

A Service of Thanksgiving and Celebration  
for the Life of

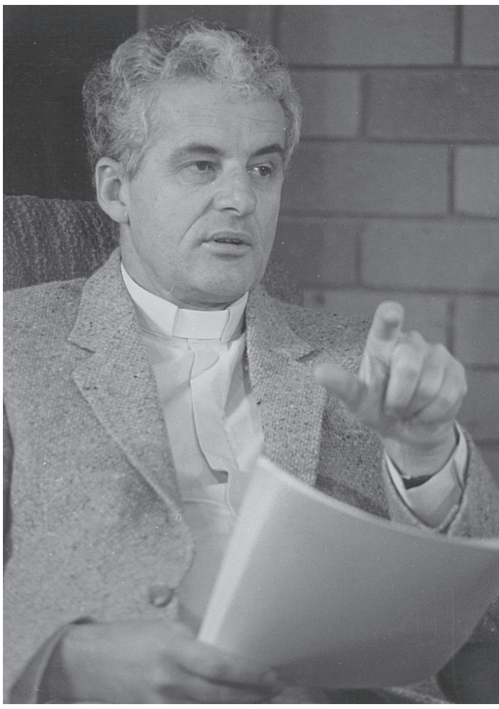
# ARCHDEACON ALAN CHARLES NICHOLS AM

25 January 1937 - 20 June 2026



“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,  
nor the heart of man imagined,  
what God has prepared for those who love him”.

*1 Corinthians: 2: 9*



Alan Charles Nichols was born in 1937 to parents Gordon (called Nick, or Chas) and Jessie (called Margaret), and lived early years of life in Rose Bay, Sydney with older sister Jan. When Alan was a teenager, they moved and lived in Hurstville. Alan attended Sydney Boys High School where he excelled academically and was coxswain for a rowing fours crew. After being offered a Commonwealth university scholarship “with optimism and against the advice of my career advisers at school” he chased a role as a cadet journalist with the Sydney Sun in 1953. While working as a journalist he undertook compulsory National Service Training over two years.

Alan studied theology at Moore College and was ordained Deacon in the Diocese of Sydney on December 21, 1961, and priested the following year. He was a curate at Kingsgrove, where he met and married Denise Jordan, and Padstow, where Paul was born. He was then appointed as Rector at Greenacre and Wentworthville, where Peter and Jeremy were born.

He went on to serve as Director of the Anglican Information Office and Media Adviser to Archbishop Sir Marcus Loane. During this time, he managed the publishing of An Australian Prayer Book. James was born in 1973. From 1974 he took on the additional part time role as Rector at Stephen's Newtown, and Sarah was born in 1978. Alan and Denise and the family moved to Melbourne, where he became Incumbent at St James' Old Cathedral and Executive Director of the Mission of St James and St John (1978-86).

During this time, he was elected President of the Victorian Councils of Social Services and led a parliamentary enquiry on poverty for the Victorian Government.

He was installed as Archdeacon of Melbourne in 1986 and was Executive Officer in the Division of Pastoral Care and Education, as well as a Clerical Member of General Synod. He founded, with Archbishop David Penman, Anglican Overseas Aid, and was later made a Life Member. His ministry extended internationally through mission service with the Jesuit Refugee Service (1991-93) where his relationships with the church of Myanmar and displaced communities on the border with Thailand began. On return to Melbourne Alan worked with World Vision Australia leading church engagement, and began a long-standing involvement in Rwanda, including as a Canon of St John's Cathedral, Gahini, and as a Trustee of the Barakabaho Foundation.

Alan was the Assistant Priest at St John the Evangelist Toorak (1993-97) before serving as the Incumbent of St Mark's Camberwell (1997-2000). He then served as Aide to the Archbishop of Melbourne (2002-03). After retirement, Alan continued to serve through locum appointments, including time as Coordinator of Multicultural Ministry, supporting the Church's engagement with Anglican diaspora communities, including the Karen, Sudanese, Chinese, and other congregations.

Throughout these periods Alan was a prolific author and publisher. He was a founding Director of Acorn Press and was a Founder and Life Member of the Australian Religious Press Association. He published over thirty books including: "Reluctant Conscience: closing the gap between the Gospel and reality in Australia" (Dove, 1984), "Dancing With Angels" (Acorn Press, 2003), "David Penman: bridge-builder, peacemaker, fighter for social justice" (Albatross, 1991) and a series of Bible Study books on the Old Testament prophets, translated into multiple languages.

Over the course of his career, Alan served on Government and Non-government Boards such as the Peter McCallum Hospital, the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, Anglican Homes for the Elderly, Camberwell Girls and Boys Grammar schools, and many others. He also served in voluntary roles with community organisations including the Office of the Public Advocate.

Alan was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2006, and in 2013 was recognised by the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne as Archdeacon Emeritus.

# ORDER OF SERVICE

Welcome

Rev Ros Armstrong

**Gathering In God's Name** Bishop Philip Huggins

Grace and peace from the Lord be with you.  
And also with you.

**Acknowledgement of Country**

**Hymn**

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;  
To His feet thy tribute bring;  
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,  
Evermore, His praises sing.  
Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!  
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour  
to his people in distress.  
Praise him, still the same as ever,  
slow to chide, and swift to bless.  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Glorious in his faithfulness!

Father-like He tends and spares us,  
Well our feeble frame He knows;  
In His hands He gently bears us,  
Rescues us from all our foes.  
Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!  
Praise with us the God of grace.

