

m |  | c
s | c
50 Years

@ YARRA THEOLOGICAL UNION

CONTENTS

Foreword	
Frank Dineen	3
History	
Peter Malone	5
Reflection	
Bob Irwin, <i>The Earliest Days</i>	10
John Mulrooney	11
Leo Wearden, <i>From Makeshift to a New Era of Collaboration</i>	12
John Bosman, <i>50 Years YTU – Reflection</i>	14
Brian Gallagher	15
Peter Malone, <i>Those Days</i>	17
Peter Guy (1970s)	19
John Kelliher (1974-76)	20
Roger Purcell	21
Stephen Hackett, <i>The HeyDay (1978-79, 1982-85)</i>	22
Chris Chaplin, <i>YTU in Revue</i>	24
Peter Harvey-Jackson (1996-2000)	26
Philip Malone, <i>Sharing Classrooms, Communication & Culture</i>	28
Ben Fleming (2000)	30
Peter Hendriks (2005-06)	32
Pat Mara, <i>Community & Hoodie Jumper Identity</i>	33
Krish Mathavan, <i>From More Academic Than I Liked to be, To...</i>	35
Kimi Vunivesilevu, <i>Honouring Larry Nemer SVD</i>	37
Khoi Doan Nguyen, <i>An Experience of Community</i>	39
Kenji Konda	41
Daniel Magadia, <i>Relishing A Golden Opportunity</i>	42
Quoc Trieu Nguyen, <i>A Shocking & Welcoming Community</i>	44
2022, beginning at YTU	
<i>Four of Our Confreres Early Studies @ YTU</i>	47
Vincent Pham	
Hoa Quoc Tran	
Long Van Tran	
Vu Dinh Nang	
Vice-Chancellor's Scholar, 2014, Sandy Abbey	48
In Memory	
John Rate	50
Acknowledgement of Our Sisters	
<i>Anneliese Reinhard MSC (in the past) &</i>	
<i>Robyn Reynolds OLSH (in the present)</i>	
Anneliese Reinhard MSC,	
<i>Communicating the Experience of Liturgy: Gregory Manley CP</i>	52
Robyn Reynolds OLSH, <i>Reflection</i>	54

FORWARD

“

There are many privileges in being a religious.

@ Frank Dineen

There are many privileges in being a religious. One of these certainly is the fact of being a companion and fellow traveller with those answering their call from God. My role as an MSC formator has offered many moments to appreciate our men and those

connected with them as they struggled with the challenges of being a student at university level. They learned to grapple with new situations. And not the least among these would be to come to terms with their new personal situation

having moved out of a previous lifestyle. The student life brings about cultural change. For many also who have been nurtured in another country with its own particular mores have had to deal with these issues quickly and efficiently. The

expectation is also that one becomes proficient in the English language.

This academic world, as we know, has a life and culture of its own, as does living in a new community with persons of a variety of backgrounds and experiences. Fortunately, if God's call is authentic the joy and satisfaction of study will also be apparent. The student life brings about cultural change. For many also who have been nurtured in another country with its own particular mores have had to deal with these issues quickly and efficiently. The expectation is also that one becomes proficient in the English language. This academic world, as we know, has a life and culture of its own, as does living in a new community with persons of a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

Fortunately, if God's call is authentic the joy and satisfaction of study will also be apparent. Many a comment has been aired by one student or another as to the satisfaction of mixing with others on a similar journey finding the opportunity to discuss the contents of a lecture or sharing hints as to which materials were most helpful as they put together their assignments.

Our Spirituality of the Heart is ours to share. We hold it as vital to our existence and growth. Our men take their roles in this sincerely and earnestly.

The sharing of information among the student body is also most beneficial to all. So the connections gained on a friendship level have proven valuable. It goes without saying that we humans are social by nature and those connections give all a sense of well-being. Thus it has included connection with other Orders and indeed those from the ecumenical fraternity associated in and through the University of Divinity, with new and exciting experiences.

The academic input is one part of a student's life but another important factor is allowing confidence and courage to grow in oneself so as to take up new roles in society. Some of my most warm remembrances have been observing our men taking over public roles with YTU. Finding oneself voted into a role unexpected can be confronting. More so when more prominent roles as president or committee member in the Students Representative Council takes many by surprise. These moments of course include preparing and delivering presentations. Then there are other lesser issues that happen behind the scenes. To see these roles carried out so proficiently and with aplomb was blessing. Our men have done us proud and I am most pleased to say **God bless them all!**

I would be remiss if I did not add a word of thanks to the staff who have worked so tirelessly for all the students. Automatically our men have been grateful for the instruction they have received over the years. It has been an oft made comment by the student group expressing gratitude to a lecturer who has dedicated so generously his/her time and talent to the benefit of those coming behind them. ***And it's a God bless to them also!***

“
Our Spirituality
of the Heart is
ours to share.

Yarra Theological Union is an inclusive and welcoming community for theological education and ministerial formation, open to those who seek educational and personal transformation in changing contexts. As a college of the University of Divinity, which is Catholic in tradition and ecumenical in spirit, we seek to promote and resource the participation of all people in the mission of God for the building up of a healthy Church and for the transformation of the world



HISTORY

At the end of June, 1972, classes were called off for three days and students, lecturers, formation personnel and some congregation leaders of the then Upper Yarra Consortium met to discuss the future of seminary collaboration. Discussions were heady. Butcher paper points and diagrams were imaginative. What followed

is one of those minor miracles: the religious orders made the big step, to forego independence and establish a theological union, to be one of the associate institutes of the MCD. The decision was made that St Pachal's Box Hill, the Franciscan campus would be the centre of the Union. It had the advantage of being closer to the city

although accessible to eastern, north-eastern and Southern suburbs. The name of the institute was far harder to come by, something telling but also something modest. Despite difficulties that many interstaters expressed, especially those from Sydney who thought that the Yarra River was so brown it must be flowing upside down, Yarra Theological Union was agreed on – and became a significant name for what is still a significant member of the University of Divinity (whose offices are now housed at St Paschal's).

A first president of the YTU easily emerged, Humphrey O'Leary, a Redemptorist, and a surprising blend of Canon lawyer and charismatic enthusiast. He led participants effectively through the process in June 1972 and, with infinite zest and patience, leading meeting after meeting, exercising a skill in diplomacy and attention to painstaking detail.

MSC students at the Upper Yarra Consortium as it made its transition to YTU.





*From the 1972 Handbook
(roneoed in those days).*

Fourth Year:

John Jennings, Sean Smith.

Third Year:

Phil Hicks, Robert Irwin, John Rate, Fred Van Gestel.

Second Year:

Patrick Dodson, Paul Guy, Peter Guy.

First Year:

Leo Wearden, Terence De Luca, Christopher Garrahy, Desmond Holm, Jonathan Marwick, Bruce McKean, John Mulrooney, Walter Puccetti

MSC staff, 1972.

Walter Black, Peter Hoy, John Bosman, Peter Malone, John Flynn.

Other MSC who spent some time on the staff at YTU, Frank Fletcher, Tony Arthur, Martin Wilson, Brian Gallagher, Peter Chalk (Academic Dean).

In 1974, with the closing of Canberra Monastery, all students were at Croydon and continued there until the end of 1985 when Navarre House opened in Drummoyne and studies were Sydney-focused. Readers with long memories will realise that the majority of men who joined the congregation from 1968 did not stay. By 1985, there were three remaining students, Stephen Hackett, Chris Chaplin and Chris McAleer.

There followed a 14 year absence of students from YTU. However, Peter Malone continued as a member of the Faculty until 1998. In 1999 Philip Malone became a member – and was the MSC representative on staff until 2021.

Because the MSC were foundation members, the MSC Provincial has been a member of the YTU Council. Dennis Murphy was present at the discussions in June 1972, Frank Quirk and Jim Littleton attended meetings. Brian Gallagher had taught at YTU. Bob Irwin, Tim Brennan and John Mulrooney were students of YTU. Currently, Chris McPhee is a member of the Council.



The Jubilee had something of a solemn beginning at the opening Mass, Chris Monaghan and Carmel Posa, in academic robes, proclaiming the Jubilee. I was asked to preside at this Eucharist, one of the original staff, to that extent, a relic of those days. But it gave me the opportunity to reminisce about origins, the pioneering spirit of those years, some of the personalities, staff and students. And to hold up the initial Handbook of the Upper Yarra Consortium, mentioning that it was roneoed (*blank looks, an alien word, perhaps, in 2022*).

To commemorate the 50 years, we will have the YTU Project, to be published, we hope, mid-year, in hard copy and/or e-book. There will be an introductory overview of the establishing of YTU and its place in the Melbourne College of Divinity in those years. And, at the end, there will be an overview of YTU in the 21st century, looking forward to its prospects.

This is our special MSC Project. MSC at YTU for 50 Years.

A word to thanks to our contributors and to their memories, reminding us of those days, and a tribute to YTU staff and fellow-students. And there have been significant changes over the 50 years – as you will read.

Peter Malone



@ Peter Malone

“

This is our special MSC Project.
MSC @ YTU for 50 years.



REFLECTION

THE EARLIEST DAYS

Academic and personal formation just prior to the emergence and earliest days of YTU were something of a potpourri... a complicated mix of some successful trials and some errors, but my memory of 1971-1973, is that of very happy times.

Since I do not have the prodigious memory of the Malones, my small contribution is mainly a potpourri itself.

In 1971 I came to a rather complicated mix of MSC trainees at Croydon, students who had been “on the road” for many years and much newer recruits, including novices. We “senior theologians” knew everything, of course, and pushing for formation by association rather than from above, we were probably a thorn in the side of some staff. In my memory, this year academically, was a mixture of lectures at home, some travel for other lecturers, and some lecturers visiting us.

Sometimes, the mix of different years of formation participating in the same lecture caused some drama...I distinctly remember us abandoning a scripture course and it being delivered by my classmate, John Rate... all with the approval of the professor.

1972 was a year for travelling. A small fleet of second hand cars stood alongside Croydon monastery ready to take students to the various



@ Bob Irwin

seminaries... especially the Carmelites at Donvale, Passionists at Templestowe, and Franciscans at Box Hill. The advantages were obvious in that we had access to a variety of experts in their field, and the disadvantages were obvious hence this approach was soon abandoned and by 1973 we all simply headed to Box Hill. Of course, one of the consequences of having the fleet of cars, it became much easier for students for all sorts of travels!

