

Lecture by the Very Rev. J.E. Tennison Woods.
Subject — "Joan of Arc". Musical entertainment by
the Lady and Gentlemen Amateurs of St. Patrick's
Choir, Adelaide.

Articles or subscriptions for the above will be
thankfully received by the Rev. T. Bongaerts,
Willunga, or W.W. Hewett, Catholic Book Depot,
Adelaide.



Children attending the concert at the Oddfellows Hall on the 24th August, 1868.

ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, WILLUNGA. A Grand Fancy Sale and Concert will be held in the Oddfellows' Hall in aid of the above school, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, August 24, 25 and 26.

The sale of useful and ornamental articles will open each day at 11 in the morning, and close at 10 in the evening. On Wednesday the sale will close at 5 o'clock p.m., and the lecture and concert will be given at 7.

Lecture by the Very Rev. J.E.T. Woods. Subject — "Joan of Arc".

Solos, duets, etc., by Lady and Gentlemen Amateurs of St. Patrick's Choir, Adelaide.

Entrance to bazaar, sixpence. Tickets to lecture and concert — front seats, 2/-; body of the Hall, 1/6d.; to be had of the Rev. T. Bongaerts, and the members of Committee, Willunga, and at the Catholic Book Depot, Adelaide.

ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL, WILLUNGA. — On Monday, August 24, and the two following days a fancy sale was held in the Oddfellows' Hall, Willunga, in aid of the liquidation of a debt on the above school. Considering the state of the money market, it was a great success. On Wednesday evening a lecture and concert was given; the promised lecture was delivered by the Very Rev. J.E. Tennison Woods, the subject being "Joan of Arc". The concert was exceedingly good, commencing with the glee, "Hark, Apollo strikes the lyre". "The

Army and Navy" by Mr. P. Gillespie and John J. O'Brien was well sung; this was followed by several choruses and duets, assisted by ladies; "The Good-bye at the door," by a young lady, "Molly Asthore," by Mr. Gillespie, and a duet on the pianoforte by two young ladies. The whole concert was well rendered and passed off to the satisfaction of those present. "God save the Queen" brought the evening's entertainment to a close. We are glad to say that the debt on the schools has been reduced £80 by the sale and concert.

Amongst the many raffles run to raise monies for the school was the one mentioned below which was sure to be one of interest to many prospective home buyers.

To be raffled, in September next, in aid of the debt in St. Joseph's school, Willunga, a two-roomed house, with a half-acre allotment at Aldinga.

Two hundred tickets, 5/- each.

Tickets to be obtained of the Rev. T. Bongaerts, Willunga, the members of the Local Board, the Rev. C. Van der Heyden, St. John's, Kapunda; Father Woods, Adelaide; and W.W. Hewett, Catholic Book Depot, 18 Hindley Street.

Southern Cross — 20th August, 1869.

Feast Days

Again we are indebted to the *Southern Cross* for extracts from their papers which tells us how the children under the guidance of the Sisters of St. Joseph took part in those days during 1868-69 and 1871.

FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH — 19th MARCH, 1868.
WILLUNGA SCHOOL — Thursday, March 19 (the Festival of St. Joseph), was a day that will be long remembered by the children attending the Willunga School. About mid-day they assembled in the schoolroom, and after singing some hymns, marched through the township, preceded by a banner, having a bunch of white lilies worked in the centre, and the words “St. Joseph pray for us”. On returning to the school, they sat down with their clergymen and friends, and partook of an excellent tea, provided by the ladies of the congregation. The gathering was enlivened by the children enjoying themselves with various games, and just before dusk, accompanied by their parents, they returned home, well pleased with the day’s pleasure.

THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION — 8th DECEMBER, 1868.
WILLUNGA — The Feast of the Immaculate conception was celebrated at St. Joseph’s this year with usual eclat. A novena was given in preparation for the festival, with the benediction of the Most

Holy Sacrament after the evening novena service, producing a feeling of lively anticipation of the joy of the great day itself cannot but bring to the heart of every Catholic. On the present occasion, too, a special degree of interest attaches to it, from the preliminary proceedings taking place for the General Council at the metropolis of the Christian world. But the great event here was the procession of the school children, numbering nearly 100, carrying banners, headed by their reverend pastor, Rev. T. Bongaerts, and accompanied by their teachers and their Sisters of St. Joseph in charge of the school, and a crowd of spectators, singing with much spirit several appropriate hymns. The banners were exceedingly beautiful, and attracted the notice of several of our Protestant friends, who expressed themselves astonished at the style and order of the procession; they were very artistically worked in silk and gold by Misses Milligan and Ward, and reflect the highest credit upon the skill of these ladies. The one to the Infant Jesus was of white silk, with a centre painting of the Holy Nativity, surrounded by a gold lace border, with inscription in gold letters “Infant Jesus”. That to the Mother of God was of blue silk, with a similar painting in the centre representing the Coronation of our Immaculate Mother, with same description of border, having the words “Holy Mary, Pray for us,” worked in white silk. The banner to St. Joseph was of red silk, with the lily worked in the centre,

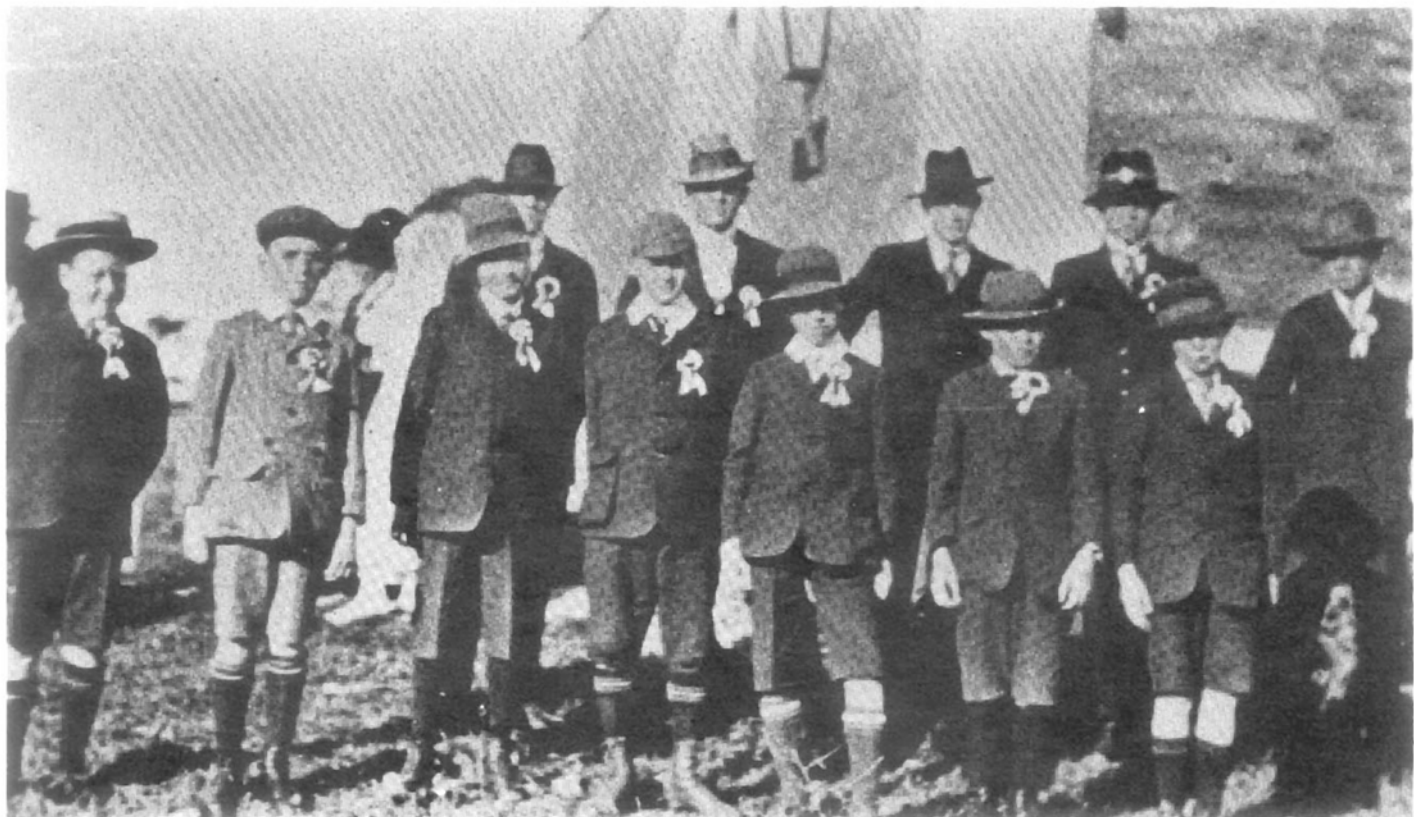
and the words "St. Joseph, pray for us". The procession, after walking through the township, returned to the schoolroom, which was very tastefully decorated with floral devices, singing a processional hymn, and the children were then regaled with tea and cake in abundant supply, after which they engaged in numerous games until 7 o'clock, when they assembled in the church for Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. At the conclusion of the service they adjourned to the schoolroom to be entertained with magic-lantern views, kindly lent for the occasion by Mr. Malpas, and which certainly afforded the greatest amount of delight and amusement to them. At the close they sang "God bless our Pope," and other hymns, heartily cheered their kind pastor, the Sisters, and the ladies, who had so generously furnished the tea table, departed thoroughly satisfied with the fete of the Immaculate Conception.

