



TOGETHER

In the Diocese of *Wagga Wagga*

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FREE

- March 2018 -

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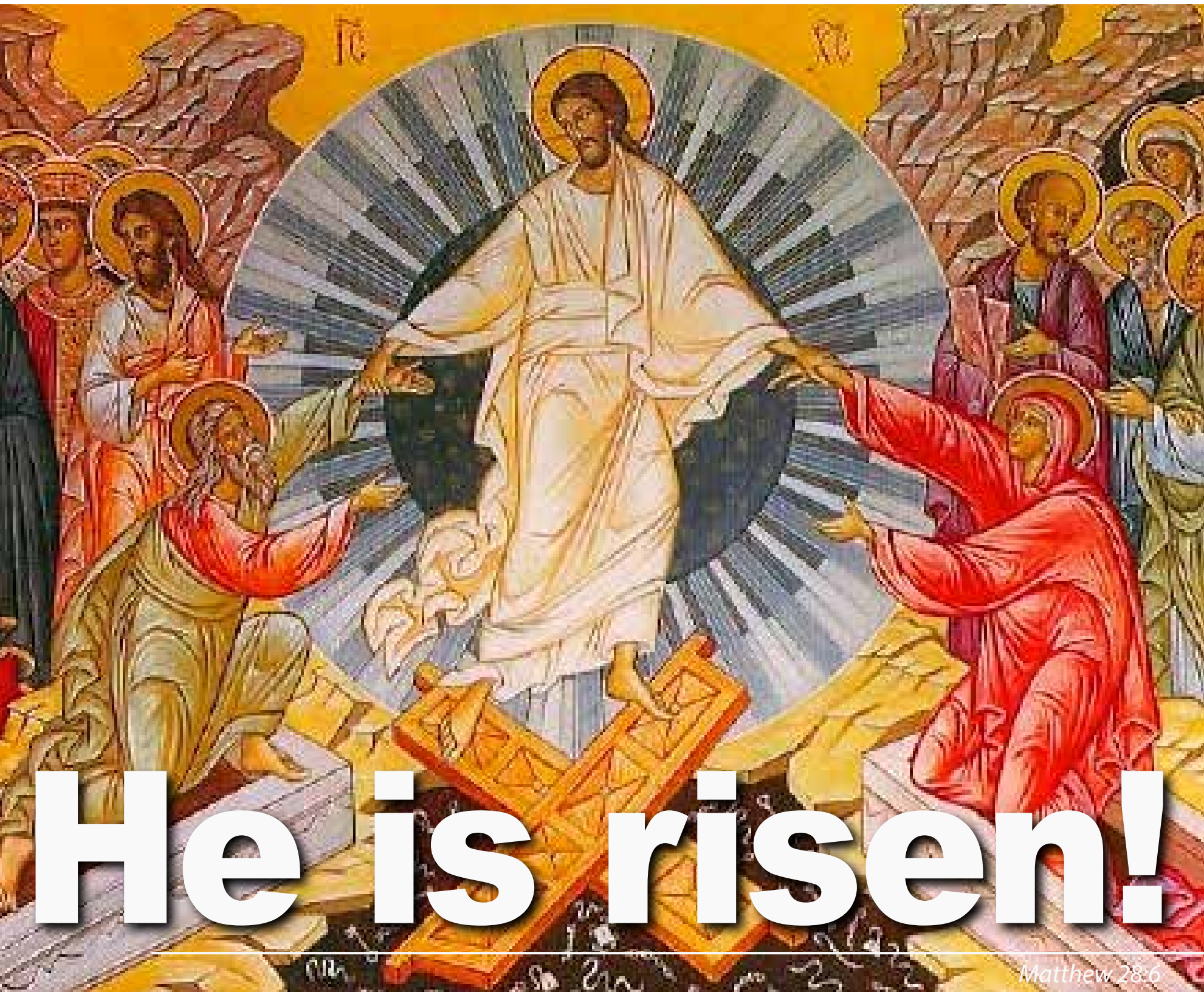


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MICHAEL
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Matthew 28:6



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Some immediate priorities following the Royal Commission

Following from the publication of the *Final Report of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* (Dec 2017), some immediate priorities must be set to ensure that our Archdiocese is the safest possible place for our beloved children.

Three such priorities come immediately to mind.

First, we need to scrutinise our policies/protocols regarding

professional standards to see how they shape up in the light of the Royal Commission’s recommendations.

Secondly, using the key terms of the Royal Commission – especially “transparency” and “accountability” – we need to review the governance and consultation structures of the Archdiocese.

I have already initiated a working party to advance these two priorities.

Thirdly, in the light of all that has taken place in the Royal Commission, the present challenges facing the Church in Australia in general, and the upcoming Plenary Council of the Church in Australia in 2020/2021, we need to articulate together the lights and shadows facing the Archdiocese today. This ought to be accomplished within the parameters of our continual need for conversion, our Catholic understanding of



Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Apostolic Administrator
of the Wagga Wagga Diocese

the Church, and our mission in the world.

Starting in this edition of Together, I wish to articulate over the next few editions some reflections on these three parameters.

I start today with a reflection on our continual need for conversion...

TOGETHER

IN THE DIOCESE OF WAGGA WAGGA

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1. Pilgrims’ encounter of beauty

Whatever we might state as the challenges facing the Church in Australia today, our reflections are to be seen from the panorama of our deepest need: *conversion afresh to the centrality of Jesus*.

PILGRIMS

Written on her tomb in North Sydney, St Mary of the Cross MacKillop offers us an essential wisdom. She said, “Remember we are but pilgrims here.”



Christians are never nomads, or wanderers. We are pilgrims. We know what our ultimate destiny is: happiness with God in the Father’s House. We are led to this destiny by Jesus, “the Way, the Truth and the Life” (John 14/6). Like the disciples on the Emmaus story (Luke 24/13-35), we walk together alongside the Lord. From this image the word “SYNOD” is derived.

ENCOUNTER

Christianity is an encounter religion. Our way forward on pilgrimage is by encountering Jesus continually in mercy and humility. It is the path of conversion that we choose. There is no room for egoism, gossiping or narrow ideologies.

Pope Benedict expresses it wonderfully:

“Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction”. (*Deus Caritas Est*, 2005, n.1)

The Kingdom of God is already upon us in the Grace of the Lord’s Death and Resurrection but no yet fully realised. In Faith we allow Jesus to lead us, just like Mary, St Joseph and all the Saints, into the fullness of the Kingdom of God along with the entire cosmos.

BEAUTY

This saving encounter as pilgrims is the opposite of the predominating context in which Australians live today.

All that draws us to see life in terms of power and competition, of egotistical individualism and gratification must be avoided. Although we need to deal with this societal context every day, succumbing to such forces is not worthy of our human dignity. This is why our journey ahead is crafted as a path of conversion.

It is a “conversion from” all this chaos but a “conversion to” all that is of beauty. This leads us to all that is good and true.

All that is beautiful truly moves the human heart and brings us into the presence of God – the author of all beauty and present in the Holy Trinity.

The saints are beautiful. Icons are beautiful. The scriptures are beautiful. The Sacraments are beautiful. Prayer is beautiful. The fragrant rose is beautiful. The sunrise and sunset are beautiful. True love and forgiveness is beautiful. Selflessly working to alleviate poverty and misery is beautiful. A community/diocese trying to live in the truth and goodness of Jesus in the middle of our grave challenges in Australia is beautiful.

God is all beauty – the purest light “in whom there is no darkness”. (1John 1/5). Let us let God lead us forward!

Let us pray for each other often. God bless you always.

Prayer Intention for March...

Pray with Pope Francis

Evangelization:

Formation in Spiritual Discernment

That the Church may appreciate the urgency of formation in spiritual discernment, both on the personal and communitarian levels.



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

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<http://popesprayerusa.net/popese-intentions/>

Points for Meditation

Do I pause to reflect, meditate and ask the Lord to guide me in the major and minor decisions of my day? In what ways has the Holy Spirit helped me to see or hear God's will in these first months of 2018? Has the bad spirit, the enemy, the tempter, been whispering deceipts to me in secret?

Scripture

Phil 1:9-11 And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, to discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.

Visit this link to hear the Pope deliver his March prayer:

<http://popesprayerusa.net/2018/03/02/march>

-pope-video-formation-spiritual-discernment/



Prayer for the election of a Bishop

O God, eternal shepherd, who govern Your flock with unfailing care, grant in Your

boundless fatherly love a Bishop for the Diocese of Wagga Wagga who will please You by his holiness and to us show watchful care. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Good Friday Collection vital to support Christians in the Middle East

Catholic parishes in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga last year contributed almost \$12,000 to help support Christians in the Holy Land as part of the annual Good Friday Collection.

Australian Catholics donated more than one million dollars in last year's Good Friday Collection which supports the missionary work of the Church in the Holy Land as well as the upkeep of the sacred shrines associated with the life of Jesus.

For 800 years since St Francis of Assisi travelled to the Holy Land with a message of peace, the Franciscan Friars Minor have cared for the people, churches and sacred places in the Middle East as part of their everyday pastoral ministry.

Franciscans first arrived in the Holy Land in 1217 just six years after St Francis founded the Franciscans (Order of Friars Minor). This new Holy Land Province included the places where Christ was born, performed His ministry, died and was resurrected. St. Francis himself stayed several months in the Holy Land during 1219-1220.

