

St Johns Mudgegonga

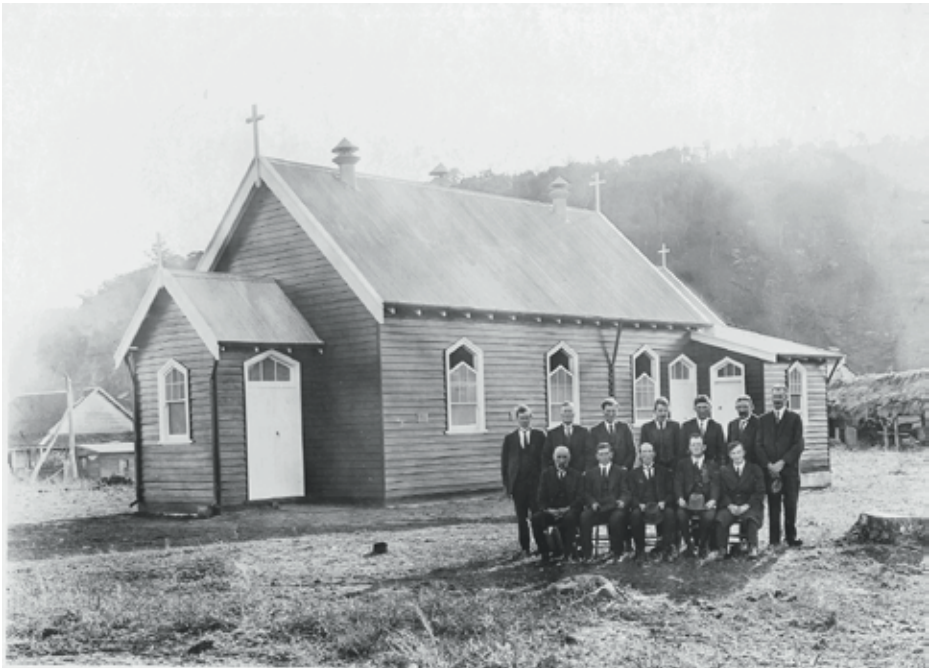


1882 to 2010

Celebration Mass
Sunday, 21st March 2010

St Johns Church in Mudgegonga was opened on the 10th November 1882, just a few short years after the arrival of Mudgegonga's first selectors. Many of those families continue to live in the valley today. Prior to St Johns, mass was held once a month in the home of Mrs Richard Box an early lessee of Barwidgee. The Parish of Myrtleford was created in 1877 – only five years earlier – and extended from Yackandandah to Omeo.

Father Michael O'Connor purchased an acre of land that was cleared by parishioners attending working bees. Fr O'Connor planted many pine trees on the block, which were later harvested in 1918 and sold for £500. With this money, the community was able to pay for a new church in 1924, which was built by locals: Sid Brewer, John Byers and Fred Jones.



Opening of the new Catholic Church in 1924.

Standing (L-R): Peter De Piazza, Rich Larkin, John F Pini, Jack Healy, John Carroll, Bill Carroll, Fred Jones

Sitting (L-R): Victor Pini, Bert De Piazza, Tom O'Callaghan, Pat Carroll, Sid Brewer



The pews from the original church have endured and are still in use at this final mass in 2010. Interestingly, the same individuals sat in the same seats week after week. In the early days it was women and children on the left, and men on the right. Later, families sat together, but again, always in the same seats. The pews will be distributed to the St Johns families as a memento.

Prior to the arrival of electricity in the 60's, the church had no heating (or cooling) and frozen holy water was sometimes a problem on winter mornings. The cold conditions were compounded in the days when transport options included horseback and open-top buggies or motor cars.

Processional Hymn

All the Earth Proclaim the Lord

Refrain

All the earth proclaim the Lord,
Sing your praise to God.

Verse 1

Serve you the Lord, heart filled with gladness.
Come into God's Presence singing for joy.

Verse 2

Know that the Lord is our creator.
Yes, God is our Father; we are His own.

Verse 3

We are the sheep of the green pasture.
For we are God's people; Chosen by God.

Prayers of the Faithful

Our gathering here today, Lord, is to remember and thank you for the many joys and blessings that the Mudgegonga community have enjoyed in this Church.

1) Lord, we thank you for the Bishops, Priests and Sisters who have cared for our spiritual needs during the past 128 years.

