documents available at National Archives.

5130 Private Eric Walter Johnson was the son of Walter Thomas and Hannah Amelia Johnstone,

of Patrick St, Ulverstone, Tasmania. Before joining the army Eric was employed as a clerk. At the age of 24 he enlisted in Melbourne on 20 April 1915. He initially undertook cyclist training and in September 1916 was posted to the 8th Battalion AIF. He sailed in *HMT Briton* and arrived in Plymouth UK in June 1916.

On 25 February 1917 in France, while in action Eric was wounded (described as gunshot wound forearm, mild); then on 20 September 1917 he was wounded in action in Belgium. On 20 April 1918, he was again wounded in action and died that day at the 15th Casualty Clearing Station.

The personal effects sent to his father comprised: cards, photos, comb, knife, 2 badges, nail file, YMCA wallet cover, notebook and Testament. In his will he left his estate to Miss Jessie Florence Mitchell of South Yarra, Victoria.

He was buried at Ebbingham Military Cemetery along with 157 Australians. His headstone is inscribed with:

**TRUE TO COUNTRY KING AND MATE
LEAVING A SPOTLESS NAME LOVED BY ALL**

This lovely poppy tribute shows that Eric Johnstone has not been forgotten.



Additionally, 30,000 poppies covered nearly 50 metres of the entrance wall to the Great Hall in the Marble Foyer of Parliament House.



In 2013 Lynn Berry and Margaret Knight could not have imagined that their initiative would engage so many people in making poppy tributes; nor could they have possibly foreseen the emotional impact that their project has evoked in so many people across the world. They have truly enriched our lives.



The Royal Australian Mint has commemorated a century of remembrance in Australia with a special uncirculated \$2 coin.

At the Australian Parliament House a sea of 270,000 poppies were laid on the Forecourt—giving a direct line of sight to the Australian War Memorial.





This article from the Australian War Memorial publication 'Soldiering On 1942' is an account of AIF soldiers serving in the Middle East in WW II and finding themselves on Christmas Eve in The Holy Land. The author of this account was SX7106 Major Kenneth Spencer May who joined the Army on the outbreak of the War serving in the 2nd/3rd Machine Gun Battalion. Later he was appointed to the Army's public relations section in New Guinea. After the War he served in the media, especially with The News Corporation for 51 years, including 11 years as chief executive of the News Group of Companies in Australia.

His reflection on that moving event in that so sacred a location is memorable.

Sir Kenneth May on his retirement as Chief Executive of the News Group of Companies in 1980



Away in a manger, no crib for a bed we used to sing at the Christmas service at Sunday school. That line alone gave me a child-like conception of the stable in which Christ was born, the wise men following the star, and everything associated with that first Christmas at Bethlehem. Lustily we sang, our eagerness to make our voices heard above our companions' often obscuring the simple beauty of the words.

Last Christmas morning I sang carols again. The eager faces of children were replaced by the serious faces of grown men. This time there was no child-like conception. I was in Bethlehem, at the exact spot where the manger served as a crib at the birth of Christ. Indelibly implanted in my memories of the Middle East will always be that service at the Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem, at Christmas. The spectacle is ever vividly alive.

In the teeth of rain, hail, and a cold, penetrating wind, we drove from Jerusalem through the ancient Jaffa Gate, across the five and a half miles of Judean valley and hill to Bethlehem. Bethlehem was hardly imposing on first appearance. Cautiously we threaded our way through the narrow streets to the cobble-stoned square in front of a fortress-like block of buildings that comprise the Church of the Nativity. Actually this block is formed of three contiguous convents belonging to Latin, Orthodox and Armenian faiths.

It was Christmas Eve. In the quiet of the church I was about to see the spot that marked the birthplace of Christ, and later listen to the world-famous service that would begin in the Roman Catholic church of Saint Catherine at midnight. My hands were trembling not from excitement or nervousness but from sheer cold. My first impulse was to run from the truck to the portico for shelter. There was no such portico but only the aptly named Needle's Eye entrance, big enough to admit one person at a time and then only if the person stooped. In the spacious Orthodox church, one of the oldest in the world, Australian, British, Czechoslovakian, Polish, Palestinian and other Allied soldiers were walking quietly about, waiting for the service to begin. To obtain a seat in the congregation many waited up to four hours. Crests sketched by the Crusaders caught my eye as I wandered through the monolithic columns of red limestone, towering on each side of the hall.

