

THE HISTORY OF ST JAMES' PARISH, COORPAROO TO THE YEAR 1925

1 April, 2003

Fr Michael Endicott osa

This Early History of St James' Parish, Coorparoo to the year 1925 can be presented in a way that captures the mood of a different era. At least, that is what this talk hopes to do.

Before the year 1885, Coorparoo was an area of small cropping and dairy farms. The area contained a few substantial houses that were occupied by the owners of large portions of this land, or by wealthy families who desired a comfortable and commodious residence outside of urban Brisbane.

In the immediate Coorparoo vicinity were *Langlands* house, built in the early 1880s and now largely restored as the administration centre on the campus of Villanova College and *Hatherton* at Coorparoo Junction, now part of the Queensland School of Food.

In the year 1885, the first housing estate was drawn up in Coorparoo, and included the site of the present St James' Church and School. The population stayed tiny, however, and any Catholics there after 1892 were part of St Joseph's Parish, Kangaroo Point. In 1892 both the Kangaroo Point and South Brisbane Parishes were founded; other churches south of the Brisbane River were in the country villages of Wynnum South and Goodna.

Visible Catholic activity in Coorparoo began about the year 1910, when the Sisters of Mercy began regular visits there on Sunday afternoons to give religious instruction to local Catholic children. There was no Sunday Mass as yet offered in the area. Catholics either walked to the 8.00am or 11.00am Mass in Kangaroo Point, or took the Stones Corner tram to a late-

morning Mass at the Cathedral – the Stones Corner electric tram service had begun in 1899. (To satisfy their Sunday obligation, many Brisbane Catholics who were not conveniently near a suburban church, availed of the Cathedral and Brisbane's Sunday trams.)

Back to the Sisters of Mercy Sunday School of 1910.

Sunday School

Around 1910, the Sisters of Mercy at Kangaroo Point began regular visits to Coorparoo on Sunday afternoons to give catechetical instruction to the local Catholic children, some of whom attended Kangaroo Point Convent School, while others were enrolled at Coorparoo State School.

Of the eight sisters in the Kangaroo Point community, at least six Sisters were regularly engaged in catechetical instructions, teaching Sunday school at Annerley, Greenslopes and Coorparoo. Sister Emelian, who was always accompanied by another Sister - usually Sister Charles - taught at Coorparoo in a four-roomed cottage that was not otherwise used during these years. It stood well back on a large allotment near the corner of Clarence Street and lower Cavendish Road, opposite the Coorparoo railway Station.

The dwelling is universally acknowledged as having been in the charge of Mr Michael ('Gil') O'Gorman, Jnr, third son of an Irish pioneer who had purchased much land in that vicinity in 1882. The Sunday classes in the cottage continued from 2pm to 4pm, with usually about 20 children present.

A contemporary student of the Kangaroo Point Convent School, now Sister Mary Liguori rsm of Paddington Covent, gave details of a small fete that Sister Emilian once organised as a 'breaking up' novelty at the Coorparoo Sunday School. She assisted at the sweets stall that Sister Emilian set up in the room where the catechism was taught. She explained that more people than

expected had patronised the function. The money raised helped in the purchase of teaching materials for the Sunday School the following year.

By early 1912, the Coorparoo Shire was just beginning to emerge from 20 years of virtual stagnation. Development throughout the Shire had been minimal since the Brisbane flood of 1893. Publicity given to the effects of the flood at the gateways of Coorparoo – Stones Corner and Stanley Bridge – created the false impression that most of the suburb had been under water.

Because land buyers preferred real estate in Northern Brisbane, Coorparoo land values had decreased. Only in the year 1910 did the Coorparoo property market begin a slow upturn, when land for sale in suburbs adjacent to north side Brisbane tram routes became hard to find.

St James' Distinction

Another big step forward for Coorparoo proved to be the appointment in February 1912 of James Duhig as Coadjutor Archbishop of Brisbane. He was given the right of succession to the aged Archbishop Robert Dunne, but in all but law virtually took over the archdiocese the day he arrived. If then, at the age of forty, Duhig thought that Dunne then at the age of 81 was too old to run the archdiocese, I wonder if that thought came back to haunt him in his own twilight years half a century later?

At all Masses at St Stephen's Cathedral on Sunday, 5 January, 1913, it was announced that there would be a meeting to consider the building of a church at Stones Corner. This meeting was arranged for 3.30pm on Sunday, January 12, 1913 in the schoolroom of St Joseph's Kangaroo Point.