FEAST OF ST. JOSEPH — 19th MARCH, 1869.
WILLUNGA SCHOOL TREAT — On the Feast of St. Joseph a very pleasant day was spent by the children attending the school. About midday a large number of children attended the church, and after a short service by Father Theodore, they marched through the township singing several hymns, and headed by the elder scholars carrying some beautiful silk banners representing the Immaculate Conception, St. Joseph, and St. Patrick. On returning to the schoolhouse a tea was provided, and after enjoying various games they returned home, well pleased with their day's entertainment.

FEAST OF THE ASCENSION — 1871. ST. JOSEPH'S, WILLUNGA — On the Feast of the Ascension there was a grand procession of the school children round the township of Willunga, and in the afternoon a festival. The whole affair was a complete success, and gave great satisfaction to both pastor and people. The procession was arranged with considerable taste; the double lines of children walking far apart so as to give a central position to the banners, five in number, which were carried on the occasion. The first was a magnificent one of the Blessed Virgin, which made the procession a special manifestation in her honor. The hymns were sung with that taste and precision which has long given to Willunga the palm for music of this class, and which reflects the greatest credit on the training bestowed by the late organist, who, though far away, is still affectionately and gratefully remembered by the congregation. In the evening there was great competition and keen enjoyment over the field sports provided for the occasion by the Rev. Father Quinlan.



St. Joseph school-girls attending their first Holy Communion Service in 1870.



St. Joseph school-boys attending their first Holy Communion Service in 1870.

Extracts of Letters/ Diaries of the St. Joseph Sisters

While much of our history went unrecorded during the early days of our young nation, there are still pieces of information available about the Schools and the Sisters — such as extracts of letters and diaries exchanged by the Sisters and Mary MacKillop: **SISTERS AT WILLUNGA 1868-1876, 1879-1882.** 1869 — Mary MacKillop visited Willunga on her way back from Yankalilla.

27/8/1869 SR. MONICA PHILLIPS TO MARY MACKILLOP. Sr. Imelda is returning . . . the children will be surprised tomorrow to see *me alone*. Fr. Theodore Bongaerts is going to take a house for us near the school. That will be very convenient not to have the long walk here so often. (Johanna Callaghan and Miss Ward are mentioned).

5/5/1874. Sr. Agnes Nolan to Sr. Editha Flanagan. We have devotions here every evening during this month. The priest gave us permission to say the Rosary for the people and sing the litany and hymn. We commenced last night and had a good many people attend. We have the Blessed Virgin's altar done up with nice flowers and a white table veil and wreath on her head. The people give us great praise and say it looks very neat.

The church is a pretty little building and is called St. Joseph's, and the Mission is also consecrated to the Saint.

Willunga is a very pretty place and is only about 7 miles from the sea. You can see the ships out on the water and the waves quite plainly, and hear the sea roaring sometimes if the evening is calm.

. . . We do not often get the privilege of receiving our Blessed Lord. We have only had Mass once since we came and then we had not known until ten o'clock and we had broken our fast. It is uncertain here when we are to have Mass.