Every soldier who entered that rambling building made first for the traditional site of the Nativity. I did not have to inquire where it was. Uniformed men kept descending on one side of the grotto, and, after a few minutes, coming up on the other side. This, then, was the place where Christ was born. I paused at the top of the rude, slippery steps that spiralled down. I realised I had not yet formed any definite impression of what I expected to see. Already others were forming up behind me, and I followed my companions down the steps. In the dimly lit grotto there were two bare-headed Diggers kneeling, their bowed heads strangely silhouetted against the rocky wall on the far side. They were looking at the site of the

manger, over which were hanging five lighted lanterns. As I watched, timidly, I wondered just what their thoughts were. I think I knew.

The grotto was really a vault, decorated with embroidery, figures of saints, and sacred ornaments. I did not expect to see such ecclesiastic richness. I would have preferred to see the manger still of crude wooden structure; instead marble covered the spot where Christ was placed after birth. To the left of the manger, beneath an altar, was embedded in the stone floor a silver star, marking the actual spot of birth. Above were 15 silver lamps which were always kept burning. A little dazed, I hardly remember ascending the steps on the far side. There was a long line of men and women now, all waiting patiently to go down into the grotto. A group of Australian nurses, with candles already alight, had joined the queue. There was hardly standing room in Saint Catherine's Church as the midnight hour approached. Outnumbering civilians in the congregation were uniformed soldiers of all nationalities, men who were fighting for their democratic rights, and their right to worship as free Christians.

We requested to be allowed into the gallery at the rear of the church. To get there we were led up narrow stairways and across the church roof. Standing serenely in the far loft, above the mammoth, gilt candlesticks were the choir boys. Their singing was an inspiring opening to the service. As the service continued I had a chance to study the church. In contrast to the Orthodox church, with its nave and aisles steeped in antiquity, Saint Catherine's was a modern structure of outstanding splendour. The biggest crystal chandelier I have ever seen was suspended in the centre of the church. It was brilliantly lit, but paled soon after the service had begun. The magnificent Star of Bethlehem suddenly glittered in all its glory, far above the heads of the choir boys. Momentarily, the star, with its hundred of lights, was the cynosure of the whole congregation. This was the emblem of the birth of Christ. The service continued for two hours, when the procession, at the head of which was borne the effigy of the Christ child, assembled for the slow march from the church, through the Orthodox church, to the grotto. Slowly it moved down the steps into the grotto, and after the effigy, in its swaddling clothes, had been placed on the manger, the procession ascended.

For us the awe-inspiring service had finished. Although some would stay in the church all night, we decided to leave. Returning later on Christmas morning, we took part in the services especially arranged by the Church of England. The singing of carols was broadcast to many countries. British and Australian nurses mingled with officers and men of the Allied armies, and helped in the singing.

'SX7106'.

(This article was published in the Australian War Memorial book 'Soldiering On' in 1942. Contributors to the publication series were identified only by their service numbers.)

Army Padres: A Former CO's Personal Perspective

Lieutenant Colonel Gavin Keating

(COL Keating was Director Future Military Commitments in the Department of Defence when he was approved in late 2017 to undertake civil schooling as a lieutenant colonel to transition to becoming an Army padre. This will take four more years and involve completing a Bachelor of Theology and pastoral placements in Canberra. At the successful completion of these requirements, as a deacon, he will be appointed as a captain padre.)

A few years ago I had the privilege of commanding an infantry battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment. For many General Service Officers unit command is one of the highlights of their professional careers and this was certainly the situation in my case. It was everything that the Directorate of Officer Career Management said it would be: demanding and rewarding! Perhaps it could be said that the 'reward' was in direct proportion to the 'demand.' Doctrine talks about leadership as the act of appropriately balancing the competing demands of task, group and individual needs. It sounds easy on paper but is perhaps the most difficult aspect of unit command. Short of deployment on operations I often found that task and group needs tended to merge, since 'group needs' cantered on ensuring the group could carry out the tasks required by the larger institution. As such the real 'demand' was balancing institutional requirements and individual needs. I was fortunate to serve with many highly capable people who helped me to try and get this balance right. One of the key people in this respect was the Battalion padre. Given this context I would like to offer a few personal observations about Army padres from a former CO's perspective. I do not pretend that they are particularly unique or insightful – they simply reflect my experience and might be useful to others.

