

Fr John Rasmussen

Bishop Michael
Bishop Emeritus Brian Heenan
Reverend Fathers
Religious who are present
Father Johns Family and relations
and friends

It is indeed an honour to be asked to say a few words about Fr John Rasmussen. Robyn and I were involved with Fr John at St Brigid's Parish, Farleigh. I was chairman of the parish finance council and Robyn helped him in whatever way she could. On behalf of the parishioners of Farleigh, Seaforth, Calen and Midge point we appreciated having Fr John as our Parish Administrator with Fr Don White as Parish Priest.

While at Farleigh he instigated having parish gatherings at Midge Point and Seaforth. Parishioners from the 4 church areas would gather. The format would be a BBQ and various sports games, tug-o-war etc. While the elder parishioners would watch on, Fr John joined in with every event.

He always encouraged the young to participate in the music at church and that was a feature at Farleigh. Children right through to teenagers would regularly attend mass every Saturday night. There was never a shortage of altar servers. Sometimes one of them would put the overheads upside down.

He would come and listen to the young choristers practicing on Friday afternoons. When the children were preparing for their sacraments, he would always attend the practices. He always appreciated the help from the catechists at the state schools and at the church.

The men in the parish had working bees for the Fair preparation, with the cleaning of the buildings and mowing. Fr John enjoyed these occasions and would often produce a few beers which always hit the right nerve.

We formed a roster to take turns driving Fr John on the Sunday morning to Seaforth, Calen and Midge Point. Joe Sherry, Mick Refalo, and Charlie Muscat were also on the run. We used to drive "Fill-us", which was Fr John's affectionate name for his land-cruiser as it always needed filling up. Fr John loved to have a cuppa after Mass at Midge Point. Once on the road from Midge Point, we would not be one kilometre down the road and Fr John would be sound asleep. He would not wake up until we were turning into the presbytery at Farleigh.

He attended all CWL functions and meetings if possible whenever they were held at either Calen, Seaforth or Farleigh. He felt that the CWL ladies were a great support to the parish.

He endeared himself, not only to the parishioners but to any members of the general public he came in contact with. His nature was to be totally inclusive.

He would come and have a meal with us from time to time and would reflect on how his parents were introduced, (and I am going back to the late 20's). I believe that Arthur Rasmussen as a boarder would have meals at Molloy's hotel which was in Sydney street where Wallace & Wallace solicitors are today. William Athol Molloy had the hotel from 1927 to 1934. They informed him that a niece of theirs would be

coming from near Mount Morgan and that they were sure that he would find her interesting. The thought that went through his father's head was that in no way would he be attracted to her as she was "Catholic". They were married on 29 May 1929 in the Cathedral in Rockhampton and the rest is history

Fr John never missed an invitation to the Catholic Debutante Ball. He made a point of having the Pride of Erin with my wife Robyn. He said he imagined Robyn as a broomstick as that is what he had to use when he was learning to dance.

We all knew that he had a direct connection to the Heavenly Father. During the Mass prior to one fair, the weather was heavily overcast and there had been intermittent showers during the day. In his closing remarks at Mass, he hoped that the rain would hold off at least until 9pm. Sure enough right on cue there was a shower of rain and when I checked the time it was 9.00pm. Not enough to wipe it out but I believe it was the Lord letting us know that he heard our prayer.

The presbytery was broken into while he was away on holidays, and I was with him when he arrived home. The first place he went to was the freezer in the fridge and out he pulled his bottle of whiskey. He was very relieved. Apparently, He always kept his whiskey in the freezer.

In conclusion he was greatly missed when he finished his time at Farleigh. He was a humble man and a compassionate priest.
Vale Fr John Rasmussen.