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In Loving Memory of  
**Father Jim Carroll SDB**



<b>Born</b>	<b>12 June 1924 at Armadale, Australia</b>
<b>First Profession</b>	<b>31 January 1944 at Sunbury, Australia</b>
<b>Final Profession</b>	<b>31 January 1950 at Sunbury, Australia</b>
<b>Ordination</b>	<b>1 July 1954 at Valdocco, Turin, Italy</b>
<b>Entered eternal life</b>	<b>15 May 2010 at Ferntree Gully, Australia</b>



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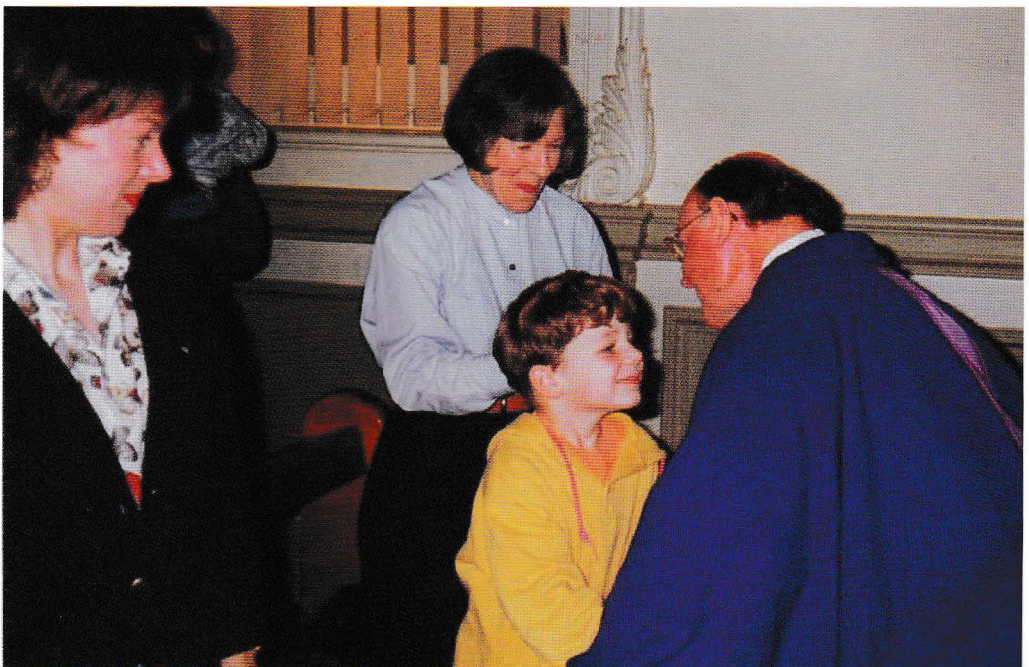
Dear Confreres,

The inscription on Jim's mortuary card says it well: *Here we try to make holiness consist in being very joyful.* How apt! How true of Jim.

Jim entered the Salesians because of the influence of the young men who led the Don Bosco Scout Troop at Brighton. Through them he came in contact with Rupertswood and Fr Ciantar who invited Jim to Rupertswood for a "holiday". As a result he met and was significantly influenced by the then Br Terry Jennings, and by the wonderful Brothers who kept the farm productive and the buildings maintained. Jim was so influenced by the Brothers that he wanted to be a Brother. Fr Ciantar talked him out of that. Jim was a Salesian for 65 years and a Priest for 55 years.

Fr James Joseph Carroll, son of Michael and Gemelia Carroll, would have been 86 in about a month's time. He was born on 12 June 1924. These details were not only of chronological significance for Jim. He was passionately committed to his family to the very end, and fiercely proud of his Lebanese background. Jim had two sisters: Philomena (Mena) who is deceased and Joan. Philomena was the only female in her dentistry class.

In keeping with the family spirit, Jim was always a thoroughly modern man, practical and inquisitive, he was not daunted by the advent of the computer and prided himself on his Lotus 123 (and later Excel) skills.



**JIM WITH HIS GREAT-NEPHEW, SISTER AND NIECE.**



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It was in the practical realm that Jim shone. Jim's work ethic matched that of "the men of 27," the magnificent Brothers whose labours put "Rupertswood" on its feet in those early, difficult days. The photo in this mortuary letter of Jim at the "kitchen" at the very first camp at Dromana in 1941 recalls his "studies" over those years. But eventually he had to leave the farm at Rupertswood and, in 1950, go to Turin, Italy to study for the priesthood.

His time there was not without adventure. He experienced his first serious illness, underwent very poor surgery ... and was forever disqualified from his life as an outstanding gymnast by the fact that he could not raise one arm high above his head.

At the end of his course of studies Jim was awarded a Licence (equivalent to our Masters degree) in Sacred Theology in 1954, and was ordained a Priest in Turin, with his mother and one of his sisters present, on 7 July 1954. However, instead of coming home, he was asked to remain in Turin to pursue a further Masters degree - a Licentiate in Canon Law. Jim felt unlucky to be asked to remain behind for further studies; he wanted to get back to something hands on.

