



## MEDIA RELEASE

20/11/2019

### Father Damian celebrates 25 years

A POPULAR Ingham priest had a night to remember last Saturday as the local Catholic community celebrated 25 years of service for Father Damian McGrath.

Hundreds of well-wishers attended the celebration at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School for Fr Damian's "Silver Jubilee", marking the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

In his Homily on the night, Fr Damian, who has spent 11 years in the Ingham region, said it had been a blessing to serve the Lord and provide spiritual guidance to the community.

"I have been privileged to celebrate hundreds if not thousands of baptisms, to witness hundreds of marriages, and to confer the sacrament of confirmation, ordinarily the ministry of the Bishop, upon children and adults alike," he said.

"It remains an incredible honour to minister the sacrament of forgiveness in the confessional and to offer the sacrament of peace and healing in holy anointing to the sick and the elderly. And, of course, it has been a privilege and an honour to be present for so many families at that moment when the darkness of death has entered their lives and I have been able to offer them a small candlelight in the rites of Christian Burial.

"The priesthood, at the service of God and God's people, is an incredible gift of love from God to his church. Its origin is in him, it only has meaning if it is exercised for him, and its only purpose is to lead us to him."

Parishioner Pam Harris received a special mention from Fr Damian at the end of Mass for his Silver Jubilee, where Ms Harris was presented with the Bishop's Medallion for playing the organ for the parish for a remarkable 70 years.

"Thank you Pam for sharing your gifts with us," Fr Damian wrote in a Facebook post

"As Bishop Timothy J Harris wrote, "St Augustine said, 'He who sings once, prays twice'." You have multiplied the prayers of the faithful for many years through your service."

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto praised Fr Damian for his immense contribution to the local community.

**NICK DAMETTO**  
Member for Hinchinbrook

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"I'd like to congratulate Father Damian on this important milestone and hope he enjoys a well-deserved break as he takes some long service leave. He has well and truly earned it," Mr Dametto said.

—ENDS—

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### *Photo captions*

*Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto with Father Damian McGrath at last Saturday night's Silver Jubilee celebrations at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School.*

*Father Damian McGrath cuts his cake at last Saturday night's Silver Jubilee celebrations at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School.*

*Father Damian McGrath with some parishioners at last Saturday night's Silver Jubilee celebrations at Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School.*

### **Media Enquiries**

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