



VIGEAT VERITAS

coba news

Mar 2017

Issue 50

From the President

As this is the first Newsletter for 2107 I wish all our members and their Families good health and Prosperity in the year ahead. This year is going to be an exciting and eventful year for us.

At the last Committee Meeting, some good ideas were presented to raise funds for our Scholarships Program. It has come to our notice that there are many ex-students residing in Western Australia, who are not aware of the existence of COBA and our mission. We are looking at the viability of organising a Dance in Perth this year. The dance would be a fund raiser for us as well an opportunity for us to enrol new members in W.A. We currently have six Life Members in W.A. and I am confident that we can rely on them to organise this event on our behalf.

We are having great difficulty raising adequate funds through Social Events to finance our Scholarship and other programs. I am appealing to all our members to consider donating \$50 or more a year to keep our Association viable. I am confident I can rely on your full support in this matter. I also urge existing members to sign up new members.

Our Campion Roof Appeal has received donations of \$9300 so far from our members. I intend to close this Appeal once we reach \$10000, which was our initial target. I thank all those who have contributed to this worthy cause and I once again appeal to those who have not contributed yet to do so now and help us meet our target. I have been assured by the Principal Brother Soosairaj s.g. that the names of all donors will be displayed on a plaque in the newly constructed roof. All donors will receive an official receipt from the school via email or post.



Loftus Callanan

What's inside ...

My life in the Philippines

Reflecting on my school years

COBA Barbeque

Special Events

Advertise in this Newsletter

For a half page black and white advertisement for 3 issues - \$150

For a half page colour advertisement for 3 issues - \$200

For a full page black and white advertisement for 3 issues - \$300

For a full page colour advertisement for 3 issues - \$400

Editor's Note

We are proud to publish the second part of Fr. Rodney Hart's life in the Philippines. Royston Edwards shares his memories of his days at Campion.

Feel free to send us any old photographs from your school days that you would like to share. If you need any assistance, contact and of us and we're glad to help. Our contact numbers are below.

Editor

Congratulations: KEVIN Michel, (class of 1978) on being elected to Parliament in WA. He won the seat of Pilbara the recent State Elections in Western Australia. Kevin represented the Labour party, who won a landslide victory in this election.

Congratulations to Kevin and his party on this achievement. Kevin is a Lifetime member of COBA Australia.

It is a proud day for the Campion community in Australia.



Obituaries:

OLGA D'Vaz (nee Vassou) passed away in Melbourne on 30-Jan-2017. Our heartfelt condolences to Don, Sharon and all the family.

coba news



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I had two other close encounters with death, both in Margosatubig, a fishing town. I was on my way to a neighbouring island to bless a wedding. I had with me in the boat 8 students, boys and girls and two catechists. The island was about 1 hour and 15 minutes away by boat. Suddenly a freak storm arose and the boat capsized. I was thrown into the water. I did not know how to swim. One of the students grabbed me and helped me get back into the boat which would not start again as water had got into the engine. We were drifting on the sea, knowing very well that people from the wedding would come searching for us and sure enough they did. The funny part of this whole incident was that my Mass kit went into the sea. I could not say the wedding Mass. So we had the wedding banquet, village style, before the wedding Mass. In the meantime some students went back to Margosatubig to get another Mass kit. I celebrated the wedding Mass late afternoon. This was a case

of putting the cart before the horse.