The Friars Minor, then, are the official guardians of the Holy Places on behalf of the Christian world. Today the Custody of the Holy Land embraces Israel and Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and the islands of Rhodes (Greece) and Cyprus.

The ongoing civil war in Syria has inflicted unimaginable suffering on the people and displaced half of the country's population. Yet the Franciscan friars and nuns refuse to abandon

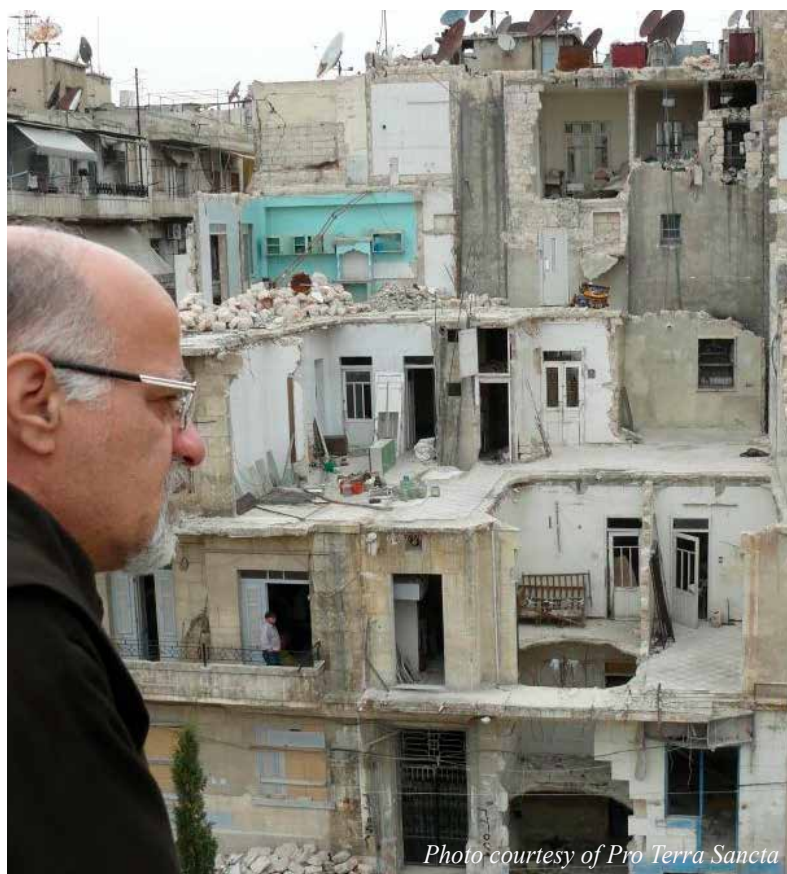


Photo courtesy of Pro Terra Sancta

Syria's Christians and others in need and are still doggedly working in demolished cities such as Damascus, Homs and Aleppo.

In the midst of this devastating conflict the friars are continuing to celebrate Mass, provide pastoral care and other humanitarian aid such as water, medicine and food.

Visiting Aleppo recently, Franciscan friar Fr Luke OFM, of Rhodes reported:

"Our friars and nuns have really done a wonderful job. The two Catholic hospitals have remained open throughout. The soldiers are used to seeing the Franciscans on foot, visiting the poor and gathering the children for the creches and for Catechism. Even a few kind words from us help the people. The see in us determination to be with them and near them despite the danger."

According to Fr Carl Schafer

OFM, Commissary of the Holy Land in Australia, the presence of Jesus can be felt strongly in the minority Christian community who make up less than 2% of the population of the Holy Land.

"The political and economic crisis of this area shows evidence each day of unspeakable suffering," Fr Schafer said as he thanked Australian Catholics for their generous and ongoing financial support.

"The situation impresses upon all of us that there is an absolute and urgent need to support our brothers and sisters in the Holy Land. Despite their countless difficulties these Christians offer day by day, and in silence, an authentic witness to the Gospel.

"They need the support of their fellow Christians in other parts of the world including Australia.

"Please pray for them on this Good Friday and where possible assist them by giving generously to the Good Friday Collection. Your support of the Good Friday Collection can be a meaningful sign of the spiritual link which unites all Christians to Jerusalem and to the Land of Jesus."



Pope approves 2020 Plenary Council in Australia

Pope Francis has given his approval for the Catholic Church to hold the first Plenary Council – the most significant national gathering that can be held – in Australia in more than 80 years.

"The Australian Bishops are deeply grateful to Pope Francis for affirming the decision and we ask all people to join in prayer as we embark on this journey together as God's people in Australia," said Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge, chair of the Bishops Commission for the Plenary Council.

"The Council will be a unique opportunity for people to come together and listen to God in all the ways God speaks to us and in particular by listening to one another as together we discern what God is asking of us at this time – a time when the Church in Australia is facing significant challenges.

"We sincerely hope the preparation and celebration of the Plenary Council is a time when all parts of the Church listen to and dialogue with one another as we explore together how we might answer the question: 'What do you think God is asking of us in Australia?'"

In approving the Plenary Council, Pope Francis also endorsed the bishops' nomination of Perth Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB as the president of the Plenary Council. Archbishop Costelloe said he holds great hope that the Council will bring about a period of authentic renewal.

"I encourage all Catholics, whether devout or disillusioned, fervent or

frustrated, to seize this opportunity to speak what is on their minds and in their hearts."

Plenary Council facilitator Lana Turvey-Collins said she is inspired by the many faith-filled people across the country who have shared with her their hopes for the Church during a series of planning meetings.

"People are both curious and passionate about how all people – particularly people who are marginalised, vulnerable or distant from the Church – can be part of preparing for the Plenary Council," Ms Turvey-Collins said.

"The process of listening and dialogue, beginning at Pentecost 2018 on May 20, will help form the agenda for the Plenary Council. It's a chance for us all to learn to become a truly listening Church. All people are invited to share their story of faith, of life and of their experience of the Church."

The website for the Plenary Council was launched last week and helps people better understand how they can participate in the process.

"Signing up to the e-newsletter and the Plenary Council social media channels is the best way to stay up-to-date with local and national activity for Plenary Council," Ms Turvey-Collins said.

Visit the Plenary Council website at plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au



Plenary Council 2020

'Listen to what the Spirit is saying...' REV 17

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From Kildare to Wagga Wagga



Presentation Sisters sang the hymn *Assumpta Est* – a traditional hymn sung by students and Sisters in earlier years at Mount Erin High School



Sr Alexis Horsley and Sr Barbara Webber cut the ribbon to mark the opening



Sr Barbara Webber and Fr Kevin O'Reilly who officially blessed the new Mount Erin Heritage Centre



Mount Erin ex-students gather outside the entrance to the former convent: From left, Dorothy Allen, of Coolamon; Pat Sheridan, of Wagga, a member of the Mount Erin Heritage Centre Committee; Mary Dwyer, Wagga, also a member of the Heritage Centre Committee; Jill Cookson, of Canberra and Sr Barbara Webber.

Mount Erin Heritage Centre preserves legacy of Presentation Sisters

Speaking at the official opening of the Mount Erin Heritage Centre in Wagga Wagga on 9 March, Sister Barbara Webber PBVM paid tribute to the founder of the Presentation Sisters, Irishwoman Nano Nagle.

"This year the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary all around the world are celebrating 300 years since the birth of Nano Nagle (1718-1784) in Ballygriffin, Ireland, during the persecution of Irish Catholics under the oppressive English penal laws.

"They are celebrating 300 years of the life, legacy and inspiration of their founder who could be described today as a social entrepreneurial woman of contemplation and action."

Nano Nagle, who was named in 2003 as the 'greatest Irish person of all time' was also well known as 'The Lady with the Lantern'. She often walked the dark and dangerous streets of Cork by the light of a flickering lantern visiting the sick, elderly, imprisoned and destitute.

Thus it is appropriate that a lantern greets visitors at the entrance to the new heritage centre and is symbolically featured throughout the display.

"Nano's lantern is still alight and shining today," Sr Barbara declared as she and Sister Alexis Horsley PBVM, archivist for the Presentation Sisters Wagga Wagga, cut the ribbon to mark the official opening of the Mount Erin Heritage Centre.

In thanking the numerous people who had helped bring the dream to life, Sr Barbara particularly acknowledged

the hard work of the Heritage Centre Committee.

"In 2013 the seed was sown and a committee formed comprising Bernadette Rava; Robyn Gooden; Mary Dwyer; Sr Alexis Horsley; Susan Todd; Patricia Sheridan and myself. We were very fortunate to have the guiding hand of Dr Annette Brown and Peter Cranko who gave us valuable assistance to get to where we are today.

"The expertise and combined creativity of graphic designer Suz Keough, graphic artist Christina Reid and Littlewood Signs have produced a magnificent presentation of the timeline of the Sisters since their arrival in 1874 to the present day."

Sr Barbara thanked the successive Presentations Sisters Leadership Teams from 2013 to today for their encouragement, appreciation and financial support as well as the Presentation Ex-Students for their generous contribution of items of interest and donations.

She also paid tribute to her fellow Presentation Sisters and Kildare Catholic College staff for their interest and generous assistance at every stage of the project.

"Sr Noela Fox for her research and wording assistance and Sr Ann McRae who provided photos of every Sister from 1874 – 2018. Both mammoth tasks. Thanks to each one of you."

Several ground floor rooms in the original Mount Erin Convent in Edmondson Street, Wagga Wagga have been transformed into a historical display which showcases

continued on page 5...