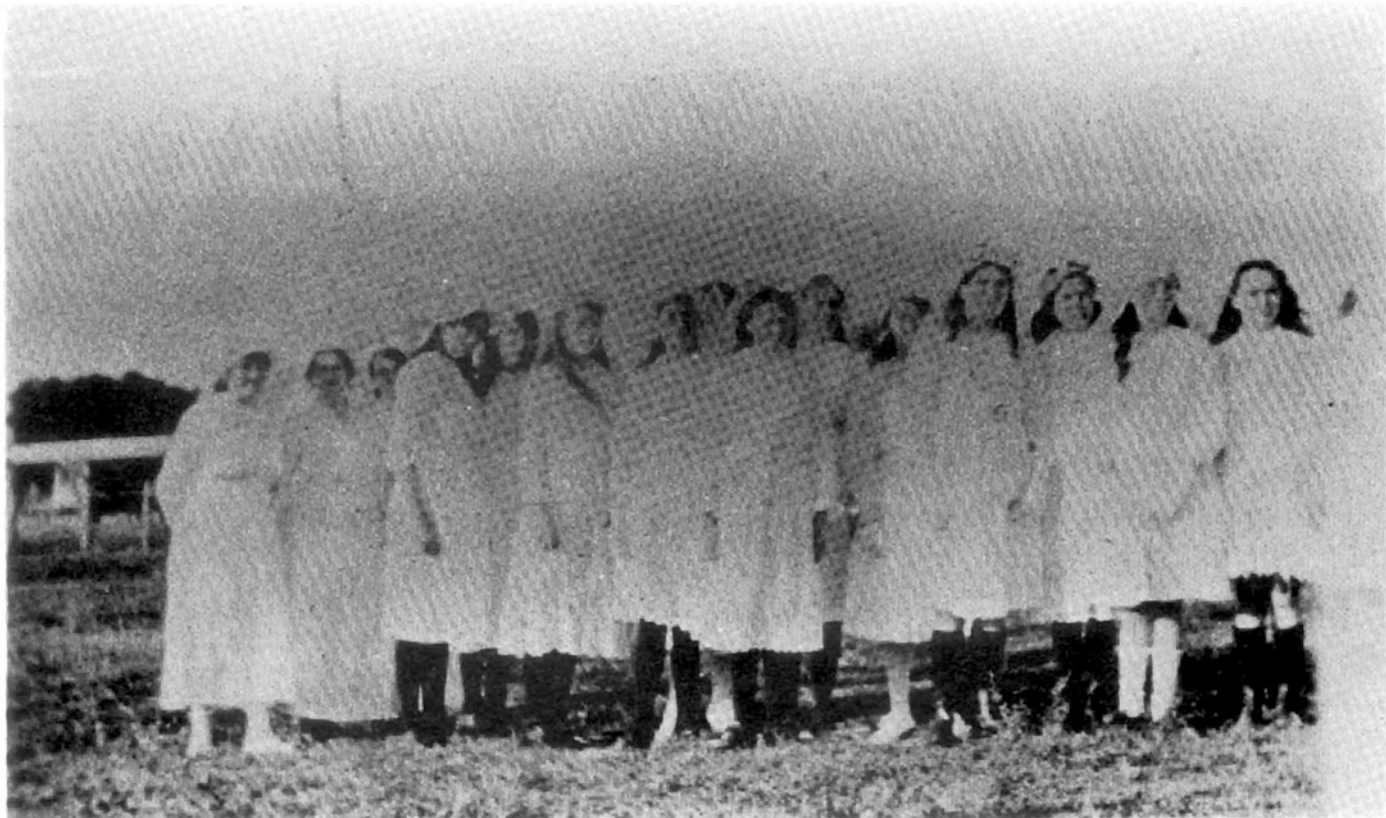
23/9/1874 DIARY ENTRIES. Thursday — called at Fr. Moore's house. Each week day: School 9.30-3.30 p.m. Sunday: Sunday School 2.15-3.45 p.m.

20/10/1880 LETTER FROM SR. TERESA EICHOFF TO MARY MACKILLOP. Sr. Austin O'Meara the other Sister in community Sr. Agnes Nolan visiting.

