

THE CHRISTIAN BROTHERS IN QUEENSLAND

1875-1988

April, 1988

Br P.C. McCarthy CFC.

Who are the Christian Brothers?

The Christian Brothers are the followers of Edmund Ignatius Rice, who was born in Callan (Ireland) in 1762, and on account of the Penal Laws was educated at one of the Hedge Schools nearby. He was apprenticed to his uncle, a merchant of Waterford. He married, had a handicapped daughter, and then lost his wife in tragic circumstances. He had amassed a considerable fortune when he decided to devote his life to the Christian education of the poor. He provided for his daughter, and in 1802 opened the first school of the Christian Brothers at Waterford. Despite early difficulties he had a sufficient number of followers for six of them to take the Vows of Religion in August 1808, modelled on the Institute of the Presentation Sisters. This was a diocesan Institute. In 1820 the "Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools of Ireland" received a Brief of Papal approval from Rome. Not all the communities opted to accept the Papal Brief, and they remained Diocesan - the Presentation Brothers. Br Ignatius was elected the first Superior General. The Institute of Christian Brothers, as it came to be known was now a Papal exempt Religious Institute and was no longer Diocesan. Schools were established in Ireland, England and Australia in the Founder's lifetime. Later the Brothers had establishments on all the continents and the sub-continent of India.

The Brothers until the time of Vatican II took the following five vows:

- * Poverty
- * Chastity

- * Obedience
- * Gratuitous Instruction and
- * Perseverance

Temporary vows were made for periods of one year at a time, commencing on the Christmas Day of the Teacher Training year which followed the completion of a One-year Novitiate. After six years of temporary vows Perpetual vows were made when the Brother reached the age of 25 years. About the time of Vatican II, the number of the vows was reduced to three. i.e. Poverty, Celibacy and Obedience.

Why did the Brothers come to Queensland in the first place?

Sydney

Fr McEnroe had invited the Brothers to Sydney in 1832. In 1840 Dr Polding made a formal petition to the Holy See, for a community of Brothers. From 1843 to 1847 three brothers (Brs Carroll, Scanell and Larkin) took charge of separate schools in Sydney. No community residence was set up as a Monastery. In 1847 the three Brothers returned to Ireland, due to the interference of Dr Gregory, who had tried to give practical effect to Bishop Polding's hope of making the Australian Church completely Benedictine in ideals and organisation. The specific issue was the admission of the first Australian Postulants to the Congregation. Dr Gregory with the approval of the Bishop announced that the Novices were not to make Vows according to the Brief, granted to the Brothers in 1820, by Pope Pius VII, but conditional Vows as His Grace should think proper. When the Brothers objected to keeping the Novice under these conditions His Grace confirmed this expression by saying that 'If the Brothers dismiss the Novice, he should feel it his duty to visit them with the severest marks of his displeasure'". One of the three Brothers, Br Larkin, later returned to Gregory Terrace in 1881.

Melbourne

In 1860 Dr Gould formally petitioned the Holy See for a community of Brothers. On August 15, 1868 four Christian Brothers left Dublin on their long voyage to Australia. Brs Ambrose Treacy, Fursey Bodkin, Barnabas Lynch and Joseph Nolan boarded the "Donald MacKay" in Liverpool. They established a School in Melbourne on a site adjoining St Francis' Church in Elizabeth St. Later this was moved to Fitzroy with the Brothers residing in Victoria Parade. In 1874, Fr Corbett, Dr Gould's secretary, told Br Treacy that the Bishop did not wish the Brothers to open outside the Melbourne Diocese until all the needs of that diocese had been fulfilled. The Brothers were concerned lest their work would become purely Diocesan and the failure of the Sydney venture would be repeated in Melbourne.

Ireland

In Ireland, (1875-1879) the Bishops issued the Maynooth decrees, (some 239 of them of which 5 affected the Brothers) which effectively changed the nature of the Papal exempt status of the Brothers, granted in 1820 by Pope Pius VII. An appeal was made to Rome and the Brothers stormed heaven through the intercession of Our Mother of Perpetual Succour, and, when the appeal was successful the Brothers promised to erect a shrine of Our Lady under the title of Our Mother of Perpetual Succour in each of the Houses of the Congregation. This promise is still being honoured.

In Sydney, Melbourne and Ireland the Bishops attempted to control the future development of the Congregation, in a way that voided the Papal Brief granted to the Brothers in 1820. In Sydney the Brothers withdrew, while in Melbourne the invitation from Dean Tissot provided an opportunity to assert that the Brothers were independent, while in Ireland an appeal was made to the Holy See to set aside the Maynooth decrees as they affected the Brothers.

Consider the following Providential series of events:-

- * The rumblings of the Maynooth Decrees were being felt in Australia.
- * Interference in the internal affairs of the Institute had contributed to the failure of the Sydney foundation.
- * Bishop Quinn's invitations for a community of Brothers had been refused.
- * Dean Tissot requested Br Ambrose Treacy for a community of Brothers for Maryborough.
- * Br Ambrose Treacy, reacting to interference in the internal affairs of the Institute, in Melbourne, seized the opportunity to assert the independence of the institute, guaranteed by the Brief of 1820.
- * Br Joseph Barrett needed to recuperate after a bout of ill-health.
- * Bishop Quinn, a personal friend of the sick Brother, against the advise of the man who succeeded him as Bishop, seized the opportunity and prevailed on the Brothers to make a foundation in Brisbane, using land given by Mr Dan McSweeney for the use of the Church.