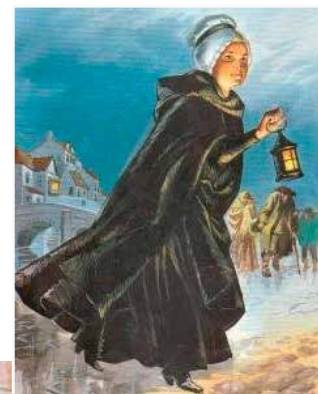


Above: Bernadette Rava, left of Grong Grong and her sister Anne Henry, Kamarah near Ardlethan, pictured with model wearing the bridal dress worn by their late sister, Margaret Rava (Sr Pierre) when she entered the Presentation Sisters Novitiate in Wagga



Right: Nano Nagle 'The Lady with the Lantern'

Below: Sr Bernadette Pattison PBVM and Sr Imelda Suyai PBVM from Papua New Guinea, pictured at the entrance to the new Mount Erin Heritage Centre which features a replica of Nano Nagle's symbolic lantern





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'Many of us had a dream and today the dream has come true!'

continued from page 4...

the story of the Presentation Sisters Wagga Wagga alongside the story of education which emanated on and from the Mount Erin land.

The fascinating display includes numerous photographs of several generations of young women and men educated by the Presentation Sisters at Mount Erin; models dressed in different habits worn by the Sisters over the decades; a room furnished as a boarder's bedroom in the old boarding school during the 1950s and a porcelain tea set carried from Kildare, Ireland to Wagga by the original Presentation Sisters as a reminder of home.

The Mount Erin Heritage Centre has been established to keep alive the wonderful story of the first five courageous Presentation Sisters who crossed the seas from Ireland to Wagga Wagga in May, 1874 – a three-month journey by boat to Australia to establish a Foundation on the other side of the world in Wagga Wagga.

The centre also celebrates the lifework and contribution of the many Sisters who have followed them and the thousands of women and men who have been educated on the Mount Erin site and beyond.

The journey of the Presentation Sisters to Wagga Wagga began as a result of a letter written by Fr Patrick Dunne who was in charge of Wagga Wagga Parish to the Bishop of Goulburn Diocese, Bishop William Lanigan who was on holidays in Ireland.

In his letter dated Nov. 17, 1873 Fr Dunne implored Bishop Lanigan to send nuns to Wagga Wagga immediately in the hope the good

Sisters would save the female population from the evils of drink.

The letter read as follows:

"Nov. 17th, 1873.

My Lord,

Nuns could and should be sent here at once. The people are willing and able to support them. The nuns should come at once and they could occupy the Presbytery for a short time. Six months would build a convent.

There is a large population settling down about this part of the country, and nuns here would be the salvation of the rising generation of the female portion.

Everyone gets drunk here and they see no harm in it, except perhaps a headache when they go to the lock-up. One of our most respectable Catholic ladies was visibly the worse for drink in the church yesterday, and they all, young and old, drink like fishes!

*Your Lordship's obedient servant,
Patrick Dunne"*

When the sisters first arrived they lived in the original two-bedroom presbytery in Church Street (now the site of St Michael's Cathedral) which the priests vacated for them.

Within two years the iconic Mount Erin Convent was completed on land overlooking Wagga Wagga donated by local grazing pioneer Mr John Donnelly, of Borambola. Mr John Cox of Mangoplah, provided the finance for building the convent which the sisters moved into on 20 November, 1876.

After many years of persistent, ongoing requests from the people of the Riverina approval was given for a boarding school to be built. Mount Erin Boarding School was opened and welcomed its first boarders on 26

January, 1890.

The Sisters also established a primary and secondary school in Wagga Wagga. The first school was known as St Brigid's and then as enrolments increased it became St Eugene's. In 1938 Mount Erin High School was built and opened.

From the Wagga foundation, further foundations were made over the coming years in Hay, Berrigan, Urana, Lockhart, Ganmain, Five Dock, Drummoyne, Sutherland, Yarralumla and Gowrie in the ACT as well as Young, Tarcutta and Bangor/ Menai.

From Wagga, foundations were also made in Victoria at Star of the Sea Convent, Gardenvale, Melbourne; Southern Cross in Western Australia; Longreach in Queensland and Papua New Guinea.

Much work, energy and excitement has gone into establishing the Heritage Centre to record this extraordinary story from the beginning to the present.

In 2000, there were huge changes in Catholic education in Wagga Wagga with the establishment of Kildare Catholic College and Mater Dei Catholic College, both co-educational schools. Mount Erin High School building was incorporated into Kildare Catholic College while the convent was converted to accommodate young men and Mount Erin Boarding House became a co-educational weekly boarding facility for students in Years 7-12.

It is hoped to soon employ a curator so the Heritage Centre can be opened for a few hours a week for visitors or school groups by appointment.

The Mount Erin Heritage Centre will have an open day on Saturday April 14 between 10am and 4pm to which everyone is invited.

The Centre is situated in the western end of the original Mount Erin Convent near the Chapel.

***Our feet know the way,
our hearts carry the light.
Let us go forth and let the
light shine!!***



Kildare Catholic College 2018 captains Amy Li, 17 of Wagga and Jackson Weidemann, 18 of Wagga with models displaying habits worn by the Presentation Sisters in the 1960s and 1970s



Historical photos and memorabilia on display in the Heritage Centre including dolls dressed as Presentations Sisters down the decades

Insert: Sr Noela Fox PBVM who contributed much of the historical research for the Mount Erin Heritage Centre

Mount Erin ex-students, family and friends enjoyed reminiscing and exploring the newly opened Heritage Centre.



**The Presentation Sisters of Wagga Wagga
&
The Mount Erin Heritage Committee**

Invite you to visit the

**Mount Erin Heritage Centre
Open Day**

Saturday 14th April 2018
10.00am - 4.00pm

Parking, please use Mt Erin Boarding School entrance
or Kildare Ave entrance.
Parking available on Edmondson Street.



Church gives hope to India's poorest, the Dalits



Bitu lives in a mud-walled hut with an earthen floor. Actually, it is only a few mud walls covered by a plastic sheet. Her old house burned down a year ago.

“That was a great misfortune.” One of the children saw the fire start just in time and was able to pull the younger sister out of the house, the mother of three says.

The church community then helped her obtain a small loan. This allowed her to temporarily move into a nearby dwelling, although it is not much more than a makeshift shelter of mud and straw: one room to sleep in, one to cook and live in, both of them only about three by three metres.

Most of the Dalits live in extremely close quarters, and their space is even further restricted.

“There are a lot of things that Dalits are not permitted to touch, they may not be touched and may not set down their things everywhere,” Father John explains. His name has been changed for his safety. For decades, he has been working with Dalits, the members of the lowest caste in India.

“The cooking area, for example, is a holy place. Once, I put down a drinking glass in the wrong place. It was a huge drama,” the priest recalls. For the host he was visiting, it was an affront that made it “unholy”. For the Dalits it is like a ban. They believe that disaster will

befall anyone who doesn't respect it.

Plagued by a spirit world

Bitu once believed this as well. “I was very scared and afraid of bad spirits,” she said.

It was an imaginary world that began to plague her more and more. “I was even afraid to get out of bed and walk. I became ill.”

Then she met a Christian woman who told her about the Bible. The message that there is a God who is a champion of the poor and the lowest in society, who invites them to join His community, goes beyond anything that the Dalits can imagine.

This Christian invitation also began to exert its influence on Bitu. Today, she is being pressured by her neighbours. Most people in the village are members of other religions and distrust how Bitu is growing closer and closer to the Catholic community.

“I fear that they are also a little envious because I am now part of a community that supports me; that I am feeling better again, since I started going to church.”

Strengthened, yet under new threat as a minority

Anyone who visits Bitu can feel some of the anxiety that hangs in the air. Bitu and a small

handful of other people have now converted to Christianity. They are a minority among neighbours who are trying to get Bitu to leave the church. However, she remains true to her faith.

“I have also convinced my husband. He stands by me now. We have more joy in our lives and also earn a little more. We have hope again. We have put

our faith in God and the church.”

When asked which passage from the Bible she likes best, she takes a moment to reflect. “Jesus says, love thy neighbour. That gives me strength.”

ACN is presenting projects that support the poorest of the poor in India so that they can live their faith and develop as individuals in dignity: india.acninternational.org

Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has dedicated its 2018 Lenten campaign to helping suppressed Christians in India where nationalist groups have branded them the enemy of Indian society.






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Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

Easter is the antidote to fear in our world

by Paul Jensen
Chief Executive Officer
Centacare South West

Sociologist Frank Furedi (Culture of Fear revisited, 2006, Continuum, London) rightly contends that fear plays a key role in twenty-first century consciousness.

Increasingly, we seem to engage with various issues through a narrative of fear. You could see this trend emerging and taking hold in the last century, which was frequently described as an 'Age of Anxiety'. However, in recent decades, it has become more and better defined, as specific fears have been cultivated.

The rise of catchphrases such as the 'politics of fear', 'fear of crime' and 'fear of the future' is testimony to the cultural significance of fear today.

Many of us seem to make sense of our experiences through the narrative of fear. Fear is not simply associated with high-profile catastrophic threats such as terrorist attacks, global warming, AIDS, economic collapse or a potential flu pandemic; rather, as many academics have pointed out, there are also the 'quiet fears' of everyday life.

