

THIS IS AN INVITATION TO YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS

to attend

A SPECIAL AFTERNOON MASS

in memory of the Pioneers of

MYERS FLAT AND DISTRICT

and to commemorate the First Mass

celebrated in

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH

101 years ago

MASS 2 P.M.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 7th, 1965**

Afternoon Tea in the Church Grounds

under the Century-Old Gums will be served

*Céad Mile Fáilte*

*(100,000 Welcomes)*



*St. Augustines' Church*  
*Myers Flat*

**1965**

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Myers Flat in the early days was over-run with aborigines. Myers Flat and Myers Creek were first invaded by men named Myers and Nicholls, hence the name. 1857 saw the discovery of alluvial gold in the area and in less than one month 1000 ozs. of gold per week resulted. The number of diggers in Myers Flat was 1400 to 1500, making the total around Myers Creek and Burnt Gully 4000 to 5000. Myers Flat consisted of several shops and buildings, two hotels, racecourse and a lock-up built of logs.

It was also famous for its cricket team and hurley team.

A great number of early settlers came from Ireland, mainly Tipperary and County Clare. They came in sailing ships, the journey took four months. They travelled from Melbourne to Myers Flat by bullock waggon which took seven days.

On November 6th, 1864, the opening of the New Church of St. Augustine's took place. The first Mass was celebrated by the Rev. Dean Hayes, of St. Kilian's, Sandhurst. The Church of Gothic design was built by a local contractor, and with bricks made from local clay. The Church also has a fireplace and is widely known as the Church with the chimney. It was for many years also a Catholic school and attended by many of other denominations. Reminiscent of the school days are the long desks with eight inkwells along the top. The names and initials carved into the wood still remain a memory of those who have passed on.

The Church is surrounded by picturesque bushland and in the spring is a blaze of golden wattle and various wild-flowers are to be found there.

An event in Myers Flat was the St. Patrick's Day Procession, when Parishioners from miles around assembled at the Church to take part. They arrived in gigs, horses, buggies, anything with wheels, and drove to Bendigo to take part in the procession to honour the feast day of St. Patrick, the Patron Saint of their homeland. St. Augustine's Church looked out upon the poppet heads and battery of the Byronic Mine. Life for the miners was not easy, boys from the age of twelve years worked in the mine.

St. Augustine's Church throughout the past century has seen many changes—the closing of the mines, the drift of people to the City, the depression years, and the departure of young men to two World Wars. During the pneumonic influenza the congregation knelt outside in the bitter cold while Mass was being celebrated inside. In 1951 parishioners collected their gold and had it made into a chalice. A specimen of local gold found near the Church was placed on the base.

St. Augustine's Church is steeped in history and in the Faith handed on by those who pioneered this land. A few land-marks remain in Myers Flat, the once famous Hibernian Hotel at Sailor's Gully and Balmer's School at Burnt Gully are but a memory.

To commemorate the first Mass celebrated at St. Augustine's 101 years ago, a Mass will be offered in memory of the pioneers Sunday, November 7th, 1965.

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