

Fr Keith Shepherd SM



Province of Australia



Keith Shepherd was born to Leo and Alice (nee Dwyer) in Bowral, NSW, on 24th Dec 1923. Leo Shepherd at the time was with the Bank of NSW in Goulburn. Leo was a great benefactor and advisor to the Marist Fathers when they began to subdivide and sell off the farm at Toongabbie, the beginnings of developing a solid financial foundation for the province. Keith's education was at St Theresa's, Lakemba for primary and at the Christian Brothers Colleges, Strathfield (three years) and Waverley (two years) for secondary. After leaving school he worked in the bank for a number of years. In 1941 he enlisted in the Army, transferring to the Air Force in 1942. He remained there until 1946 when he came back to civilian life and recommence work in the bank.

In 1950 Keith entered the Society of Mary and did his novitiate at Armidale. He was professed on 2nd Feb 1951 and moved to Toongabbie for his seminary studies. He was ordained at St Pat's, Church Hill, on 4th Jan 1957. His first appointment was as bursar to the new college at Geelong, Vic. For the next twenty years Keith was to fill the role of bursar in three of the province's colleges and at Toongabbie. He was at Geelong (five years), Toongabbie (four years), Lismore (four years), Burnie (one year), and back again to Woodlawn (5 years).

In 1979 Keith was appointed assistant priest at Hunters Hill. After two years he moved to St Pat's, where he worked for eight years. In 1989 he moved to Maryvale, which at the time was the Provincial House, as superior. In 1992 he moved to Hunters Hill presbytery where he helped out when needed in the parish but was available to take on supplies elsewhere. For many years Keith was the mainstay for priests in the Lismore diocese using him to do a supply while they took a break. In places like Port Macquarie, but especially Wauchope, Keith was so regular locals regarded him as belonging to their parish.

In his mid-80's Keith kept working and people could be forgiven for thinking that he was a man of much younger years.

His last years, as health declined, were spent at the Maryvale/Montbel community, Hunters Hill, and St Catherine's Nursing Home, Eastwood.

On Jul 02, 2016, he died at Ryde Hospital in the presence of Fr Paul Mahony, his brother, Reg, and other family members. May he rest in peace.