Alongside the narrative of fear, writes Furedi (2006), is the new identity of vulnerability – these are the flip sides of one another. Vulnerability confers the idea that we are the subject of threats – threats

that have an independent existence – and we are generally 'at risk'. Therefore, the language of risk spreads through individual and organisational definitions. Individuals and families have 'risk' and protective factors; organisations have risk assessment and management frameworks. While it is important to manage risk, the ubiquitous nature of the language of vulnerability and risk can unintentionally render individuals and organisations powerless to address fear and risk and to prevent us from making life-affirming decisions.

I remember reading Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's *Smartraveller* warnings about travel to Vanuatu in 2008. DFAT's *Smartraveller* warned of public and political unrest and conveyed the impression of an almost lawless society. Their advice .. 'manage risk' and 'assess the necessity of travel'. On arrival in Vanuatu, I found a peaceful, socially cohesive yet economically poor society. The people were wonderful.

In circumstances where fear and vulnerability are the means through which people respond to and make sense of the world it is not surprising that most of Centacare's counselling clients present with fear and vulnerability.

The number one issue confronting students from our Catholic Schools when they engage with a Centacare School

His was a positive vision of a future where fear, risk and vulnerability would be addressed by a society that believed in itself. Today, politicians are far more likely to advise the public to fear everything, including fear itself.

wellbeing practitioner is Anxiety. They present with the 'quiet fears' of specific phobias, family breakdown and academic performance anxiety.

The sense of fear and vulnerability is so ingrained today that it is easy to overlook the fact that, relatively speaking, it is a recently invented concept. The terms 'vulnerable group' and culture of fear first started to be used in the 1980s and stand in sharp contrast to the approach taken by US President Franklin D Roosevelt in his inaugural address in 1933, when he stated that the 'only thing we have to fear is fear itself'. Roosevelt was trying to assure the public that it is both possible and necessary to minimise the impact of fear. His was a positive vision of a future where fear, risk and vulnerability would be addressed by a society that believed in itself. Today, politicians are far more likely to advise the public to fear everything, including fear itself.

While the Easter resurrection narratives elicit fear and vulnerability the message of the risen Christ is peace and empowerment.

Upon encountering the young man in white at the empty tomb, we are told in Mark 16:8 that the women 'went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid'.

To fear the risen Lord breathes peace. John 20:19 'When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said "Peace be with you". To vulnerability, the Risen Lord brings empowerment and he commissions his followers. John 19:21 "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me so I send you".

What are the fears and vulnerabilities you carry this Easter? The Easter narrative remind us that fear and vulnerability are not the last word and that we can have agency over them. **This Easter, I prayer we hear the words of Jesus "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me so I send you".**



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Men refresh, reflect and reconnect at menAlive Thurgoona

by Andrew Garratt
Holy Spirit Parish, Lavington

It was a weekend to refresh, reflect and reconnect at the menAlive weekend on 24 and 25 February at The Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Thurgoona.

In the spirit of the Henty Field Days, the men did come from miles around but with an important difference: it would be God that would be doing the cultivating and the sowing so the tractors, trailers and big cultivators could stay at home.

Approximately 60 men from right around the district took two days out of their busy lives to join with

other men who were led by an eight strong Canberra based team.

The purpose of menAlive is to bring men together to renew their faith in God and to encourage them to become an active force of renewal in the Church.

The weekend featured some deep testimonials that challenged all those present on how to grow as a father, as a husband, as a single man and above all how to make a difference. Through a variety of events and programs the men were invited to explore what God would want for their lives and how they might come to experience the

fullness of life that God wants for us all.

The challenge: what was I going to do differently with my life after the weekend?

There were some amazing personal sharings in small groups and plenty of opportunities to reflect. It took a few songs but eventually we found our signing voices (not everyone may agree). There was a wonderful procession to a fire pit where we burnt our baggage; a commitment candle ceremony; confession and awesome Mass together.

But it wasn't all prayer and

reflection either. We had a beer and a barbie together; took time to catch up with men in the Church where we knew faces but not the man behind the face; talked cars and boats and of course talked about the weather.

In the coming weeks small groups will be formed to continue the great spirit of the menAlive weekend at Thurgoona, including prayer groups, working groups and social groups.

menALIVE is a national Catholic Ministry to Men which was founded as a response to a great need in the hearts and lives of men

and a great need in the life of the Catholic Church.

The purpose of menAlive is to bring men together to renew their faith in God and encourage them to become an active force of renewal in the Church.

Through a variety of events and programs men are invited to explore what God would want for their lives and how they might come to experience the fullness of life that God wants for us all.

For more information about menAlive please check out the website www.menalive.org.au

TJHC head urges all states to join Redress Scheme

The Chief Executive of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, Mr Francis Sullivan, has urged all states to sign up to the national child sexual abuse redress, scheme noting that Catholic leaders are on the record saying they will join the scheme.

'The new Commonwealth Redress Scheme paves the way for non-government organisations in NSW and Victoria to join the scheme,' Mr Sullivan said.

'This would include Catholic dioceses and other Catholic Church organisations in NSW and Victoria providing access for survivors abused in Catholic institutions in these states to seek redress.

'And while Church leaders are yet to see the exact details of how the scheme will work, there has been wide-spread in-principle support from Church authorities', he said.

Mr Sullivan said that for the scheme to become truly national other state and

territory leaders must act.

'This national scheme will provide a consistent and fair response to victims of abuse no matter where or when the abuse occurred. It will be relatively straight forward for survivors compared to litigation, and it is available to survivors abused by people who have died.

'We, along with others have advocated to Federal and state attorneys general and relevant ministers, for a generous, national scheme where redress is paid for by the institution responsible for the abuse.

'Survivors of abuse have been hanging their hopes on this scheme for a long, long time.

'Many have died without the apologies and the redress that should have been theirs many years ago,' Mr Sullivan said.



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CS376 101117

PROJECT COMPASSION

FOR A JUST FUTURE

Strengthening Indigenous culture a fine art



Caritas Australia's Project Compassion campaign is helping youth in First Australian communities to strengthen their culture and create opportunities for their communities.

Evangeline is employed as a Senior Artswoker by the Caritas Australia supported Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, based in Beswick (Wugularr), 100 kilometres east of Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Today she is strengthening Aboriginal culture, while making a living for herself – and creating opportunities for her community.

Featured in Project Compassion 2016, Evangeline went from seeking employment to being a Senior Artswoker and an inspirational leader for youth.

Her work at the non-profit Aboriginal organisation, Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, has supported the organisation's growth from a multi-media project to a multi-level contemporary arts and culture centre. An example of excellence in Indigenous tourism, it's now a major employer for young people in the remote Northern Territory community.

Evangeline's community of around 450 people faces a range of challenges, stemming from the violent experience of colonisation, including few employment opportunities, crowded housing, a lack of access to services, alcohol and health problems and financial hardship.

Limited political influence continues to disempower Australia's First Peoples. Lack of opportunity draws young people away from their country and culture into towns and cities where they are most vulnerable.

Whilst working at Djilpin Arts, Evangeline has supported the organisation's growth from a multi-media project to a multi-level contemporary arts and culture centre. An example of excellence in Indigenous tourism, it's now a key employer for young people in the remote Northern Territory community

of Beswick (Wugularr).

This year, 2018, Evangeline is busy guiding tourists, coordinating cultural activities and helping community members to practise and market their arts, such as weaving and jewellery-making.

"Now we have a new gallery up. And we have our new kitchens, we look after these and we now maintain this to make sure it's running okay and in good condition. We're also trying to open up another tour for tourists to go around the waterfall, we're just planning that now," says Evangeline.

Evangeline believes that Caritas Australia's support for Djilpin Arts, through Project Compassion, is vital for all Wugularr's young people. Although their families do their best to pass on knowledge, Elders are dying and she is keen to spearhead the preservation of culture and lore for future generations.

"It's good for them to learn and to keep their culture strong," says Evangeline.

Support Project Compassion 2018 and help provide employment and training opportunities for First Australians like Evangeline. A just future starts with you.

David Armstrong visits the Diocese



David Armstrong with Fr Thomas Casanova from the West Wagga Parish.

On behalf of Caritas Australia, thank you Wagga Wagga Diocese for your support of Project Compassion.

I have experienced first-hand how our acts of kindness can make a huge difference to our global neighbours who live in poverty. Like the communities I visited on the outskirts of Dhaka in Bangladesh - one of the poorest countries in the world.

With that in mind, I had the great privilege visiting parishes and schools in Wagga Wagga and Leeton to share how their support is transforming lives

around the world.

Over three days (18-20 February) I shared with almost 2,000 students, teachers and parishioners, stories about young people, families and communities who are given hope for "a just future" through Project Compassion.

There is a great sense of community and solidarity in Wagga Wagga Diocese, and it was inspiring to watch people of all ages take action to end poverty.

I'd like to thank Our Lady of Fatima Church, Holy Trinity Church, Sacred Heart Primary School, Mater Dei College, St Francis De Sales Regional College and St Joseph's Primary School, for their generous welcome to me, and their passionate support of Project Compassion.

Helping to end poverty takes many forms, none more so than floating a Gumi down the Murrumbidgee River! Many thanks to the Vernons who arranged for the race entry on behalf of Caritas Australia and for hosting me during my visit to Wagga Wagga.

David Armstrong

*Head of Engagement & Sustainability
Caritas Australia*



Caritas competes in the famous Gumi Race

Caritas had two Gumis take part in this years World Championship Gumi Race in Wagga Wagga. They had students, young doctors, their friends, and of course the inflatable swan wearing the Caritas Ks tee shirt. Caritas even enticed Tom, a French backpacker working in Wagga to jump aboard the Gumi.

