

From the Diary of Bishop John Francis Norton – 1925

Inscription....

*Diary kept for my dearest Mother
on the P. & O Steamer "Mongolia"
by John F. Norton
With the Australian National
Pilgrimage to Rome & Lourdes 1925.*

14th April

Colder day, 60. All day there has been a heavy swell with a strong head wind. The Cabin occupied by the Bishop and myself is situated on the shelter-deck, near the front of the ship – forward would be the correct nautical expression. Hence we got a good blowing these two nights. But the Cabin is very comfortable. Instead of the ordinary berths, we have beds. The fittings are most elaborate, and best boon of all- there is a bathroom attached for our exclusive use. The whole concern is called "a cabin deluxe". We have wardrobes and a good dressing table, which is most suitable for saying Mass each morning. And I have not missed a morning, the Bishop answering and receiving Holy Communion.

15th April

Day was breaking as we steamed into Port Adelaide, twelve miles from the city. There was a special train at nine to bring the pilgrims to the Cathedral. When we got there we found that a great number of people filled the building, which is now undergoing completion. There was space reserved for us and the clergy had places in the Sanctuary. Archbishop Spence welcomed us and then intoned the "Veni Creator Spiritus". He has a fine singing and speaking voice. The boy choristers took up the hymn and sang it very beautifully. Then the Archbishop gave Solemn Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Lunch was then served in the Catholic Club, close at hand. At its conclusion the Registrar General gave us an address, and a very fine one it was. Besides him there were also many other prominent men present, including the Attorney General. Archbishop Mannix replied on behalf of us and did it in his own inimitable way.

I had a little shopping to do afterwards and when this was over, lunched with some of the priests. They very kindly took me then for a motor drive to the Mount Lofty Ranges, a ridge of the hills that starts at the back of the city. Strangely enough, the point chosen to show me is called "Norton Summit". From it a grand view of the city area can be obtained with its long straight streets and parks, and the prominent buildings standing out here and there. The extent of the panorama was lessened today by a haze that hung between Adelaide and the sea. We made our descent after a while among the vineyards and orchards that clothe the slopes of the hills. And then we motored through the city right out to the "Mongolia". Once again there was an enthusiastic crowd to bid us farewell, and one lady, as I passed up the gangway, handed out a tin of tobacco into my hands. At five the tug got to work, and amid cheers and songs we set sail again.