So the Brothers were disposed to come to Queensland. Bishop Quinn was able to start to implement his plans for the Christian Education for the whole of Queensland.

How It Happened

Mr Friedrich Winterheld prevailed on Dean Tissot, Parish Priest of Maryborough to request Br Ambrose Treacy in Melbourne to open a school of the Christian Brothers in Maryborough. Br Joseph Barrett was sent to negotiate. However, he called to see his former teacher and friend Bishop Quinn in Brisbane. As a result a school was opened in St Stephen's old Church with 19 pupils on 6th July, 1875.

Mr Dan McSweeny had left land for Church use and this became the site for the first permanent School of the Christian Brothers in Queensland, St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace.

Bishop Quinn's Dream Comes To Fruition

Foundations were made throughout the Diocese, which was Queensland-wide:-

1875 Gregory Terrace, Brisbane	1949 Cardinal Gilroy College, Ingham
1888 Maryborough	1952 St John Fisher's, Curranjong
1891 Nudgee	1952 St Patrick's, Shorncliffe
1892 St. Mary's, Ipswich	1956 St Joseph's, Toowoomba
1893 St James', Brisbane	1958 St Stanislaus North Rockhampton
1894 St Joseph's, Rockhampton	1960 St Kieran's, Mt Isa
1899 St Mary's, Toowoomba	1964 Aquinas College Mt Gravatt
1902 Mt Carmel, Charters Towers	1968 Wewak, P.N.G. Townsville
1911 Our Lady's Mount,	1970 Our Lady's Mount (Nov.)
1912 Warwick Helidon	1971 Xavier Teachers' College
1915 St Laurence's, South Brisbane	1974 Temporary Novitiate, Beenleigh
1919 Bundaberg	1976 Bathurst Island
1928 St Columban's, Albion Heights	1982 Port Keats
1934 Abergowrie	1982 Kingston
1938 Nudgee Junior, Indooroopilly	1987 Novitiate, Dutton Park
1940 St Brendan's, Yeppoon	1987 Darwin

Other Labourers In The Field

When the Brothers came to Queensland there were already twelve Schools of the Sisters of Mercy, twelve Schools of the Sisters of St Joseph, and six Schools for boys,

conducted by laymen. Mr Long, an outstanding educationist, had built up a reputation for himself and for St James's Primary School in Boundary Street. There had been "vested Schools" and Grammar Schools, but in 1875 Education became free, secular and compulsory. When the Sisters of St Joseph were withdrawn, and the Catholic boys' Schools conducted by lay-men also ceased to exist the Sisters of Mercy and the Brothers carried the flag for Catholic Education in Queensland for many years. Bishop Dunne, despite his earlier distrust of the Brothers, about 1888 had a complete about-turn and became such a staunch supporter of the Brothers that he left his possessions, when he died, jointly to the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers.

The Archbishop left £90,000 - £15,00 to St Stephen's and two-thirds of the remainder to the Sisters of Mercy, and one third to the Christian Brothers for education in Queensland. The Brother Provincial with the concurrence of the Brothers' Consultors and some other experienced Brothers asked the Archbishop to take control of the Brothers' share of the bequest and administer it as he saw fit. He was very grateful and assured us that the money would not be touched till instructions regarding it came from the Holy See. In the course of the year, the Bishop agreed to advance money for class rooms and music rooms at Nudgee and a residence at South Brisbane (viz. £17,000 and £9,000 resp.) At the end of the year the decision from Rome gave £54,000 to the Archbishop, \$20,000 to the Sisters of Mercy and £15,000 to us. During the year the Provincial was assured by the Archbishop that no matter how Rome decided we should get £30,000.

Archbishop Duhig was always a staunch and generous friend of the Brothers.

Negotiations For A Brothers' Community

The Brothers have never had an overall "Grand Plan" for their establishments. In 1974 Br Colman Curran, representative of the Superior General in a discussion with the Parish Priest of Warwick Fr J. Bergin responded to the following statement: "The Christian Brothers' school is not attracting the better class boy of the town - i.e. the sons of the professional men."

Reason. We are too cheap. Professional men are fully aware that you cannot provide the amenities - the facilities and the teaching for the kind of fee charged. We too could conduct a prestige school in the Downs by concentrating our Brothers from Dalby, Toowoomba and Warwick in a single school - charging a fee comparable to that charged by Downlands or Nudgee. We could admit the elite only, the boys who are clever and from good homes and proceed to build for ourselves a 'good' reputation. The truth is we do not want to do this. This is not necessarily our vocation. Our Brothers want to align themselves with the intellec-

tually and materially poor. We know we can do a good job for these our pupils with some kind of adequate expenditure.

They sought and obtained a rescript from Rome so that "Pay Schools" could be established. They took very seriously the implications of the vow of Gratuitous Instruction and showed that they were ready to co-operate in any plan that could further the educational growth of the poor - even the establishment of "Boarding" Schools. The initiative for Brisbane and Maryborough came from laymen. The Ingham establishment was due to the initiative of the Parish Priest Fr O'Meara, who, when his request to the Provincial in Sydney met with the refusal, wrote directly to his personal friend, the Superior General of the Brothers, and made the necessary agreements. "Boarding" Schools were apart of the dream of Bishop Quinn. When serious negotiations were entered into and an agreement was made the Brothers usually acted as quickly as possible to found an establishment.