At the 9am and 11am Cathedral Masses of January 5, Archbishop Duhig explained that Archbishop Dunne felt that, of all Brisbane districts, the most pressing need for a church was felt in the area beyond Woollongabba.

When Archbishop Duhig took the chair at the Kangaroo Point meeting, he continued this theme by quoting Archbishop Dunne: *We don't want a twopenny ha'penny church. We want a large central church to suit the people.* His listeners were unanimous regarding the need, but of different opinions regarding the locality.

Stones Corner became the terminus for the electric tram in 1899 and it was a foregone conclusion that service would soon extend at least to Greenslopes and to Coorparoo Junction. Thus, whereas some people at the meeting were happy to build on the Toohey bequest land in Buranda, most felt that future development demanded a site nearer the anticipated termini of the trams.

Because the meeting could reach no consensus, Archbishop Duhig suggested that the decision be deferred. He proposed that one of the two halls at the Stones Corner tram terminus be hired at 9.30am on the first Sunday of the following month. He promised to celebrate Mass and to convene another general meeting afterwards.

Stones Corner Mass

The first public Mass at Stones Corner was celebrated by Archbishop Duhig on February 2, 1913; the congregation being too numerous for Foresters' Hall that had been hired for the ceremony. This hall, built in the last century and now long demolished, faced Logan Road, Stones Corner, approximately on the site of Barry and Roberts' Mall today.

The two priests attending the Archbishop at the Mass were Fathers James Byrne, V.G. (who in 1929 became the first Bishop of Toowoomba) and Michael Potter, P.P., Warwick, who was visiting Brisbane at the time. Father O'Leary was not present. On this February morning, described as being *bright but somewhat oppressively warm*, Archbishop Duhig said the large attendance was convincing testimony to the need for a church in the vicinity.

He announced that since the Kangaroo Point meeting, he had inspected several sites in the Stones Corner and Coorparoo areas, accompanied by Father Byrne and Mr John Currie, an auctioneer and land agent who had been involved in the ensuing negotiations. He announced that he had placed a £50 deposit on what is the present St James's property.

Mr Currie then gave details of the purchase and revealed an agreed price of £1,250 for the three acres. He mentioned that the property had cost £2,000 in 1892. This apparent anomaly is indicative of the extent to which memories of the 1893 flood depressed Coorparoo land prices. Each year from 1906 to 1910 the total value of rateable land in the Coorparoo Shire had actually decreased.

William Keating proposed that the meeting endorse the selection made by Archbishop Duhig. The motion was carried unanimously. Archbishop Duhig then proceeded with the purchase and obtained title to the land four days later, on February 6, 1913.

At the meeting a committee was formed to build a church/school on the site as soon as possible. Those present also resolved to erect on the site at a later date 'a modern brick church that would be neatly designed and commodious'. November 1975 marked the golden jubilee of this resolve becoming a reality.

A subscription list was opened at the meeting. Archbishop Duhig announced that the £50 he had outlaid as the deposit money would be his personal donation to the fund. Father Potter gave £5/5/0. In a brief period, the sum of £450 was pledged.

Father O'Leary Appointed

At 9.30am Sunday Mass was again celebrated by Archbishop Duhig at Stones Corner on March 16, 1913. In the presence of Fathers J Byrne and J O'Leary, he convoked a third general meeting and announced that Father O'Leary had been appointed

the first Parish Priest of the districts served by Old Cleveland Road, Logan and Ipswich Roads. Father O'Leary had recently completed a year as Administrator of St Patrick's Parish, Fortitude Valley.

According to the subsequent issues of the secular and Catholic newspapers of the day, this second Mass was also celebrated in Foresters' Hall. However, when writing about it six years later, Father O'Leary gave Oddfellows' Hall, on the corner of Ellis and Montague Streets, as the venue. Oddfellows' Hall, twice slightly remodelled, still stands on the same Stones Corner site as the Salvation Army Hall.

From the time of this second Mass at Stones Corner, until the first St James' Church was completed five months later, Father O'Leary celebrated Sunday Mass in a Stones Corner hall. One long-time Coorparoo parishioner has boyhood recollections of taking cut flowers to a hall on Saturday afternoons, so that Miss Eileen Page, a Kangaroo Point convent lay teacher, could prepare the building for Sunday Mass. Unfortunately, neither he nor any other participant can now confidently say which of the two halls was thus used 90 years ago.

