



THE CHURCH OF THE  
TRANSFIGURATION

February 2012

Dear Parishioners and Friends of the Church of the Transfiguration,

February in Melbourne, Australia used to be the time for ordinations since it was the beginning of the new parochial year after the summer break. Deacons and Priests were ordained together on Sunday morning at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, usually on the Sunday before Lent, which bore the name Quinquagesima.

Thus I was ordained to the priesthood on February 20, 1972. So it is by some miracle that I will be celebrating my 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Priesthood on Sunday, February the 19<sup>th</sup> at the 11 a.m. Solemn Mass with Bishop Richard Grein, the XIV<sup>th</sup> Bishop of New York, preaching.

By chance it is also the Last Sunday after the Epiphany, the Sunday before Lent begins. One of the seminarians, on learning of this anniversary, said he thought it was "awesome." Someone else commented kindly that I must have been ordained as a child! I only wish. The fact of the matter was that with a mid-February birthday I was 28 when I was ordained priest. So there we are.

In some ways, those 40 years seem to have flown by but when you think of the events, people, experiences, changes, and so forth over those years you realize it is a significant piece of time. I am deeply thankful for my ministry thus far and for the fact that I still find it most fulfilling. And I am conscious of the many people including family, friends, colleagues and parishioners who have encouraged and sustained me over the years. My only sadness is that my father never lived to see me ordained although he knew I was intending to go to seminary and was supportive in that intention.

Lent begins this month with Ash Wednesday on February 22. However, before we take on the seriousness of Lent we make the most of Mardi Gras on Tuesday, February 21 with a Pancake Supper at 6:30 p.m. followed by the annual Parish Talent Show. This event is always huge fun and is a showcase for the wide range of talents in this parish. The services for Ash Wednesday as well as the Lent Program are set out in the enclosed brochure. I would highlight the Christian Adult Education series on Sundays at 10 a.m. reflecting on "Gilead" by Marilynne Robinson; the Lent Quiet Day on Saturday, March 17 with Fr. William Derby talking about "Forgiveness"; the daily readings for Lent, "From Ashes to Hope", available in the bookstore or on the back table; the Benjamin Britten Church Opera, "The Prodigal Son", on Friday, March 9; and Stations of the Cross and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament every Friday in Lent at 6.30pm. Lent is a great time of opportunity to stretch and grow spiritually.

So February is a time of celebration as well a time of reflection and growth. Enter into both wholeheartedly to gain that equilibrium which is at the heart of the spiritual life.

This comes with my prayer filled good wishes and hopes that you have a "good Lent."

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew St John", with a stylized flourish at the end.

+Andrew St John,  
Rector