To enter the race you need a team to build a 'gumi' which is a raft using only rubber tubes for flotation. You also need paddle power to get yourself the seven kilometres down the Murrumbidgee River to Wagga Beach.

Over \$1300 was raised on the day for Caritas which is a phenomenal effort. Caritas would like to see more people come on board next year. If you are

interested in being part of the Caritas Gumi Crew in 2019 then contact Michelle Fernon via email on mfernon@gmail.com or mobile 0428 212 711.

Everyone and anyone is welcome and there is still time to donate to this years Caritas Ks online at secure. caritasfundraising.org.au



Photo by David Armstrong



Father Thomas Keating O.C.S.O. is a Trappist monk and priest and a founder of the Centering Prayer movement. He lives at St Benedict's Monastery, Snowmass, Colorado, USA.

Similar in many ways to meditation in other spiritual traditions, centering prayer is a method of silent, wordless prayer that comes out of the Christian contemplative tradition.

Different contemplative practices have always existed in Christianity. Practices such as the *Jesus Prayer* in the Orthodox Christian tradition; *Lectio divinae* in the Roman Catholic tradition and the silent worship of some Quaker and Protestant churches have provided means for experiencing the contemplative dimensions of the Gospel.

The practice of centering prayer is primarily based on the teaching of a classic spiritual text from the fourteenth century, *The Cloud of Unknowing*. This contemplative practice is rooted in the teachings of Jesus.

In recent centuries contemplative practices were preserved mainly in monasteries. In the last two generations, at the same time that Eastern forms of meditation became increasingly popular in the West, the Christian contemplative tradition has undergone a renewal.

Christian Contemplative Practice and Centering Prayer

This renewal began in the 1950s and 1960s through the work of writers such as the Trappist monk Thomas Merton. In the 1970s three other Trappists, William Menninger, Basil Pennington and Thomas Keating looked to ancient Christian sources to develop a simple method of silent prayer, now called Centering Prayer.

Thomas Keating translated Christian mystical theology into modern, psychological terms and created an extensive support network called Contemplative Outreach to support the practice of centering prayer in ordinary life.

This form of prayer does not replace other forms of prayer in one's life but for some is an important component. A Centering Prayer group now meets regularly in Wagga and those who belong to it have found it a profound form of prayer that overflows into their daily lives.

A Meditation Day and introduction to Centering Prayer will be held at Erin Earth, Kildare Avenue, Wagga Wagga on Saturday 12 May from 9.30am to 3.30pm. All are welcome and entry is free or by donation.

Some useful books for further reading include: *The Path of Centering Prayer: Deepening Your Experience of God* by David Frenette; *The Heart of Centering Prayer* by Cynthia Bourgeault and *Open Mind, Open Heart* by Thomas Keating.

There are also good YouTube videos available online by the above writers and practitioners.



MEDITATION DAY

An Introduction to CENTERING PRAYER

Saturday 12 May, 9.30am-3.30pm

Nagle Room, ErinEarth, Kildare Ave, Wagga Wagga

For anyone interested in:

- the history of western contemplative prayer
- current practice of centering prayer
- regular meditation practice

"Centering Prayer is simply a wordless, trusting opening of self to the Divine Presence – listening to God..." (Cynthia Bourgeault)

Morning tea and 'all day' tea, coffee, water available.

BYO Lunch

Cost: Donation only

For further information contact: Sr Carmel Wallis: email: carmel.wallis@preswagga.org
<http://www.erinearth.org.au/>

Participation in this activity will contribute 6 hours towards currency of accreditation to Work, Teach, Lead in Catholic Education. There will be a CSO sign on sheet available. Please sign on if you attend.

Shared thoughts from the 2017 Centering Prayer group at ErinEarth:

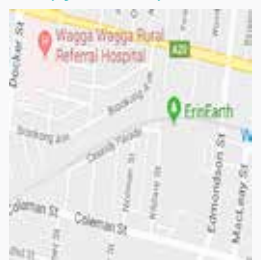
"Contemplative prayer- a new lifeline for me. While I enjoy praying alone, & derive benefits I have not experienced before such as peace, love, and forgiveness, I find gathering with others to pray in silence seems to strengthen this...the mystery of silence energises me to be faithful to my daily practice."

"... has given me a peacefulness that has permeated my life. I am very grateful".

"A gentle way to sit quietly, be open to God and learn so much about traditions with a supportive group."

".. I have a new energy and urgency to pray each day as it stimulates me to want more and be calm."

"I sit quietly, constantly bringing my wandering mind back to a place of 'no thought'. After this meditative time, I am calmer, refreshed and ready for the day."



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Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Level 1 Part 1 (3-6 year olds) Training



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a faith formation process that honours the spiritual values of childhood and the child's covenant relationship with God. Founded by Dr. Sofia Cavalletti and Professor Gianna Gobbi in Rome, this method draws on the discoveries of childhood development made by Dr. Maria Montessori and implements Montessori principles of education, such as the use of concrete materials, spontaneous choice of work and freedom of movement.

Date: Monday 16th to Saturday 21st April 2018 (6 days)

Trainer: Angela Hague from Chatswood Sydney

Location: St Michael's Parish Centre WAGGA WAGGA

Cost: \$320

Course Description and Aims:

The Level One Formation Course is the foundation course for all three levels of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. It aims to:

- Explore with participants the general developmental characteristics, religious nature and religious needs of the 3 to 6 year old child.
- Meditate on the Biblical and Liturgical themes of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.
- Offer guidelines and assistance to catechists in setting up an atrium for the 3 to 6 year old child, preparing presentation album pages and making materials.
- Experience being formed as catechists by the Word of God and deepening our ability to observe and learn from the children, the joy of the Gospel!

Participation in the course is not a commitment to working in an atrium. Course content is also helpful for those working in other catechesis settings or for parents interested in understanding what the CGS is and what their children will experience in the atrium.

For more information or to express interest please contact Emily Shaw 0400 524 190 emily-shaw@live.com.au or Fr. Darlow 0269 276 438

Enrich your faith and life at a parish mission

Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, 'What do you seek?' And they said to Him, 'Rabbi' (which means "teacher"), 'where are you going?' He said to them, 'Come and see' (John 1: 38-39).



Parish Mission!

- ✓ Given by the Fathers of Mercy USA
- ✓ 5 Evening talks with prayer
- ✓ Confession opportunity before & after
- ✓ Shared supper to conclude last evening
- ✓ Door prizes on final night
- ✓ All welcome including non-Catholics

Presenter: Fr. Louis Guardiola CPM
Date: Sun. 15th April - Thurs. 19th April 2018
Time & Venue: 7pm St. Brendan's Catholic church Ganmain
Contact: Fr. Justin Darlow 0407734747 or 69276438

Sunday
15th April
The 4 Last Things

Monday
16th April
The Sacrament of the Prodigal Son: Confession, Penance & Reconciliation

Tuesday
17th April
The Most Holy Eucharist: Sacrifice, Holy Communion & Real Presence

Wednesday
18th April
The Eucharistic Culture of Eternal Life

Thursday
19th April
Our Lady: Mother

Six parishes in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga are hosting Father Louis Guardiola C.P.M. and Father Ricardo Pineda C.P.M. of the Religious Pontifical Congregation of The Fathers of Mercy to conduct parish missions during April and May 2018.

A “parish mission” is a special event in which people of the community are invited to take part in several evenings of talks and prayer, all focusing on faith enrichment. A mission is conducted by a guest speaker who provides dynamic presentations directed toward key aspects of faith applied to life issues. A parish mission often results in a new spiritual awakening for those who attend, bringing about a deeper love for God and a revitalisation of personal relationships.

The mission presenters are members of a religious order of priests, the Fathers of Mercy headquartered in Auburn, Kentucky, USA.

For almost 200 years, the Fathers of Mercy have evangelised and strengthened the faith of parish

communities through their dynamic form of preaching. The Fathers of Mercy hope to enrich the faith-life of all who attend, including those who are already very devout as well as those who may just be very doubtful.

For people who are not Catholic, the parish mission is an excellent opportunity to hear clear presentations on exactly what Catholics actually believe as opposed to what many may mistakenly think they believe.

The mission priests associate their work with a scripture passage from the Gospel of St John in which Jesus spoke to those who desired to be His followers:

Jesus turned, and saw them following, and said to them, 'What do you seek?' And they said to Him, 'Rabbi' (which means "teacher"), 'where are you going?' He said to them, 'Come and see' (John 1: 38-39).

Each mission will be presented over five consecutive evenings from Sunday to Thursday in each church. The mission priests will be available to hear Confessions before and after their talks and

throughout the week.

The Fathers of Mercy and the priests of the respective parishes warmly welcome all to attend these dynamic parish missions. For specific times and further information please contact the local parishes.

Fr Louis Guardiola C.P.M. will offer parish missions in the following locations:

April 14 - 19: St. Brendan's Catholic Church, Ganmain with Fr Justin Darlow;

April 21 - 26: St. Mel's Catholic Church, Narrandera with Fr Bradley Rafter;

April 28 - May 3: Holy Spirit Catholic Church, Lavington with Fr Peter Murphy.

Fr Ricardo Pineda C.P.M. will offer parish missions in the following locations:

April 14 - 19: Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Griffith with Fr Andrew Grace;

April 22 - 26: Holy Trinity Catholic Church, Ashmont with Fr Thomas Casanova;

April 28 - May 3: All Saints Catholic Church, Tumbarumba with Fr Thomas Brancik.

