

St. Francis Xavier's Presbytery

BOWEN STREET, NARRABRI, N.S.W. 2390

P.O. BOX 182

TELEPHONE 922035

Report on
1981 Ministry Programme
Phase 3 St Francis Xavier's Parish, Narrabri
Feb 20 to April 26.

Most Rev. H. J. Kennedy, D.D.
Bishop of Armadale,
Bishop's House,
Armadale.

My dear Bishop Kennedy,

I hereby submit my report on Deaconate Programme for Rev. John Farrell for the period he was stationed at St Francis Xavier's Parish, Narrabri. I shall forward a copy to Rev. John Farrell.

Parish Lenten Programme

General Remarks; During his stay in Narrabri, John showed a fair deal of initiative and was always willing to do anything I asked of him. He prepared his homilies well and, whilst his delivery lacked in some ways, the general effect was pleasing. He seemed to resent any criticism, or gave me that impression. John was particularly helpful in preparing the Altar Boys for the Easter Triduum and I believe the ceremonies here more of a high standard because of the time and enthusiasm he showed in preparing the readers etc. He was always ready to take part in the Lenten exercises of Stations of the Cross. He talked to a group of Parishioners on the "From Ashes to Easter" Programme on a couple of occasions but thought it was too much for him to do in any detail.

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(c) Children's Liturgies

The Deacon helped with the preparation for Reconciliation groups. Because of some misunderstanding on John's part he was not associated with infant school liturgies and Paralympics. He was associated with class masses for the children of the Parish school. He took an interest in these matters.

(d) Primary school catechetics

A separate report on his supervised practicum at St Francis Xavier's school has been forwarded to Fr Flood. I understand the teachers at the school initially had some difficulty with this programme as John seemed unwilling to follow the programme that had been devised for him. In fact there seemed to be real tension between John and the very capable Principal, so tense, during most of his stay in Narrabri. I believe, this was because of John's desire to do things his way and to resent direction. John was very faithful to his classes at the state school but I gathered the children found him rather harsh.

(e) Catechetical Training Programme.

I didn't ask John to give these talks. But I do know that he discussed programmes with the catechists and attended a seminar in Moree.

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(e) Pastoral care of the sick & housebound

John took Holy Communion and visited the housebound whilst in Narrabri. Some of the people found him cold in his approach at first but they told me he improved after they got to know him better. He was not very frequent in visiting or expressing the wish to visit the local hospitals but that may have been because he had not continued that work on a regular basis. In addition, he may have thought, he had sufficient experience in that sphere whilst at Tamworth. He attended on occasions when I wanted the sick. I do not know whether he exercised a ministry of prayer when he visited the sick. I had to impress on him the importance of visiting the aged at the time stated. In other words, I wanted him to know that just because you are old you are not ^{un}important.

(v) Liturgies of Baptism, Marriage & Funerals. John prepared the parents of several children for Baptism, performed one marriage ceremony. I had good reports of the way this ceremony was celebrated. He attended one funeral with me and visited the bereaved.

(g) Completion of Documentations, Registers etc

Deacon Farrell was extremely accurate in these matters. I went through the papers of the marriage he performed & could not find a single mistake.

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Some General Remarks

(1) I worry that John seems to presume priestly ordination is just a matter of time. He doesn't seem to think the Vocation Team has much authority. I understood that the Vocations Team had a mandate from the Bishop to supervise his final year of training and that a good deal of importance would be attached to the Team's report.

(2) John tends to get people "off-side" - maybe because of hisumptious nature. During the time he was here buses, typists, altar boys and teachers were upset by his attitude in some matters. I also found some of the people found him difficult to approach. On the other hand some people warmed to him.

(3) He tends to take over rather than to be guided. He seems to be conscious of his ability - e.g. inserting degrees after his name on notice sheets. I think it is important for a future priest not to celebrate himself and would recommend those in charge of John's future programme suggest remedies in this matter.

(4) I was disappointed that on some occasions John was out late at night and failed to inform me where he could be contacted.

(5) I found John courteous in the house and always ready to do anything I asked. He was industrious and did a great deal of visitation of the parents of the children from the school.

Signed, G. Harry Leis