In truth, Jim was intellectually gifted. He had won the State competition for Mathematics in his final school year at CBC St Kilda. Jim always joked about his theological and legal background, especially in the years when he was running the farm or the school at "Rupertswood". He often asked what was the point of all that theory that had occupied seven years of his life.



**JIM SETTING UP AT THE FIRST CAMP AT DROMANA, 1941**



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In this Jim underestimated himself. Jim had the ability to ask the right question - and of recent years even the radical question. Vin Feeney, Principal at St. Joseph's College Ferntree Gully, recalls how when he wanted to build a Technical Centre for the students on a site where the new building would be uncomfortably close to the Salesian Residence he put the matter to the Salesian Community. Jim asked, "Will it mean jobs for the students?" Vin replied that, yes, the extra training would result in more and better employment possibilities. Jim's response was simply to say, "Well then there's no question."

In 1957 Jim returned to resume his Sunbury experience, and he was to remain there until he was appointed to Oakleigh in 1973. In those 17 years Jim was the Principal of the School (or Prefect of Studies, as we called it then), the Bursar, then concurrently the Bursar and the Farm Manager, succeeding Fr Terry Jennings. He became something of a specialist in dual roles. Indeed, in the years 1967 till 1972 he was simultaneously the Bursar and Farm Manager at "Rupertswood" and the Rector of the house of formation at the Provincial House, Oakleigh! I think that this must be unique, not just in our Province, but in the whole Congregation.

Frank Moloney, the current Provincial tells how he first came to know Jim as a Novice in 1960, and later from 1963-65 while Frank was teaching in the emerging Salesian College "Rupertswood". He recalls being told by Jim in 1963, when he wondered out loud how he could possibly cover all his obligations: "You will be amazed just how much you can do in a day if you set your mind to it." They were exhausting days. The farm was at its peak, the College was growing to Matriculation classes, and the boarding section of the College was brimming over. Jim was everywhere - either in his soutane, or his overalls! At 2 in the morning he could call the young brothers from their duties in the dormitories to slip around in the muddy paddocks to shift irrigation pipes so that there would be good fodder for the cattle. Apparently well-fed cattle were more important than a young man's sleep! But the young brothers loved the challenge, and they loved Jim because he NEVER asked anyone to do anything that he himself was not doing first.

He led from the front. Sure, some of it - looking back - was unreasonable, but there was a foolishness for the Kingdom that drove Jim, and the young brothers admired him for it. None of this hectic activity was about Jim Carroll. It was all about what the Salesians were trying to do in the name of Don Bosco at Sunbury.

Then came the Oakleigh years (1973-1993). This period of Jim's life was the time when he really "came of age", and made an unforgettable contribution to the Province. In the first place, he took to a total change of scene with incredible ease. He moved from the frantic world of "Rupertswood" to the house of formation and the Provincial office with great peace, and brought his talents to bear immediately.



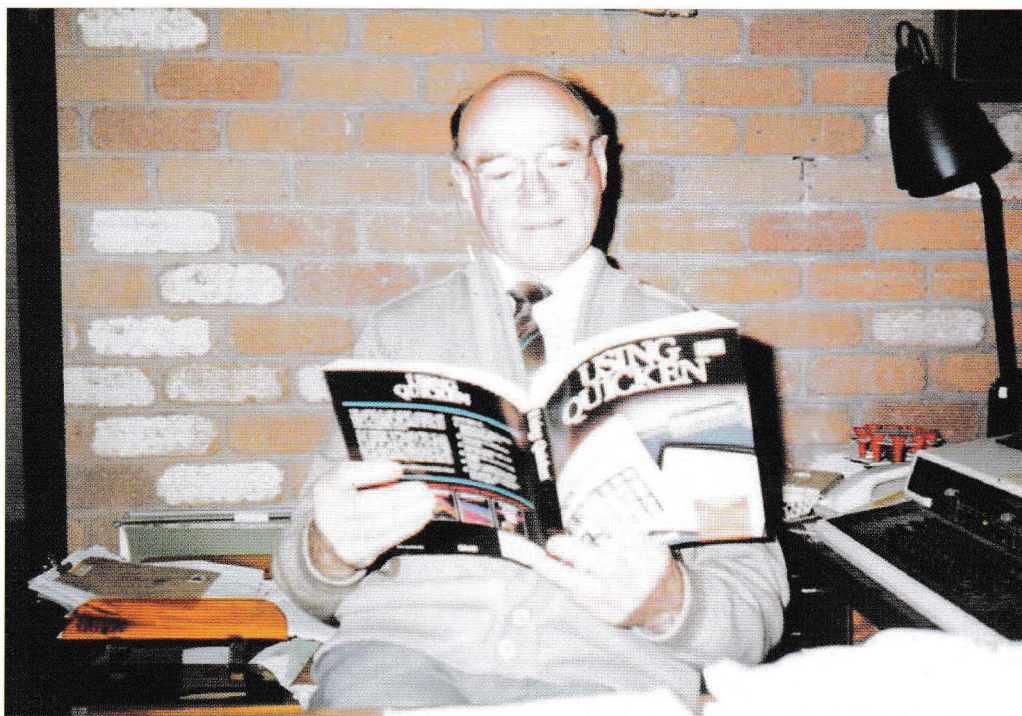
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As Rector of the young men preparing for the priesthood, Jim displayed an amazingly balanced ability to meet each person on his own ground. One theological student, who was out of favour at the time, suspected I think of being a maverick, carried out a demanding act of kindness which completely won Jim over. That was how Jim was. He had the ability to change his mind where change was necessary, and he would go in to bat for those who showed him that their needs were genuine.

