



# Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney

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2 September 2004

**Mr Patrick Monahan  
Monahan + Rowell  
Level 31  
525 Collins Street  
Melbourne VIC 3000**

**FILE COPY**

Dear Patrick

**ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY  
MR JOHN ELLIS AND FR AIDAN DUGGAN**

I refer to and thank you for your letter dated 25 August 2004.

Please find enclosed Fr Aidan Duggan's original personal file.

**1) Fr Aidan Duggan's Archdiocesan Appointments**

I advise that Fr Aidan Duggan held the following appointments within the Archdiocese of Sydney:

- Assistant Priest, Parish of Christ the King, Bass Hill, 1974 to 1978
- Assistant Priest, Parish of St Catherine Laboure, Gymea, 1979
- Assistant Priest, St Mary's Cathedral, 1979 to 1984
- Administrator, Parish of St Joseph, Camperdown, 1984 to 1992
- Assistant Priest, Parish of St Mark, Drummoyne, 1992 to 1995
- Chaplain, Novitiate, Little Sisters of the Poor, Randwick, 1995 onwards

**2) Parish Clergy - Christ the King, Bass Hill - 1975 to 1978**

The *Official Directory of the Catholic Church in Australia & New Zealand* (1975) records two priests being resident at the Parish of Christ the King, Bass Hill, in 1975, namely: Fr J Farrar DSocSc PP and Fr D A Duggan OSB.

Unfortunately, the *Official Directory* was not published in the years 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979.

I am making efforts to locate details of the clergy at Bass Hill for the years 1976 to 1978 by other means.

### **3) Leadership of the Archdiocese – 1975 to 1978**

From 1975 to 1978 the relevant persons directing the activities of the Archdiocese were as follows:

#### **a) Archbishops**

His Eminence, Sir James Darcy Cardinal Freeman, Archbishop of Sydney - 1971 to 1983 (died 16 March 1991)

#### **b) Auxiliary Bishops and Vicars General**

- Archbishop James Patrick Carroll, Auxiliary Archbishop and Vicar General - 1965 to 1984 (died 14 January 1995)
- Bishop Thomas William Muldoon, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General - 1960 to 1982 (died 13 January 1986)
- Bishop Edward Francis Kelly MSC – Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General - 1969 to 1975 (died 2 September 1994)
- Bishop Edward Bede Clancy, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General - 1974 to 1978 (retired and resident in Sydney)
- Bishop Patrick Laurence Murphy – Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General - 1977 to 1986 (retired and resident in Sydney)
- Bishop Bede Vincent Heather, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General - 1979 to 1986 (retired and resident north of Sydney)

### **4) Ordination**

Fr Duggan was ordained at St Patrick's Seminary Chapel, Manly, on 8 December 1950 by His Eminence Sir Norman Thomas Cardinal Gilroy, Archbishop of Sydney.

It seems that Fr Duggan arrived in Scotland in approximately 1954, four (4) years after his ordination by Cardinal Gilroy in Sydney.

### **5) Abbey of the Holy Trinity, New Norcia**

Although our records do not assist here, it would appear that Fr Duggan was ordained for the Abbey of the Holy Trinity, New Norcia, Western Australia. At that time the Abbey was an *Abbey Nullius i.e. a* territory which did not belong to a diocese and which was separate and distinct by its own proper boundaries from the surrounding Archdiocese of Perth and Diocese of Geraldton. The *Territory Nullius of New Norcia* was ruled by a *prelate*, namely the Abbot of New Norcia, who exercised active jurisdiction over the clergy and people living in the territory. The *Territory Nullius* was suppressed in 1982 and reverted to the Archdiocese of Perth.