Lord Hear Us

2) Lord, we pray for the repose of the souls of the early pioneers who built, faithfully attended and supported St Johns Church Mudgegonga.

Lord Hear Us

3) Lord, we thank you for the memory of the many special ceremonies that have taken place here including Baptisms, First Communion, Confirmations, Weddings and Funerals.

Lord Hear Us

4) Lord, we pray for the people of Mudgegonga who have lovingly tended the Church and its grounds in preparation for Masses and the many ceremonies held here.

Lord Hear Us

5) Lord, we ask your blessings Lord, on all of us here today who are saddened by the closing of St Johns, but who at the same time rejoice that many of the spiritual icons will live on in new places where you are worshipped.

Lord Hear Us

6) Lord, we pray for the people of Mudgegonga who have endured good times and bad, may they continue to grow in strength and may the spirit of the St Johns Catholic Church community live on in the years to come.

Lord Hear Us

Offertory Hymn

In Bread we bring you Lord

In bread we bring you Lord, our bodies labour,
In wine we offer you our spirit's grief;
We do not ask you, Lord, who is our neighbour?
But stand united now, in one belief.
For we have gladly heard your Word,
your holy Word, and now in answer,
Lord, our gifts we bring.
Our faltering hearts make true, our failing faith
renew, our lives belong to you,
Our Lord and King.

The bread we offer You is blessed and broken,
And it becomes for us our spirit's food.
Over the wine we bring, your Word is spoken;
Make it your gift to us, your healing blood.
So that our daily toil, plants in our heart's poor soil,
all things we start and spoil,
each hopeful dream.
The chances we have missed, the graces we resist,
Lord, in our Eucharist, take and redeem.

Communion Hymn

Prayer of St. Francis

Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring you love.

Where there is injury, your pardon Lord, And
where there is doubt, true faith in you.

Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is despair in life. Let me bring hope.

Where there is darkness, only light,
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Oh, Master, grant that I may never seek

So much to be consoled as to console.

To be understood as to understand.

To be loved as to love with all my sole.

Make me a channel of your peace.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

in giving of ourselves that we receive, and

in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Recessional Hymn

Hail, Queen of Heaven, the Ocean Star

Hail, Queen of heav'n, the ocean star,
Guide of the wand'rer here below;
Thrown on life's surge, we claim your care:
Save us from peril and from woe.

Mother of Christ, Star of the sea,
Pray for the wanderer, pray for me.

O gentle, chaste, and spotless Maid,
From sins domain God kept you free,
Plead with your son for he has paid
The price of our iniquity.

Virgin most pure, Star of the sea,
Pray for the sinner, pray for me.

St Johns Church in Mudgegonga has meant much to many people over the years and it is sad to see it go.



Up until the 60's, fasting from midnight was the order of the day and that included the priest. The local ladies always provided much-appreciated sandwiches and a cup of tea before he returned to Myrtleford.

For many years, Minnie Pini, Mudgegonga's Postmistress, would walk to the church to attend to the cleaning and preparation of the altar. This responsibility was later delegated to a roster of hard working ladies who always had the church looking beautiful with flowers from their gardens.



Up until the 70's Redemptorists Missions were held every 2 or 3 years for a full week and on the Saturday night the parishioners decorated Our Lady's altar and had a kind of celebration. The early morning sessions focussed very much on hellfire and brimstone. The sermon was delivered in a booming voice which seemed to echo off the hills behind the church and could be heard as far away as Johnsons. To keep warm, the men lit the old pine stumps and had great fires to ward off the frosts.

Almost everyone attended Sunday mass, at the Feast of the Assumption and other holy days. For many of the farmers, it was one of the few social activities.



Standing around after Mass, earnestly discussing local affairs was an important part of the routine, although sometimes less enjoyed by impatient children eager to resume their weekends.

Mudgegonga also experienced the baby-boom of the 60's and a Curate once commented that it was the noisiest congregation he'd ever experienced.



Thank you **Bishop Joe Grech**, *Bishop of Sandhurst*, for joining us for the final Mass in the historic Mudgegonga Church.

Thanks also to **Tim Fischer**, *Australian Ambassador to the Holy See*, for bringing greetings from the Holy See in Rome.

Thank you **Fr Peter Tailor**, *Parsish Priest Myrtleford*.