I have very happy memories of some of the courses I attended. I remember especially Christology with Camillus Hay OFM.

1973 was ordination year for myself, Phil Hicks, John Rate, and Fred Van Gestel, so naturally it was an exciting year alongside the emergence of YTU.

My fondest memories are of the people, especially our own MSC formators at

Croydon, including John Bosman, our Director, and Peter Hoy, the Superior.

Whilst at times in the formation program that lead up to the successful beginnings of YTU, one wondered at the amount of time wasted. But when you look around tertiary education these days, most students with face to face classes, have a long commute.

YTU became a godsend for the students of its day, and I am sure it still serves them well today



“

YTU became a godsend for the students of its day...



I loved being part of all that.

@ John Mulrooney

The first memory that comes to mind in 1972 is the daily commute! We MSC piled into 'second and third hand cars' and each day travelled to a different formation house – the Frannies at Box Hill; the Passionists at Templestowe and so on. The highlight of the morning was often morning tea. No-one could beat the Franciscans hot jam donuts. (the cold left over toast at the MSC's could not compete).

The teachers that spring to mind in those early days are people such as Walter Black

MSC. He taught Moral Philosophy and I found his method of teaching was to my liking. He was clear, concise, logical and his class notes were outstanding and a great help to evening study and assignments. I was obviously enjoying the class because half way through the year he asked me to join the theologians moral group.

Another teacher was John Flynn MSC. He taught the 'Mystery of Christ' course. Very early on we started to call it the "Mystery of Flynn" course. It was quite some

months into the course before Christ got a mention.

He began with us reading some excerpts from literature; poetry; looking at art works/ photography – helping us to get in touch with our own human experience and the experience of humanity. It was later we were introduced to Jesus in the Gospel of Mark and he led us to look upon and reflect on the humanity of Jesus. I think what made him a great teacher was the fact that he left us to make the connection/fusion between our own humanity and the humanity of Jesus. As a young fellow in High School I had questioned the image of God as a 'little old man in the sky'. It did not make any sense to me. This course opened up a whole new way of seeing things and understanding the divine in the world and in humanity.

Thirty years later I found myself a member of the YTU Council and Chair of the Council for a number of years. This gave me an insight into what a special place it is. The staff worked so hard (and often with minimum financial reward) to make it an intimate and special place for the students who attended. The fraternal relationships with other Provincials provided us all with an opportunity to also share about things other than YTU matters. I loved being part of all that.

Of course there are lots of other memories through the years but these give us a small glimpse of the world of YTU in its early years.

FROM MAKESHIFT TO A NEW ERA OF COLLABORATION



@ Leo Wearden

I joined the MSC in 1972 because I wanted to work as a missionary in PNG. I was 17 years of age, very impressionable and keen to begin studies. There was much excitement as I moved from farm life and family in country Victoria to Croydon and greater Melbourne.

Each morning we jumped into one of the newly bought

second hand cars and made our way in the morning peak hour traffic through a mixture of new residential areas and orchards to Templestowe, and Box Hill and then on a couple of days of the week we stayed home and took classes at Croydon.

Though classes and arrangements were all a bit makeshift, it made sense as

we began this new era of collaboration with a number of religious orders that there were benefits to be gained by studying with other students outside our own Religious Order and also benefits in receiving the wisdom and learning from lecturers who came from different Religious Orders and different traditions.

The courses in the first year introduced us to the Bible and theology and the person of Christ. There were further insights gained in latter years but these courses were particularly nourishing for me as I began that time of initial discernment. The entertaining Franciscan Fr John McCrystal Church gave a brief overview of the highs and lows of Church History. Passionist Fr Jerome Crowe had a drier style but I took up New Testament Greek and though I went no further with the Biblical languages I was always able to decipher the Greek script after that.

When I returned to what by then was known as the Yarra Theological Union in 1974

and again in early 1976 after the Novitiate I was developing some particular interests in ministry and pastoral work.

A course offered by Peter Chalk looked at colonialism and development and gave the opportunity to research events that had led to a group of Timorese refugees taking up residency in Australia in 1975. Meeting the Timorese community in Melbourne I was aware of the human rights abuses that they suffered and their struggle for self determination. These were issues that were increasingly confronting the wider Church of that time and it brought a poignancy to some of the courses that I was studying.

Martin Wilson with his experience in both PNG and the MSC missionary work in northern Australia presented a new course at the YTU on Australian Aboriginal societies. He spoke of the significance of Aboriginal religion and its ceremonies. The course introduced us to a number of anthropologists who shed light on social structure and the values of these societies. There were new directions emerging regarding the missionary work of the Church and he applied these to missionary work amongst Australia's Aboriginal peoples.

I completed studies at the YTU in 1980 and moved to Port Moresby the following year. One of the last courses was with

Carmelite Hugh Brown on patristics. I enjoyed the opportunity to take a closer look at the sermons of the recently murdered Bishop Oscar Romero in El Salvador in light of the writings of St Ignatius of Antioch on his road to martyrdom.

There were of course many other issues that were explored in philosophy, scripture, moral and theology. Numerous lecturers come to mind from the different Religious communities including our own MSC whose knowledge and learning and creativity inspired me to keep up exploring new ideas through reading and study. I have tried to maintain this in the various pastoral situations in which I have found myself since then.



...spoke of the significance
of Aboriginal religion and
its ceremonies.



@ John Bosman

50 YEARS YTU - REFLECTION

Without reaching for lecture notes now, what was I trying to achieve then?

Looking from the top of this mountain that is 50 years in the making I notice that some things have receded into a far distance, and others are near and clear. In 1972 the Church in Melbourne was buzzing: preparations for the Eucharistic Congress were in full swing, Action for world Development blossomed also into Ecumenical involvement, the YTU was getting established.

Students and staff welcomed me into the transitioning from being student to teacher. I had been a keen student and disciple, perhaps remaining a learner a bit long. Not quite a year had passed since I finished my studies in Rome.

I was asked to teach Fundamental Moral Theology. I had to adjust to the fact that I was teaching students of other religious congregations (and not my own).

I was keen to share what and how I had learned about the ups and downs of life. A life force that was 'not a spirit of fear, but one of power and love and self control', a spirit that could readily be tasted and self control', a spirit that could readily be tasted and recognised as being good, a spirit that is present in heart and lips and tongue. Yes, 'to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly (proudly) with our God'. What had enthused me in my studies and now in my life, was to be accompanied and complemented in the community I am part of. I had followed all the scripture courses I could on topics like Law, Freedom, Conscience, Authority, Bodiliness, Community, Prudence, Responsibility, Suffering, Death and Dying,

Marriage. And I am still on that journey from the head to the heart, that movement encapsulated in the saying *non quantum sed ex quanto* or in the telling phrase of Les Murray: *Where two or three are gathered in my name.... that is just about enough (!).*

The YTU staff welcomed me: we had our professional development days. Precious friendships were offered. A special boon was the Community Development Programme under the guidance of Ron Perry and Kevin O'Shea, Peter Cantwell and Margaret McGovern. It opened my heart and germinated what one of my later teachers, Marion Rosen, said about her life's work and mine here: *This work is about transformation from the person we think we are to the person we really are.*

My life has been enriched by my stint at the YTU. I gratefully greet my colleagues and students.

Y TU has permeated my years of ministry in ways that I would never have anticipated. I began as a lecturer and ended as a student! I moved to Croydon in 1980 as director of students. I cannot recall whether it was in that year or the following year that I found myself lecturing at Y TU on 'Prayer in Christian Spirituality', a subject I had previously taught at St. Paul's late vocation seminary. I lectured at Y TU – and enjoyed it – for a few years.

In the process I met other staff and the then-president Tony Kelly CSsR. Knowing my background and my interests, Tony asked me to investigate the feasibility of setting up a spirituality centre at Y TU.

To the disappointment of both Tony and myself, the positive plan that I presented was rejected by Y TU faculty on the grounds that it was not sufficiently academic. But by coincidence at the same time, Provincial Frank Quirk had asked me to finish in my formation ministry at Croydon. (That is another story!) So I suggested to Frank that we MSC establish the spirituality centre. Thereafter Frank always said

that he had founded Heart of Life Centre – in an indirect way, thanks to Y TU. This was in 1983.

Heart of Life coloured my ministry for the rest of my

life. As director, staff member, teacher, spiritual director, supervisor, encourager, I have been involved for most of Heart of Life's 40 years. I had already started a program

“

Y TU has permeated my years of ministry in ways that I would never have anticipated.



for the formation of spiritual directors, *Siloam* (1979). That program became central to Heart of Life's several offerings. As is well documented, Heart of Life has prepared women and men from around Australia and internationally for ministry in spirituality and religious formation for all of those forty years. And still counting.

The YTU connection was not lost. I planned a Diploma of Studies in Spirituality, involving some study at YTU and attendance at a number of seminars at Heart of Life,

with a major assignment at the conclusion of the 12-month program. That, too, continued for several years – until, more importantly, YTU agreed to accredit Heart of Life's program in spiritual direction. Initially the accreditation was minimal, but later eligible students are now granted a Master's degree in Spiritual Direction, accredited at both YTU and the University of Divinity. Around the same time, Heart of Life's part-time program called Spiritual Leaders was also given credit towards a degree at YTU.

The accreditation by YTU required considerable negotiation, as academic people slowly came to accept that experiential learning was no less valuable than academic learning. Traditionally, spirituality is taught experientially – precisely because spirituality is concerned with the *experience of God*. All good spiritual writing is based on personal experience. For example, in her autobiography, Teresa of Avila wrote 'sisters, this is how God has been working in me.' At Heart of Life, we listen to personal experience, our own and our students' in a contemplative way: our teaching builds on this.

And then the turning point: after I 'retired' from Heart of Life, I decided to take up some study. One visit to YTU to look at possibilities had me enrolled as a graduate student for PhD. I became a student! I wrote a thesis entitled 'Discernment of Spirits: the Corner-stone of Formation of Spiritual Directors' based on my many years' experience in spiritual direction. The YTU support through the Director of Graduate Study, supervisors and research seminars was crucial. The degree was granted by the University of Divinity in 2018. Three cheers for YTU.