An example of the procedure followed when a foundation was being negotiated can be taken from the History of Warwick.

When Fr James Horan died in 1905 his Will contained the words, "... and any property I may be possessed of at my death after my debts are paid I leave for a Catholic Boys School in Warwick." Father Potter honoured this wish.

The originals of the following letters are in the Archives of St Mary's Parish, Warwick, photostat copies are held in the Diocesan Archives, Toowoomba.

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS (Letters to Provincialate New South Wales)

First letter August 17.'08 asking, on behalf of Archbishop Dunne & myself, that a community of Christian Bros. be sent to Warwick at the beginning of the year 1909.

Second letter Dec 17th. 1908 regretting that there was no hope of getting the C.B. in 1909 & sending the plan as roughly sketched by Bro O'Brien.

Third letter
Warwick
Queensland August
31, 1909

Brother Barron,
Provincial Christian Brothers

Dear Brother Barron,

Owing to serious illness I had to postpone the movement for the introduction of the Christian Brothers to Warwick. I intend please God to make another start shortly.

You mentioned in your first letter that you would undertake to send the Brothers to Warwick as soon as possible, and that certain conditions would have to be signed by you and me before and commitment was made.

Would you kindly let me know the conditions on which the Christian Brothers would come to Warwick.

I remain

Yours faithfully

M. Potter

Christian Brothers' Novitiate

"Mount Sion"

Petersham

Sydney

August 22nd. 1908

Very Rev M. Potter,
Warwick, Q'land

Rev & Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your letter of 17th inst. and beg to thank his Grace the Archbishop and yourself for your invitation to send a community to Warwick. I regret however to say that it will be impossible for us to send Brothers at the beginning of, or any time during the next year. At present we have very few Brothers available and many of our existing communities are very much undermanned and require strengthening. I am not able to say just now when we could sent Brothers, but I would undertake to send them as soon as possible. If you consider it likely that you will wait till we can take up the work I request that no buildings - either schools or residence - be started without submitting the plans to us. Above all avoid the Toowoomba plans, I heard you were looking into them. Conditions would also have to be signed by you and us before any commencement was made; they would be practically the same as we are working under in Gympie - the last house we opened in the Archdiocese.

I beg to remain, Rev & Dear Sir
Respectfully Yours
P.J. Barron

Christian Bros.
Training College
Albert Road
Strathfield

Dear Father Potter

Could you conveniently send me, for a few days, the plans of the proposed house and school, my own rough sketches will do, I would like to place them before the authorities here to convince them that they ought to do something for Warwick as soon as possible. I shall send them back after a few days.

I am feeling much better since my arrival in Strathfield.

With kind regards to self, Father Baldwin and Father O'Brien

I am dear Father Potter
Yours faithfully
F.T. O'Brien

Send also the plans of the plot showing position of House & School.

Christian Brothers Training College
Mount St Mary
Strathfield, N.S.W.
29/9/1911

Dear Fr. Potter,

I will have the desks ready & sent on in due course. You will be delighted with them & they will be good for all time.

As the sisters have so kindly undertaken the furnishing of the house we would like to leave the matter as much to their selection as possible. Br O'Shea likes the Altar in the Convent Chapel very much, & if Mother Kevin is pleased with it, a like one would do our little oratory admirably. Br O'Brien was not satisfied with some of the details but

he is an artist whose taste is very refined. I doubt if his suggestions would improve the exquisite Altar in the Convent Chapel.

If there is any detail re furniture or buildings about which you may wish to ask us it is better to drop us a line direct. As you escaped having to referee a match between Brs O'Brien & O'Shea you must not run a like risk again.

Instead of a picture rod for hanging Maps etc. a flat board or cornice would be better. The picture rod stands out too much & the maps are liable to blown (sic) about when so hung. The board as at x about 3" or 4" all round would be just right. It may be flush with plaster or stand out a shade 1/2" or so - Just the thickness of the wood.

With every good wish,

Yours sincerely

W.M. McCarthy

(Comment)

Replied saying the brass rods were there now and it would be a pity to discard them. Asked was the dado moulding necessary and what height the top of the moulding should be from the ground. Oct 3, 1911

Conditions for the Opening of a House of the Christian Brothers in Warwick, Queensland

- I. The Provincial of the Christian Brothers undertakes to send a Community of three Brothers to Warwick in January 1912.
- II. Suitable Schools for the Brothers to be provided and suitably furnished at the expense of the Parish. The Brothers will attend to the ordinary cleansing and such minor repairs as broken glass, locks, bolts, &c., but the Parish is to be responsible for keeping the buildings and premises generally in good repair.
- III. A suitable residence for the Brothers to be provided and furnished at the expense of the Parish. The Brothers' Rules require that they have at least joint title to the residence, but as in this case the site cannot be alienated, they are to be given a lease of the premises for (?) years. The Brothers undertake to afterwards keep the house in good repair at their own expense and to conduct the schools in an efficient manner.
- IV. The Parish to pay the Brothers the sum of £120 (One hundred and twenty

pounds) to defray the travelling expenses of two Brothers who must be brought from Ireland for this foundation.

- V. Fees will be charged in the schools but no Catholic child shall be excluded through the inability or unwillingness of the parents or guardians to pay their fees. If however the number of non-paying children should amount to 20 per cent of the whole attendance the parish shall pay the Brothers the sum of £25 per year to make up for the loss of Fees.