I remember the first time I met the Battalion's padre. It was during the handover period and I came across him at the Brigade swimming competition, wearing a pair of Speedos and marshalling the unit's swimmers. From memory he was not a great swimmer but what did stick in my mind was that he was enthusiastically making a contribution to the sort of activity that helps shape a unit's inner life. He was present and active and that made all the difference. It is a fundamental truism that all units have their own unique character, formed by nature of their military specialisation, history, customs and traditions and key personalities. Having an innate feel for this character is critical for the key personnel in any unit, and this includes the padre. Indeed, given the unique nature of a padre's duties this is particularly critical. The best way for this 'feel' to be developed is active personal participation in all areas of a unit's life: training (particularly field training), major exercises, barracks routine, ceremonial activities and sport. No one expects the padre to be the top marksman or the best runner but their presence is critical for developing the trust so essential to providing effective pastoral care. The more demanding the activity the more important is the padre's presence. The Battalion's padre was pretty popular because when he turned up in the field the soldiers knew they would get a bit of help to deepen their fighting pits or an extra person to put on picket (not that the latter was officially encouraged). This presence can be really difficult for a padre who does not have the luxury of being able to focus on a single unit but this is a handicap that must be overcome to the greatest extent

possible. Getting involved at the appropriate time and place is not necessarily easy and requires consistent effort from the padre. The unit's CO and staff also have a responsibility to identify and facilitate opportunities for this sort of engagement.

Having made this fundamental, but perhaps obvious, point it is fair to ask what COs actually want from their padres (or perhaps more pointedly what they should want). This might vary a bit, particularly given the CO's own attitude towards religion. Drawing on first principles, however, might be useful. COs have access to a plethora of 'subject matter experts' who advise them on everything from tactical operations to overseeing large equipment accounts. Some exist internal to the unit and some reside externally. Most are in uniform but, increasingly (particularly in the medical and rehabilitation areas) they can be civilians. As such, the padre can simply be seen as yet another specialist adviser who can offer useful insights on a range of issues. It does not take personal devotion for a CO to see that their padre can be of service in this general sense. Of course, padres represent a unique specialisation and stand somewhat aside from the formal military hierarchy that governs most of the other 'SMEs'. The only other figure who used to occupy a similar position in a unit was the Regimental



LTCOL Gavin Keating with Japanese Self Defence Force officers during combined arms training at Townville Army High Range Training Area

Medical Officer. However, with the centralisation of uniformed doctors in recent decades, this parallel no longer exists. Indeed, the great loss involved in this reorganisation was the severing of the bond that existed between units and their integral doctor. No amount of 'habitual association' can re-establish this former intimacy. Thus the unit padre is the one remaining integral specialist adviser available to a CO who has both a deep understanding of the unit's life and a military position which is understood to sit, in many important respects, somewhat outside of the formal hierarchy. This last point may not be well defined in a formal sense but the fact is that anyone can talk to the padre at anytime, without having to adhere to the normal process of the 'chain of command'. In my experience this is a universally accepted position, well understood by the most junior soldier through to the most senior officer. It is a position which means that unit padres offer their COs something that no one else in uniform can.

What I really wanted from the Battalion's padre were insights and assistance that might help me to better balance the competing 'I's of institutional and individual needs. In recent times the range of advisers available to provide counsel on individual needs, such as doctors, psychologists, rehabilitation consultants and social workers, has greatly expanded. Each of these is important and the connections between physical and mental health, domestic life and the well being of individual soldiers and officers are increasingly well understood. However, the importance of spiritual health to an individual's welfare and military effectiveness, itself strongly connected to these other areas, remains unchanged since ancient times. It is easy for science to overlook this reality and the active ministry of a padre is the best antidote to ignoring an aspect of human existence, which some may find hard to quantify, but remains a reality repeatedly proven in the Army's history. The old saying that 'there are no atheists in the trenches' still rings true.

Continued page 8

From page 7

In fact you could say 'there are no atheists anytime when humans are confronted by their own mortality'. This is an occupational reality inevitably associated with the profession of arms. The tragic death of one of the unit's soldiers in a motorbike accident certainly reinforced this to me. The scene of the padre helping a group of distressed young men make sense of the tragic death of their equally young friend one late night in the unit's guardroom will always remind me that padres provide a service that uniquely meets some pretty basic human needs.

There is an old joke about how unit Regimental Sergeant Majors always wrote their religious denomination on their personnel records in pencil, so they could amend it to match the CO's affiliation! Even if this is true I am pretty sure it was never a common practice among padres, nor should it be. Like everyone else, COs profess a wide spectrum of beliefs. My experience was that most COs, and indeed most soldiers, related to their unit padre on the basis that they were the unit padre and not through a denominational lens. Diggers tend to be pretty pragmatic about most things and I think this includes most aspects of theology. Australian Army chaplaincy has a strong tradition of ecumenical cooperation and this is critical for a unit padre and their approach to their service and to the padres in neighbouring units. Ecumenical dissension can only interfere with what most soldiers and officers want from a padre, which is a sympathetic ear and someone who can give them spiritual support in whatever form it is required.