Jim was the Economer from 1973 until 1993, and saw the Province through difficult financial times under four Provincials: Fr Wally Cornell, Fr Terry Jennings, Fr Frank Bertagnolli and Fr Julian Fox. One Salesian recalls how he required \$30,000 for a project he had in hand. He went to Jim and asked if he could have \$30,000. Jim replied, "\$30,000 is too much. I'll give you two cheques for \$15,000 each." That was Jim all over.

Jim worked hard to establish a well-balanced administration, to bring our systems into the modern world ... eventually (although not without some hesitations) into the era of computerisation. The photo of the 60+ year-old studying the most recent handbook on the accountancy programme "Quicken" illustrates his flexibility and modernity.

It was in the early 1980s that we began our mission into Samoa. Jim was intensely involved, even spending time with teams of workers to construct the present magnificent facility we have at Alafua. Across those years he became a crucial, and even towering figure in the life of our Province.





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There would hardly be a Salesian in the Province whom Jim did not support in a moment of personal or family difficulty. He was an example to the young men with his observance of the duties of a Salesian - prayer, work, joyful presence at community gatherings, especially mealtimes. Always a practical man, Jim sometimes surprised with his insights into people and situations. His advice, when sought, was couched in a few words that really went to the heart of the matter. His wisdom was astonishing!

Jim returned to the life of a Salesian school in 1994. His presence in the St Joseph's College Community at Ferntree Gully from 1994 until 2009 was as a unique face of Don Bosco. A young boy, who was in deep trouble in Year 8, was obliged to do community service for a misdemeanour by helping Jim one summer. Three years later Jim had him still as an assistant but he had trained him well by then and the boy developed into one of the College's finest student leaders. This young man credits so much of his achievement to the quiet influence of Fr Jim Carroll.

But it was not only current students who came under his influence. Past pupils of Jim's were in frequent contact with him. For example, Jim taught Peter Dillon in 1947 at Rupertswood in Jim's first year of teaching. Jim celebrated Peter's wedding to his wife Elaine in 1957. Jim then celebrated



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the marriage of one of Peter's daughters, and educated and celebrated the marriage of Peter's son and grandson. Not surprisingly, Peter went on to become an engineer. When Jim was in hospital in 2002 Peter came to visit him. This illustrates how Jim connected to people in extraordinary ways. A visitor to St. Joseph's College has this to say: *"I met Jim some years ago when he was Business Manager and I was impressed! Jim seemed to embody the fine Salesian spirit I grew to admire and respect - the genuine pastoral care of the students, sensitivity to family issues, and the marvellous 'roll up your sleeves and get things done quietly and capably' attitude. I liked Jim's orderly mind, his attention to detail and creative solutions to issues. One would never doubt his closeness to Jesus and the light of faith which marked his journey. Jim loved people, in particular, celebrations with people. His social skills were remarkable. He always found someone to talk to, laugh with, and share a glass of wine with. Jim made friends easily and in true Salesian spirit, embraced life joyfully."*

Allow me to end with words that Vin Feeney, Principal at St Joseph's College, wrote for the College Newsletter. Vin points out that Jim had such a strong appreciation of the value of time, he did not want to dally in conversations that were going nowhere. He had no desire to waste anyone's time ... not just his own. It was a rare form of respect. When Jim wished to bring a conversation to an end he would say "you can go now". Recalling that peculiarity in Jim's encounters with others, Vin writes: *"So, Fr Jim, you too can go now, knowing that you have in fact had a very good life. That you have been a force for good, an example of priestliness of the highest order, that you have loved and been loved by family, friends, confreres and students alike over many, many years. You can go now knowing that the God who so loved you that you were created with talents to share, welcomes you home."*

John Prest SDB  
Rector,  
Lysterfield, Australia

**Pastoral Ministry:** Teacher, Principal, Bursar, Rector,  
Provincial Economer, Vice Provincial.

*"Here we try to make holiness consist in being very joyful"*  
(Don Bosco)



