

Archdiocese of Melbourne

In causa: BAKER

**INTERVIEW WITH MOST REVEREND PETER CONNORS, AT THE
CATHEDRAL PRESBYTERY, EAST MELBOURNE ON MONDAY 9
AUGUST 2010 AT 4.30PM.**

Name: Most Reverend Peter Joseph Connors
Address: St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat
Born: 6 March 1937
Ordained: 23 July 1961

THE OATH WAS TAKEN

How did you first meet Bill Baker?

We were in the same year at Corpus Christi Seminary.

What do you know of his background?

He was born of a strict Catholic mother and a non-Catholic father who was a General Practitioner. There were four boys in the family, and Bill was the eldest.

Bill was sent to Assumption College, Kilmore as a boarder when he was eight. His mother had a brother who was a Marist Brother. I have often wondered why Bill was sent to boarding school at that age when his brothers weren't. Academically he was quite bright but because of his size and his personality he was the subject of ridicule.

He was short and rotund. He didn't have a pleasant personality. Probably "small man" syndrome.

I remember in the seminary he used to bite his nails down to the quick, and also scratch himself until he drew blood. He did mix better in the seminary, and also did well academically. He was a good singer.

Did there seem to be any doubts about ordination – either from him or the seminary staff?

Not that I knew of. In those days you wouldn't have spoken about that anyway. As far as I knew, his seminary years were uneventful.

What do you know of his priestly life?

He was always very involved with young boys – camps and retreats and things like that. He did a lot of retreats for the junior school at Assumption College. I'm not sure if he was assistant priest in Kilmore. I don't remember. As far as I know he didn't do anything untoward there.