

St. Carthage's Cathedral Centenary

by Very Reverend
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An overview of the
Concelebrated Mass

The centenary of the opening and blessing of St. Carthage's Cathedral, Lismore, was celebrated at the 5pm Vigil Mass on Saturday 18 August 2007.

The day had begun overcast and cool, but the evening arrived with a gentle breeze and no sign of rain. The light of the setting sun faintly illumined the stained glass windows above the sanctuary. As the bishops and priests processed into the Cathedral the 600 strong congregation supported by the choir sang J. M. Neale's hymn, "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation". A century ago the Pontical High Mass began at 11am and the new, but uncompleted cathedral, was packed from wall to wall. The surrounding fields were covered with unhitched horses and empty vehicles. Apparently, 10,000 people were in Lismore that weekend in 1907.

The Celebrants

The principal celebrant at the Centenary Mass was His Excellency the Most Reverend Ambrose De Paoli, Apostolic Nuncio in Australia since 2005. The Nuncio presided from Bishop Jarrett's cathedra assisted by Deacon Chris Wallace and carried the crozier of Bishop Doyle who built the Cathedral a century ago. The concelebrants with Bishop Jarrett were the Cathedral clergy, Very Rev. Fr. Dennis Carroll Adm VG, Fr. Peter Padsungay and Fr. Bhasker Reddimasu. Other concelebrants were Rev Mgr Wayne Peters VG from Armidale, Fr. P. McDonald from Coffs Harbour, Fr. V. Doyle, Fr. J. Kelly, Fr. P Pidcock sm and Fr. P O'Sullivan sm. The Master of Ceremonies guiding the acolytes and servers was Fr. Peter Slack, the Parish Priest of Casino. At the opening of the Cathedral in 1907 Dr. P. J. O'Connor, the bishop of Armidale and Bishop Doyle's boyhood friend, celebrated the High Mass. With commanding presence Sydney's Cardinal Moran presided from the bishop's throne. The Cardinal had last visited Lismore fifteen

years before to bless the foundation stone in the stifling heat of 1892.

The Music

At Saturday evening's Mass the Brisbane Concert Choir repeated the Mass setting of 1907 and sang Gounod's "Messe Solennelle de Ste Cécile". At the Introit they sang "Locus Iste" by Bruckner. The Offertory motet was "Haec Est Dies, Quam Fecit Domino" by Handl (Gallus) and the Communion motet was "Cantate Domino Canticum Novum" by Schütz. At Communion the congregation sang "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence" translated by Moultrie. All sang the Recessional "One Church, One Faith, One Lord" by Plumptre. The cantor, Robin Maurer, intoned the Colin Mauby settings of the Responsorial Psalm and Alleluia. Warren Whitney played the great organ installed by Bishop Carroll in 1912.

The Liturgy of the Word

After the Nuncio incensed the altar, the Liturgy of the Word began with an account of the dedication of Solomon's temple from the First Book of Kings 8:22-23, 27-30 read by Glenn Roff, Principal of Woodlawn College. The second reading was from St Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians and reminded us that we are all God's temple. This was read by Sister Jill Kennedy, Congregational Leader of the Lismore Presentation Sisters and successor of Mother Stanislaus D'Arcy who backed Bishop Doyle with conviction, faith and money after the disastrous fire of 1905. The Luke 19:1-10 account of Jesus' meeting with Zaccaeus reminded us of the gift of salvation.



(From left) Bishop Jarrett and Archbishop de Paoli enter the Cathedral for the Centenary Mass

The Nuncio's Homily

Referring to St. Carthage's in his homily the Nuncio said. "This Cathedral, in the image of so many of the great cathedrals of Europe, the British Isles and of Ireland, which are found here in Australia, is also a school of faith, a teacher of the faith, the fundamental catechism, if you will, which was first taught to us. In a word, but also in stone, in glass, in wood, the essentials of our faith became visible, to teach, to remind. We are the Church and this Cathedral and our parish churches are "homes", where we come to celebrate our oneness in Jesus."

The Prayer of the Faithful

Among the intercessions read by various parishioners all prayed:

"For the faithful departed, that they may take their place at the altar of the Lamb at the heavenly banquet: especially Jeremiah Doyle, First Bishop of Lismore, all who worked with him to build this Cathedral and those who were present here at its dedication". I thought of Joseph Bede Kelly and Thomas J. McDermott who backed Bishop Doyle when others were timid and oftentimes fearful in the hard years after the Diocese was founded in 1887. It was wonderful to have Tom McDermott's great granddaughter, Miss Oona McDermott from Ballina at the Centenary Mass.



Archbishop de Paoli preaches the Homily at the Mass



Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Nuncio united the Eucharistic assembly in praying the Roman Canon and elevated Bishop Doyle's chalice at the consecration. Bishop Jarrett read the Memento, Monsignor Peters the Communicantes, Fr Carroll the Memento Etiam and Fr McDonald the Nobis Quoque.

Supper at the Trinity College Sports Centre

After almost two hours the Mass concluded and everybody was invited to the Trinity College Sports Centre for supper. The new eight million dollar facility is situated on land originally occupied by the original 1886 St. Carthage's school and Orion Street opposite the Cathedral. Roz Robinson and her team organized the excellent supper in the cavernous space of the Sports Centre.

The Special Guests

The special guests and their partners who mingled with the ordinary parishioners and enjoyed the refreshments were: The Mayor of Lismore, Merv King, Councilors John Hampton, Jenny Dowell, Vanessa Ekins and Frank Swientek. The Chancellor of Southern Cross University, John Dowd. The State Member for Lismore, Thomas George. Rev. Margaret Davies from St. Andrew's Anglican Parish, Rev. Garry Priest, Byron Bay, Rev. Ben Gilmore, Mullumbimby. In 1907 Alderman Quilty attended in full mayoral robes. And a touch of nobility came with the presence of Bishop Doyle's friend Count Morner, the Consul General of Sweden in full military attire.

(photos provided by students of Woodlawn College)



Archbishop de Paoli and Deacon Chris Wallace during the Readings at the Centenary Mass