My third encounter with death was about a year later when I was almost shot to death. This is what happened. One Sunday morning after I had celebrated Mass, a girl came to see me with her parents and the man who wanted to marry her. She was just past 18 years while the man was around 35. When they had filled up their marriage forms for investigation. He was not from our parish but from Cotobato, another town quite far away. The name sounded familiar, because about 10 days earlier Bishop Escaler, a Jesuit, had given us at a clergy meeting the names of people who were doing the dirty work of the military, killing people. They were guns for hire. This man's name topped the list. At first, I did not tell him that I knew his identity. He had no documents whatsoever to prove his identity or even to show that he was a Catholic except that his name was Ignatius. When I told him that I could not bless his marriage unless he presented me with people who could vouch for his identity and character, he got very angry and began to use abusive language against me and the Church. I lost my temper and told him to his face that he was a murderer who had murdered 12 or 13 people after torturing them. He was dumbfounded and could not talk for a while. Then he jumped up from his seat and said: "I will come back and get you." He did come back one week later with a revolver. I had just left for the school. He stood in front of the main door of my residence, knocking with gun pointed at my door. He was shielded by a companion. However, a passer-by saw them standing with the gun and ran to the police. One escaped but the one with the gun, the one who came to see me was arrested. If I had stayed five minutes longer in my room that day before going to school, I would not be alive to tell this story and others. According to the police, he had a fanatical group called the "Rock Christ." Every night he and his group would gather in a hut he had built. They had erected an altar. They would place a Bible on the altar and around it their guns and knives and conduct their bizarre ritual. The gun he had was in the name of a general in the army, a clear sign that he was a gun for hire.

While the above are frightening experiences that I went through, there were others, some comical, others not so comical.

In Cullion I was charged in court by a lawyer for illegal possession of firearms. He had an ax to grind against Jesuits because his son was dismissed from a Jesuit College in Manila. I did have an illegal gun in my possession. I had taken it away from a man whom I knew who was running after a man whom he had caught having relations with his wife. I told the gun owner that I would give it to him the following day when he had calmed down. This lawyer came to know that I was in possession of the gun and right away filed a case against me. The police arrived and saw the gun under my cabinet. It was there for all to see. They knew my story but were forced to file a case against me because of the lawyer. The case was dismissed a month later when I appeared in court with witnesses who testified on my behalf.

In Margosatubig, when I took over the parish, it was week before Holy Week. I had taken over from a Jesuit who was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. The parish was in a mess. For the blessing of palms on Palm Sunday, I could not find a holy water bottle and I was told that a big crowd would attend. So I found a fairly large rubbing alcohol bottle and filled it with holy water. With my first splash of holy water, the small plastic cover came off and a whole lot of water went straight into the face of a woman in front of me. She exclaimed with a loud voice: "Dios ko" meaning "O my God". The people roared with laughter. The woman took it well and smiled although her facial make-up was a mess. I apologized.

In the same parish, about a year later, there was a referendum ordered by the dictator Marcos. I was told that preparations were underway to manipulate the votes. I told my parishioners at my Sunday Masses a week before the voting that I would announce the names of the people who cheated in the balloting if I had positive evidence. As expected, there was cheating. I had first hand evidence from teachers who were manning the ballot boxes. The following Sunday I announced the names of those who cheated. One of those was the Mayor's secretary who lived next door to the church. That night big stones were thrown on the roof of my residence. They created a noise as the stones came rolling down. People rushed to my residence when they heard the noise. There was no damage to my residence. They were just trying to frighten me. It did not work. The stoning took place on a Monday night. The following Sunday I told the parishioners of the stoning. Some of them cried. At the prayer of the faithful, I inserted this petition: "That God may punish those who cheated in the voting. Let us pray to the Lord." Some of the people opened their mouths to reply: "Lord hear our prayer" but then immediately shut their mouths while others replied. It made me smile. On Monday, I put up a big classroom writing board in front of the main entrance of the church with these words: "This is the house of God. Devils keep out." That same Monday evening, I got a call from the wife of the Mayor who was a Catholic while her husband was a Protestant. She requested me to visit the Mayor who was in hospital. As soon as I entered the room, the wife left. The Mayor was lying in bed. I stood by his side. He told me that he had collapsed that afternoon while he was talking to his staff although he was not sick at all. He told me that he had heard that I had prayed at the Sunday Mass that God would punish those who cheated. He said that he had no hand in the cheating. He said that his fainting was a punishment from God because of his command responsibility. He told me that he would look into the matter. I told him that I had nothing personal against him as we had often met at gatherings. We parted as friends. That was the activist in me.