Brian Joseph Gallagher

Catholic Theological College

Thesis: Discernment of Spirits: the Corner-stone of Formation of Spiritual Directors

Supervisors: Reverend Dr Alan Niven and Dr Patricia Fox

This thesis researches the theory and practice of spiritual direction, discernment of spirits, and formation of spiritual directors. The argument builds on a sound theology of the Holy Spirit and a psychology of human freedom, concluding that a spiritual director becomes discerning through growth in inner freedom. Effective formation programs foster such growth.



THOSE DAYS

Surprised, though perhaps not so surprised, to find that my first thought was to write about teaching.

At the end of 1971, Franciscan Peter Cantwell and Passionist Tony Eagar and I were commissioned to propose a course suitable for the first year pre-novitiate group for our congregations. They would study together for the first time under the banner of the Upper Yarra Consortium. And they would travel for classes at their respective centres, St Paschal's Box Hill, Holy Cross

Templestowe and Sacred Heart Monastery Croydon.

What should they study? In the mid-1950s, Pius XII had authorised a replanning of seminary studies. The suggestion for beginners was "The Mystery of Christ". We could plan our content and, with the outside-the-box imagination of John Flynn, a personally involving experience of theological thinking was created. Dubbed, of course, The Mystery of Flynn.

Scripture was on the agenda, so I taught introduction to Old Testament (or Introducing the Old Testament, even if the students forgot the details of this course and their 300 words/week assignment giving them the chance to improve, I was satisfied if, at the end of this course, they were eager to do more Old Testament studies.)

Jerome Crowe taught Introduction to the New Testament. The joyfully exuberant Redemptorist, Frank Smith, took them for communications.

And surely apprehensive, alarm was raised that students together would lose their congregational identity. 100% wrong. If anything, the togetherness brought out latent pride and boastfulness and, echoing Mohammed Ali, "our congregation is the greatest!".

In 1973, some pre-novitiate students and novices from the women's congregations joined



@ Peter Malone

us. In retrospect, I hope it had a moderating effect on the young men and their inherent “machoism”.

In 1975, I inherited The Mystery of Christ/Flynn – and I was presented one year with a T-shirt emblazoned (well, blue anyway) with The Mystery of Malone.

This course was a wonderful, exciting challenge – I eventually organised it into a roneod book form which I am now going to look at again. I hoped that the students would begin to think spiritually and theologically as well as pastorally with their first-time ministry work, parishes and youth groups. While Orthodoxy was important, so was Ortho Praxis, right practice, and Orthopoiosis, right creativity – a debt to Maryanne Confoy for this.

We also did the daring and watch Ken Russell’s rather mad film, *The Devils*, to challenge any lurking puritanism and learn that the history of the church had bizarre moments. We also read Alan Seymour’s *One Day of the Year* for Australian context. Guest lecturers opened up world religions. We looked at traditional Christian art, but also the piety in the popular holy cards for our missals, pictures where Jesus was standing in the cloud, never feet on the ground.

During 1972, we were able to have some media courses. Looking back I also remember on a term teaching The Prophets and, especially for some years, The New Testament in the Light of the Old, getting students to check

their Gospel texts and Jerusalem Bible references to the Old Testament and investigate one and find a creative way of communicating the discovery without relying merely on words.

Which reminds me that the first-term assessment for Mystery of Christ was to create a collage of images and words on Ministry and the Church. In fact, more demanding in the search for images and creating a context than quickly tossing off a 40-minute exam question in words.

Postscript: in 1977, the mischievous Dominicans in the group told me that when former Provincial, Jerome O’Rourke, asked them what they were doing with the collage, he rounded on it as “Theological Kindergarten”! Oh well!





“

It was a great experience
being with the students from
the other Religious Orders.

YTU was a wonderful opportunity. For this I am very grateful, to this present day.

“

There was always more to OFM campus, Box Hill, than YTU studies and the B. Theol at the completion of Croydon!! Weren't there 14 Men's Religious Orders initiating the YTU?

I delight with memories of mixing with many Religious Orders, not only as a student. The lecturers too were dynamic. They opened to me, a variety of Charisms across those years. New Testament Scripture with Jerome Crowe CP, and Fr Callachor CSsR; Old Testament with Angelo O'Hagan OFM. Then Moral with Brian Johnstone CSsR, freshly returned from USA, and Cormac Nagle OFM. Even

a Moral Oral Exam with a Jesuit, firing, "And what is justice?" How can I forget Humphrey O'Leary CSsR, wisely demonstrating how to negotiate Canon Law and the fine print in the Rituals of Liturgy, where there was more give and take than meets the eye! It was a time when few MSC taught my vintage. Frank Fletcher on Francis De Sales and Brian Gallagher in Spirituality and Peter Malone, as I recall.

Upon ordination and posting to Darwin, it was not feasible to return to Melbourne for B.Theol Graduation. Though I still enjoy coming across peer YTU graduates in many Dioceses around Australia



1974-76

@ John Kelliher

YTU was a wonderful opportunity, For this I am very grateful, to this present day.

Congratulations YTU and I have tasted for the diversity of God's surprising appetisers in Ministry.

First thing to mind is the greater numbers of people, both students and staff, and the variety of all with different congregations and an increasing number of lay people. This was a great experience and an education in itself. It also increased the number and variety of course available.

A few stories come to mind so hope I don't step out of line. Jerome Crowe teaching us scripture was a delight as a teacher and inspiration as a scholar. He was speaking of Genesis and touched on the creation of woman from the rib bone. He asked Sr Roseria msc who was a very qualified and experienced nurse, "What would that be, a ribotomy?". To which she replied "No father, that is just a side issue!" The class erupted and it took Jerome at least 15 minutes to get his train of thought back.

I had to do a reading course too as I had been in PNG and missed a course so did it under Tony Kelly. This also was a good experience in the subject and the method. A further reading course with Malone on the Minor Prophets as a certain scripture professor insisted on students reading in the original Greek. I refused to consider doing this for only one course and could see no other advantage in it. I of course failed that course so finished up with you and the Prophets. I handed that paper in on New Years Eve at 12 midnight!!

I initiated a major change in the timetable. When we started the first class began on the hour (8 or 9 am) and went for 50 minutes, when the next lecture started at 10 minutes to the hour and so on. No one knew the times of lectures including all the staff. I suggested every class begin at 5 minutes past the hour and finish at 5 minutes to the hour, giving 10 minutes in between to get to the next class and so on. This went to a staff meeting and was past!! A time for every purpose under heaven!

The travelling back and forth was not a great part of the day, but we did it ok.



“
This was great
experience
and education
in itself.

Organizing the cars and people became a dedicated job for one of the students, which was also a feature of the Canberra system. This was interesting and developed new skills of organization. Often the last class finished at 1pm so by the time all assembled in the car and drove home we were all pretty hungry. For this one particular brother cook was a delight with great food, while another was a disaster. One day I was driving home and all were pretty quiet and subdued until I realized who was cooking – the really great cook. I said, "Brother X is cooking today!". The mood immediately lifted.

For our Revue night, the YTU Revue, there was a lot of talent and ability. Some of the sisters became involved which improved the night considerably. One year it was at Croydon with one of our brothers being the MC. Waiting for an item to finish and to introduce the next which was lined up behind him, he turned to see the female character in the skit, observed an obvious part of her anatomy where he poked her with his finger saying, "Gee, they look real!" To which she replied, "They should do because they are real!". In his embarrassment he was happy to go forward and announce the next act. Enough for now.

THE HEYDAY

1978-79 1982-85



If theology schools can have a heyday, chances are YTU's occurred in the late 1970s and the 1980s. The number of religious institute students from the member colleges – seminaries, for want of a better descriptor – was still strong, if not as great as had been the case in the preceding decades. For the first time, religious women and brothers now had ready local access to theological education and enrolled in large numbers. And the number of laity choosing to study theology, whether for personal faith development, intellectual enquiry or for pastoral ministry, just kept growing. Most students were

fulltime, though when teachers from Catholic schools commenced theological studies, the number of part time students increased.

YTU's enrolment through this period was perhaps the highest in its 50-year history. Yet that doesn't quite make for a heyday. But significant and complementary numbers of seminarians, religious and laity does, which served to create a climate for learning marked more by a sense of Church than a consortium of seminaries. The men in initial formation from the member colleges, or at least some of them, probably invested more of themselves in YTU

than did most other students; after all, they would be studying there for six or more years, on-and-off, which was longer than the religious and lay students whose end-point was a degree in theology rather than ordination.

There was a fine spirit of community, with the student common-room a popular and convivial meeting-place. For some years, an anthology of students' poetry was published, a mix of mostly serious poems with an occasional work of humorous rhyme. The Student Representative Council published a regular newsletter and supported a variety of student activities. There was a celebration for graduands with YTU offering congratulations to all who received the various academic awards of the then Melbourne College of Divinity.

The academic year began and ended with festive celebrations of the Eucharist in St Paschal's Chapel. On occasion, the Archbishop of Melbourne or the Apostolic Nuncio were invited to preside. The weekly celebration of the Eucharist was widely appreciated and

well attended. Throughout the course of each year, YTU students participated in the celebrations of the perpetual profession of vows and ordination to the diaconate and priesthood of the mostly young men from the member colleges.

The course of studies for the ministerial priesthood, incorporating a Bachelor of Theology along the way, was a solid program of studies adapted from the traditional pattern of philosophy preceding theology to give significant place to the study of scripture from the outset. YTU had particular academic strengths in missiology and Catholic social teaching, which helped shape its outward-looking character. The faculty was comprised mostly of priests from the member colleges, along with a few religious and lay women. Some members of the faculty were experienced educators, others fine orators, and there were who some simply delivered the next lecture from their notes. A few enjoyed international standing. Some were widely published.