On arrival at the Old Cleveland Road property on Sunday afternoon, April 6, 1913, Archbishop Duhig was accompanied by Fathers J P Byrne (Cathedral) and J McCarthy, P.P. (Red Hill). He was met by a group of Hibernians, Children of Mary and schoolchildren, and escorted to a platform prepared at the scene of the ceremony.

Archbishop Duhig complimented Mr John Currie, through whose good offices the site was obtained. He added that it would be difficult to locate a more beautiful site and noted there was ample room for a church, school, presbytery and convent, which he hoped they would construct in due time.

For a number of years the wooden edifice, whose foundation he was then laying, would have to suffice as a church/school. But, when Father O'Leary knew the district better, the Archbishop knew they would build a church in more durable materials than wood, a structure that would be worthy of themselves and their district.

He explained that the new parish was dedicated to St James. He said this was fitting, because it was from the parish of Father James Breen at Kangaroo Point that the Coorparoo Parish had come and because of a generous bequest of land to the Church by the late James Toohey. Possibly, it did not escape his audience that by a happy coincidence Archbishop Duhig also bore the same Christian name.

Broadening the scope of his address, Archbishop Duhig commented that anyone who spoke out against certain phases of seaside bathing or against cinematograph exhibitions was labelled a *Puritan*. However, the Church would not be dissuaded by this, but would condemn with vigour the evils that surrounded her people. *Catholics* must raise their children in the love and fear of God.

Four months later, the building was ready for use. On Sunday morning, August 10, 1913, streamers stretching across Old Cleveland Road drew attention to the ceremony of the blessing and opening of the first church building in the new parish.

Eleven o'clock was the time fixed for the ceremony, but long before that hour several hundred people had assembled. The Sisters of Mercy at Kangaroo Point organised a choir of schoolgirls for the ceremony. The route of the procession of blessing around the exterior of the building was indicated by a guard of honour of 200 members of the Hibernian Australian Catholic Benefit Society, wearing regalia. Some of these men had travelled from as far as Sandgate, so that every Hibernian branch in the metropolitan area could be represented.

A weather-conscious reporter at the opening wrote that the '...weather was a happy blending of mellow sunshine and exhilarating zephyr. It was indeed in full accord with the spirit of the day's proceedings'

The spirit of the proceedings no doubt pleased the Pastor who, at the conclusion of the ceremony, announced that in its 16 weeks of existence, the parish had undertaken a total debt of £2,650 of which only £450 was outstanding. At the conclusion of his speech, £300 was raised and the Kangaroo Point Hibernians gave £100. He thus opened the church with a mere £50 left to pay.

Annerley Development

In themselves, these proceedings at Coorparoo during the first 16 months of St James's parish would be impressive enough, but a similar development at the Ipswich Road end of the same parish must not be neglected. Father O'Leary soon built a church on the Ferndale Street property that had been Archbishop Duhig's first Brisbane land purchase.

Even after St James's Church was opened, Father O'Leary had to live at the Kangaroo Point presbytery, for he had no residence of his own. He set about remedying this situation. At a meeting held at St James's towards the end of March 1914, parishioners decided to build a brick, two-storey presbytery in the parish. The young Archbishop Duhig selected the Coorparoo rather than the Ipswich Road property as the better location.

Archbishop Duhig presided at Father O'Leary's 9.30am Sunday Mass on April 19, 1914. Immediately after the Mass, the ceremony of laying the presbytery foundation stone began. Special trams had come from North Quay for the convenience of those who wished to attend the ceremony. The presbytery, which on that day was already well-advanced beyond the foundations, was designed by G H Addison, architect, and constructed by Mr Edward Duhig, the lowest tenderer, at a total cost of £2,408.

A newspaper report diplomatically commented that, apart from *Dara*, the residence of Archbishop Dunne, then situated on what was later to become the site of the proposed Holy Name Cathedral, the Coorparoo presbytery would be the most attractive parochial house in Brisbane.

The building is the present parish priory, unaltered except that the verandahs on the front and sides on both floors have been enclosed.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a vote of thanks to Archbishop Duhig was formally proposed by Mr Justice Real, a parishioner who lived at McIlwraith Avenue, Norman Park. His Honour said that all present at the ceremony looked toward any bishop as the representative of God on earth, but in Archbishop Duhig they had the gratification of knowing that the saintly office was filled by one whose very presence was a sermon.