Copied from 'BOOK OF FOUNDATIONS' 1912 (Handwriting of Br P.J. Barron)

1912 By January of this year, the House and Schools in Warwick were completed and arrangements were made for the Opening. Br Athanasius Kelly was appointed Director, with Brs Mark Reidy and Athanasius Mackintosh as members of the Community. The opening ceremony was very enthusiastic, attended by people from the surrounding districts. The buildings are commodious and well-lighted, and the grounds extensive. Archbishop Dunne said he could not make the Brothers joint owners, as the property could not be alienated. The Provincial asked for a lease of 99 years, which the Archbishop agreed to give; but up to the end of the year, the document had not been executed.

In 1914, Dr Duhig was negotiating with the Provincial Br J. Barron for Brothers for St Laurence's South Brisbane. He asked the Brother Provincial not to ask for any conditions or guarantees as the old Archbishop would agree to none and that he (Dr Duhig) would see that the Brothers were adequately supported and that when the old man died, we would get any terms we wanted.

In the 1960s when Br Athanasius McGlade was Provincial for Queensland and New South Wales the question of signed agreements between the various Dioceses and the Brothers' Schools was raised and Br Athanasius asked the question, "What can be done when the Bishop just doesn't get around to signing?"

The Brothers have continued to work with or without a signed written agreement, and for the most part, worked very well with the Bishops, Parish Priests and Assistant Priests.

Individual Brothers in Australia, allowing for the fact that conditions were very different in Australia from Ireland, had not come to terms with the implications of the vow of Gratuitous Instruction. The literalists interpreted the implications of the vow

to mean that no fees could be charged for the education of the poor who were being educated. The founder had seen the need for services to be offered to the sons of shopkeepers, semi-skilled and tradesmen's sons, who could not afford to go to schools for the wealthy, and he proposed that there be fees which could then be used for the education of the poor and not for the support of the Brothers. The needs of the Brothers were provided by the stipend paid by the Parish, or from the Charity Sermon preached on behalf of the Brothers, or by the begging that took up a great deal of the time of the Brothers, when Classes were over for the day.

In Australia, in the early days, the parents of the poor were in desperate straits and could not contribute to the Charity sermon, nor could they help the Brothers in their questing, and the Parishes were too poor and extensive to be of much practical help, so from the start fees were charged, and the agreement with the Parish which said that 'fees would not be charged, if the parents or guardians were unable or willing to pay' satisfied the consciences of most of the Brothers. However, there are instances of Brothers, in Australia who would write, periodically, a letter of protest to the Provincial Superior, notifying him of their concern about the implications of the vow of Gratuitous Instruction.

The Provincial Superior had to be convinced that the local Parish could support a community of Brothers in a way that would allow for the rules to be lived out. A request had been made for the establishment of a Brothers' community in Roma. Br Barron went to Roma to evaluate the situation. His conclusion was that Roma could not support a community of Brothers, so he refused the request. Later on the De La Salle Brothers did go to Roma, but after ten years they withdrew.

Boarding Schools

Up to the time of an opening in Queensland the Brothers had not had a "Boarding" School. Bishop Quinn was eager to provide for the needs of his whole Diocese so he proposed that provision should be made for boarders at Gregory Terrace. Br Joseph Barrett opposed the idea, and was prevailed on to accept the responsibility, only when the attempt by the Priests failed. He was never reconciled to the idea for Boarders to reside at Gregory Terrace. His objections disappeared when Nudgee College was established. Since those days the following Boarding Schools have been established:-

- * 1902 Mount Carmel College, Charters Towers
- * 1934 Abergowrie Agricultural College
- * 1938 Nudgee Junior College, Indooroopilly
- * 1940 St Brendan's College, Yeppoon
- * 1948(?) Sacred Heart College, Gympie

For many years the task of the Brother in the Boarding School was extremely onerous. The Boarders could not afford to pay high fees, so for the most part the Brothers had to act as the Teachers, supervisors of Night study, and assume the role of parents. Sport tended to be used extensively. The work of the Brothers, while being very demanding was also rewarding, as many of the boys came from such remote areas that they had little contact with other Catholics, and no chance of receiving the sacraments regularly. The whole area of the State was serviced by these Schools.

In Abergowrie the emphasis up to the Junior Public examination was on Agriculture, but the remaining two years were devoted to academic studies leading to Matriculation for a Tertiary Institute.

Charters Towers served North Queensland as far as the Northern Territory. Rockhampton catered for Central Queensland. Nudgee Junior was an attempt to separate the Primary School Boarders from the Senior Boarders.

Gympie was in a category by itself. It developed as a Hostel where boys could stay for the week and return to their parents' farm in the district at the week-end. Officially, it seemed to have no existence, and the staffing agreements were minimal. Financially, it operated on a shoe-string budget. In many of the country towns in Queensland Hostels were set up for children to attend the local High School. From the earliest days in Warwick, Hostels were set up for the Catholic boys of Warwick. Names such as Mrs French, Mrs J. McMahan, Mrs A. McMahan and Mrs J. Hagenbach are some of the parents who responded to the needs of the Boys of this District. The Brothers supervised the "Night Study" and kept the boys actively engaged in gymnastics.

Banyo Junior Seminary

When the Seminary for the training of all the Priests of Queensland commenced the Brothers were asked to supply Brothers to teach the boys who had not completed their Secondary education. Brs Leo Duffy, Athanasius Rieck, Anthony Sterling and Thaddeus Landener all contributed. They resided with the Brothers at Nudgee College and helped with the supervision at night. Br Anthony Sterling, who had had heart trouble for some years died while he was giving a religious instruction to the boys at Nudgee.

