

THE

71,500 copies sold each week

# Northern Star



\$1.20 Wednesday, February 13, 2013

www.northernstar.com.au SMS 0428 264 948 E news@northernstar.com.au

INSIDE

## Pope shock

Bishop supports Pope's decision to step down

➤ STORY PAGE 4



INSIDE

## Kindy surprise

Kids make transition to big school

➤ STORY PAGE 3



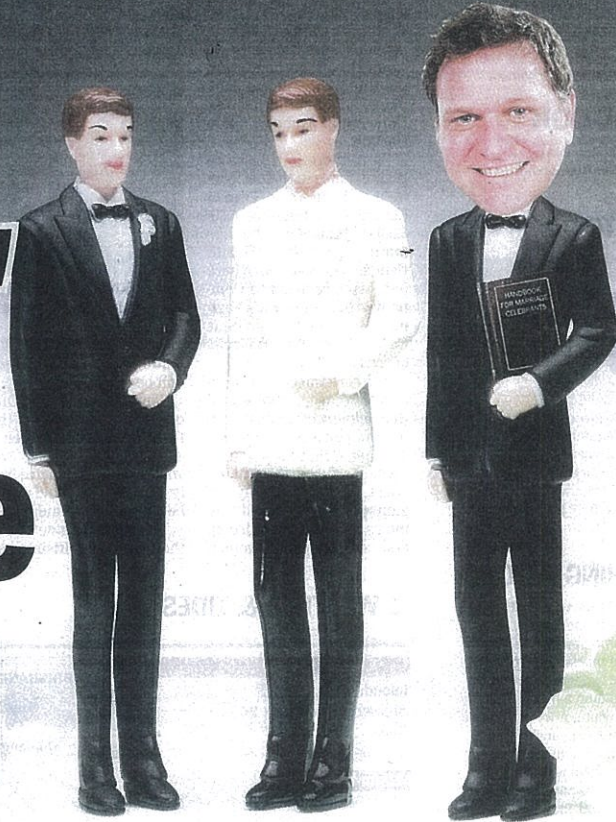
INSIDE

## Singing praise

Conservatorium conducts children's choir

➤ STORY PAGE 21

# Mayor's 'gay Bay' marriage proposal



Byron Shire to lead the charge  
towards marriage equality

➤ STORY PAGE 4

DIGITAL MISCHIEF: ISOBEL RODGERS



less stress  
more relax  
refinance with us and pay no establishment fee\*

Summerland  
CREDIT UNION

banking on people,

Terms & conditions, fees & charges apply. \*No establishment fee applies to home loans only. See us for details Australian Credit Licence 239238

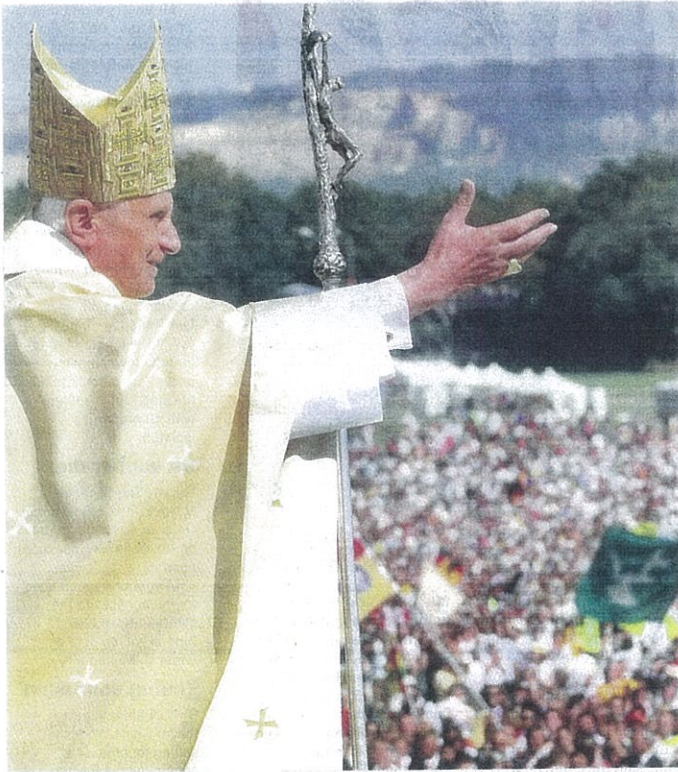
ask us now

1300 802 222 • summerland.com.au



**CATHOLIC CHANGES:** Benedict has one of the shortest times as pontiff and is one of only three who have quit

# Bishop salutes retiring pope



When the Pope steps down his reputation as a brilliant theologian will be intact. But he fell short of the mark he set himself on unifying the church, building relationships with other religions and restoring the church's influence. He was criticised by Muslims for quoting a Byzantine emperor who characterised some teachings of Muhammad as "evil and inhuman". PHOTO: AP

MARNIE JOHNSTON

marnie.johnston@northernstar.com.au

A LOCAL bishop has reacted to the news of Pope Benedict XVI's resignation, supporting the leader of the world's Catholics in his decision.