Having half the required £2,400 collected while the building was little more than a foundation stone might have pleased many a pastor. However, Father O'Leary, who had opened his Coorparoo church almost free of debt eight months earlier and who would have Mary Immaculate Church, Ipswich Road, ready for dedication eight weeks hence, thought the proceeds of a garden fete would boost the coffers.

Garden Fete

The Jeremiah O'Leary expression, *garden fete*, was an innocuous synonym for extractive industry that could proceed on five successive week-nights and culminate in a full day's business on Saturday. His garden fete after the foundation stone ceremony of the presbytery netted £400, a sixth of the anticipated cost of the building.

During one such marathon fete, when radio was still in its infancy, a radio tent proved as lucrative as it was innovative.

Undaunted by the fact that Brisbane had no radio station, the promoters set up a radio receiver and a bank of earphones. An amateur radio enthusiast at Greenslopes was prevailed upon to transmit a programme nightly for the duration of the fete.

Those for whom radio was an unexpected novelty willingly paid threepence for three minutes listening and many patrons were so enthralled that they preferred to part with another coin rather than with the earphones. In an effort to satisfy the popular demand, the radio tent continued on the Sunday, the day after the fete had ended. Even so, the operators could not cater adequately for the large numbers, until after Sunday Benediction a loudspeaker replaced the bank of earphones. The technological leap forward from earphones to loudspeaker was accomplished without any increase in the threepenny tariff.

A personal fund-raising effort by Father O'Leary to meet the presbytery construction costs was the publication of his 208-page booklet, *Catholic Miscellany*. In 1913, the 2/6d charge would have been a sacrificial offering for many of those parishioners who purchased a copy.

On Sunday afternoon, August 16, 1914, the completed building was opened by Archbishop Duhig. A procession was formed in the church and moved across to the new building. It was led by a cross-bearer and altar boys, followed by large contingents of both ladies' and men's branches of the Sacred Heart Society. These societies had been formed during the previous eight months, but already had what was described as a surprisingly large membership.

In the first 16 months of the St James's Parish of Coorparoo-Ipswich Road, expenditure for the two pieces of land and the three buildings that then stood on them was £7,220, of which all but £1,220 had been paid. Father O'Leary himself indicated that the condition of the balance sheet was exceedingly gratifying, especially seeing that very few of his parishioners could be called wealthy.

A number of people have mentioned that some time after the Brisbane Tramway Company extended its electric tram service to Coorparoo Junction on February 27, 1915, Father O'Leary managed to connect his presbytery to the tramway electricity. As was the case with the old trams, light bulbs were necessarily connected in series and the lights were simultaneously all off or all on.

For a neighbourhood where every other residence depended on kerosene or gas for illumination at night, the presbytery was described as being *lit up like a Christmas tree* whenever all bulbs were aglow.

From the opening of the church/school building in 1913 until the end of 1915, the only school in the edifice was the Sunday School, which the Sisters of Mercy transferred from the previous site near the Coorparoo Railway Station.

Good Samaritan Sisters

The next major development at Coorparoo was the arrival of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan from Sydney to begin a convent school at St James's. Improvements were made underneath the building, so that the infant classes could take place there.

On opening day, January 31, 1916, almost 200 children began classes. Thus began a sterling service that the Sisters and lay teachers continue to the present day.

The six Sisters, who made the foundation community of Coorparoo Convent, arrived in Brisbane in the company of other members of the congregation who came to establish the Bulimba Convent. They disembarked from the steamer, *Osterley*, on January 7, 1916, to be welcomed on the New Farm Wharf by Archbishop Duhig, six priests including Father O'Leary and parishioners of Coorparoo and Bulimba. All 14 Sisters were taken in cars to Coorparoo, where another six priests awaited to participate with them in a Mass and reception.

These Sisters initially lived in a now-demolished house that stood on 67 Kirkland Avenue. A young lady who was present at the wharf to welcome the Sisters and who is now Sister M. Scholastica Cullen of the same religious congregation explained that recourse was had to a rented dwelling because her uncle, Archbishop Duhig, hoped to purchase *Langlands* for their convent.