There were social occasions. An end-of-term (semesters came later) lunch at a nearby hotel always attracted a broad cross-section of students. An annual football match against a team from Catholic Theological College, then co-located with Corpus Christi College at Clayton, was characterised by YTU students, many coming from New South Wales and

Queensland, bringing Rugby Union skills and tactics to an Australian Rules match. Every year wound up with the annual YTU Revue, an entertaining evening which showed off the talents of the students from the member colleges and others who chose to perform, while celebrating the bonds which existed within the YTU community, students, faculty and staff.

The YTU I remember from all those years ago is marked by friendships formed then which have endured through the decades since, and which continue to bring much mutual support and joy to life; surely an expression of God's loving kindness towards us. It was a time when the Second Vatican Council was part of recent memory and still shaped our response to what was occurring within the Church and in the Church's mission in the world, along with the somewhat permissive 'spirit of Vatican II' which in hindsight seems to have been more limiting than liberating.

Of the men who commenced initial formation, relatively few persevered to ordination and, of those who did, quite a few subsequently left their religious institutes and resigned from the ministerial priesthood. Among the students and faculty there were a few who offended against children.

From both members of faculty and students who persevered in a religious vocation, some have been called to lead their religious institutes in Australia and internationally, while others have been appointed to the Order of Bishops. A number of those who were ordained have undertaken higher studies and then returned to teach at YTU or another theological faculty. Most have ministered among the People of God, both in Australia and beyond our shores.

Of the women religious and brothers and the laity who studied at YTU in its heyday, many have served in pastoral ministry in parishes, hospitals, and other places of ministry, as well as in leadership roles within religious institutes and major Church organisations. Quite a few undertook postgraduate studies and some later taught at YTU. The YTU of the late 1970s and the 1980s has become something of the quiet achiever, making its mark in the life and mission of the Church through its lay, vowed and ordained alumni. The Church has changed greatly during YTU's 50 years, yet it has adjusted to the changing landscape of theological education in Australia and has continued to engage innovatively and even prophetically to meet the needs of its students, the member colleges and their religious institutes, and the Church.

YTU IN REVUE



@ Chris Chaplin

I was a student at Yarra Theological Union in the 1980s. For me, the main purpose of being there was to complete studies required for ordination. I am now somewhat embarrassed to acknowledge that while the studies held little interest for me personally at the time, in subsequent years, I see with gratitude the foundations they provided. At the time I was inspired by many women and some men who undertook studies at YTU purely out of personal and pastoral interest. These individuals and those belonging to the member religious congregations were

in those days a close-knit community. Many of them had friendships and mutual social connections beyond the classroom, and while not a natural extrovert I enjoyed the company of many of them.

A tradition of the Yarra Theological Union meant that founding religious congregations had a representative on the Student Representative Council. In due time I too served my time in this role. I recall that the engagement of students in extracurricular activities was a highlight. Yes, there were the normal

student concerns to be taken to administration, such as coffee being available in the recreation room, the occasional representative act on behalf of students, or forming a choir to sing at graduation time. But one of the most memorable involvements I had was the annual YTU Revue. These were moments of extraordinary creativity, connection, and comedy. Not only for students but also for staff, families of lay-students and staff, and seminarians from the member congregations.

Mandatory at the annual Revue were performances by each of the member congregation; Franciscans, Passionists, O'Carms, Dominicans, Redemptorists, SVD's, Pallotines, and MSC. Their antics were generally hilarious, and at times a little risqué, but always in good humour and within the boundaries of decency. Humour was accompanied by song, poetry, and musicianship. Dominicans including Mark O'Brien, in flowing white robes presenting their translation of "Psalm 23", or Adrian Hellwig's memorable "Phonetic Punctuation", Franciscan's singing "Pigeon Ponds" and "Establishment Blues", the SVD's in rubber boots and shorts on mission in the Garden of Eden, or their "excerpt from the Don (Mc)Lane Show", "the Yarra Boy's Lament", a Rock Musical called "Graffita", and even the S.R.C. elections were not quarantined from satire's barb.

But sweet revenge came in 1981 when the SRC cat-walked its version of "Faculty Fashions". We witnessed that the several women and married students could easily equal anything that the seminarians could dish up – a duet of "Noel and Gertrude" for example – only to be matched by "Anthony and Cleopatra" by the YTU President and Dean. The staff too we're not left wanting, as many of them took to the stage, either to recite prose or poetry, or to lampoon themselves, each other, or the system. No one will ever forget Tony Kelly's

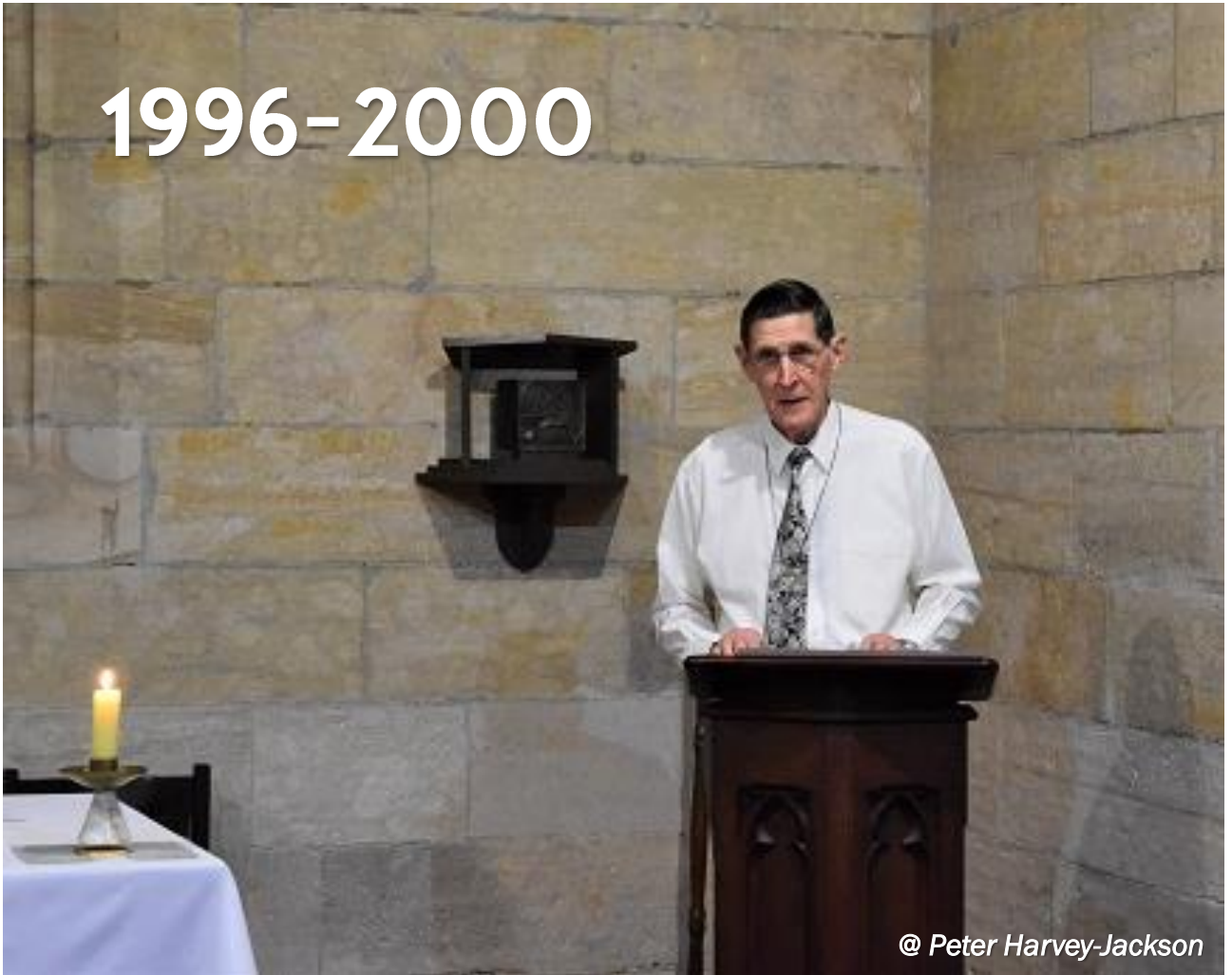
recital of (insert here any variety of wine) Nowotny!! Not too many sacred cows escaped the performer's wit.

Even the themes of those Revues were creative, giving me (on most Revue committees) licence to create some elaborate stage scenery. The 1980 Revue was "Play it Again, Y.T.U" – As Time Goes By. 1981 was threateningly called "yes folks, it's that time of the year again ...". The most creative was perhaps the doctrinally correct, "Extra Y.T.U. Nulla Salus" and the memorable "Y.T.U. Back to the Future." The Revue was always a combination of fun with food. SRC appointed a Revue committee who determined if it be catered or bring to share. Favourites included born-again chicken, cold meat a la Gnosticism, salad so healthy you could leap Joan Nowotny's desk, rice so white and fluffy you would think you were at lectures, all topped off with a tasty dolce that was more liberating than Segundo! Y.T.U. studies had their place. But when we come together from those days, these are the stories we tell. And we laugh. And we remember with gratitude.

“

But when we come together from those days, these are the stories we tell. And we laugh. And we remember with gratitude.

1996–2000



@ Peter Harvey-Jackson

I entered the Holy Grounds of YTU as a mature aged student close to 'my sixtieth year. The majority of the students in the subjects I attended were many years younger than me. However the welcome and hospitality expressed by the faculty and taken up by the students was outstanding. We were all there together for the common purpose of studying and learning our Christian heritage in all its richness. Not all but most of us at the end of the adventure hoped to qualify for a Bachelor of Theology Degree.

One of the values expressed in the documents of YTU is a

commitment to being a community of scholarship. There certainly was a sense of community which was apparent by the closeness and trust that developed amongst us, usually in small numbers, as we attended classes together during the semester and in the relationship which built up between the Lecturers and the students in their classes.

The students came from all backgrounds, many from different religious orders, and over the time I attended YTU it became an increasingly multi-cultural student body. There was a great acceptance of diversity

of customs and points of view which was expressed on different occasions and at celebrations of cultures like the 'Cultural Night' party. I was accepted to study part time which allowed me to continue with my work within my Congregation and take a light load of study. YTU was very much interested in its students and tried to accommodate students' individual needs.