The German-born Pope Benedict announced his resignation, spoken in Latin, at a meeting with world cardinals in his residence in the Apostolic Palace on Monday.

The Pope said he would resign due to old age (he is 85) on February 28 after just eight years as Pope, making his one of the shortest pontificates in modern history.

"I have come to the certainty that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry," Pope Benedict said.

The only other resignations of popes are known to be Celestine V, who resigned in 1294, and Gregory XII, who abdicated his role in 1415.

Local Bishop, Rev Geoffrey

**REV GEOFFREY JARRETT:** "Of the 265 popes in history, only two have resigned, the last in 1415. The church is always moving on, and by Easter we expect a new pope to be elected to lead the Catholic Church."



WHEN IN ROME: Bishop Geoffrey Jarrett meeting Pope Benedict XVI in 2010.

Jarrett of Lismore Diocese spoke of the shock move yesterday.

"Pope Benedict's announcement of his retirement at the end of this month has taken us by surprise. After all, of the 265 popes in history, only two have resigned, the last in 1415," Rev Jarrett said.

"Yet, on reflection the decision will be recognised as quite in character with this humble and courageous leader who has always been a clear thinker and a man of decisive action."

"The church is always moving on and by Easter we expect a new pope to be elected to lead the Catholic Church."

Rev Jarrett asked people of faith for their prayers in the process of choosing a new pope, which commences on February 28, and to remember Pope Benedict "with gratitude for his Christian teaching and leadership".

"Pope Benedict has the sharp mind of surely one of the keenest thinkers and scholars of his era."

"We will remember him for his clear, profound but simple teaching of eternal truths, especially about the dignity of the human person and his strong warning against the dictatorship of relativism which takes over when people forget God."

## Love park for gay couples as Byron mayor bays for equality

SUE GARDINER  
sue.gardiner@northernstar.com.au

MAYOR Simon Richardson wants Byron Shire to "lead the charge" for marriage equality in Australia and is even considering producing symbolic marriage certificates that he could present at ceremonies for same sex couples.

Cr Richardson is preparing a notice of motion to

place on record the shire's support for marriage equality and is looking for more ideas, "both symbolic and substantial to add weight to this".

A marriage registry in Byron Shire for gay couples and handing out a tree to them on their union to plant in a "love park", are some of the ideas that he's already considering.

He said he hoped Byron's

**"If many local governments start coming out it starts to get hard for the higher echelons of government to ignore."**

stance would prompt similar action from councils across Australia, placing pressure on the Federal Government to reverse its opposition to gay marriage in this election year.

He said even those not convinced by the equality argument may be persuaded by the amount of pink dollars such a stance would likely inject into the shire's economy.

Cr Richardson said he would liaise with locals and groups like Australian Marriage Equality and the Greens' own equivalent group before bringing a motion before council at Easter.

Shane Duniam from Northern Rivers gay and lesbian group Tropical Fruits said such symbolic support would likely enhance the Northern Rivers' growing reputation as a gay

travel Mecca.

Mr Duniam said it was important that councils were inclusive.

"Just the recognition would mean a lot. Symbols are important," he said.

But deputy mayor Diane Woods said social issues were not the domain of local government.

"I'm not against the concept but it's got nothing to do with us," Cr Woods said.

**Coopers 62 Pilsner**  
Bottles 24x355ml  
OR James Boag's Premium Lager  
Bottles 24x375ml

**\$47 each**

**COOLABAH**  
Dolce Rosso  
FRESH DRY WHITE

**2 FOR \$20**  
**SAVE \$798**

Coolabah 4 Litre Casks

**ANY 2 FOR \$68**  
**SAVE \$12**

Southern Comfort, Johnnie Walker Red Label, Scotch Whisky, OR Bundaberg UP Rum 700ml



Visit [bws.com.au](http://bws.com.au) Call 1300 138 297\* BWS supports the responsible service of alcohol. Only available in Ballina, West Tower Tavern, Banora Point, Brunswick Heads, Casino, Kyogle, Lismore, Mullumbimby, Tweed City, Tweed Mall and Yamba until Tuesday 19th February 2013 unless sold out prior. Savings are based on our standard selling prices. Multibuy offers apply to the quantity advertised only. Limit rights reserved. Specials may not be available in all stores or through Woolworths online. \*Wine varieties may vary by store. \*Standard local call charges apply.