In Ipil where I was next assigned as assistant parish priest and director of the school and college, this incident happened. I mentioned earlier that the area was a trouble spot. One night I was alone in the parish priests' residence. The parish priest was away on retreat. Past 10.00 at night, there was a knock on the door. I was already in bed but awake. I opened the door. It was a teenager. He wanted to talk to me. He had a plastic bag in his hand. He said that he was hungry, that he had come a long way to visit his mother who was sick. I gave him food. While eating he told me that he had joined the News Peoples' Army because the military had killed his father and he had resolved to kill any military man if he got the chance. He asked me for medicines for his sick mother. I gave him what medicines I had. After eating, he asked me if he could leave his plastic bag with me and that he would pick it up after seeing his mother. He showed me a revolver and a live hand grenade that was in the bag. He was afraid to take it with him to his mother's house. I was put on the spot and did not know how to act. I agreed to protect this teenager from sure death if caught. He told me not to lock the door and that he would return about 2.00 a.m. and pick up the bag which he left behind the door and leave quietly. A little after 2:00 am I heard the creaking of the door. After about 15 minutes I got up to check. He had left with the bag.

From Ipil I was sent as chaplain to Philippine General Hospital in Manila. One Sunday morning I was hearing confessions in a nearby parish church before saying Mass. A man came into the confessional and right away said that he was murderer. He then slowly pushed a dagger, the murder weapon, in the space between the priest's arm-rest and the confessional screen and told me to keep it, that the police were after him. I said "no" and immediately pushed it back. He took it and disappeared. I had no idea who he was. I could not recognize his face through the confessional screen.

These are some of the incidents that are clearest in my mind. All these incidents took place during my 22 years of work in the trouble spots and poor areas. The remaining 22 years of my life in Cebu and Manila were quite comfortable. I was never in want. I used to keep my mother informed while she was still alive of all that was happening. She told me to write a book of all my experiences in detail. I have never done so. I would at times give friends here and in India snippets of my experiences. This is the first time I have put down in writing somewhat in detail my major experiences in the Philippines.

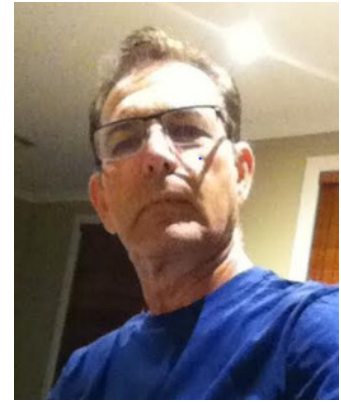
Since my arrival here in the Philippines, I go home every 4 years for 6 weeks. I usually spend Christmas and New Year at home in Chennai. We usually have a family gathering some time in Christmas week.

I must say that I have seen the hand of God guiding me through life especially in the 3 near death experiences. I have lived a full life as a priest and a very fulfilling one at that. For this, I thank God from the bottom of my heart. I now look forward to God's continued guidance during the remaining years of my life as I walk the path that leads to his heavenly home.

The NBN comes to Darwin.

LOGON : Add wood to make the barbie hotter.
LOG OFF : Stop adding any more wood to the barbie.
MONITOR : Keeping an eye on the barbie.
DOWNLOAD : Getting the firewood off the ute.
HARD DRIVE : Making the trip back home without any cold tinnies.
KEYBOARD : Where you hang the ute keys.
WINDOWS : What you shut when the weather's cold.
SCREEN : What you shut in the mozzie season.
BYTE : What mozzies do
MEGABYTE : What Townsville mozzies do.
CHIP : A pub snack.
MICROCHIP : What's left in the bag after you've eaten the chips.
MODEM : What you do to the lawns.
LAPTOP : Where the cat sleeps.
SOFTWARE : Plastic knives and forks you get at Red Rooster.
HARDWARE : Stainless steel knives and forks - from K-Mart.
MOUSE : The small rodent that eats the grain in the shed.
MAINFRAME : What holds the shed up.
WEB : What spiders make.
WEBSITE : Usually in the shed or under the verandah.
SEARCH ENGINE: What you do when the ute won't go.
CURSOR : What you say when the ute won't go.
YAHOO : What you say when the ute does go.
UPGRADE : A steep hill.
SERVER : The person at the pub who brings out the counter lunch.
USER : The neighbour who keeps borrowing things.
NETWORK : What you do when you need to repair the fishing net.
INTERNET : Where you want the fish to go.
NETSCAPE : What the fish do when they discover a hole in the net.
ONLINE : Where you hang the washing.
OFFLINE : Where the washing ends up when the pegs aren't strong enough.