The Horarium of the Brothers

(The District Inspector of Rockhampton T.R. Brown in 1905 sent this perceptive insight into the organisation of the Brothers' Schools to the Director of Education.)

Brother Keniry is the head of the house. He is the Principal or Head Teacher of the School, with general responsibility for its management. None of the other teachers has any standing as Head Teacher of the Primary School, or responsibilities as such; each of them, the Brothers or the young lad acting as pupil teacher, is a class teacher pure and simple answerable for the management and progress of his own class ... not to Brother Keniry, but to the Provincial Visitor, who keeps himself acquainted with the conditions of the school by personal visits, and periodical reports of his Inspector. The class teachers guide their work by a printed schedule or programme which is common to all schools of the Order, and is not subject to modification at the discretion of the Principal of any particular School.

However, he did not know the whole story. Every moment of the Brothers' day was filled. From the time the Brother was summoned from sleep with thirty-three rings of the bell at 5.45 a.m. till the warning bell rang at 9.55 p.m. and the "lights-out" bell at 10.00 p.m. every moment was accounted for.

At 6.00a.m. the *Benedicamus Domino* rang out and the Brothers responded with *Deo Gratus*. The *Angelus* was recited in Latin, then the Morning Prayers followed in English. When the Prayer before Meditation had been recited in unison the Superior read out the proposed 3-point Meditation, one point at a time. At 6.45a.m. the *Pater Noster* was said in Latin and then followed a 10minute lecture from some Spiritual Book. Mass followed immediately, usually in the local Parish Church, with the Brothers, like Brown's cows meandering to the church, giving witness to the sanctity of the *Magnum Silentium* and their state of life with their black clerical dress. In some places the *Soutane* and *Cincture* were worn down the street. Mostly the ordinary "walking clerical dress" was used, At 7.40a.m. the Superior said Grace before Meals and breakfast commenced, with Brothers taking it in turn to read to read from some book. The "Educational Records" were used for this purpose, but suitable novels were also used. No Brother was permitted to leave until all the community was ready. The Grace after Meals would be recited and the Brothers would then get ready for school.

The Brother was required to be in the classroom fifteen minutes before the commencement of the formal teaching. school commenced at 8.30a.m./8.45a.m. and continued until 10.50a.m. when the boys were given a Recess of 10 minutes. The Brothers continued their supervision of the boys during this recess. The Rule did not allow for a cup of morning tea to be taken. At 12.30p.m. the Dinner Recess commenced. The time allowed for this was forty-five minutes. The Brothers spent half of this time in Playground supervision, and the rest of the time was spent eating in silence. At 3.30p.m. classes finished for the day. Between 3.30p.m and 5.00p.m. the Brothers

were on recreation, which could be spent training some of the sports' teams or playing games with the Brothers, usually Handball, or walking into the country. At 5.00p.m. a period of silence commenced. This could be used in class preparation. At 5.30p.m. public reading for fifteen minutes - usually lives of the saints. At 5.45p.m. a visit to the Blessed Sacrament was made for fifteen minutes, most of the time spent in prescribed oral prayers. At 6.00p.m. the long Latin Grace before meals was recited in choir. The Saint for the day from the Miniature Lives of the saints was read and the Brothers had a recreation meal. At 6.30p.m. the Martyrology for the day was read and the long Latin Grace after Meals was recited. This was followed by the "Beads" - six decades of the Rosary, recited as the Brothers moved up and down the grounds. At 6.45p.m. the Brothers assembled for Night study and this continued until 8.30p.m. when the Brothers had recreation for 30 minutes. At 9.00p.m. "Conference" study of some theological work was made for 20 minutes. At 9.20p.m. the Rosary and Litany of Our Lady were recited in unison. Finally the points of the Meditation for the following day were read, and the names in the Liber Mortuorum were read out. The Magnum Silentium had commenced and it would continue until the end of Mass next day.

The Office of Our Lady was recited in Latin on Saturday and Sunday and special Feast Days, and the Office for the Dead was recited instead of the evening lecture on Monday. Feast Days were special and recreation would commence at 8.00p.m.

Now the Prayer of the Church is the prayer of the Brother. Many of the Spiritual Exercises are now performed in private, and the onus is on the individual Brother.

Some Cameos of Christian Brothers

Br Ambrose Treacy

In 1885 the Australian Province was inaugurated with Br Treacy as the first Provincial, who with typical forthrightness transferred the novitiate from Richmond, Victoria to Petersham in N.S.W., making that the sixth opening in the older State before 1898. In thirty years under Br Treacy's guidance thirty schools and twenty houses had been opened. What kind of a man was he? Contemporaries of his tell us he was dedicated to the work of Christian education, that he was a poor man in personal living, walking rather than using public transport; rarely purchasing new clothing for himself. To finance the schools he collected from settlers in northern South Australia, from the gold miners at Ballarat and Sandhurst, and from the gold miners at Croydon in Northern Queensland. Br Joseph Barrett wrote of him: "He was not one of those expansive characters that naturally attract, but he was reserved, resolute, without a particle of selfishness, and very kind."

With all his activity, he did not neglect his work in the schools for he was one of the first Brothers permitted to undertake Classic studies, and these together with his mathematical ability helped to strengthen the soundness of secondary education in those early foundations.