. . . Went to see Mrs. Fitzpatrick yesterday. Fr. Esser intends celebrating Mass at Mrs. Fitzpatrick's next Friday, as it will enable Miss Harrison (Mrs. Fitzpatrick's sister, who is an invalid) to be present.

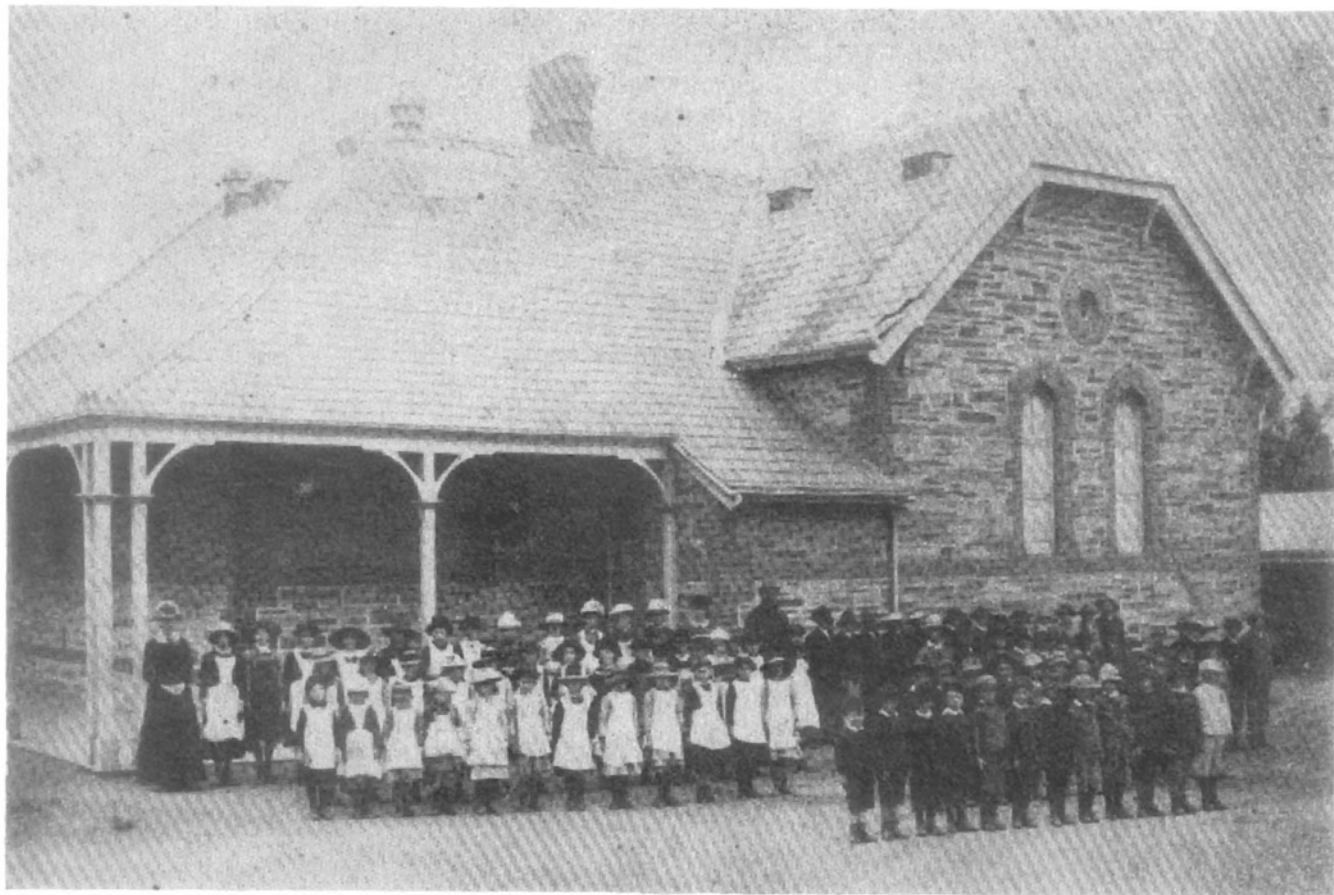
22/11/1880. . . . The hay-making has commenced so, of course, some of our children are away, and others are sick, but still we have 20 during the week.

17/4/1881. Poor Fr. Esser is very sick. I think he has lumbago. Do you know of a cure for it?



