



ANGLICAN BOARD OF MISSION

Working for Love, Hope & Justice

2nd March, 2018

Top End Golden Jubilees celebrated Downunder

Celebrations for the 50th Anniversary of the Diocese of the Northern Territory are in full swing in Sydney, where the first diocesan bishop, the Rt Rev Ken Mason lives.

Bishop Ken was ordained to the diaconate by the Bishop of Bathurst, Arnold Wylde, in 1953, and priested in 1954. He then served within the Brotherhood of the Good Shepherd, a community of priests working in the outback of Australia. Members of the Brotherhood were appointed to outback parishes, remaining unmarried during their period of service. Without a regular stipend, their accommodation and living expenses were provided from the central funds of the Brotherhood.

After parish appointments in New South Wales and the Northern Territory he pursued studies at the University of Queensland. In 1965 he moved to Melbourne to work as assistant chaplain of Trinity College within the University of Melbourne and became its dean for two years in 1966.

On St Matthias' Day (24 February) 1968 Bishop Ken was consecrated at St John's Cathedral, Brisbane, Archbishop Phillip Strong KBE being the principal consecrator. On St David's Day (1 March) he was enthroned at Christ Church, Darwin, which became the cathedral as the new diocese – one of the largest in the world at 1,420,970 km² – was inaugurated. Cyclone Tracy destroyed this building on Christmas Day 1974. Only the entrance porch of the cathedral remained and this is now incorporated in the 'new' Christ Church Cathedral, which was consecrated on 13 March 1977 in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev and Rt Hon Donald Coggan.

Bishop Ken travelled frequently around his large diocese, to the four main parish centres (two of them staffed by the Brotherhood of the Good Shepherd) as well as to the aboriginal missions, which were served by the Church Missionary Society. He fostered the vocations of indigenous ministry, ordaining seven men to the ministry (known as the 'Arnhem Seven'). He also oversaw the transition of the missions to government settlements with Anglican ministry.

After fifteen years in Darwin he left the diocese to begin work as Chairman of what was then called the Australian Board of Missions, now the Anglican Board of Mission, the national mission agency of the Anglican Church of Australia. He remained in this position for ten years, from 1983 until his retirement in 1993.

In retirement, he enjoyed a busy social life being in residence for 22 years at St John's Village, Glebe. During his retirement he has maintained his long-standing association with St James' Church, King Street, in the city, and travelled widely, including a locum in the Diocese of Hong Kong. He now receives the care of medical and nursing staff of Sirius Cove Aged Care facility in Mosman, having suffered a stroke in January 2015. On Saturday there was a celebration at Sirius Cove of his 50 years of episcopal ministry, and we wonder if there are any others who have reached this significant milestone.

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Yesterday the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Diocese of the Northern Territory was marked by friends of the diocese with an afternoon tea hosted by St James', King Street, and attended by Bishop Ken and some of his successors – the Rt Revs Clyde Wood, Greg Thompson and Dr Greg Anderson, who has been the diocesan bishop since 2014.

On Sunday 4 March the celebrations continue at St James', King Street, with the Bishop of the Northern Territory, the Rt Rev Dr Greg Anderson, being the preacher at the three Eucharists: 7.45am (said), 9.00am (sung) and 11.00 (choral, music by Byrd).

A booklet giving more details about Bishop Ken's ministry can be downloaded from:
https://www.abmission.org/data/Publications/2018/Celebrating_Bishop_Ken_Mason.pdf

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Contact Vivienne For, ABM Communications Coordinator at communications@abm.asn.au for more information.

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