Thomas William Connah, the owner of *Langlands* had died on November 21, 1915, eight weeks before the Sisters reached Brisbane, and his widow decided to sell the property. The transaction was officially completed on April 16, 1916, the house and nine acres costing £4,600.

On Sunday, August 20, 1916, Archbishop Duhig blessed and dedicated the 1884 house to St Scholastica and celebrated Mass in the chapel that had been added to it. The chapel and other improvements cost £2,000. The architects of the chapel were Messrs. Coutts and Beresford.

For the third time in Coorparoo church history, the builder was Mr Edward Duhig. In the following year, Mr Duhig purchased *Knowsley*, an 1880 home, since demolished, that stood in the vicinity of the street of the same name in Stones Corner. He thus became a member of the St James's Parish in which he had built the first church, presbytery and convent chapel.

Mt Gravatt Property

Thus by 1914, the beginning of the First World War, the parish plant of St James' at Coorparoo was adequate for the time. There was a church/school – a building that was still part of the school plant until demolished as recently as five (?) years ago – and a presbytery that is still in use today.

With Coorparoo itself in hand, Father O'Leary turned more attention on the sections of his parish that were in Annerley and

Mount Gravatt. (Remember that Coorparoo's neighbouring parishes in an arc to the south, southwest and west were Cleveland, Beenleigh, Beaudesert and Goodna).

On 14 June, 1914, the first wooden church was opened at the site of Mary Immaculate, Ipswich Road, Annerley. The area became a separate parish in 1916.

On Sunday, 3 July 1921, the first wooden church at St Agnes's at Nursery Road, Mount Gravatt was opened. The building is now re-sited at the back of the property as a parish hall.

Having a morning engagement in the Ipswich district, Archbishop Duhig had allowed himself time to travel the 40 miles to Mount Gravatt by car. However, there was insufficient time to repair a front-tyre blowout en route and the remaining distance was completed with the vehicle in that condition. It is not known whether Archbishop Duhig's remarks at Mount Gravatt about the shocking condition of Brisbane's arterial roads were part of his prepared text, or whether they were added extemporaneously because of his eventful journey!

Construction of the church had cost £1,000, exclusive of furnishings. Already an amount of £357 was in hand, which included donations of £50 each from the Archbishop and Mr Peter Hartley. In reading out the financial statement, the Archbishop mentioned a young child who had given 23 shillings, the entire contents of a money box. He said he wished that some wealthy people would imitate such generosity, so that the debt on the church could be liquidated by the end of that year. The collection at the ceremony amounted to £152.

Archbishop Duhig mentioned that in the past seven years he had opened 13 new churches in Brisbane and re-dedicated two others.

He expected to open five more in the following eight months, adding that the difficulty was not in having people build churches, but for him to find Sundays on which to bless and open them!

Within months of the opening of St Agnes's Church at Mt Gravatt, as part of St James's Parish, Coorparoo, Father O'Leary was given a curate in the person of Father John McCarthy. In 1975 he was in his 82nd year and living in retirement at Clontarf.

Father McCarthy's presence in the parish allowed further expansion to be undertaken. Development had also quickened along the other main thoroughfare in the parish, Old Cleveland Road. The tramline had been extended from Stones Corner to Coorparoo Junction early in 1915 and was to reach Camp Hill in April, 1925. Father McCarthy was directed to canvass the Catholics of what was then called East Coorparoo and Coorparoo Heights, regarding the erection of a chapel to serve the residents of Camp Hill and beyond.

Camp Hill Church

Early in 1923, such a church was constructed on land at Camp Hill that was formerly portion of the Byrne's estate. The building was dedicated to St Thomas in memory of the late Thomas J. Byrnes, who had been Premier of Queensland from April, 1898 until he died in office five months later.

The wooden church, 60 feet long and 30 feet wide, had cost £820, of which £300 had been bequeathed by a sister of the late Premier.

The solemn blessing was deferred until Sunday, February 11, 1923, by which time Archbishop Duhig had returned from an overseas visit to Europe and the United States. Addressing the several hundred people who braved the inclement weather, Archbishop Duhig said it was in 1913 that Catholic progress south of the Brisbane River had really begun.

He explained that before then, there was a church and school at South Brisbane, a church/school and convent at Kangaroo Point and a church at Bulimba. These six buildings together occupied a little over five acres.

At the time of his 1923 speech there were nine churches, seven schools, six convents and four presbyteries in the same area, standing on about 100 acres of land.