St. Joseph school'girls attending their Confirmation in 1878.

Willunga Public School 1887 (approx)



The photo shows the style of clothing worn by the children and what their new School looked like.

In February 1882 the following children were transferred to the Willunga Public School:

John Skeyhill
Michael Skeyhill
Thomas Dunn
John Cushen
Walter Smith
Peter Cushen
Caroline Cushen
Mary Ann McCaffrey
Phillip O'Reilly

Patrick Sullivan
Fanny Sullivan
Sara Jane Sullivan
Patrick O'Reilly
Margaret O'Reilly
Annie Sullivan
Elizabeth Gaffney
Mary Cavanagh

Elizabeth Davaron
Alice Cooke
Mary Cooke
Joseph Cooke
Cecilia Kean
Bridget O'Reilly
Elizabeth McCaffrey
John Brennan

Sisters of St. Joseph's School Period 1868-1872

1868 — Sister Agnes Nolan.

1868-1869 — Sister John Baptist Fitzgerald and Sister Laurence O'Brien (4th Mother General).

1870 to January 1872 — Sister Bridget Crimmin and Sister Casimir Meskill.

1872, March/July — Sister Lucy Crowley.

1872, May/December — Sister Cecilia Hehn and Sister Anne Byrne.

Past and Present Parish Priests, St. Joseph's Church, Willunga

5th Aug., 1849-till 1850	Fr. Thomas Caldwell (see Note 1)
24th Sept., 1853-9th Mar., 1866	Fr. Peter Hughes
24th Mar., 1866-8th May, 1868	Fr. Theodore Bongaerts
29th Aug., 1868-23rd Apr., 1871	Fr. Michael Kennedy
7th May, 1871-30th Apr., 1872	Fr. James Quinlan
26th May, 1872-30th Dec., 1873	Fr. P.D. Moore
8th June, 1874	Fr. Joseph A. Sheehy (visiting priest)
19th July, 1874-21st Apr., 1876	Fr. Patrick Corcoran
8th September, 1874	Fr. A. Burke (visiting priest)
3rd Sept., 1876-1st Jan., 1877	Fr. Michael O'Connor
4th Feb., 1877-22nd Dec., 1878	Fr. Patrick J. Byrne
17th Mar., 1879-19th Aug., 1882	Fr. John Esser
10th September, 1879	Fr. J. Tappeiner and Fr. M. Gibney (both visiting priests — see Note 2)
October, 1882	Fr. Michael O'Brien
30th Jan., 1883-1889	Fr. William Prendergast
1891-1892	Fr. Mark Delahunly
1892	Fr. Cornelius O'Donnell

1900-December, 1901	Fr. Thomas Cosgrove
1902	Fr. Michael Maher
1903-1905	Fr. James Hanrahan
1905-1912	Fr. James J. Blake
1912-1915	Fr. Michael McNamara
1916-1918	Fr. Michael Brady
1919-1924	Fr. John Fahey
1924-1946	Fr. John Eviston
1946-1973	Fr. Edward J. Smyth
1974-1975	Fr. Peter Robert Wilkinson
1976-1977	Fr. John A. Honner
1978	Fr. Kevin W. Hay
1978-1985	Fr. Michael Rodger
1986	Fr. Peter Milburn

NOTE 1. Fr. Thomas Caldwell was ordained a Priest by Bishop Murphy on the 29th of July, 1849. On the 5th of August on the Feast of Our Lady of the Snow he said his first Mass. Father Caldwell arrived in Willunga on or about the 1st of May, 1850, St. Joseph Church was officially opened by Bishop Murphy on the 5th of May, 1850. Father Caldwell died at St. Malvern Monastery, England on the 1st of March, 1897 at the age of 77.

NOTE 2. Fr. Gibney heard Ned Kelly's confession at Glenrowan in 1880, Fr. Gibney later on became Bishop of Perth 1887-1911.

Father Theodore Bongaerts

The Parish Priests in the early years of the parish were very busy, often having to travel long distances to minister to the needs of their distant parishioners. Willunga parish in those days took in the whole of the Fleurieu Peninsula. Not only did they have to contend with long distances but, also, the mode of travel be it walking, on horseback or buggy, plus inclement weather, ill health, etc. Such was the case of Father Bongaerts. The following is an extract taken from the Local Gawler Newspaper dated January, 1875.

