

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Remembrance on the occasion of the closure of Holy Spirit Convent, Kurri Kurri, 12th June 2011.



Presider: Sr Laretta Baker. Word of Welcome.

We begin : In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Take a moment of quiet to remember the Sisters of St Joseph who have served in the parish community here over the last 113 years and let us ask the Holy Spirit to guide us into our future as we sing:

Pulsing Spirit.

Pulsing Spirit, rippling river,
Source of mercy's tender might,
Gentle power, humble glory,
Subtle, ever dancing light:
Healing Wisdom in us flowing,
Now reveal our human worth.
Play beneath the muddied waters:
Come renew the face of earth!

Spirit free, unbounded motion,
Beauty's mirror, heart's delight,
Gift abundant all around us,
Flood the world with life and light.
Fountain ancient, ever springing,
Play in new, creative ways.
Lift us, stream of lavish loving,
High on waves of joyful praise!



Presider: Today on this feast of Pentecost, it is appropriate that this Parish named in honour of the Holy Spirit gathers to recall the giftedness that has been poured out on them over the last hundred years and more. Let us hear again part of the message that is given us in today's gospel of St John.

Reader: *In the evening of the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were for fear of the jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you.' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again. 'Peace be with you. As the Father sent me so am I sending you.'* After that he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'



Response [Sung]: Let the Spirit dwell within our hearts to celebrate the wonder of our God

As we reach out together and find our strength in you,

Come share the gifts of the Spirit. [No 118 AOV. Copyright 1995 John Burland & John Jacobs Used with permission WOL 314]

Presider: In this reading, we hear how the first disciples of Jesus were jolted out of their fear and galvanized by the Holy Spirit to go out and spread the Good News of Jesus to the world of the first century.



Just over a century ago, on the 28th June, 1908 a duo of Sisters of St Joseph, spurred on by this same Spirit, came to this parish - first of all travelling from Nulkaba where the Sisters had been ministering since 1886. Sister Vincent Webber and Sr Sebastian Brimstone were those forerunners of many more sisters who followed in their path over the next hundred years. During that time no less than eight local girls chose to dedicate themselves to this same ministry – Sr Clothilde Gollan, Sr Xaverius Byrne, Sr Margaret Connell, Sr Monica and Sr Zita Peel, Sr Eileen Page, Sr Rosemary Jackson and Sr Helen Anne Johnson – a great tribute to the faith filled families of Kurri.

Today, another duo , Sr Lesley and Sr Tess, become the last of that long line to have lived in the heart of this parish community where so much has been accomplished, witnessed by the complex of buildings now occupying this site close to where that original convent building was constructed. As reported at the time it was: *a weatherboard (rusticated) structure of handsome design, built on brick foundations. It had a villa front, finished with ornamental barge boards.* – a result of the efforts of hard-working mining families hand in hand with those first sisters and their formidable parish priest Fr McAuliffe.

So we come to the closure of the successor of that first foundation and the closure of one phase of our history. We look forward with confidence to a continuing growth of this Parish of the Holy Spirit as we pray with gratitude for all that has gone before.

Reader:

1. We pray for our Church – especially the local church of Kurri-Abermain. May the people here always be open to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. *Pause* We pray to the Lord.

Response: Lord hear our prayer.

2. We pray that the Holy Spirit may fill our hearts with gratitude as we remember the pioneers of this parish who welcomed the sisters among them and whose generosity enabled the growth of Catholic education for over one hundred years. *Pause* We pray to the Lord. **Response...**

3. The Spirit's fire of zeal burnt brightly in the families of this parish and gave rise to a rich legacy of religious vocations. We ask that all those who have dedicated their lives to spreading the Gospel may continue to be messengers of this Holy Spirit. *Pause* We pray to the Lord. **Response...**

4. May the Spirit of Knowledge and Wisdom be poured out on the children of Holy Spirit School so that they learn to appreciate the great gifts they have received and cherish their catholic heritage. *Pause* **Response...**

5. We pray that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, come in a special way to Sr Lesley and Sr Tess who are the last Sisters to call this convent home and who have enjoyed the hospitality of the people here. Grant them many happy years ahead. *Pause* **Response...**

6. We entrust to the Holy Spirit all those who have lived and worked here. We remember both the Sisters, Priests and people who have gone before us and we pray they be gathered together in the embrace of Father, Son and Spirit. *Pause* **Response...**

Presider: Gracious God, we ask you to hear our prayers through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing: Fr Tony Potts.

May God to whom nothing is hidden, and to whom you belong, give you blessing, salvation, and peace all the days he grants you on earth. Blessed be your way on the roads and paths you go.

May you go in the peace of God.

May the Holy Spirit preserve you.

May God's face shine upon you, and turn you from all evil.

And may Almighty God bless you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

AMEN.





The present convent at Kurri... home of the Sisters for many years.

KURRI VOCATIONS TO THE SISTERS OF ST JOSEPH.

Sr Margaret Connell



Sr Clothilde Gollan



Sr Xaverius Byrne



Sr Eileen Page



Sisters Monica and Zita Peel

Sr Rosemary Jackson



Sr Helen Anne Johnson



Sr Damian – the last Sister to be principal of Kurri School



Sr Tess and Sr Lesley the last sisters in residence at Kurri Convent.