

REMEMBERING BR PATRICK CAMILLE MOHEN CFC

Born: 3 February 1931
Entered the Christian Brothers: 26 January 1953
Entered Novitiate: 14 January 1954
Made First Vows: 13 May 1955
Made Final Vows: 25 December 1960
Entered Eternal Life: 12 May 2010

“Pat’s life was filled with excessive physical pain for most of his 79 ½ years yet it never stopped him from performing physical assignments that would have challenged the fittest of men. In the 1960’s at our Victoria Park School, he built a stone wall 70 metres long, from local colourful rocks which was admired by the locals for its artistic beauty and meticulous craftsmanship. At one end of the wall, he dug a well 30 feet deep in sand, to tap into pristine fresh and sweet water which for forty years kept all the school grounds and lawns green and blooming.



Despite all his infirmities the help he gave to others far, far outweighed the help he permitted himself to receive.

He was imbued with a determination for Social Justice and his “wheelchair” (Gopher) was often seen in the gatherings of demonstrators campaigning for a Justice Cause”. **(Br Pat Kelly, Cluster Leader W.A.)**

I learned he slept barely four hours each night as he was constantly racked with pain. He filled in the hours reading. His reading has been a feature of his life. His formal education was sparse, but he constantly read deeply and widely. He was attracted by anything radical. For a time, I found his views difficult to accept but in general it was simply that he was ahead of the field. The rest of us caught up in time, only to discover Pat had moved on yet again. He was the best example of a self-educated person I have known.

(Br Rod Ellyard, Philippines)1981:

1980, 1985 – 1995 Broome, WA

Pat’s presence has been a real gift for us and our community has become the richer for his presence. During his stay of little over a year, his physical condition has improved immensely, and he has done wonders around the garden.

1986: One of the areas of need that has developed is for the local students to feel that they, as well as

the boarders, are part of the school. Pat Mohen has gone a long way to provide that pastoral support. By checking up on those students missing school and meeting with them and their parents he has been able to forge a bond between school and local community, especially the poorest of them. His cry is that “there are people whose lives are a complete mess, and the Church is irrelevant to them”. Somehow, we have to meet them where they are.

1996: Towards the end of the year Pat realised that return to Broome was out of the question. He then became officially a member of the Leederville Community.

In later years he took on a major role in setting up and supporting the Broome Drop-In and Youth Support Centre (Bubaugurra) in Dora St as a venue for youth to have a place for sports and other interests and to keep them occupied and off the streets. He was on the inaugural Committee and supported the project right through to his departure from Broome.

1996: Towards the end of the year Pat realised that return to Broome was out of the question. He then became officially a member of the Leederville Community.



In the Brothers and local communities he was always ready to challenge unjust situations and encourage Brothers and others towards authentic living of the Gospel. He is greatly missed by people of the town as well as the Broome Brothers Community.

Other Comments:

He has been an inspiration to me for years. I remember when He was in a cage outside Parliament House protesting the government policy on refugees. Yet he was a sensitive man who expressed his deeps soul through his poetry. His presence among us will be very much missed. He kept us honest and focused on what really matters in life and who we are as Christian brothers. ***(Br Peter Harney, Deputy Province Leader)***

“He wants to go but we want him to stay. He does so much good work here for so many patients and staff. We’ll really miss him when he goes.” ***(Staff at Catherine McAuley)***

The Poem, “Repayment” , by Pat, was included in the Funeral Mass booklet

You will find it on the next page:

Repayment

The earth is always ever kind to us
It has a passive acceptance of our abuses
We have abused so many earthly gifts
Over the ages and onwards into the future
Could we even try to offer a recompense
Small gifts of charity in return for rich bounty
What small returning could we offer in return
Even a simple lifestyle is an attempt
If it appears ungrateful at times, who is to blame?
We plant vast crops on land drying to desert
We settle populations in the path of wild cyclones
We cut down forests, destroy the land,
who is to blame
What can be done to repair past sins,
prevent future ones?
I know this appeal sounds like poetic pedantry
But I write from a long life time of suffering
I have watched the earth suffer, I can but appeal.

Br Pat Mohen