Br Treacy personally attended the openings of the seven Queensland schools while he was Provincial. This attendance is a tribute to his zeal, to his interest in education and to his physical stamina. Travel was not easy in Queensland before the turn of this century. He returned to Ireland in 1900 as Assistant to the Superior General but returned in 1912 to the scene of his greatest labours at the age of 76. In that year Br Ambrose Treacy died and was buried at Nudgee cemetery where his body awaits the Day of Judgement when everyone will be rewarded according to his works.

Brother Joseph Barrett by Brother Stanislaus Nunan

“The salient feature of our history in Queensland in the early years when Br. Joseph Barrett was Director, were extreme poverty, general unworldliness and an absolute adherence to older monastic customs...Going to Brisbane in those days was regarded in much the same way as banishment to Siberia, in another quarter of the globe. Few, or perhaps more correctly, no Brother stood it for long, as invariably after a few years they had to travel south for the reestablishment of their health. No games were allowed at recreation, nor was there any reading or other form of relaxation to relieve the monotony of the situation.” (‘Life of Br. Barrett’ p.191).

Brother Furlong by Br Mark McCarthy

“His instruction profoundly impressed his pupils, and they imbibed his own ardent spirit of faith and piety. Mere superficiality in religious matters he could never endure. Thoroughness here as in all things was his motto, and his pupils rose fully to the levels of his high ideals.

“He possessed an unerring instinct which revealed to him the needs and many sidedness of a boy’s nature. He firmly believed that healthy and vigorous sport was necessary to draw out and foster some of the most valuable qualities of a boy’s character. At a period when new forces were welling up in life, and the superabundant energies of juvenile vitality are craving for realisation, it is wise to supply legitimate and beneficial spheres for their exercise. But while Br Louis with his inexhaustible fund of Celtic enthusiasm, apparently threw himself into the field of sport and athletics, he ever did so with the high purpose of promoting the physical and moral well-being of his pupils.”

Brother Joseph Mullen

This Brother, with his quiet manner and his strict sense of justice, exerted a profound influence at Terrace after 1885... "His work was of a quiet unostentatious character, his life being spent on teaching in which he was very successful, many of his former pupils in Ireland and Australasia, attaining high positions in the leading professions and in the Church.

"In the late nineties a number of young Brothers came to the Terrace and they immediately joined in the games with the Senior boys. Soccer, handball and cricket were the games favoured. Many a great game of football took place on the school grounds, with Br Leighton on one side and Br Reidy on the other."

Brother B. Duggan.

"He was not merely a teacher but entered largely into every phase of school life, was deeply sympathetic for the welfare of the pupils and took the keenest interest in their games and amusements. In this way, he soon won their affections and in the end possessed unlimited control over boys."

Brother Ignatius Hickey (1863-1927)

"He was a tall man with a strong and rather stern face and deep-set blue eyes. The dominant expression of this monk's face was indomitability. He had the steady look in the eyes and the set of the head of the absolutely brave man... In life one meets very, very few really interesting men. And this monk was one of them. He might have organised and lead a revolution. A fine, deep-browed, strongly-faced, indomitable man. A man with the suggestion of the terrible within him. And still a man spiritual and calm." (Bart Kennedy)... he was a vital man, a restless Celt who had apparently become somewhat involved in the troubled Irish political scene after 1916 and was removed to an area less affected by Irish nationalism.

Br Hickey was a man who painted on a large canvas. He highlighted the shortage of Brothers and proposed to Br Barron the establishment of a Juniorate to encourage suitable boys to enter the Congregation before their education was completed, so that the training in the discipline of Religious life could be trialled. Br Hickey, as the Postulator in 1923, secured thirty boys for the Juniorate. The following year the numbers were more than doubled. He dramatically focussed the attention of all Brothers on postulating. Numbers in the houses of formation increased greatly in a few years and the Order was able to staff its schools satisfactorily after 1930. To meet the necessary expansion in the Juniorate buildings, Br Hickey organised the "Self

Denial Days” in the schools, tuckshop days and other means of raising money. Br J.A.Kearney wrote about Br Hickey: “He had shown that the scope of our operation in Australasia would increase a hundred-fold if only we first insisted on colossal development at the centre instead of casual and timorous ventures on the rim.”

For the professional development, an internal system of Grades had been organized. While the knowledge of the Brothers kept pace with the educational needs of the time, no formal qualifications at universities could be commenced. With this mind, Br Borgia Murray prevailed on the Provincial, Br Barron, to let the boys of the Juniorate to take the Intermediate Examination. Later the Leaving Certificate became the norm. Matriculation for university studies was the end-point of Juniorate studies.

Brother Gabriel Purton

Brother Gabriel Purton was one of the first Brothers to secure a university degree. He wrote a number of pamphlets on Church History and lives of the Saints. However, his outstanding work was the “Our Studies”, which was first published from Nudgee in 1929. Articles written for this publication were extremely helpful to the Brothers who were looking for other teachers’ approaches in trying to impart knowledge. The scope was the entire curriculum. The editing task has been shared by the various Provinces in recent years. Br J.G.Hodda was the Queenslander in charge for some time.

Memories of Brother Borgia Murray by Br A. McKay

He was an outstanding man in so many diverse ways - he was an incomparable teacher. He could entertain boys endlessly, a never ending stream of boys sought his advice, he was genuinely holy. Then there were those contrasts in his nature - he was fiery and excitable, yet humble and patient; he was vibrant and vigorous, yet weak and subject to violent attacks of asthma, attacks which eventually led to his early death. The comparison with St Paul is compelling and when I think of Paul I imagine him as Borgia with those flashing eyes and craggy brows yet somewhat kindly face.