Frail as summer's flower we flourish;  
Blows the wind and it is gone  
But while mortals rise and perish  
God endures unchanging on.  
Praise Him, praise Him, alleluia!  
Praise the high Eternal One

## Scripture Sentence and Prayer

Let us pray.

Loving God, you alone are the source of life.

May your life-giving Spirit flow through us,  
and fill us with compassion, one for another.

In our sorrow give us the calm of your peace.

Kindle our hope, and let our grief give way to joy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Tributes

Rev Canon Dr Ray Cleary

Paul and James Nichols

Greetings from Rwanda – Rev Sarah Gover

Greetings from Myanmar – Andrew Htayrey, Ko Saulsman

## Hymn

The King of love my Shepherd is,  
whose goodness faileth never;  
I nothing lack if I am His,  
and He is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow,  
my ransomed soul He leadeth;  
And where the verdant pastures grow,  
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,  
but yet in love He sought me,  
And on His shoulder gently laid,  
and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill,  
with Thee, dear Lord, beside me;  
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,  
Thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spreadst a table in my sight;  
Thy unction grace bestoweth;  
And O what transport of delight  
from Thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days,  
Thy goodness faileth never;  
Good Shepherd, may I sing  
Thy praise within Thy house forever.

## The Ministry of The Word

**Micah 6: 6-8** – Hamish Nichols

With what shall I come before the Lord  
and bow down before the exalted God?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?  
Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,  
with ten thousand rivers of olive oil?  
Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression,  
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?  
He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.  
And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**John 13: 34-36; 14: 1-4** – Charlotte Nichols

Jesus said “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”  
Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?”  
Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.”

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Homily**

Bishop Philip Huggins

**The Prayers**

Dr Jeanette Lawrence/

Jennifer Langmead

We thank you, heavenly Father,  
for taking Alan from sickness into health, and from suffering  
into joy.

We thank you for all he gave to us, his family and friends.

Be with, comfort and strengthen Alan’s family:

Denise, Sarah, Paul, Linda, Alexander and Natasha; Peter,  
Coralie, Ruby, Mietta and Hamish; Jeremy, Penny, James, Jenny,  
Charlotte, Juliette, Jimmy, Alan’s sister Jan and her family.

Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer**

We thank you Lord,

for Alan’s constant concern for humankind, especially for people  
in difficult places and hard times. Alan gave special support to  
colleagues in Myanmar, Thailand and Rwanda. Thank you for  
his journalist keen eye and commentary, and for his clergy  
compassion and support. Be with your people serving you in  
Myanmar, Thailand and Rwanda. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

We thank you for Alan's example as an activist, committed to making a difference wherever he found himself.

In the Anglican Church, publishing the first Australian Prayer Book, leading the Mission of St James and St John, and his support of the church's social justice mission; In his support of the Labor party, especially his support for justice, ethics and welfare issues; In his deputy chairmanship of the board of Peter Mac; In his support for and involvement in refugee communities in Australia.

We are humbled by his engagement and encouraged by his good humour, hopefulness and embodiment of the call to do justice and love mercy. May we be encouraged to be active in serving the community. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

We pray for all suffering dementia and those who are supporting them. We pray that you will give sufferers peace and a sense of your presence, and that you will strengthen and enable the work of family, medical staff and carers.

We especially thank you for the respectful care given to Alan and others in his time at the Brotherhood of St. Laurence. Guide and prosper clinicians and researchers. Give us all deeper understanding and patience as we all are confronted by this illness. Lord, in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen.

## Hymn

Be still, my soul! the Lord is on your side;  
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain;  
Leave to your God to order and provide;  
In ev'ry change he faithful will remain.  
Be still, my soul! your best, your heav'nly friend  
Thru' thorny ways leads to a joyful end.

Be still, my soul! your God will undertake  
To guide the future as he has the past;  
Your hope, your confidence, let nothing shake;  
all now mysterious shall be clear at last.  
Be still, my soul! the waves and winds still know  
His voice who ruled them while he lived below.

Be still, my soul! when dearest friends depart  
And all is darkened in the vale of tears,  
Then you shall better know his love, his heart,  
Who comes to soothe your sorrow and your fears.  
Be still, my soul! for Jesus can repay  
From his own fullness all he takes away.

Be still, my soul! the hour is hast'ning on  
When we shall be forever with the Lord,  
When disappointment, grief and fear are gone,  
Sorrow forgotten, love's pure joy restored.  
Be still my soul! when change and tears are past,  
All safe and blessed we shall meet at last.

**The Farewell**

Rev Ros Armstrong

**The Committal**

Bishop Alison Taylor

**The Blessing and Dismissal**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

**Soloist:** Jessica Kinsella

**Pianist:** Angela Chandler

**Vocalists:** Fiona Dowling, Jessica Kinsella





Denise and the family would like to thank you all  
for the many expressions of kindness, care, love and support  
shown to them and Alan over recent times,  
and for your presence here today.

Please join us for refreshments immediately after the service  
and share memories of Alan.

Special thanks to the parish of St Michael's North Carlton  
and those who have assisted in the preparation and conduct of the service.



Acknowledgement: AMCOS, ARIA, Copyright Agency Limited Licensed Copy

Created for **Selwyn Allen Funerals**  
Phone - (03) 9888 1672  
by Baileys Computer Services  
Phone: 8060 4445 Fax: 9018 4415