The Archbishop continued:

It is the spirit and the zeal of the priests which enabled me to put up such a record. When I came here from Rockhampton a little over 10 years ago, there were 12 priests in the Brisbane area – now there are 40.

When, by 1923, the needs of the outer edges of the parish had been satisfied by chapels at Mount Gravatt and Camp Hill, attention was directed to the construction of the long-promised brick church at Coorparoo.

Although there were already signs of the onset of the great world depression – a difficult time to pay for a £9,000 church – it was nevertheless deemed opportune to undertake its construction. One of the men who took up the Sunday collection at the 7am Mass in those days has recalled that there was usually no more than a solitary one shilling coin in the collection.

This fact stands out clearly in his mind because of a practice the 7am collectors developed. The collector who encountered the lone shilling had to shout his fellows a soft drink at the corner store opposite the church after Mass.

Architect Chosen

Father O'Leary was a personal friend of Father P Fouhy, P.P. (Laidley). In 1919, a spacious brick church had been built in that town by the architect, Mr H J Marks.

Father O'Leary engaged Mr Marks to prepare plans for an identical church at Coorparoo and this process was repeated in Bulimba parish two years later.

The foundation stone for the church was laid by Archbishop Duhig on January 25, 1925. In his address he spoke of the great opportunity given the Catholic Church to present examples of good architecture to the city. He praised the State and civic authorities for the pleasingly designed buildings that had recently been undertaken.

The day St James's Church was blessed, November 29, 1925, was a very active one for the Archbishop. His handwriting in his copy of *Ordo Recitandi Divini Officii* reveals his itinerary for the day.

It is interesting to note that Laidley, Coorparoo and Bulimba – the three parishes where Archbishop Duhig performed ceremonies that day – all came to possess identical brick churches designed by the same architect.

Present Church Blessed

By 3.30pm on Sunday, November 29, 1924, 30 priests and several thousand people had gathered at St James's for the ceremony. His Grace read the dedicatory service at the western door of the new brick church and then proceeded to the nave, accompanied by Monsignor J Byrne, V.G. and the altar-servers. Addressing the gathering, Archbishop Duhig said:

Monsignor Byrne will remember that in the year 1913 he and I searched this district high and low for a site for a church/school. We hit upon this site which was a most beautiful one, but the district at that time was not very progressive. The wisdom of the choice, however, is seen today and I want to thank the Vicar-General for all the assistance he gave me at that particular time, when he said this was the site for us. I am sure you all agree with the taste he showed and he himself is delighted to see this glorious church erected today on that spot.

Yet again, the parish priest performed the task of acquainting those present with the state of the parish balance sheet.

Father O'Leary explained that the building had cost £9,200 and furnishings an additional £1,400. At the foundation stone ceremony earlier in the year, £814 was subscribed and during the intervening period the £2,000 mark had been reached. After the collection that afternoon, £3,040 was in hand.

No contemporary newspaper report mentions the actual time or the celebrant of the first Mass in the new church, possibly because it would go without saying that such would have been Father O'Leary's honour.

When unknowingly I was researching for this talk in the year 1975, I met some of the people who participated in the Coorparoo parish history before the present St James' Church was opened in 1925.

- I talked to a Sister of Mercy who as a girl had been taught Sunday School by the Sisters of Mercy visiting Coorparoo from Kangaroo Point In 1912.
- I talked to two people who attended Mass in a hall at Stones Corner in 1913.
- I talked to a Sister of the Good Samaritan who as a girl had been at the wharf when the first Sisters of the Good Samaritan, heading for Coorparoo, had arrived by boat from Sydney in 1916.
- I spoke with Fr John McCarthy, then 82 years old in 1975, who had been Fr O'Leary's curate in 1921 and who spearheaded the building of the first St Thomas' Church at Camp Hill.

Catholic Culture has changed in Australia since 1925; indeed, the whole world has changed a lot since 1925. Nevertheless, we can still benefit greatly from knowing our past, from studying our roots and our Catholic heritage. We can do with the past what people of the future will doubtless do to us: i.e. quiz the worldview espoused, laugh at the eccentricities demonstrated, and be puzzled by the assumptions operating.

This is a historical talk - not a homily - hence I will conclude historically with that old chestnut: *those who ignore the past do so at the risk of repeating its errors.*