Although most decisive in school and in general administration of the Juniorate, he was rather timid in conscience and was very afraid of making a mistake when guiding a boy. He bordered on the scrupulous in this regard.... Pay a visit to a classroom where he is teaching. Some kind of organized pandemonium reigns... I can hear the daily estatic buzz as he appeared at the door and can still recite the verbs that take the infinitive without the ‘to’ ... Most of us relax after school. Borgia had the gift to relax in school... He was a great source of encouragement but he demanded a high standard in following the ideals that he set before them... It was generally a happy group with

Borgia about. But you have to go beyond all that we have told for the real man. For the ultimate reality with Borgia was his genuine holiness. It explained all about the man and all was an external manifestation of it. It's futile to describe holiness in someone, you just know it and with Borgia you had no doubt. His prayers, his dealings with the boys and the Brothers, his literal wearing out in work - all came from his deep faith and devotion. His poverty was very real. After his death there were none of his belongings worth keeping. Old patched clothes - shirts, singlets, habit were just burned. A night or two before he died he insisted on giving back a watch he had borrowed, a symbol to us all that he died with nothing. He died a lonely death. He went blind the night before and he died quietly the next day. He was a tremendously strong character and I think he was oblivious of all around him as he awaited confidently for God's call. It was a lesson on death to see this man, beloved by hundreds of ex-students, boys and Brothers, leaving all and going home to God.

Brother Daniel Coffey

Brother Daniel Coffey who died suddenly in Warwick on October 10, 1973 was a model Christian Brother. He had laboured in the very poor schools of Carlton in Melbourne and Darlinghurst in Sydney before he came to Queensland to become the first Superior and Principal of Shorncliffe. From his earliest years in the Congregation he showed a great community spirit. In community recreations he was always the centre of fun. He was not gifted as a sport but as he played handball he showed a determination to win, but not by any means. He was left a very large personal fortune by his parents, but in his life he was a model of the virtue of poverty. He tended to be diffident, and he was quite blind to the influence for good that he was with his pupils. All the Brothers held him in the highest regard. For years Dan worked on courageously in spite of a mysterious physical illness which rendered him likely to have sudden blackouts. He followed heroically the spirit of the Founder in expressing the life-style of Christ.

How Others See the Christian Brothers

At the Queensland Centenary of the Christian Brothers, Archbishop Rush said: "The Brothers who guided our youthful steps emphatically declared their belief in and love of God by their lives of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. By what they believed and by what they were, they were a goad to our Catholic conscience, a persistent reminder of what life was all about. A past pupil of the Brothers, now an historian at the National University has written that "the life of a Christian Brother is now, as ever, a thrusting and unremitting signal to the world that existence has a meaning and a purpose, that there is a God and His noblest creation is Man. A Christian Brother is a Christian humanist." (Nairn in "Studies", September, 1968).

“We are grateful to the Brothers for what they were and are. living reminders of that union with God in Christ to which we are called... The Church is a sign of the intimate union of its members with God and one another: it is also the instrument by which our union with God and one another is achieved... Something similar can be said of the Christian Brothers. During their hundred years in Queensland they have been a kind of sacrament - a sign and instrument through which their pupils have been led to closer union with God and their fellowmen. The very sight of a Christian Brother should be a reminder to all of us - whoever we are - of the union with God which is a foretaste of eternal union with Him after death.”

The Province of St Francis Xavier

In 1967 the Province of St Mary's was divided into two. The Queensland Province became known as St Francis Xavier's Province with Br Stanislaus Campbell as the first Provincial. One of the first acts was to set up a Novitiate and Xavier Teachers' College for the three years of Teacher Training. Up to this time such training was received at Mount St Mary in Strathfield, New South Wales, since 1908. Mt St Mary's College had built up a tremendous reputation with the various Inspectors who came from Victoria to implement the policy on Teacher Registration for the Primary Schools of Victoria. All Brothers, even those who were to teach in Queensland were tested for registration for Victoria.

The Brothers in Sydney had cast doubts about the advisability of setting up such a Teachers' College. However, the Professor of Education, Professor Bassett, at the Queensland University proposed that we apply for affiliation with the Queensland university. When an application was proposed in writing it was approved by the Dean of the Faculty of Education.

Brs N.T.Landener, Leo Barry and Geoffrey Fredericks spent some time at Strathfield in 1968/69 and the first named proceeded to draw up the specifications for the new Teachers' college. He carried out an extensive tour of such institutions in New South Wales and Victoria and came up with his recommendations which tended to be accepted. He sought the expertise of the various lecturers in the State Teachers' Colleges and arranged for lectures to be held at a time to fit in with their commitments. The proposal was to complete a Diploma of Education at Xavier, study some subjects in the Faculty of education at the University of Queensland, go out to teach for some time and then complete the Degree course at the University of Queensland. The plan embraced excellence at all levels, but it did not allow for a community of lecturers to be developed in such a way that they could make and implement proposals for the educational improvement of the Teachers' College. Br B.D.Crawford was the first Principal and Br J H Wright was the last. When the Commonwealth Government

adopted a policy of combining various tertiary institutes, no suitable combination was offered. Hence the Teachers' College had to close.

