

## TRENTINI AUSTRALIA

### VISIT-PILGRIMAGE TO FR CONFALONIERI'S GRAVE:

For sometime now, we have been planning a visit-cum-pilgrimage to Fr Angelo Confalonieri's grave, on the Cobourg Peninsula, North of Darwin.

Fr Angelo was the first Trentino to come to Australia. He responded with generosity to the appeal of Bishop Brady of Perth, to help with the "conversion" of thousands of aborigines in Western Australia. Fr Angelo arrived in Perth in 1848, together with some 26 missionaries, mainly from Ireland and from Spain.

Fr Confalonieri was posted to the Victoria, on the Cobourg Peninsula, where the British Royal Marines had established a "garrison". On the way there, unfortunately one night the ship struck some underwater reef at the entrance of the bay, and in five minutes it sank. The only survivors were the Captain of the ship and Fr Angelo!

The Captain of the Marines was very sympathetic to Fr Angelo, and set him up with some accommodation; he also introduced him to the Aborigines. Fr Angelo spent the next two years trying to learn the language of the aboriginal tribes, mapping the coastline, and building a "field" hospital for the native population. But in 1848 he contracted a violent form of fever, and died in a few days. He was buried with all the military honours by the Marines. Fr Angelo was only 35 years old when he died.

The following year the Marines left the place, and never returned. Now the area is an aboriginal park.

***The time of the visit-pilgrimage is the last week in July 2009.***

***There will be three people coming from Trento for this: a writer, a TV camera man, and a journalist.***

***The cost will be around \$2000 Australian – NOT counting the cost of the airfare to Darwin and back.***

***Expressions of interest from anyone interested in making up a group from Australia will close by 24<sup>th</sup> May 2009.***

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