My time as a student was a happy time and I felt encouraged by the lecturers. Amongst those I remember are Chris Monaghan with whom I studied Corinthians and Matthew. He was clear and precise and easy to approach for advice. Another was Cormac Nagel who lectured in Moral Theology whose courses were very popular and well attended. I attended his course on 'Major Issues in Contemporary Moral Theology.' I was asked to present a tutorial on the Encyclical 'Humanae vitae.' I found out that it was still an 'issue' which produced many opinions and questions and some heat. Cormac came to my rescue and it all calmed down. Another course which also engendered active participation and interest was 'Theologies of Liberation.' Bernard Teo was our lecturer and we heard about the difficulties of the Theologians in South America.

Another course I remember was 'Sacraments' and when we were addressing the Eucharist our lecturer (whose name escapes me) commented wryly 'the presence of Christ in the bread is an act of faith but at times an act of faith is required to believe that the host we receive actually is bread!'

A lot of memories come back to me however it is the spirit of YTU that remains with me. A spirit of hospitality, academic endeavour, a singleness of purpose and willingness to listen and learn. Perhaps also something of the Franciscan spirit which was expressed by the community members, a cheery word or a greeting from Campion Murray, Oliver Goode and others.

“
YTU was very much
interested in its
students and tried to
accommodate students’
individual needs.”

SHARING CLASSROOMS. COMMUNICATION & CULTURE



During my time teaching at St Paul's National Seminary in Sydney (1986-1998), while some of our students came with English as their second

language, they were a minority and were in formation for the local Churches. This meant that our classroom concern for those students whose first language was not English was to help them 'follow' the lectures and complete their assessment tasks (including the recommended/required reading entailed) in English.

But as few of us had training or skill in this, it was no mean feat, for students and staff alike.

No doubt others will recount and rightly laud the development and success of the ELSPM program from its visionary inception to establishment at YTU and its significant role in blending language and culture for students learning English in preparation for pastoral ministry.

I would like simply to recount here the (wonderfully positive) impact for me of working with students from other countries and cultures at YTU.

Arriving at YTU from St Paul's Seminary for first semester of

1999, I found two important differences in relation to working with students who had English as a second (or even third or fourth) language.

Firstly, there were many more such students in our classes (sometimes exclusively so); secondly, while the expectation was (as it was in Sydney) for all students to achieve a competence in English sufficient to participate in classes and manage assignments, there was a different ethos for teaching and learning, as most of these students came from overseas and were in formation for ministry in their own cultures and Churches.

This required of us as teachers, then, not only an appropriate focus on course content, but also an important emphasis on the context(s) for the teaching/ learning process so as to ensure the content was properly enculturated. What Clodovis Boff called 'feet on the ground theology'.

Students at YTU didn't simply come from other cultural (social/ecclesial) experience and leave this at the door of the classroom. They were participants as members of these cultures and Churches.

This was particularly significant for me in working with students in the fields of moral theology and liturgy. No 'one size fits all here'!

In this the students were most helpful and supportive - not just of me but of each other, since the experience of moral norms or liturgical practice for Filipinos, say, is vastly different from that of students from PNG, China, Mexico, Madagascar, Ghana, and the vast array of countries and cultures our students come from.

It was this necessity to ensure a blend of content with context, of 'theory' with practice, that was stimulating and challenging. It was the need to work through issues to find their meaning and relevance in each cultural and ecclesial experience that energised the classes.

And it was the discussions, debates, presentations (to the class or written), the

selection of assessment tasks and readings for the students relevant to their ministerial and cultural expectations, the engagement with assignments (often chosen by the students themselves as individual or group tasks), and the quality of what was presented that made teaching in this way so satisfying - and hopefully effective.

The contribution of YTU over 50 years to the local and universal Church will rightly be recognized and acknowledged.

From my perspective as one of the YTU community for some of that time I am just grateful to have shared in this enterprise in a way that I had not expected but which has offered me the opportunity to grow as a teacher and as a person.



2000

In February 2000 I went to Melbourne to start my studies at YTU. I had been given a choice as to where I wanted to study as I was the only MSC student who was commencing full time studies. So I was the first MSC since the early 1980s to undertake full time at Box Hill.

It was a rather simple set up then. Located at St Pascal College half the residence contained the YTU classrooms and offices, the other half was the Franciscan residence, and Franciscan Press was located at the side of YTU.

The first person that Philip Malone introduced me to in order to get my enrolment started was the Registrar, Kath Moynihan. She was a fount of knowledge of all things connected with college administration, as well as the history of the place, and remembered the MSC students who had studied there previously. She also had a store of academic gowns and I remember borrowing one from her for my graduation! Kathleen Williams RSM was the President at that time and helped me with some subject selections and timetabling and then it was done and I was ready to start.

The fulltime students were mainly religious studying in preparation for ordained

@ Ben Fleming

ministry. In my time there were Franciscans who lived on campus at Box Hill, the Redemptorists who lived nearby, SVDs on campus as did the OCD, as well as Passionists, Blessed Sacraments, O Carm, and the one MSC. The part time students, who were the majority, were a mix of religious and laity, a large number of them being teachers studying for their Theology degrees. It was a good mix of people and since it was not that large a group most of us knew each other.

The SRC was active in providing a range of activities to promote a conducive atmosphere for both study and socializing. The common room was the hub of activity outside of the classroom. Tea breaks, or just sitting and chatting. In the evening it was often the place for a meal, as the part time students arriving from work for class would organize to bring some food for shared meals during the break. The SRC also organized the weekly mass in the common room and other social events each term. At the beginning of my time there it was ably led by Patrick Connell, whose son Brendan CP was also a student there. Patrick worked well, with his team, to provide these various activities. I enjoyed my involvement with the SRC and eventually took over from Patrick as SRC President - following a number of MSC who had been SRC Presidents in earlier days.

“ I had four years at YTU and they were good years.”

However it was not all social activity and sitting around the common room. There were classes to attend, assignments to be done and hours to be spent in the library. It had been a few years since I had done full time study and as a teacher it was a bit of change to be on the other side of the desk. My memories are of an excellent and engaging faculty. Smaller class numbers meant that we able to engage fully in the lecture and it was harder to nod off at the back of the room!

A few names come back to mind. Glenda Bourke SGS and Chris Monaghan CP teaching scripture. Brian Gleeson CP, sacraments, Bruce Duncan CSsR, social teaching of the Church, Philip Malone MSC and Cormac Nagle OFM, moral theology. My interest in missiology was sparked by John Prior SVD and Ennio Mantovani SVD, and the

courses and the discussions I had with them gave me a solid grounding for my work in Papua New Guinea. Dr. Norman Young along with Aloysius Rego OCD lectured in Systematic Theology. Norman had an engaging way of trying to get us to think about the subject not just read about it. He would always bring things back to scripture and would ask what the biblical foundation of the theological concept we were discussing was. He encouraged us to be very familiar with the scripture, to read it and know it. I had good teachers at YTU and enjoyed not only their classes but also their genuine warmth and interest in me and the other students.

I had four years at YTU and they were good years. I was ordained a Deacon in St Pascal Chapel by Archbishop Denis Hart and I presided in the same chapel at the mass for the end of the 2003 academic year. It was all over then and my time at Box Hill had come to an end, off to PNG it was.

I was fortunate enough to do an MTS at YTU in 2005, 2006. The two years that the Sydney Swans were in the AFL Grand Final.

I remember the Dean saying that YTU is very relational, and that sums up my experience. It is a place that is relaxed and welcoming. It was academic and had time for social events. It expected the best from the students and gave them great support.

The lecturers, the administration, the library staff, the chaplain became more like colleagues and companions on the journey.

There is no doubt the most significant event that occurred while I was there was the tragic death of two students in a car accident. One of the students was a member of the Divine Word Missionaries (SVD) and one was a layman who had just left the SVD. The Union responded pastorally with great compassion. I was Secretary to the Student Representative Council (SRC) at the time and both funerals, held a week apart, were supported by the staff and students of YTU. The students organized the reception after both masses, one of those practical matters which makes a big difference.

I still have my notes from three subjects that I re-read from time to time when needed. I also, still have many wonderful memories from my time there and a grateful heart for the opportunity to be there.

“

The Union responded pastorally with great compassion.