At the young age of 10 I was packed off to Campion along with 2 of my elder brothers. Mum accompanied me on this first journey to Campion to meet the principal and complete my admission into the second class boarding. My luggage consisted of a trunk and bedding. The trunk contained my clothes, school uniform, wash-basin, enamel mug, plate, spoon & fork. Strapped to my bedding of course was my hockey stick.



Other old boys will also remember filling the basin in the night to brush our teeth and wash our faces in the morning. I found the food hard to swallow but the biryani we were served on feast days cannot be forgotten. We would wash our utensils after every meal and clean them once a week with the ash that was dumped near the cistern. Once a week we would access the box room when the dhobi came.

My first principal was Fr. Thamby and the prefect was Fr. Asirvatham. I will never forget Fr. Thamby as I've received six of the best from him, twice. The first time was for failing in Tamil, the second for not sweeping the staircase close to his office properly. I had stripes on my backside, which nowadays would be considered child abuse. Nevertheless, school days were great. I began to travel to and from the school by myself, meeting up with the Hubli, Guntakal, Bangalore and occasionally the Erode boys. I am sure some of the guys will recollect how we packed our bedding and trunks into the bullock cart from the railway station to the school.

In my first year I was put in team Tars. In my second year, I became captain of Tars. I spent the next 7 years in the boarding. My journey took me through Berchmans, Gonzagas, Southwells, Ogilvies & Fishers. I was team captain of the Savio House and we won the shield in '68. We also won the hockey finals that year and I represented the Trichy district in the state tournament in Madras in 1969. I was also picked along with Ashley D'Cruz, Edgar Atkinson and Ian Bird to represent the under 17's Trichy district cricket team.

There's a lot to be told. My teacher Miss Florence Jeremiah was my mentor. I had Frs. Miranda, Macedo, Hart and another priest we called "Cock Robin" as prefects. Fr. Hart copped the most trouble from us as we were senior boys and he was a young priest at the time.

It has been wonderful recounting the memories of those years. I am sure other boys from other eras would also love to share their experiences.

A few photos from the COBA Barbeque December 2016



Campion Old Boys Association Australia

MAY DANCE & CURRY NIGHT

A COBA Scholarship fund-raiser event

For Bookings Contact

Bernard D'Lasselle	0434854 127
Cedric D'Rozario	03 9576 8204
Charles Honour	0416 269 173
Christopher Quental	0406 207 639
Gareth Stevenage	0403 523 332
Gerard Fernandez	0439 197 627
Loftus Callanan	0407 840 161
Robbie Starr	0423 250 146
Royston James	0408 266 436

**Noble Park Community Centre
Ross Reserve, Memorial Drive
Noble Park VIC 3174
Melway Ref. 80 – E12**

Music by Dynamic Duo

**Sat, 6th May 2017
7:00 pm - 12:00 pm**

**Adults \$25
Kids 10 + \$10**

BYO drinks



**VINCENTIAN RETREAT CENTRE,
MELBOURNE**

INAUGURATION MASS

"All things can be done by the one who believes"