Parish Mission

“If you knew the gift of God...”
-John 4:10

WHEN: Apr. 22 - 26, 2018 (Sun-Thurs)

WHERE: Holy Trinity Catholic Church
7 Bardia St.
Ashmont, NSW 2650

Confessions @ 5:30-6:30pm & 8:15pm
Mission Presentation @ 7pm by
Fr. Ricardo Pineda, CPM

*** TOPICS WILL INCLUDE ***

- Baptism:Power to Become Children of God
- The Church: That They May All Be One
- Confession: Unconditional Love & Healing
- The Eucharist: Heaven on Earth
- Mary, Mother of God and Our Mother

For more information, please
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Be a good egg and buy slave-free chocolate this Easter



ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans) has a message for anyone intending to buy chocolate this Easter – make sure it's slavery-free.

Australians will spend approximately \$2 billion on chocolate at Easter this year and ACRATH says much of it will be chocolate produced using child labour from West Africa.

Christine Carolan, the Executive Officer of ACRATH said buying slavery-free chocolate at Easter gives people the opportunity to take a stand against human trafficking and slavery. “We know that some children, working in some of the cocoa farms in West Africa are trafficked. Many others work in dangerous conditions for little or no wages and cannot attend school,” Ms Carolan said.

To purchase slavery-free chocolate, look for one of three labels – FAIRTRADE, Rainforest Alliance or UTZ certified. These labels show that the cocoa beans used in the chocolate’s production have been sourced ethically, from farmers who engage in good labour practices.

“If you buy chocolate with one of the three slavery-free labels you can be sure that the cocoa beans used in the chocolate’s production have been sourced ethically, from farmers who

engage in good labour practices.”

Slavery-free supply chains are becoming a major issue within the Church and in the wider business community, not just at Easter.

Two of Australia’s largest archdioceses, Sydney and Melbourne, are moving to ensure their supply chains are slavery-free. Sydney has already established a taskforce, with the aim of purchasing only slavery-proofed products and services. Melbourne is set to follow this lead.

ACRATH’s call is in line with Caritas Australia, which funds projects such as cocoa production in Bougainville. In this project, young people in Bougainville are learning cocoa production skills. This ensures they receive a fair price for their crops at the market and helps break the poverty cycle.

“Lent is a very important time for schools who raise funds for Caritas Australia’s Project Compassion,” Ms Carolan said. “We support this wonderful project and ask schools and parishes to remember to use only slavery-free chocolate in their fundraising.”

Centenary celebrations of St Patrick’s Church, Matong

The centenary of St Patrick’s Catholic Church at Matong will be celebrated on Sunday 27 May, 2018 – exactly 100 years and one day since its official opening on 26 May, 1918.

The celebrations will start with 10am Mass at St Patrick’s Church in Wood Street followed by a luncheon in the Matong Hall beginning at 11.30am. Cost for the luncheon will be \$10 per head.

The organising committee is planning a display of historical photos and memorabilia in the hall. They are also hoping there will be some storytelling and reminiscences from local or former parishioners and residents.

According to Father Justin Darlow who is writing a book about the history of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, Father Gray of Narrandera parish celebrated Masses at Matong as far back as the 1890s in Mr McCormick’s home at Matong.

Later Matong was placed under the parish of Junee and Monsignor Buckley held Masses in the Farmers Home Hotel dining room. Apparently some people have claimed that their baptism was conducted by Fr Patrick Hartigan (bush poet ‘John O’Brien’) in the bar of the same hotel.

With the construction of the School of Arts building, Masses were held at that location for a further 14 years until St. Patrick’s Matong was officially blessed and opened on Sunday the 26th May 1918.

‘The building of the church had taken a little over 18 months as the foundation stone had been laid on the 15th October 1916. The construction of the church during the years of the First World War



attests to the faith, generosity and fortitude of the local people of Matong. (Research gathered by Fr Darlow for his forthcoming history of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga entitled Consider the Crows).

If anyone has any memorabilia or photos they can contribute to the St Patrick’s Church historical display please contact the centenary coordinator John Smith on 0408 687 504 or Fr Justin Darlow, Administrator, St Brendan’s Catholic Parish, Ganmain on 0407 734 747 or 6927 6438.

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Easter Mass Times 2018

Cathedral Parish

St Michael’s Cathedral

Passion (Palm) Sunday:
Vigil Saturday 6:00pm, 24 March
Sunday Mass 8:00am, 10:00am, 5:30pm
Chrism Mass: 27 March - 11:00am
Holy Thursday:
7:00pm Solemn Mass of the Lord’s Supper followed by Adoration until 10:00pm.
Good Friday:
10:30am Stations of the Cross
3:00pm Solemn Liturgy
Holy Saturday:
8:00pm Solemn Vigil Mass for Easter
(NOTE: no 6:00pm Vigil Mass)
Easter Sunday:
8:00am, 10:00am, 5:30pm Mass
Carmelite Monastery
Holy Thursday: 7:00pm Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Good Friday: 3:00pm Solemn Celebration of the Passion
Holy Saturday: 7:00pm Solemn Vigil Mass for Easter
Easter Sunday: 9:30am Mass

Mt Erin Chapel

Palm Sunday: 10:00am Traditional Latin Mass
Easter Sunday: 10:00am Traditional Latin Mass
St Mary’s Chapel - Vianney College
Palm Sunday: 9:00am
Easter Sunday: 9:00am

South Wagga Parish

Our Lady of Fatima Church
Passion (Palm) Sunday:
Vigil Saturday 5:00pm,
Sunday Mass 8:30am, 10:30am
Holy Thursday:
7:00pm Solemn Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Good Friday:
10:30am Stations of the Cross;
3:00pm Solemn Liturgy
Holy Saturday:
7:00pm Vigil Mass
Easter Sunday:
8:30am, 10:30am
Syro Malabar Rite
Palm Sunday: 5:30pm
Holy Saturday: 10:00pm at Bourke Street

St Patrick’s Church Uranquinty

Palm Sunday: 8:30am
Easter Sunday: 8:30am

Koorringal Parish

Sacred Heart Church
Passion (Palm) Sunday:
Vigil Saturday 5.30pm,
Sunday Mass 8:30am, 10:00am,
Holy Thursday:
7:30pm Solemn Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Good Friday:
11:00am Stations of the Cross
3:00pm Solemn Liturgy
Holy Saturday:
7:30pm Solemn Vigil Mass
Easter Sunday:
8:30am, 10:00am (No 5:30pm Mass)

West Wagga Parish

Holy Trinity Church
Passion (Palm) Sunday: 9:00am, 5:30pm
Holy Thursday: 7:00pm
Good Friday:
11:00am Stations of the Cross

3.00pm Solemn Liturgy
Easter Sunday: 9:00am, 5:30pm Mass
San Isidore
Palm Sunday: 6:00pm
Holy Saturday: 7:00pm Solemn Vigil Mass
Collingullie
Easter Sunday: 9:30am
Loretto Home of Compassion
Palm Sunday: 10:30am
Easter Sunday: 10:30am

The Rock Parish

The Rock - St Mary’s Church
Palm Sunday: 10:00am
Holy Thursday: 8:00pm
Good Friday: 10:00am, 3:00pm
Vigil Saturday: 8:00pm
Easter Sunday: 10:00am

Please note that Easter Mass times were true and correct at the time of printing. For further clarification, please check parish bulletins and noticeboards closer to the date.



Humility vital to discovering who we were made to be

by Emily Shaw
Virtue Ministry graphic designer and writer

The great author, C.S. Lewis once wrote: "Humility isn't about thinking less of yourself, it's about thinking of yourself less."

And of course, this sounds like a great ideal but a harder reality when we live in a society that considers one's self first, validating our own personal success before all other achievements.

Putting ourselves first, to the detriment of others, is selfish. Likewise considering that anyone else's needs and ambitions as second to our own.

The tip to tackling this skewed way of viewing ourselves, explain the Virtue Ministry (VM) Team, is to practice the virtue of humility. Easier said than done perhaps? Or perhaps not.

The virtue of humility helps us to put a lens over our view of self, and see ourselves not in a vacuum but in relation with others and with God.

This lens helps us to see our very ordinary humanness and recognise that any gifts and talents we possess are, in fact, bestowed on us by God, and are not an indication of our own human merit.

"It's the difference between thinking that I am good at something because I'm naturally gifted that way," say Stina Constantine, Founder and Managing Director of Virtue Ministry, "and

recognising that I am talented in this area because it was gifted to me and there is a purpose behind that gift."

This realisation of our God-given abilities comes with a responsibility to use them for the very unique and distinct purpose we were given them; realising the person we were made to be.

Humility then, helps us to see our true value, dignity and potential as a child of God.

Self-knowledge, on the other hand, helps us to see where we may be falling short of that inherent dignity. It helps us to recognise our strengths as well as those areas where we need more prayer and guidance.

"The aspiring novelist," explains Constantine, "might recognise in themselves a gift for descriptive writing or imagining captivating plots and characters, but a fear of failure or criticism might be the stumbling block to submitting their finished manuscript to potential publishers."

Self knowledge and introspection then, are useful tools to not only reflect on what makes us the kind of person we are, but also can be used as signposts for mapping out the kind of person we want to be, and the person we were made to be.

The virtue of humility is one we might

all aspire to grow in, but a difficult one all the same. But, suggest the VM Team, small steps forward will result in big gains.

