

## **Miraculous Medal Homily 04/05/2013**

**By: Fr Sanislaus Barry C.M.**

Today we are having devotions in honour of Our Lady of The Miraculous Medal. Not so long ago we were celebrating ANZAC Day (25<sup>th</sup> April 2013). I wish to tell you a story in connection with ANZAC Day and Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal. When the late Fr Bill Taylor C.M. and I were young priests, way back in 1951, we were sent down to the Vincentian parish in Ashfield to help look after the parish, while the priests serving in the parish were taking it in turns to have their annual holidays. The provincial at the time, Fr Nicholas Rochester C.M. informed Fr Bill and I that Ashfield was not to be our initial appointment; we were only filling in!

Fr Victor McKinnon C.M., the parish priest of St Vincent's Ashfield, at the time sent me to visit a World War II veteran who was very ill in the old Western Suburbs Hospital. When I saw him he did not want my priestly services! He claimed that he had given religion away as a result of his shocking experiences during the war.

Fr Joseph Quinn C.M. was one of the priests serving in the Vincentian Parish of Ashfield. Fr Joe was a late vocation. He was working on the Quinn family property outside Elmore in Western Victoria, when he decided to become a Vincentian priest, but he had great difficulties in achieving that goal because he had left school early and had not studied Latin. However he was eventually ordained a priest. During WWII Fr Joe volunteered to serve as a chaplain in the 2<sup>nd</sup> A.I.F. He saw action in North Africa, Greece and Crete. He also volunteered to serve in Papua New Guinea, when the Japanese invaded.

When I returned to Ashfield presbytery from the old Western Suburbs Hospital, Fr Joe asked me about my meeting with the very sick digger. I had to confess that my mission was unsuccessful. Fr Joe asked me whether I had given him a Miraculous Medal? I had to confess; No I hadn't.

Fr Joe then said that he would go around to Western Suburbs Hospital that very afternoon; off he went. When he returned to St Vincent's Ashfield, he too had to admit that the dying digger didn't want his services either. However the patient took a Miraculous Medal from Fr Joe, who had written out the invocation on the Miraculous Medal, and the digger promised to pray the invocation. Two to three days later the dying digger requested that Fr Joe would visit him again. Fr Joe went to see him and he was able to tell us later that his fellow digger asked for the sacraments from him.

A few days later, he died. Fr Joe looked at us – Fr Bill and myself - he seemed to say to us; "Well why don't you young priests give your patients the Miraculous Medal?"

### **Fr Joseph Quinn C.M.**

**Born:** 26<sup>th</sup> May 1891 at Elmore, Victoria

**Ordained:** 1<sup>st</sup> December 1930 at St Mary's Cathedral Sydney

**Died:** 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1958 at Ashfield

**Aged:** 66