The Public Examinations

The University of Queensland through its Senate, controlled the contents of syllabus at both Senior and Junior level up until 1963. University staff members held important positions on the Board of Secondary school Studies and on the various subject committees. Christian Brothers held positions on these two Boards and subject committees.

When the Board of Secondary School Studies appointed a sub-committee of its own members to investigate and make recommendations concerning changes in the Secondary curricula and organisation, under the chairmanship of Mr Harry Roberts, Br P.C.McCarthy was on this committee. The committee duly presented its findings to the Board of Secondary School Studies, but made one over-riding proposal that a thorough investigation be carried out under Dr Radford of the Australian Council for Educational Research, as Chairman. The Board accepted this recommendation and when the Radford committee was formed, Br J.S.Campbell was one of the committee members. The recommendations were implemented as the Radford Scheme, which placed Queensland to the forefront of educational reform. Since then Br N.T.Landener served on the Board and Br P.C.McCarthy served as the Chief Moderator in Mathematics. Other Brothers served as District Moderators and members of the Syllabus committees. More recently the Catholic representatives on the Board are associated with the Catholic Education Office. As recently as last year, Br B.M.Shortall was seconded to the ROSBA committee to take part in syllabus revisions.

When the Radford Scheme was introduced in 1970 a completely different emphasis was given to Secondary education, with schools setting their own examinations, and being moderated locally and centrally. The great opportunity for great professional development was available for the teachers. The Brothers quickly showed their willingness to serve on the various committees, and for the first time they found themselves being treated as equals in the State and Independent Schools. Unfortunately the Brothers have not availed of the opportunity to continue to serve in these roles.

Earlier I quoted Nairn in "Studies", September, 1968, where he stated: "A Christian Brother is a Christian humanist." Right from the earliest times the Brothers showed that they regarded education as something to be integrated. Each day a period of thirty minutes was set aside for Religious Instruction. It was preceded by a five-minutes' instruction which was directed towards developing piety, respect for religion, and

morality. The Sunday's Epistle and Gospel formed the subject for the Friday's instruction. It was always between 12 noon and 12.30p.m. The day began with prayer, the Apostles Creed, the Morning Offering. The day ended with the Memorare and the Litany of Our Lady. When other subjects were being taught the opportunity was availed of to inculcate the Church's teaching. A special May Altar was erected and the Rosary and Litany of Our Lady were recited, either in class groups or as a school group. The crucifix and a statue of Our Lady were in every classroom, and a shrine of Our Lady, especially of Our Mother of Perpetual Succour occupied some place of prominence in the school. Frequently external statues were in the school grounds, and cults developed around them. Holy Days of Obligation and other Feast Days were celebrated with Mass in the local church. Yes, the Religion Period was important, but so were the other periods. There were no specialist Religion teachers, no Religion co-ordinators. The same Brother taught the secular subjects, gave the religious instruction, inculcated the need for the knowledge and practice of right conduct in accordance with the teachings of the Church, and trained the boys to excellence on the sporting fields, as well as preparing them for School Concerts and introducing them to the social graces and culture that stayed with them for the remainder of their lives. He encouraged boys to join societies such as the that of St Vincent de Paul, the Sodality of Our Lady, the Legion of Mary or the Y.C.S. He invited boys to take part in the Apostolate of Prayer, to become a Knight of the Blessed Sacrament, a Page of the Blessed Sacrament or a Crusader of the Blessed Sacrament. He assisted in the training of acolytes, parish boys' choirs and co-operated with the local parish with Holy Name Societies. The Brother conceived his role as being pupil-oriented. He did not consider his role as being that of a teacher of religion alone. He was a Christian teacher of boys, and this implied a total integrated curriculum, which ensured that spiritual development took place at the same time as the intellectual and emotional development, with the end product of this education being able to move easily into employment in the adult world. In this sense the Christian Brother was a Christian Humanist.

However, things have changed drastically. The proportion of Christian Brother to lay-teacher in the school has changed to such an extent that what has been written above is no longer true. In a typical school a Brother or a lay-person is appointed as a Religion Co-ordinator, while a Brother becomes a subject specialist, with two or more Religion periods being taught each day. The idea that the most important role of the Brother is to provide for the teaching of Religion is being bandied about. The "witness" value of a "Religious" is being stressed, however, with little conviction, as it is important to stress the importance of the "Lay-person's" role in the religion programme, and in the School community. In many cases, the Brother is a "utility person" who is called upon to do what others do not or will not do. The Christian Brother as a Christian humanist is harder to perceive. Personalism has become significant. It is important for

him to be known by his given name, and as a member of the school community, rather than as a member of the Christian Brothers' community. He is rapidly losing his identity. Perhaps he could be classified now as a humanist, rather than as a Christian humanist?

Br Ronald Fogarty FMS, in "Catholic Education in Australia" said:

The Irish Christian Brothers, moreover, who had seen the advantages of the Intermediate system in Ireland, were quick to seize the opportunities offered by the examination system in Australia and the bishops gave them every encouragement. Lastly, the public examinations had the effect not only of co-ordinating and creating a uniform standard among Catholic secondary schools, but of forging a useful link between the Catholic system and the non-Catholic system.

The organisation of the Congregation from the Provincial level down ensured that the results of the public examinations were kept at a uniform level. Any deviations downward from the norm would result in transfers to ensure that the high standard could be maintained.

(Br P.C. McCarthy, now retired at St Laurences's College in Brisbane, taught for nearly fifty years in the Christian Brothers' Schools of eastern Australia and also in the U.S.A.)