"Humility requires us to put things into the right perspective," says Constantine.

"This means we need to set aside time for prayer and reflection, and to be honest about our own faults and failures, but also discern our gifts and our own unique calling."

Regular prayer, introspection and discernment are key to unlocking our purpose and our potential.

"Ultimately humility is about being true to the person we were created to be and to the one who created us to be so," says Constantine.

Sometimes these habits can feel at odds with the culture around us, but they are vital if we are going to succeed in growing in virtue. Just a few minutes of prayer every day can make all the difference.

Practicing the virtue of humility may seem like an uphill battle at first, but in doing so we learn more about ourselves and the unique purpose God has given us.

And we come closer to being that person we were created to be.

In One Step Closer Br Anthony Freeman has produced a conversational and practical approach to 'upward ascent', a path to holiness that actually seems doable.

He has broken achieving holiness down into manageable portions so that you can approach it in a coherent and organised way which makes the whole thing seem less daunting to us mere mortals. Rather than abstract ideas about holiness he's has provided a sensible and realistic way to tackle all areas: vice, virtue, environment, relationships and vocations.

He indisperses his chapters with expressions that, although would not be out of place as memes or as part of an Instagram feed, really pack a punch, forcing you to reflect and discern. The book itself is no overly long and the explanations are succinct and effective.

Also in this volume are worksheets on virtue and vice, and a 'spiritual blueprint' that is nothing short of an excellent approach. The 'conscience exam' is on point!!

Br Freeman's explanations are simple to follow and bolstered



by relevant examples. He hasn't written this with a scholarly tone of voice, it's much simpler and conversational which works well for all audiences regardless of background.

This is perfect book for young Catholics - new to the faith or new to fervency. 'Never stop doing the good'!

The Virtue Ministry Team was honoured to be asked to pen the foreword for this book! We can't recommend it highly enough and have a few complimentary copies left to giveaway. Contact us at contact@virtueministry.org.au or via our Facebook page to snap up one of the few remaining free copies!

**MARCH VIRTUE CHALLENGE:**
Practise humility

GOALS
WRITE DOWN:
3 practical and realistic ways in which you can grow in this virtue
as well as
3 obstacles you can foresee to growing in this virtue

EVALUATE:
Check your progress every night and see how you went and where you can improve.
SHARE:
Your progress with an accountability partner or with us on our Facebook page - we're doing this challenge too!


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Wagga Youth Festival: Opening new horizons for local students

Inspirational American singer John Angotti who describes himself as 'a full-time music missionary' will perform live at the Wagga Diocesan Youth Festival to be held at Borambola Sport and Recreation Centre from 21 to 23 May.

Open New Horizons for Spreading Joy is the theme of the Wagga Youth Festival which is an expansion on the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) *Justice Matters Camp* established in 2014.

More than 140 students from Years 10 and 11 representing the five Catholic high schools in Wagga Diocese will attend the festival.

The inaugural Wagga Youth Festival is a response to the Australian Catholic Bishops Year of Youth 2018 which was launched at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney in December.

The festival will be a celebration of the gift of young people and our Catholic faith expressed through music, exploring wellbeing and responding to the call "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8 NRSV).

John Angotti travels the world providing inspirational music and witness to all ages through his concerts, workshops, retreats, conferences and liturgies. John will be a special guest at the Wagga Youth Festival where he will offer music and presentations. John's message is clear: There is hope, healing and truth with the love of God.

Another special festival guest will be Paul Ninnes, co-founder and managing director of

RealTalk International <http://www.realtalkaustralia.com/> Real Talk is about 'getting real' on the topics of sex, relationships and personal identity.

"In a world where young people crave information, authenticity and reality they need to hear the truth in a compelling way and they need it now!

At Real Talk we believe God has an amazing plan for each and every person's life," Paul says.

Paul will present a message based on the Christian values of respect, dignity and self-worth and invite students into the reality that we are created to experience a love that echoes the love of Jesus.

The festival offers the opportunity for students to:

- Experience 'joy and opening new horizons' for young people
- Experience authentic and personal engagement with young people from other schools, teachers, leaders and clergy
- Dialogue - free to voice concerns, worries and/or questions, feel validated and supported through hopeful and encouraging conversations.
- A joyful experience of Church and the Catholic faith
- An immersive experience of learning in and for faith, social justice, wellbeing and music.

There will also be two separate workshops addressing topics that develop the student's personal growth.

These topics may include:

- Connection to country and what this means to Aboriginal

people

- Mind body spirit culture: friendship or leadership
- Cultural activities specific to males or females
- Yarning with Aboriginal Elders and the Aboriginal school and community workers.



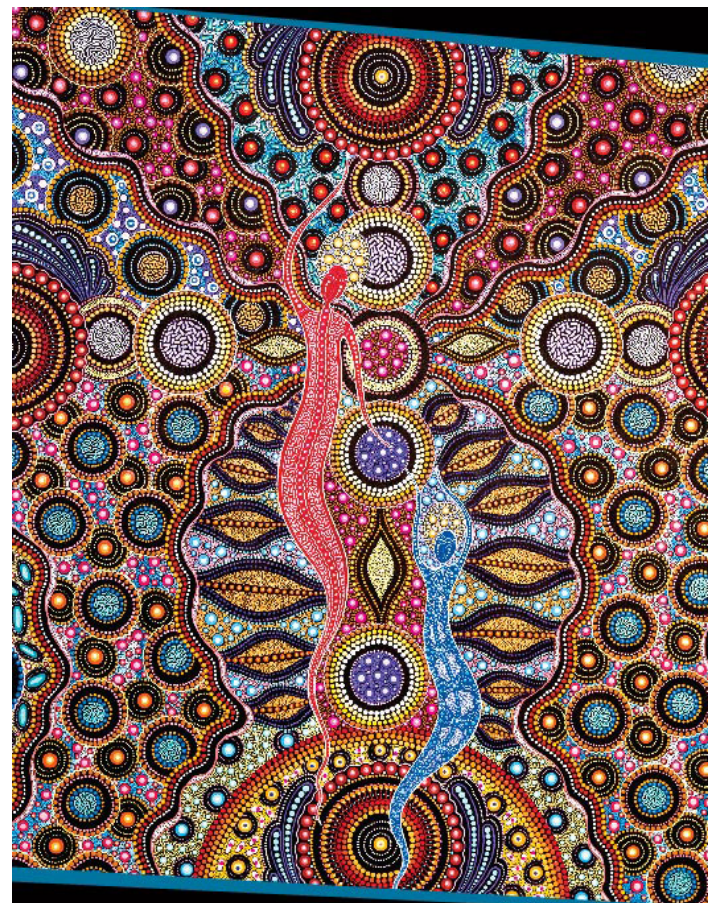
Paul Ninnes

Paul is the Co-founder and Managing Director of Real Talk International. He uses his powerful life story and fifteen years ministry experience to present the life-changing Real Talk message. Paul has a Bachelor of Physiotherapy and postgraduate qualifications in Sexual Health and Theology. In a world where young people crave information, authenticity and reality. Young people need to hear the truth in a compelling way and they need it now! At Real Talk we believe God has an amazing plan for each and every person's life. Paul will present a message based on the Christian values of respect, dignity and self worth and invite students into the reality that we are created to experience a love that echoes the love of Jesus.



John Angotti

John is a full time music missionary. He travels throughout many parts of the world providing inspirational music and witness to all ages through concerts, workshops, retreats, missions, conferences, and liturgies. John will perform live at the festival and offer music and presentations that speak into the festival theme: Open New Horizons for Spreading Joy.



year_{of} youth

OPEN NEW HORIZONS FOR SPREADING JOY

The official image for the Year of Youth is titled *Christ our Joy* and was painted by artist, Amunda Gorey in Alice Springs.

The Australian Catholic Bishops have identified the liturgical year of 2018 as a national Year of Youth to focus on renewal and engagement of a new generation of young people in the life of the Australian Church.

The image, which will be central to the celebration and prayerful discernment of local Australian communities throughout the Year of Youth, was unveiled at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney in December.

"The image tells the story of young people in the current landscape of our Australian Church as they journey toward Christ. It is a story of rich diversity and great joy," said Malcolm Hart, Director of the Australian Catholic Bishop Conference's Office for Youth.

Ms Gorey was identified by the Australian Catholic

Youth Council for her use of vibrant colour which depicts youthfulness and the joy that is central to the spiritual focus of the Year of Youth. Her previous work has also shown a depth of spirituality that is authentic to our Australian tradition.

Christ our Joy is rich in symbolism, tradition and meaning. It depicts the diversity of young people through the use of varied colour, shaped and sized dots. Some are gathered in communities, others more isolated. Some are closer to God or the cross, others further away.

The central figures are Jesus and Mary against a cross. They point to the Resurrection as the source of our Joy. Jesus extends a hand toward his mother Mary, and with her to the Church; with his other hand he points them all to his Father-God.

"Everyone will see, feel and sense the painting differently. Each is valued as our stories and experiences are different," Ms Gorey said.

Open new horizons
for spreading joy

Young people, faith
& vocational discernment

Year of Youth Theme

KIDS corner Jokes...

Q. Why did the Easter Bunny cross the road?

A: Because the chicken had his Easter eggs!



Q. How did the soggy Easter Bunny dry himself?

A: With a hare-dryer!

Q. How does the Easter Bunny stay fit?

A: Eggs-ercise and hare-robics!

