



Fr Bob Barber SM

12.3.1949 - 13.2.2021

Robert (Bob) Barber was born in Canberra on the 12th March 1949. His parents, Jack and Lil, had four children: a daughter, 18 months older than Bob, and then two more sons. His primary schooling was at Panania, Broadmeadow and Barmedman, NSW. The family moved to Newcastle when Bob was in Form One and Bob did all of his secondary schooling with the Marist Brothers at Hamilton. Sport would be the area in which he would be most remembered in school days.

After secondary school Bob joined the Marist Fathers. His first year was Novitiate in 1968 at Armidale, NSW. After first profession there were two years of Philosophy studies at Toongabbie, followed by two years of teacher training at the Catholic College of Education, then pastoral year at St Paul's Bellambi in 1973. Bob's first year of Theology was at Toongabbie and the final two at Catholic Theological Union, Hunters Hill.

Bob was ordained with Andrew Murray on 26th May 1975. His first appointment was back to Bellambi. This was followed by eight years at Woodlawn College, Lismore. He then went to Africa and lived and worked with the Marist Brothers in Nairobi until May 1994. Later that year he went to Cameroon where he began working in the African District of the Marist Fathers, first in Yaoundé and then in Bamenda. One of Fr Bob's jobs was to help with the founding of the English-speaking project in the Marist Mission District of Africa.

By correspondence Fr Bob had gained a B.Ed. and Grad. Dip. while working at Woodlawn and in Kenya. He returned to Australia for two years in 2002-03 while he had two knee replacements and worked in the Koori ministry in Lismore Diocese, gaining an M.A. (Indigenous Studies). He returned to Africa for 18 months to help start up an educational project in the District and, when that project failed to get started, returned to Australia in mid 2005 for pastoral work in West Sunshine, Vic. In 2006 he moved to Hunters Hill to help in the Provincial Administration and was appointed Vicar-Provincial in 2007, serving later as Provincial of the Marist Fathers' Australian Province, 2013-2018.

Fr Bob then joined the staff of the inner-city centre of St Patrick's, Sydney, where he became the much-respected chaplain of the Young Adults' Group.

In Jan 2021, Fr Bob moved to Lismore, NSW, to become chaplain to Trinity and Woodlawn Colleges, residing with the Marist Brothers. After a short period of hospitalization for treatment of medical issues, he took suddenly ill and died peacefully in Lismore Base Hospital on 13th February, 2021.

May he rest in peace.