Most padres I have served with initially came from 'outside' the Army system, although there are some notable exceptions to this rule of thumb. Many are not strangers to big institutions, but the Army does present some unique language, organizational and cultural challenges to the newcomer, as any recruit or officer cadet will attest. No one expects the padre to be an expert on personnel administration, military law or drill, but it is also true that the more knowledgeable a person is about 'the system' the easier it is to navigate your way through it. More importantly, it becomes progressively easier to exercise effective pastoral care when a padre knows how to 'pull the right levers'. Even most COs do not know all the 'ins and outs of the system' (I certainly did not), so it is expected

that padres will have plenty of questions. Asking them and getting the right answers is really important. Sometimes I have detected reluctance from some padres to embrace their formal military education, particularly when it comes to generalist officer career courses. I think this is unfortunate because it denies them the chance to develop their military credibility. There might be some surprise if a padre passes out of a course as the top tactics student but knowing something about the military planning process, or a myriad number of other areas, can help padres make better contributions to their units.

The example of the Battalion's padre during our service together, and the example of many other padres (of all 'flavours') over the course of my career, certainly had an impact on me. In fact, in late 2017 I was fortunate to be given the opportunity by the Army to commence training as a padre. It would be easy to describe why this came about as a modern adaptation of 'being struck by lightning whilst on the road to Damascus' (funnily enough I have had occasion to travel between Jerusalem and Damascus by road). I am learning, however, that discernment is not necessarily a linear or particularly well defined process. It is hard to articulate the complex play of motivations that influenced this decision.

When I arrived at my first unit, many years ago, I was vaguely aware that there would be one or two 'problem' soldiers in the platoon who would need to be 'assisted', hopefully without detracting too much from training for war. It took a further 17 years for me to realise that everyone in the Battalion was carrying a cross of some sort. Admittedly, some carried their individual crosses more easily than others, but everyone needed spiritual help at some point, regardless of whether they were willing to admit it or not. It was this much belated realisation that played a big part in my change in direction.

Achieving the right balance between the individual and the institution (and the mission when deployed) is not an easy feat for a CO. Padres who can bring their spiritual insights and support to the Army, and combine it with a deep empathy for their units (and some understanding of what makes the larger institution actually work), remain the sort of 'force multipliers' that military theorists dream about.

Financial Support to the Catholic Military Diocese

Income to enable the Diocese to operate comes from a number of sources. By far the largest area is from donations from chaplains: priests donate 10 percent of their pay, while married deacons and pastoral associates provide lower amounts because of their family-support responsibilities. The annual *Chaplain Cathedraticum* provides two-thirds of the annual income for the diocese.

Other sources of income are from interest, share dividends (resulting from a bequest from Fr Peter Quilty), chapel collections and donations from other dioceses and the general public.

We greatly appreciate the many individual donations to support our chaplains, from which a total of \$23,535 was received, and over \$25,000 from dioceses and church communities:

Diocese of Port Pirie	\$5,000	St Joseph's North Mackay	\$250
Diocese of Townsville	\$2,500	St Agatha's Cranbourne	\$2,135
Diocese of Geraldton	\$5,000	St Colman's Orbest	\$19
Diocese of Lismore	\$6,000	St Brendan's Lakes Entrance	\$203
Malvern East Parish	\$1,400	St Michael's Berwick	\$861
		St Mary's Sale	\$606

We are also very grateful for contributions of several parishes of the Diocese of Sale and elsewhere, which have contributed in excess of \$7,000.

In addition, our costs were significantly reduced by generous in-kind IT software and equipment support by the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

You can now easily make an online tax-deductible donation by clicking the **Donate Online** button on the Donations tab at military.catholic.org.au

Serving Faithfully

is a newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services. It is published quarterly by the Catholic Military Ordinariate of Australia. The Diocese comprises members of the Australian Defence Force and their families, wherever they may be serving.

Its people are scattered widely across Australia and overseas.

Serving Faithfully aims to be a means of sharing events and experiences from across the whole Diocese.

Articles are welcome to be submitted for publication to The Chancery, Catholic Military Ordinariate of Australia
PO Box 63, CAMPBELL, ACT 2612

Telephone: (02) 6248 0511 Fax: (02) 6247 0898
Email: sec@cmoa.org.au Website: www.military.catholic.org.au



The Order of the Knights of the Southern Cross is a national organisation of Catholic laymen. It is guided by the virtues of prudence, faith, justice, fortitude and temperance and it strives to serve the wider community and support those in need.

The Knights have supported chaplains through fund-raising activities for many years. At a dinner in Canberra in November, associated with the Knight's annual National Executive Meeting, \$2,460 was raised for support of chaplains.