Mark 9:23



**Date: 1st April 2017
Saturday**

**Venue: Salesian College
10 Bosco St
Chadstone VIC 3148**

**Time: 9:30 am to 12:30pm
*followed by lunch***

**MASS CELEBRATED BY
The Most Reverend
DENIS J HART
Archbishop of Melbourne**



**Fr Rojan George V.C
Director Vincentian Retreat Centre
Melbourne**

Contact: Fr. Rojan George V.C 0421 963 601

Ramesh & Bernie 0433 549 167 / 0425 717 556 / 5998 0994

Email: rbvm.546.samson@bigpond.com

Our Australian Life Members

ELLIS	Sydney	Skye	VIC	CONYERS	Jennifer	Clarinda	VIC
D'ROZARIO	Jude	Mulgrave	VIC	HICKMAN	Lucien	Hampton Park	VIC
FERNANDEZ	Ronald	Noble Park	VIC	D'ROZARIO	Alister	Dingley Village	VIC
RODRIGUES	Roland	Oakleigh East	VIC	FERNANDEZ	Derek	Keysborough	VIC
FULLER	Tyrone	Hawker	ACT	RODRIGUES	Brenda	Templestowe	VIC
RODRIGUES	Ouida	Oakleigh East	VIC	CORREA	Jude	Thomastown	VIC
COTTER	Cecilia	Auburn	NSW	GONSALVEZ	Austin	Dandenong	VIC
COTTER	Gwendoline	Sefton	NSW	ROUSE	Norma	Noble Park	VIC
COTTER	Leslie	Sefton	NSW	COLOMB	Noel	Glen Waverley	VIC
COTTER	Milton	Auburn	NSW	ELLIS	Philo	Skye	VIC
RODRIGUES	Robert	Chester Hill	NSW	LOBOW	Marius	Cranbourne North	VIC
VAN HALTREN	Derrick	Glen Waverley	VIC	ROUSE	Alester	Berwick	VIC
GONSALVEZ	Bernadette	Narre Warren Sth	VIC	ROUSE	Melford	Noble Park	VIC
GONSALVEZ	Cyril	Narre Warren Sth	VIC	D'VAZ	Don	Dandenong North	VIC
D'ROZARIO	Dawn	Mulgrave	VIC	CARVALHO	Raymond	Narre Warren	VIC
LOPEZ	Joseph	Bentleigh	VIC	D'ROZARIO	Priscilla	Keysborough	VIC
KEIN	Royce	Oakleigh South	VIC	D'ROZARIO	Cedric	East Brighton	VIC
WRIGHT	Neville	Springvale	VIC	QUENTAL	Christopher	Cranbourne North	VIC
PAUL	Gary	Springvale	VIC	HENDRICKS	Rory	Shelley	WA
COTTER	Evelyn	Greystanes	NSW	FERNANDEZ	Gerard	Cranbourne	VIC
PATTERSON	Terrence	Canning Vale	WA	D'CRUZ	Cleaton	Bentleigh	VIC
LOPEZ	Sheila	Bundoora	VIC	BROOK	Neville	Narre Warren Sth	VIC
MICHEL	Lester	Collie	WA	HICKMAN	Daniel	Clarinda	VIC
HICKMAN	Desiderius	Hampton Park	VIC	RODRIGUES	Astrid	Keysborough	VIC
STARR	Robert	South Oakleigh	VIC	RING	Malcolm	Kellyville Ridge	NSW
FERNANDEZ	Patrick	Beaconsfield	VIC	LOBOW	Godfrey	Hampton Park	VIC
RODRIGUES	Adrian	Templestowe	VIC	GONSALVEZ	Dalton	St. Clair	NSW
HICKMAN	Joseph	South Clayton	VIC	McCUTCHEON	Tanya	Southbank	VIC
ROZARIO	Duncan	Rowville	VIC	McCUTCHEON	Bruce	Southbank	VIC
DEVISSER	Walwin	Clayton	VIC	MICHEL	Gavin	Lynbrook	VIC
KEIN	Campion	Mulgrave	VIC	GOMES	Patricia	Berwick	VIC
HICKMAN	Dymphna	Hampton Park	VIC	GONSALVEZ	Llewelyn	Keysborough	VIC
LOPEZ	Audrey	Bentleigh	VIC	JACOB	Rex	Sunshine	VIC
D'MONTE	Eric	Wantirna	VIC	GONSALVEZ	Craig	Figtree	NSW
MC CONVILLE	Audrey	Dandenong North	VIC	FERNANDEZ	Margaret	Beaconsfield	VIC
SMITH	Tommy	Clarinda	VIC	FERNANDEZ	Christine	Cranbourne	VIC
MICHEL	Kevin	Karratha	WA	MICHEL	Juan	Hampton Park	VIC
D'MONTE	Vernon	Mulgrave	VIC	ATKINSON	Edgar	Roxburg Park	VIC
D'MONTE	Mercy	Mulgrave	VIC	RODRIGUES	Dudley	Braybrook	VIC
PATERSON	Vera	Park Orchards	VIC	DEMONTE	Stanley	McDowall	QLD
D'LASSELLE	Bernard	Carnegie	VIC	JACOB	Sylvester	Pemulwuy	NSW
GOMES	Christopher	Berwick	WA	ALMEIDA	Melroy	South Oakleigh	VIC
FERNANDEZ	Douglas	Mulgrave	VIC	BROOK	Dagma	Narre Warren Sth	VIC
VAN HALTREN	Winston	Fairfield	VIC	MACEDO	Raulston	Bentleigh	VIC
KEIN	Callistus	Clayton South	VIC	MOREIRA	Ronald	Berwick	VIC
COTTER	Joseph	Chester Hill	VIC	VERNEM	Joyce	Doveton	VIC
WALKER	Canute	Clarinda	NSW	JAMES	Royston	Dandenong	VIC
CALLANAN	Loftus	Altona Meadows	VIC	DILLON	Joseph	St.Helen's Park	NSW
RODRIGUES	Denzil	Carina Heights	VIC	DILLON	Clifford	Glenfield	NSW
HONOUR	Charles	Pearcedale	QLD	EDWARDS	Royston	Cairnlea	VIC
JACOBS	Alfred	West Pennant Hills	VIC	RING	Russell	Thornlie	WA
RODRIGUES	Vilma	Oakleigh East	NSW	RING	Alexander	Bakeman	WA
			VIC	BREWTY	Ean	Clarinda	VIC