@ Peter Hendricks



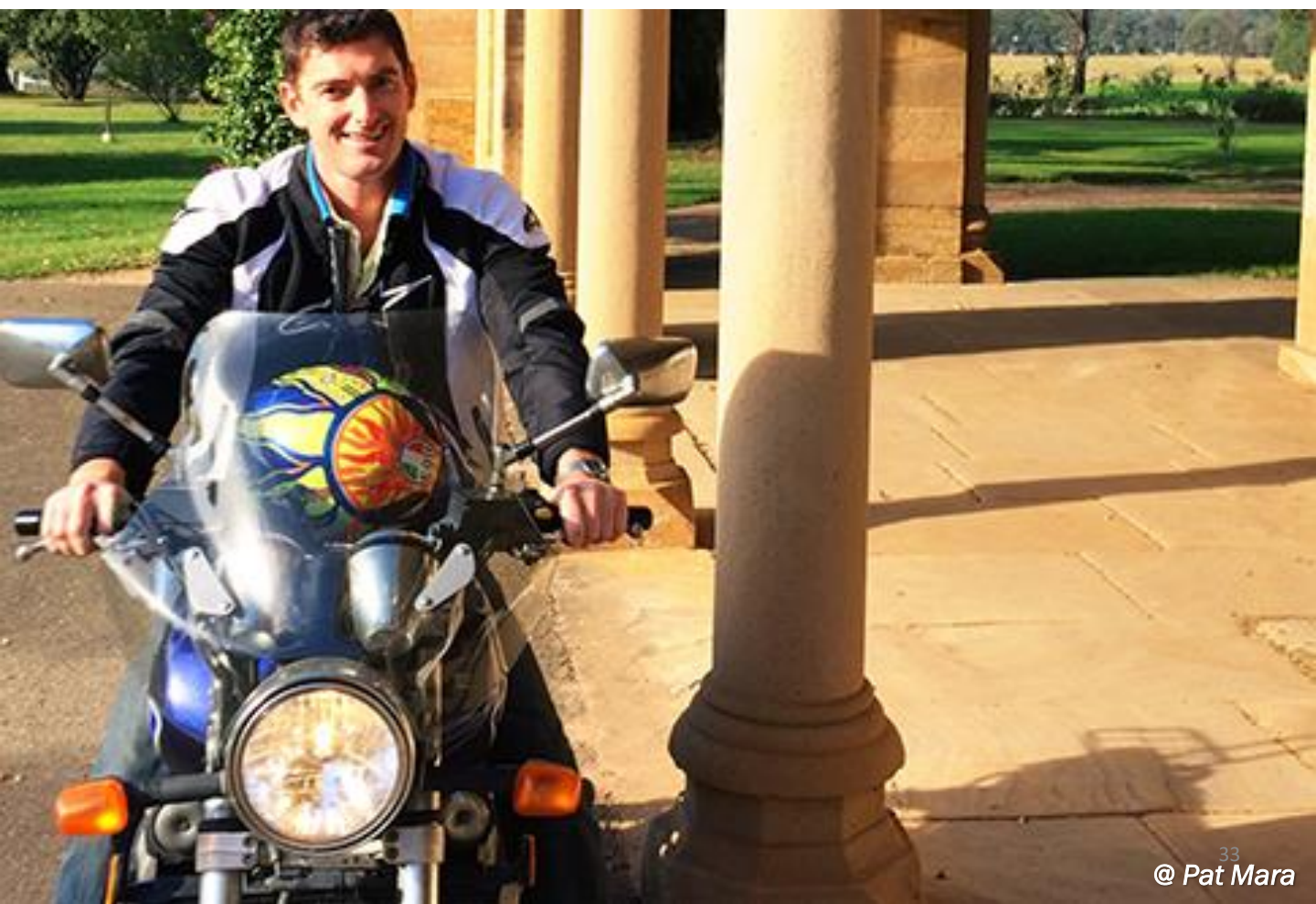
COMMUNITY & HOODIE JUMPER IDENTITY

If there was a word I would use to describe YTU during my years of education between 2009 and 2013 it would be community. As someone with no prior tertiary education it was a welcome surprise to find such a close-knit and supportive community of staff and students who were all so passionate in learning at YTU. This community

consisted of passionate Catholic and Christian laity, seminarians, religious men and women, and priests who were all striving to deepen their understanding of God.

YTU was grounded in the tradition of the church and to the various charisms of the religious orders who founded the college. Within its walls the intellectual space was

provided to discover the richness of the Second Vatican Council which was so beneficial to my learning and I am a better person and priest for it. YTU understood that life and faith are rarely black and white and this was reflected in the productive and respectful conversations which took place during lectures and recess breaks.



The Student Representative Council (SRC) played a large role in deepening the social bonds between staff and students and many an MSC have found themselves in the role of president. We would celebrate feast days, opening and closing masses for the year, professions, and ordinations which would be accompanied by food and drink in the common room, filled with a great spirit of joy and fraternity.

During my time as president we designed hoodie jumpers embossed with the YTU logo and this served to strengthen our identity as a college and there would be a sense of pride when wearing it to lectures at other theological colleges in Melbourne.

I will leave you with an excerpt of my speech given at the 2011 inaugural mass;



YTU is a unique and valuable establishment of education within the Christian community not only within Australia but the whole world.

We have students from many countries who spread the fruits of their study to other parts of the earth at the service of God and the Good News. And this year YTU is celebrating 39 fruitful years of education here at Box Hill. We celebrate the thousands of people who have grown and developed by what they experienced here, and tonight, we join with that tradition as we also grow and develop. We celebrate the spirit of community which has developed during the life of YTU, and we too join that community, making it a part of us, but also making ourselves a part of it. But most importantly tonight, we come to celebrate in our God who has called each one of us here to enter that mystical presence where we find the treasure of all treasures, God's very own self.

YTU has provided a great service to the Church in Australia and I am very proud to have been associated with the high quality of thought and learning it promotes.

FROM MORE ACADEMIC THAN I LIKED TO BE. TO...

I am privileged to be contributing to the celebration of 50 years the MSCs have been at YTU, through a reflection of my time there. I studied philosophy and theology over 5 years from 2012 to 2016. I remember enrolling at YTU at the start of the semester a little apprehensive, wondering how I will manage another program of study. Having specialized in the life sciences and doing genetic research for 7 years before joining the MSCs, I was more academic than I liked to be! I was put at ease in my first years with some of the best theologians and lecturers who taught passionately and challenged gently our underlying presumptions about God, Jesus and the Bible.

I loved the systematic theological subjects on Christ, the Church, Mary etc and appreciated how its various understandings have evolved over time into a more balanced and nuanced understanding of what is essentially mystery. Karl Rahner and Bernard Lonergan featured a lot in



those early years, thanks to my lecturers then Greg Brett and Katherine Williams. I loved the scripture units, especially the Old Testament thanks to the brilliant and hilarious Mark O'Brien.

When I had to dabble in New Testament Greek for a whole year and survived it, thanks to the late Angelo O'Hagan and Chris Monaghan, I wished I could have done more New Testament units.

I could mention many more who shaped my learning in the later years, but these set the tone for me to really open my mind and heart to grow in understanding, wisdom and asking the right questions.

I will remember that old axiom about how we receive as much if not more than what we are willing to give. As president of SRC for 2013, I got to befriend and

work with other seminarians and theological students, which greatly enriched my student experience. It was enjoyable to organize events, social nights and gain an insight of the machinery that makes YTU tick at various levels. I love the diversity of students that came together in the college from various cultures, denominations and life experiences. I also found myself in field C department

meetings, evaluating subjects and looking at what could be better for next year. The insights and humour shared in those moments were priceless!

Finally, I will remember the hospitality at YTU that made all of the above possible. I was a new face on an uncertain journey, and found myself increasingly drawn into theological learning and

friendship circles because of how staff and students were just welcoming and authentic. I remember hearing many people say the same when they look back on their journeys at YTU. There is something in the ambience and culture that invited us to dispense with pleasantries and to 'come as we are'. It allowed many of us to find our place and belonging in a complex world of theology and vocation discernment. While I got impatient of being in the study bubble by my fifth year, I would not change anything of my YTU learning and experience. It went a long way to help me take the next step of perpetual vows and the diaconate, knowing a sure foundation has been set and built on for me in those years of formation. I still find myself learning from the best at YTU through the most recent webinars on reflections on Lent and synodality!

Congratulations YTU and all how have played a small and big part in its 50-year history and its ongoing 'production' of lifelong learners! Here's praying and hoping this legacy can continue to enrich the lives of many more people, as it has and still does for me.



HONOURING LARRY NEMER SVD

I first had Larry as a lecturer in my first year at YTU with Introduction to Church History. Coming from a story-telling tradition, I would be captivated by his lectures. He did not so much teach church history as told the story of the church's history, a history that reacted, responded to, and was influenced by the secular world.

There were three lessons that I learnt from Larry that I still live out of in some way as an MSC or carry in the back of my mind when I think about how we are faring as Church carrying out its calling.

Lesson 1: The history of the Church goes through waves. We see this only when we step back to take a broader or wider-look view of things. When things are going too well, and we hit a high, we lose our way, and start to go down, and when we've reached the bottom, we get back to what is important, and regain some integrity and start to rise again. So learn to trust the Holy Spirit will try to bring about a balance. I often think of this whenever I



@ Kimi Vunivesilevu

reflect on the state of church and what we might be invited to as Church to find the balance. When the Church becomes too powerful, it loses its way and has to start again = soul-searching and back to integrity.

Lesson 2: Larry would often tell us what the official teaching or stance of the church was and then we would get Larry's take on it, what his thoughts were. He would say: "Now this is Larry speaking". (And a note about not reporting him to the

authorities.) I often find in my ministry as a high school chaplain, when students ask me about church teaching on a particular issue. I would tell them what it is. I would also tell them how I live it as an MSC. "This is Kimi, the Missionary of the Sacred Heart speaking"

Lesson 3: In 2012, out of personal interest, I did enrol in Larry's class "Growth of the Church in Asia and South Pacific 1800-1980." This was an era in the Church's history that I was particularly interested in. I remember at the end of that semester, writing my final assignment, for the first time, I appreciated that fact that, what I learnt during the history unit was much more important than the final grade for that unit of study.

When I took final vows in July 2015, Larry sent me a note which read:

"All I can wish for you is that your life in vows will be at least as happy and fulfilling as mine have been for the last 63 years. I hope you found learning a joy so that you will continue to be open to learning new things during your future years of ministry."

It was interesting that he wrote that, because that was my sentiments after the last class I did with him which was also his last teaching unit at YTU.

“
All I can wish for you is that
your life in vows will be at
least as happy and fulfilling
as mine have been for the
last 63 years.

AN EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY



“...ever seeking the grace of God in all things.

@ Khoi Doan Nguyen

When I think about YTU, the word that immediately comes to mind is ‘community’. YTU was a true community for me in my time, and I am sure it is, and will be, for many. It was not merely a community of teaching and learning, but it was also a compassionate, caring and generous community which nourished the souls and the hearts of those who were involved, studied, taught and worked there.

This experience of such a community has a significant impact on me as a person, as a religious and now as a minister to people of God. It created a desire to learn, not just for the sake of learning, but to learn in order to practice it in the reality of people’s lives, especially in a community of people with its challenges, messiness and ambivalences but always under the grace of God - for grace works upon nature. In the learning community of

YTU, I have experienced a God who is ever calling me to learn - for the mystery has no ending in itself - and to realise a God who is both immanent and transcendent, both within and beyond human comprehension, understanding and knowledge. Through my years at YTU, I know that learning is not an end in itself but a means to experience a living mystery and grow with it.

