

I have spent much of this week at the Ministry Conference, led by our Assistant Bishop, Genieve. We were reminded, and so I remind you, that our parish belongs to the Marningatha Episcopate. This is a word taken from the Woiwurrong language spoken by the Wurundjeri people, and has the meaning of “Divine Being”. Taken alongside the names of our other Episcopates, Jumbunna (speaking out, or proclamation), and Oodthenong (A gathering place), they express the desire of the Diocese to be a place where people are gathered to proclaim the good news of Christ.

We were also informed of a new Episcopate name. As you know, Bishop Brad was consecrated last month. It has been announced that his area of Episcopal care will be known as the ‘Monomeeth Episcopate.’ Monomeeth is word especially rich in meaning that can be used in a variety of contexts, most gathered around the broad concepts of rightness, wellness and goodness. It can be used to describe the personal wholeness and serenity that arises out of a sense of satisfaction with one’s vocation and life circumstances. In this ‘Monomeeth’ captures well the responsibilities of Bishop Brad, which embrace the whole of the Diocese and have a particular focus on people, culture and wellbeing.

I will reflect in more detail on some of the aspects of the conference in the coming weeks in this forum. The theme of the conference was about developing resilience and preparing for and being equipped for ministry “for the long haul”. As such, a number of the sessions had some practical aspects to them, such as how to recognise signs of unhealthy stress, the balance in our lives, and the ways in which we are able to find sustenance. Although the focus may have been on us, as people in ministry, the same is true, I think, for every person in his or her own life. So many of us lead busy, frantic lives, with competing demands and tensions. It is important for us to be able to recognise our stressors, to know our limits, and to understand the ways in which we are fed and nurtured, so that we might be able to balance our lives.

You will find more information in the pewsheets about the upcoming study sessions, which will be held here in a few weeks. Although the sessions are presented during a break in the Education for Ministry (EfM) course that is run through Christ Church, South Yarra, the idea is that anyone can come along to these sessions and engage in some thoughtful discussion around an important theological topic – how we minister in a multi-cultural context. I encourage your attendance at this event.

May Justin of Rome, John XXIII, the martyrs of Uganda, Janani Luwum, and all the Saints walk with you this week... *Sam*