The contact details for the Abbot of New Norcia are as follows

Rt Rev Dom Placid Spearritt OSB  
Abbot  
Abbey of the Holy Trinity  
New Norcia WA 6509  
Tel 08 9654 8018  
Fax 08 9654 8097  
Email [norciawa@newnorcia.wa.edu.au](mailto:norciawa@newnorcia.wa.edu.au)  
Web [www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au](http://www.newnorcia.wa.edu.au)

There are no records on Fr Duggan's file regarding his time at New Norcia. I expect that it would be useful for Dom Placid Spearritt to be contacted for further details regarding his time at that Abbey.

The reason for Fr Duggan's move from New Norcia to Fort Augustus is unknown.

**6) Fort Augustus Abbey**

Fort Augustus Abbey was founded near Loch Ness in Scotland in 1878 as an Abbey of the English Benedictine Congregation (**EBC**). The EBC groups together a number of monasteries of both monks and nuns in the United Kingdom and the United States.

The Abbey property was leased to the EBC by the 15th Lord Lovat and the monks began the conversion from a Georgian fort to a Neo-Gothic Abbey with Joseph Hanson as the original architect. A school for boys was also constructed at the same time. Further buildings were added by P P Pugin.

Fr Duggan states in some of his communications that during his twenty (20) years at Fort Augustus he had taught at Fort Augustus Abbey School, had been Novice Master and Prior, had ministered as Chaplain to Stanbrook Abbey for six (6) years and had been Parish Priest at Fort Augustus, Invergarry and Invermoriston.

The contact details for Stanbrook Abbey (another EBC community) are as follows:

Rt Rev Dame Joanna Jamieson OSB  
Abbess of Stanbrook  
Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation (Stanbrook Abbey)  
Callow End  
Worcester  
WR2 4TD UK  
Tel +44 (0) 1905 830209  
Fax +44 (0) 1905 831737  
E-mail [secretary@stanbrookabbey.org.uk](mailto:secretary@stanbrookabbey.org.uk)  
Web [www.stanbrookabbey.org.uk](http://www.stanbrookabbey.org.uk)

In 1993 Fort Augustus Abbey School was closed and, in December 1998, the remaining monks at the Abbey decided to disperse. The property then reverted to the Lovat Estates.

The last Abbot was the Rt Rev Abbot Mark Dilworth OSB who died on 28 February 1974 at the age of 79.

The only information that I have been able to locate indicates that the reason for the closure of Fort Augustus Abbey was in fact declining numbers rather than any other less inspiring reason.

For further information it may be worth contacting the current President of the EBC whose details are as follows:

Rt Rev Dom Richard Yeo OSB  
Abbot President - English Benediction Congregation  
Abbot of Downside  
Downside Abbey  
Stratton-on-the-Fosse  
Bath BA3 4RH  
United Kingdom  
Tel +44 (0)1761 235161  
Fax +44 (0)1761 235124  
Email [monks@downside.co.uk](mailto:monks@downside.co.uk)  
Web [www.downside.co.uk](http://www.downside.co.uk)

## **7) Return to Sydney**

On 20 February 1974 Fr Aidan Duggan wrote to His Eminence Sir James Cardinal Freeman, Archbishop of Sydney, indicating his desire to join his brother, Fr Fabian Duggan, in ministry in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

Fr Duggan indicated that he was concerned about his health and that the Fort Augustus climate was far too severe for him. He asked permission from his Abbot to return home and, once given, he visited the Archdiocese of Hobart for six (6) months where he was very well received by the Archbishop of Hobart, Sir Guilford Young.

By way of letter dated 6 March 1974 Cardinal Gilroy indicated that he would welcome Fr Aidan Duggan to the Archdiocese on a more permanent basis.

Fr Aidan Duggan arrived in Sydney on Tuesday, 3 September 1974.

You will note from his file that Fr Duggan's process of exclaustation from Fort Augustus and eventual incardination as a Diocesan Priest of the Archdiocese of Sydney was quite lengthy. Fr Duggan was eventually incardinated into the Archdiocese on 13 November 1990.

Please let me know if you require further information.

With kind regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian Rayner".

**Monsignor Brian Rayner**  
**Vicar General / Chancellor**