One particular person I admired, loved and respected in this community was Peter Price, my lecturer in Church History. Peter's unit was one of the first I studied at YTU. At this stage, I was still uncertain about a lot of things in the academic world. But Peter was always assuring me of how I was accomplishing my tasks,



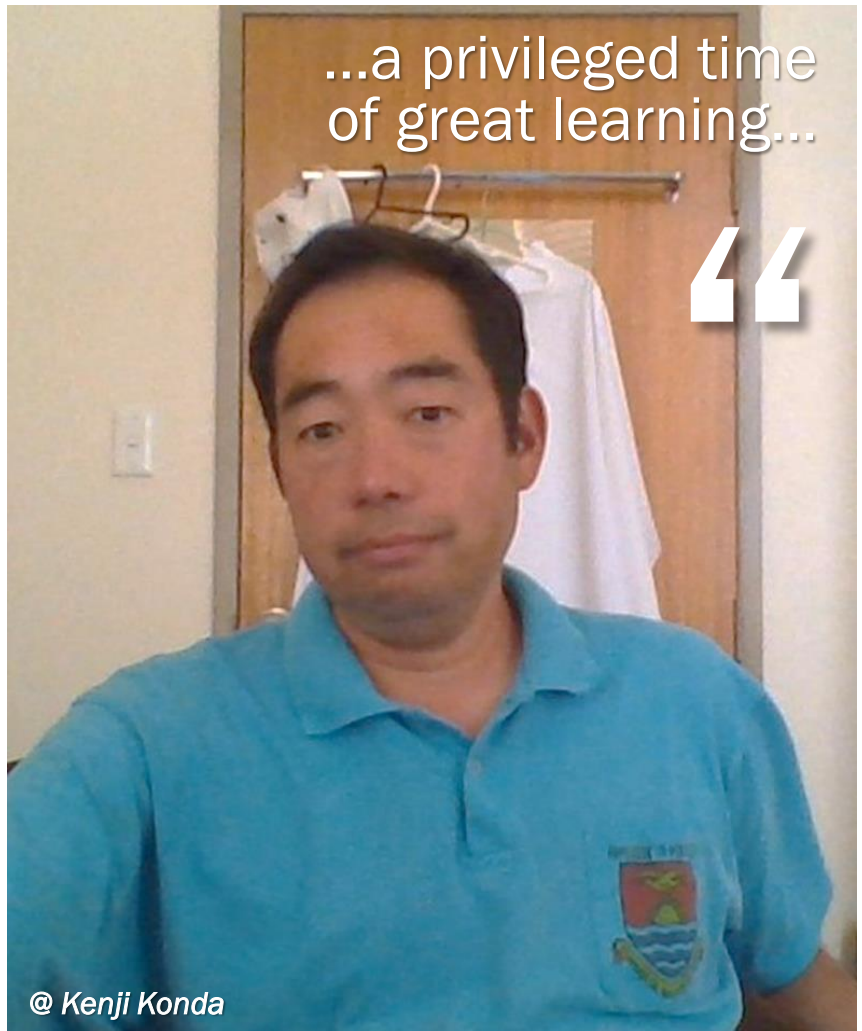
assignments and essays. In fact, one of his constant comments to me was: "I admire your command of English, even though you have been in Australia not too long ago." Trust me, my English was still improving at the time, and still is. However, this showed how humble he was, and it threw loads of my doubts out of the window and helped me ground within myself and trust in what my heart was longing for.

Sitting in Peter's lectures was a truly inspiring experience. Peter had a heart for learning and for converting people to transformative historical views. I remember he said many times: "If you have an inspiring teacher, you might be inspired to become one." Regardless of my deteriorating eyesight, somewhere in my heart, I still have a desire to become a teacher, who is humble enough to keep learning, who is grounded enough to journey with his students to their truth - not his own, who is loving enough to do it until the end.

To Peter, I am forever grateful. To the YTU community, I am forever growing in love for learning and truth, compassion and understanding for self and others, ever seeking the grace of God in all things.

I don't think I am qualified to submit an entry having spent only two semesters at YTU and most of that time under lockdown. I am not even a graduate! I recall the Opening Mass with Blackburn's own Bernard Marmion (SRC president) giving a speech, a couple of face-to-face classes then a mad dash to secure books from the library before everything shutdown... a surreal experience.

Online lectures were a challenge for the students but even more so for our teachers. They had pre-prepared an entire semester of interactive face-to-face learning only to have it reduced to staring at the Brady Bunch each week! My own experience during this time was most likely different to the other students insofar as that I came from a very different background. I had completed my entire undergrad theology degree online – one of the last students to do so before the arrangement was terminated - through the Broken Bay Institute, facilitated by the University of Newcastle. I was used to distance-learning and online research, so the adjustment to Zoom did not pose a problem. But there were other issues. Suffice to say that UN is secular, very different to a faith-based institution such as YTU. As they began to wind down their theology department



courses became increasingly radical and unrelated to ministry, perhaps a cathartic reaction or most likely to arouse interest as electives for those enrolled in the Arts and Humanities. I found the offerings too far left of centre for my liking, and institutional cynicism was pretty much a given.

Having come out of such a system, I did my best to adapt as quickly as I could to a different style of pedagogy - a more inclusive and nurturing environment - and soon developed a keen sense of gratitude and appreciation for the balance

and relevance of YTU's ministry-centred structure and curriculum, especially the quality of the teaching staff. At the end of the day they made all the difference. It was unfortunate that I did not have the opportunity to engage with the other students but the quality of education more than made up for any shortcomings. So my time at YTU was brief yet filled with fond memories; a privileged time of great learning under the tutelage of great minds.

RELISHING A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY



Coming out of a fruitful and memorable year as a novice, during the “coronovitiate”, it was off to a new chapter, now as a professed MSC. It meant a return to a familiar place, but within a new context.

Firstly, I have grown so much since I first entered the congregation back in 2019. Also, there were some new housemates, and a new formator in Mark Hanns msc. Of course, there was the “new normal” of the post-COVID world. Despite this, the MSC formation house in Blackburn (also known as Cuskelly House) is still paradise, to quote another well-respected formator

Frank Dineen msc. The bulk of the period after novitiate is theological studies. Prior to joining the MSC’s, I have already completed a Bachelor’s degree in theology. So, part of me was excited to return to academic life. I have heard great things about YTU from confreres who were either students or lecturers there. This reinforced said excitement. The counteracting feeling was trepidation, because of the many assessments that would stand on the path of completion.

Upon entering the quaint, but hallowed, grounds of Yarra Theological Union for the first time, I was quickly captured by its tranquillity. It felt like entering a monastery or a friary. Considering the college’s Franciscan heritage, it was to no surprise that the courtyard had a sculpture of St Francis of Assisi. It was at marvelling at the simplicity and beauty of the place when I was introduced to YTU’s mascots, the adorable guinea pigs. It is an environment conducive for learning and even contemplation. Cute rodents and serenity aside, a quality

worth highlighting has been the school’s strong sense of community, making YTU a very welcoming and accepting place. There is a warmth radiating from the lecturers and students.

Another notable feature is its diversity. I have had classmates from every corner of the world, from Mexico, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Vietnam, and Timor Leste, just to name a few. A variety of religious congregations were presented too, from the Carmelites to the Redemptorists, the Passionists to the Divine Word Missionaries. I even had classmates from other denominations and faiths. The subjects themselves covered different fields of Theology. I found the classes fun and engaging, and I have learned so much. In scripture, I have had units on Romans and my favourite Gospel, Luke. These were taught by current YTU president, scripture scholar and avid cyclist Chris Monaghan cp.

It was also a privilege to be under the tutelage of Robyn Reynolds olsh, where we

tackled Catholic Social Teaching, especially from an indigenous perspective. I realized that Robyn has contributed in every stage of my formation journey so far, from presenting the history of the OLSH sisters, to encouraging me to express myself artistically.

Having a confrere as a lecturer was an interesting, at times hilarious dynamic. Philip Malone msc, who happens to also be the community superior, was my moral theology professor. My most valuable insight from him was the importance of “why” in moral Christian living. He also taught me liturgy, where I developed a greater appreciation of the insights of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Staying on liturgy, sessions with Gavin Brown was always enlightening. His unit on Sacrament theology was one of my favourites. Theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet’s fanbase has grown thanks to Gavin’s class.

Looking back at my first year at YTU as a whole, it was the tale of two semesters. I considered myself lucky that the first semester of 2021 was not affected too much by COVID-19, with all sessions face-to-face. Semester two was something else. This was the first time I experienced university done entirely online, especially over the program Zoom, which had its unique set of challenges. I must confess, studying at

Master’s level was intimidating, especially with writing big essays and enduring long lockdowns. It tested my energy, and my ability to stay organized, flexible, and motivated. The moments of insights, stress, and even procrastination, were opportunities for growth.

As for highlights, there were many. Aside from the learning, one worth mentioning was getting to Box Hill for morning classes. If weather permitted, I often walked through the parklands, either silently or while listening to music or a podcast. This would also satisfy my exercise quota that day. Another was witnessing the final professions and ordinations of schoolmates. Cheering my classmates on during the annual soccer tournament, the Brotherhood Cup, has been a highlight too. Even the conversations, laughter and banter amongst seminarians in the common room were moments I would treasure. Of course, there were the feelings of triumph and relief whenever I would finish and submit a long paper.

As I embark on my second year of studies at YTU, what are my hopes for 2022?

The obvious ones are to learn more, and of course in the end to pass. I only have

four units to go in my Master’s course. The ones I have enrolled to this year are taking me to uncharted waters. This is especially true for my two units on Canon Law, being taught by Rosie Joyce csb. To my surprise, it is a subject I am enjoying so far. I admire how she makes the code understandable and practical, and how she reminds us of the primary purpose of the law: the salvation of others, not to burden them. Returning to the title, I also hope to continue to maintain this sense of fun and enthusiasm. As for future, I hope YTU continues to shape more people, especially MSC’s, to be sound and pastoral theologians in the decades to come.

I thank God and his divine providence, and also the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, for the golden opportunity to study at YTU.