Our Overseas Life Members

FERNANDEZ	Claude	London	UK	EVERS	George	Tiruchirappalli	IND
BAYER	Winston	Oxon	UK	LOBOW	Agnes	Golden Rock	IND
GREEN	Cyril	Surrey	UK	PAUL	Patricia	Tiruchirappalli	IND
PEARS	Sten	Galway	IRE	WRIGHT	Avis	Tiruchirappalli	IND
GREEN	Kevin	Wiltshire	UK	WRIGHT	Beverley	Tiruchirappalli	IND
RODRIGUES	Noel	Ontario	CAN	SHERWOOD	Althea	Tiruchirappalli	IND
D'CRUZ	Basil	Essex	UK	NETTO	Elwyn	Alwaye	IND
D'SILVA	Rex	Trivandrum	IND	ITTIANATH	Raman	Goa	IND
D'SILVA	Emmanuel	Kottayam	IND	HART s j	Fr. Rodney	San Juan	PH
D'CRUZ	Ralph	Nepean	CAN	BOUT	Aubrey	Florida	USA
BAYER	Alroy	Coimbatore	IND	PEARS	Milton	Surrey	UK
PAUL	Maxwell	Isle of Wight	UK	RAMAKRISHNAN	Nair	Chennai	IND
PILARRD	Henry	Cumbum	IND	SUKUMARAN	Arumugam	Chennai	IND
NETTO	George	Kerala	IND	BASTIAN	Ashley	Hounslow	UK
ROZARIO	Percival	Trichy	IND	Br. Soosairaj	sg	Trichy	IND