"At the Catholic parsonage, Gawler, at about 7 o'clock on the morning of Wednesday the 21st of January 1875, Father T. Bongaerts died in peace. Father Theodore had been suffering from internal cancer during the whole time he had been in the colony of South Australia, and his life was despaired of when in Adelaide five years ago; but, of the blessing of God, he was spared for a few years, during which time he had worked indefatigably in the cause of religion.

Father Theodore was cut off in the bloom of his life but his good works will live after him. We learn that he has left the whole of his property for the benefit of the orphans of members of the Church of Sts. Peter and Paul".



Bishop Laurence Sheil, O.S.F.

The 23rd and 24th of May, 1869 were a busy couple of days for His Lordship, he had been determined for some time to inspect his Diocese.

On the 23rd of May he visited Willunga and gave Confirmation. The next day he visited and examined the School of the Sisters of St. Joseph and said that he was highly satisfied with what he saw.

Shortly afterwards Dr. Sheil was called away from the Diocese and proceeded to Rome to be present at the Ecumenical Council of the Vatican.

In February, 1871 Dr. Sheil returned to Adelaide in July, went to Ballarat to assist at the consecration of the new Church dedicated to St. Patrick. His Lordship's health had never been robust since he came to South Australia. He had been suffering from sunstroke in Victoria, and the hot seasons whilst he resided in this colony tried him severely. It was thought that his removal to Willunga in December, where he would not be exposed to the oppressive heat of the plains would promote his recovery. But his constitution had given way and he was unable to bear up against the last attack of illness which seized him.

The *Southern Cross* reported his death on the 1st of March, 1872 as follows:

"The Death of The Bishop of Adelaide

At 4.00 a.m. on Friday the 1st March, 1872 the Right Rev. Laurance Bonaventure Sheil died at

the presbytery, St. Joseph's Willunga surrounded by a large number of the clergy.

The Funeral

At the Cathedral, on Saturday morning, March 2nd, a dirge was offered for the repose of the soul of His Lordship. The hour appointed for the service was 10.00 a.m., by which time a large congregation had assembled. The coffin remained in the Church during Saturday night, and was watched by some of the Sisters of St. Joseph and others who came to pay their last act of respect to the deceased Prelate."



The Faith Spreads and St. Joseph's School Closes

The District of Willunga grew with the continual arrival of new settlers, amongst those settlers were ordinary Catholic men and their young families.

These pioneers could also be described as a Lay Apostolate, for in their daily living, by their example and by dealing honestly and honorably with their neighbours in the new locality where they settled, they were gradually accepted and respected.

Their new neighbours never had much to do with Catholics before and were curious about them and their Church. Though these new neighbours neither understood the Catholic Church nor its teachings, the new-come Catholics were nevertheless exercising a lay apostolate among them by their regular church attendance and good lives.

They also brought a Catholic population with large families into an area where Catholics had hitherto been strangers and unknown. Soon

Catholics were being made Justices of the Peace and holding Parliamentary and municipal appointments.

The exodus of young farmers, all excellent Catholics from the Willunga Parish, into the new agricultural areas on the Yorke and Eyre Peninsulars occurred in the late sixties and early seventies, when the South Australian Government was opening up the large sheep runs and stations for closer settlement.

It would appear that the departure of these families may have been a contributing factor in the closing down of the School. There may not have been enough children left behind to justify the retention of two Sisters to run the school, one possibly but not two. The Sisters, Superiors, therefore may have decided against leaving one Sister by herself and reluctantly closed the School down and transferred the Sisters to another area.