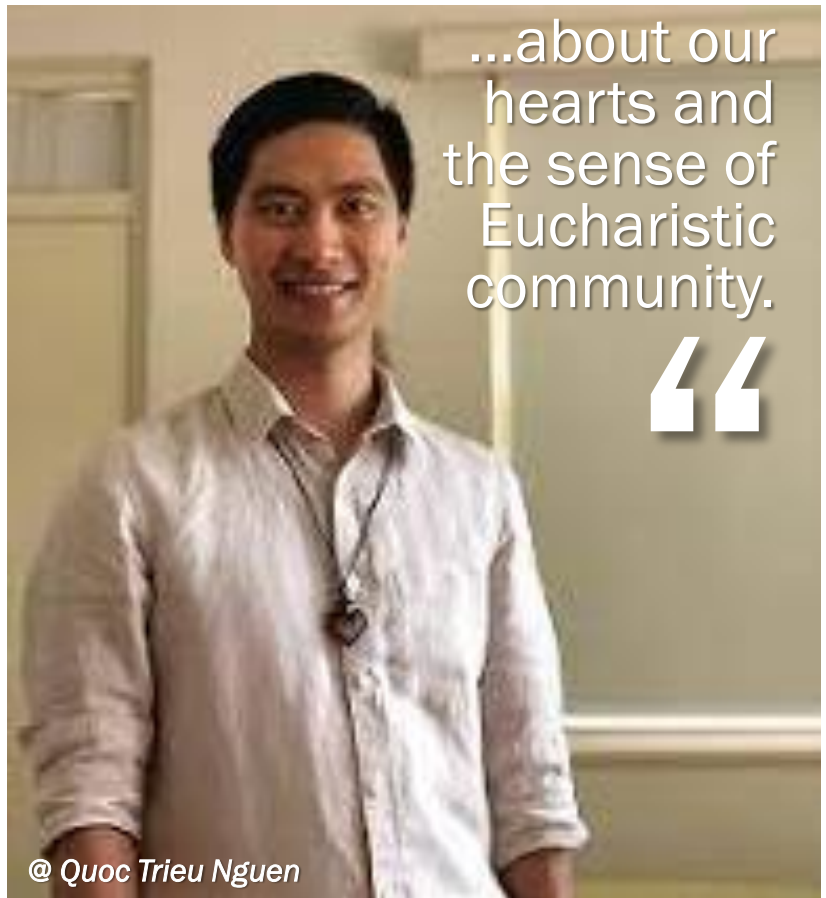
“

I thank God...
for the golden
opportunity to
study at YTU.

A SHOCKING & WELCOMING COMMUNITY

My first approach to YTU was in 2018 when I studied English in The English Language Studies for Pastoral Ministry centre (ELSPM) which is located on the YTU campus. Even though I was not a student of YTU at that time, I had opportunities to join some of its activities and the Eucharist. My very early memory there was the “Sitting Mass”. It was really shocking for me to sit for most of the whole Mass. However, later through the explanations of people there, I felt more engaged in the Mass and the sense of community. We all celebrate together, not only the priest. The most important thing is not about the gestures, but about our hearts and the sense of Eucharistic community. I guess it was the first gift that I got from YTU for my missionary life in future.

YTU is located on the very beautiful and classic friary of the Franciscans that made me think that the atmosphere would be very monastic and quiet. However, the fact is very different. There is a lot of noise of laughing and chatting. It creates an active and youthful environment. The number of



students in YTU are not large, so we have a lot of chances to catch up and get to know each other. Anyone could feel welcomed and be at home there. Students came from variety of congregations, societies, and countries from Asia to the Pacific, Africa to South America. This is truly a sign of the Church that we are hoping to build up where everyone is welcomed and respected.

Every year, YTU has a cultural day where we come to know and understand more each other's cultures and learn from them. I presume that it makes YTU different from other Catholic colleges.

YTU is an ecumenical college. Last semester, I studied the unit, “Beginning with Jesus”, which is the introduction to Christology.



about sending their students to study at YTU because they worry that they may go off the track. However, in fact we are following what Pope Francis encourages the Church to do through the encyclical letter *“Fratelli tutti”* on fraternity and social friendship. We are all the people of God, and we are called to walk together gently and respectfully.

I feel very blessed to be a part of the YTU and proud to know that the MSCs were and are involved actively since its beginning. On the very special occasion of the 50th year of foundation, I hope and pray that the YTU will be always a community for missionaries and those who seek God in listening and dialogue. Together we will try our best to rebuild the Church that it may be welcoming and respecting.

It surprised me at first that my lecturer is an Anglican minister, and he is also the academic dean of YTU. In my class, there was a woman priest from the Baptist Church, a Lutheran teacher, and numbers of Catholic lay and religious people. Sometimes, the lecturer had to

clarify which church when he mentioned the Church because we came from different Churches. We were in one were in one class to study about our Jesus Christ. We listened and learned from others’ beliefs. Some congregations get concerned



2022

BEGINNING @ YTU



FOUR OF OUR CONFREERES EARLY STUDIES @ YTU THIS YEAR

VINCENT PHAM made his profession December 2021. He had studied and worked in engineering. He had also done some theology studies at the Paramatta diocese seminary. Now he takes up studies again, Zoom at first but, happily, now face to face.



HOA QUOC TRAN began his studies in Vietnam, had some time away from formation with some work/study experience and has now come to Australia to resume theological studies.

LONG VAN TRAN is not a stranger to YTU. In 2021 he studied English at the English as Second Language for Pastoral Ministry course. He is now at Blackburn and will continue with his English studies face to face.



VU DINH NANG is also studying at ELSPM

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S SCHOLAR 2014. SANDY ABBEY



Y TU Dean, Ross Fishburn, has looked back over the last decade with the establishing as MCD as the University of Divinity and the students who have been named as Vice-Chancellor's Scholars.

He praised the award in 2014 to Alexander 'Sandy' Abbey:

“

“Alexander Abbey (2014) was a distinguished student here while he was a seminarian for the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

He decided not to continue with the order but has put his theological studies to good use as a teacher in an MSC school. He excelled in learning and has gone on to combine this with communication, engagement and service.”

IN MEMORY





R.I.P

JOHN RATE

AT YTU 1972-1973



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR SISTERS

ANNELIESE REINHARD MSC
IN THE PAST

&

ROBYN REYNOLDS OLSH
IN THE PRESENT

COMMUNICATING THE EXPERIENCE OF LITURGY: *GREGORY MANLEY CP*



Greg was sent from Ireland to Rome to study, responded to a need in Australia for a lecturer in theology and later assigned to teach Liturgy – and the beginning of a journey of discovery and communication.

A first memory. Greg conducting Liturgy courses at the Blessed Sacrament Sisters community in Armadale to religious and pastoral workers. Memories say sleep and too difficult assignments, an academic experience, too heady for a young religious – rather reinforced with later images of YTU Staff meetings, serious and venerable academics sitting in a circle.

A second memory. Greg teaching Liturgy at Assumption Institute to the women novices in the 1970s and asking me what I did with the novices instead of lectures and talks: just doing it, sharing... Greg began a profound change (and he said, at 55 not too late to change), disturbed by the atmosphere of the times, how he celebrated Eucharist, the experience of conferees leaving...

The third memory. Providing Greg with a book of images and getting him to write his personal responses opposite. My task as catalyst: how can we explain experience? By getting more in touch with experience.

The fourth memory. Greg and I at YTU. It seemed important to move away from the everyday atmosphere (like washing up cups and mugs in the common room). Important to create a setting, prepare some symbols and some beauty, and atmosphere, students not just coming in for a lecture with, perhaps, minds on the football grounds outside. At that stage, the seminarians' age and life experience meant they were ready to absorb knowledge, not so ready to be in touch with their inner selves. Many said they got nothing out of the liturgy but Greg asked them whether it was important for them to get something out of pastoral work like visiting someone in hospital. It was the experience that was key. Another of his words of advice to the students who declared liturgy was boring, "unbore yourself."

So Liturgy was part of the YTU curriculum but not just a subject or a course, but in those days for seminarians to experience being men first, to experience the humanness and bring that to their role as priests.

As Greg says in our book, *The Heart of Praying Liturgy* (Spectrum, 1984):

“

*I had opened to me a whole new world:
I learnt about the human person,
human feelings, human development,
and human relationships.
I acquired the skill of reflecting,
responding; I grew adept, not only in
coming to a quiet in myself,
but in leading others to come to it.
I discovered the connection between
liturgy and life, and new horizons in
regard to presiding at the Eucharist.
In those years, and not without a lot of
dying and some suffering,
I lost my fear of entering into the
personal, the psychological world –
although I did not recognise it as fear;
I saw it as defending truth!
I was changed; it was truly a conversion.
(P.5-6)*

(Article written by Anneliese
about Greg who died years ago)

REFLECTION

When I think of YTU I think first of the place, the grounds, the green grass, my very favourite gum tree, the kingfishers outside my upstairs office. I think too of the beautiful chapel with its magnificent stained glass window. I see the monastery courtyard where Indigenous leader, Vicky (Walker) Clarke once led a simple smoking ceremony for our opening class. I see the downstairs verandahs where, despite Covid times, students and staff still sit and spend time together. Place is important. As is space.

The YTU community makes space, finds space – especially for ones who might otherwise perhaps not find a place, a home, an inclusive environment. YTU makes extra effort to find places – academically, culturally, physically, socially... to be a welcoming space. In recent years having the connection with the Korean School of Theology and with the English Language School for Pastoral Ministry has been mutually enriching.

Over the years – and in the years since I have been at YTU, different and new roads have been taken, adaptations made, exciting initiatives taken - some have been isolated ‘events’, others longer term. I recall when YTU sponsored a wonderful gathering for

International Women’s Day. In 2009 I was a founding member of Social Policy Connections which in 2016 paved the way for passing on the baton to the University of Divinity’s New Centre for Research in Religion and Social Policy. In 2019 there was real pride in witnessing YTU leadership in sponsoring and co-delivering the outstanding Voices of Hope and Challenge Conference.

Perhaps a recent engagement might best capture YTU’s essence for me: A colleague and I, each of us carrying a bag of books, took a short walk through our lovely grounds to the UD’s new School of Indigenous Studies. Naomi Wolfe, First People’s Coordinator - knowing I had some books to pass on - had suggested a midday meeting. Naomi responded positively and generously to an invitation by my colleague – to meet with her class in first semester.

So, YTU through the years: respectful engaging with all (especially surely, with our First Peoples), and making spaces for genuine conversations, for significant learning and teaching and for life-giving, life-growing experiences. When the heart is open, the Spirit breathes!



@ Robyn Reynolds OLSH

“
When the
heart is open,
the Spirit
breathes!