FROM THEN 'TIL NOW

St. Joseph's School to St. Joseph's Parish Hall

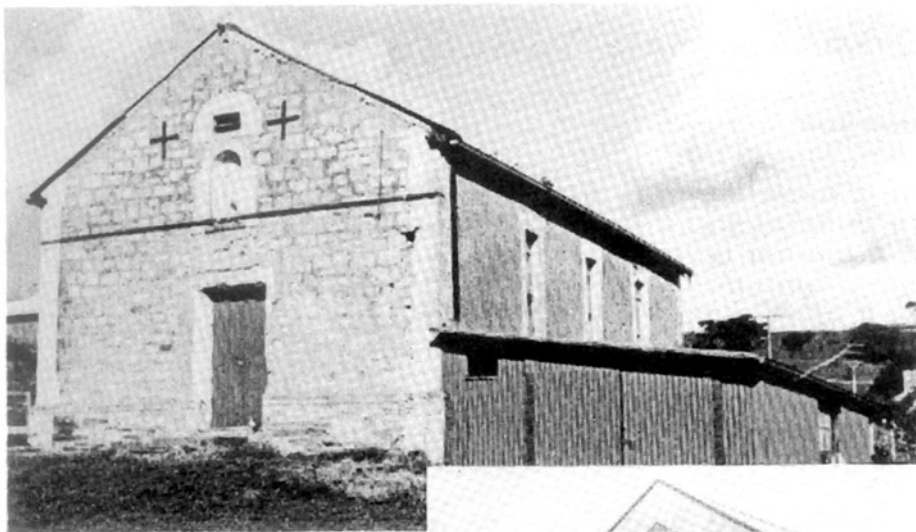
The only recorded history available to tell us how the old St. Joseph's school was used after the departure of the Sisters of St. Joseph was around 1890 when a parishioner tells of the time when she resided at McLaren Vale and remembered Fr. Prendegast coming to her home and asking her father if he would allow her sister and herself to attend the dances which were being held in the St. Joseph's Hall; her father said he would not consent to their going to the dances unless they were held in the day time.

Some of our senior parishioners can recall learning to dance in the Hall. For a time dances were held every fortnight, admission charges were, men one shilling (10¢), women free, and the organisers still made a profit. Music was provided by a piano — lighting in those days was not the best, Mainly being Carbide Gas Lights. Others remember Euchre parties being held in the Hall during the early 1930's.

The School Hall gradually deteriorated over the years but, today, through the efforts of a band of parishioners it has been restored and is currently used for religious instruction lessons for children, a general meeting place, i.e., Pastoral Council, Youth Club, Christian Life Movement and Parish Social Functions.

*Maurice (Spog) Corbett was
an MC at the dances held in
the old school.*





*St. Joseph's School
before restoration in 1985.*



*St. Joseph's School
after restoration in 1985.*

Intercessory prayer

The following passage was taken word for word from a book, originally printed at Dijon, France in the year 1646.

“Beautiful sun, father of the day, hasten thy course, let the proportionous hour come quickly in which those propheties of the Saints will be fulfilled, which promise us that towards the end of the world the greatness of St. Joseph will appear with redoubled lustre; that God himself will withdraw the curtain, and tear away the veil which has hitherto concealed from our view the wonderful sanctuary of St. Joseph’s soul; that the Holy Spirit will incessantly work in the hearts of the faithful, to lead them to exalt the glory of this great saint, consecrating religious houses to him, that THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE EMPIRE OF THE CHURCH MILITANT HER PEOPLE

WILL RECOGNISE AS THEIR SPECIAL PROTECTOR THIS SAINT, who fulfilled that office towards Jesus Christ the founder of this same Empire; which leads to hope that by a secret inspiration of Heaven the Sovereign Pontiff will ordain that the Feast of this great Patriarch be solemnly celebrated throughout the Spiritual Dominions of St. Peter; and which will announce that the most learned men will employ themselves in seeking for the gifts of God hidden in St. Joseph, and will there find treasures of grace incomparably more precious and abundant than those possessed by the greater part of predestinate in the old law for the space of 40 centuries”.

The Result

On, or about, the 10th of September, 1847, Pope Pius IX, foreseeing by divine inspiration the necessity of sheltering his flock under a powerful

protector, issued a decree commanding the celebration of the Feast of St. Joseph by all Christendom, the Feast Day to be the 19th of March.



Saint Joseph

**PATRON SAINT
OF WILLUNGA CATHOLICS**

The nearer the thing is to God the more blinding is the light in which it lies, and therefore the more assiduous and patient must the study of it be. Hence it is that nothing requires so much study as the sacred humanity of Jesus, and next to him the Chosen Mother of His Humanity. Very nigh indeed to them comes the tranquil Magnificence and unruffled depths of St. Joseph's sanctity.

Dr. Faber, 1868.