Q. Why did the Easter egg hide?

A: He was a little chicken!

Q. Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke?

A: It might crack up!



Thanks to Millie Mott for sending in this photo of her doing the capillary action science experiment from last month.

We love receiving photos!



Get crafty...

Easter Chickens Egg Carton Craft

What you'll need:

- egg carton
- acrylic paint and brush
- glue, scissors, marker
- orange coloured paper
- feathers



Instructions:

- Cut apart two egg holders from the carton and trim off the excess on the edges
- Glue the two pieces together
- Paint
- Add a beak and some eyes
- Poke a feather into the top

I did find that using a hot glue gun worked best for gluing the two egg carton pieces together. The white glue works fine, it just needs a little bit of extra holding time.



Send your coloured picture, word search or joke ideas with your name, age and school to:

Together Editor

PO Box 473

Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

We'd love to hear from you!



Word Search

E	R	U	Y	A	D	N	U	S	E
G	G	J	E	S	U	S	O	E	T
N	M	G	S	A	W	D	T	R	E
O	T	E	S	P	L	E	N	E	R
L	T	X	I	A	S	L	E	A	N
E	F	A	M	I	L	Y	S	N	A
B	U	N	N	Y	V	E	I	A	L
C	O	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	J

Easter
Risen
Eggs

Bunny
Sunday
Jesus

Eternal
Belong
Family

See page 18 for the answers

Catholic sector clarifies school funding position



School funding is a matter of concern for all schools, not just Catholic schools, says National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) acting director Ray Collins.

The NCEC last week sought to clarify its position in light of the recent coverage regarding Catholic sector funding.

"One of the important roles of state Catholic school bodies and the NCEC is ensuring that parents in Catholic schools are aware of the policies of the various political parties in the run-up to elections, whether they be Federal or State general elections or by-elections," Mr Collins said.

"Communication with parents takes various forms in a modern society, all with the intention of enabling parents to be aware of the

respective parties' policies so they can make an informed choice when they vote.

"Catholic Education Melbourne, in addressing the policies that will impact on families in Catholic schools in the recent Batman by-election, was fulfilling that responsibility," he said.

"All Catholic education authorities stand in solidarity in the commitment to engage with the various political parties to fix flaws in the current funding model; progress educational policy matters and keep parents informed of these discussions."

Mr Collins said the NCEC considers the policies of the Turnbull Government to be problematic for Catholic schools in certain circumstances across Australia and will rightfully continue to engage with the

Government to highlight these concerns.

He also rejected any notion that the position of the Labor Party outlined in a recent letter from ALP leader Bill Shorten constitutes a "special deal".

"It is a re-statement of Labor's policies when it was last in government," Mr Collins said. "Government schools will be the greatest beneficiaries of this policy."

"Catholic schools would receive their fair share based on educating one in five students across Australia."

Meanwhile, *The Australian* newspaper reported last week that enrolments in low-fee Catholic schools have fallen in Broken Bay Diocese by as much as 23 per cent this year, following fee rises in response to the Turnbull Government's school funding package.

The Australian reported that two-thirds of the 44 Catholic schools in Broken Bay have recorded declines in enrolments for this year after the schools were forced to increase fees. A third of those experienced falls of more than 10 per cent with one school suffering a 23 per cent collapse in new or returning students.

The NSW figures confirm that the Catholic school backlash to the Gonski needs-based funding model introduced last year was not confined to the Victorian branch, as Education Minister Simon Birmingham has claimed.

Concerns about the new funding package, which the sector claims will rip \$250 million out of the systemic school system, have also been raised privately by other state Catholic sector bodies.

When asked if the recent changes to



Mr Ray Collins, Acting Executive Director of the NCEC

school funding would affect the 31 Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, Acting Director of Schools, Mr Mark MacLean moved to reassure families, saying that "With this agreement and all the fine print attended to in the near future, the school fees in the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga will not increase as a direct result of this government decision."



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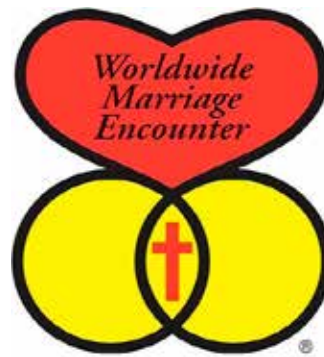
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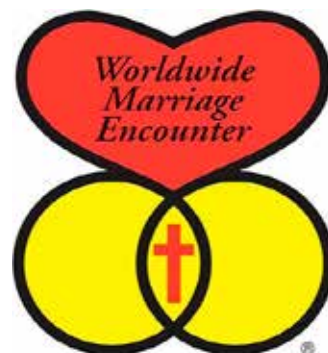
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27 – 29 April 2018
at the Mt Carmel Retreat Centre in Varroville, NSW

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If you would like Worldwide Marriage Encounter brochures please see WWME website at www.wwme.org.au

Thank you for your support of the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Movement.

In the love of Our Lord, our sincere thanks,
Fr Mick Court, Marian and Andrew Julien
Unit Coordinators and Ecclesial Team - Worldwide Marriage Encounter: Australia – Eastern Unit



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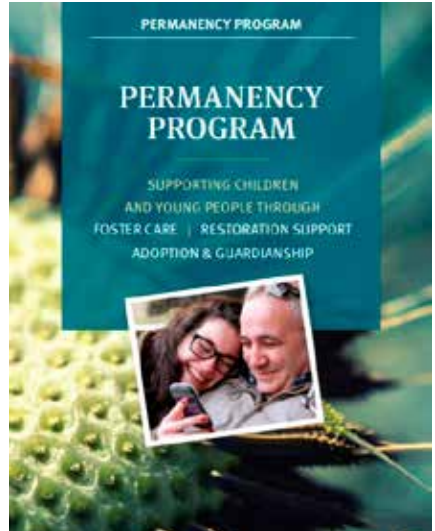
A new home for Wagga Wagga's Marymead

Tuesday 13th February saw the official opening of Marymead's new Wagga Wagga office, a move necessitated due to Marymead's rapid growth and expansion of services within the Wagga Wagga region. These larger premises, located in Best Street, were officially opened by Neil Caldicott, Director Operations Murrumbidgee, at NSW

Family and Community Services. As part of the official opening Mr Caldicott also provided an overview of recent changes within the out-of-home care sector including the implementation of the Permanency Support Program, one of the most significant changes to the child protection system in decades.

The day also featured the launch

of Marymead's new Stretch Reconciliation Plan, the next phase in Marymead's continuing reconciliation journey. The date chosen for the launch of this new Plan coincided with the tenth anniversary of the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's formal apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples on the 13th of February 2008.



Scripture reading talk

A talk on how to read Scripture will be the topic for the next Patrician's Faith Group meeting on Friday 20 April at St Michael's Parish Centre, Wagga Wagga (opposite the Cathedral) from 7:15pm to 9:15pm.

Guest speaker will be Mrs Eartha Sobolewski of Wagga Wagga.

The Patricians Group meet every second Friday of each month to discuss current issues on matters of faith.

For more information please contact Caronne Vella on 0413 801 616.

Word Search answers from page 16

E	R	U	Y	A	D	N	U	S	E
G	G	J	E	S	U	S	O	E	T
N	M	G	S	A	W	D	T	R	E
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B	U	N	N	Y	V	E	I	A	L
C	O	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	J

Catholic Charismatic Renewal Day in Shepparton

Discovering who I am in Christ: Healing of our self-esteem is the theme of a renewal day in May organised by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in Sandhurst Diocese, Victoria.

The renewal day will be held at St Brendan's Parish, Shepparton on Saturday 12 May. Shepparton is located in Sandhurst Diocese which adjoins the Diocese of Wagga and includes Wodonga, just across the Murray River from Albury.

Guest presenter for the renewal day is Maree Sobolewski, a member of St Patrick's Parish, Albury. As part of Catholic Charismatic Renewal for 38 years Maree has assisted or led the St Patrick's Prayer Group for many of those years.

Maree has a background in education, outreach work and retreat and workshop days. She is also a practicing Spiritual Director/Companion with a Master of Arts (Theology. Pastoral Care and Spirituality Strand) from the ACUC.

One area Maree is particularly passionate about is the love of God the Father.

"We are each the heavenly Father's child and God seeks to be a real Father to us. We need this love to thrive. It is a deep desire of Our Heavenly Father that we know and experience Him as a loving Father. This gives Him joy and it will enable us to live with more peace, hope and love in our lives," Maree says.

Another favourite area of Maree's is

God's call to us for 'seasons' of rest and refreshment to restore our wellbeing. As a retreat facilitator Maree has given retreats on these and other themes in Canada, Lismore and Wagga Wagga Dioceses and Darwin.

Maree has a broad teaching background which she says has helped her to understand and respect diversity but also see the great universal need for each of us to know we have a God who loves us.

We warmly invite you all to experience a day of the Father's love and rest. We are the 'apple of the Fathers eye'.

For more information about the Renewal Day please contact Brigita Hore on 0412 042 196 or email brigitajh@bigpond.com

Renewal Day

'Discovering Who I Am In Christ'

Healing of our Self-esteem

Presented by Maree Sobolewski

Saturday May - 12th - 2018



St Brendan's Parish, Shepparton
Monsignor Peter Jeffery Centre:
9:30 am to 4:30 pm

Hosted by Diocesan Catholic Charismatic Renewal

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Contact Brigita Hore: 0412-042-196
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Please bring a shared lunch and afternoon tea.
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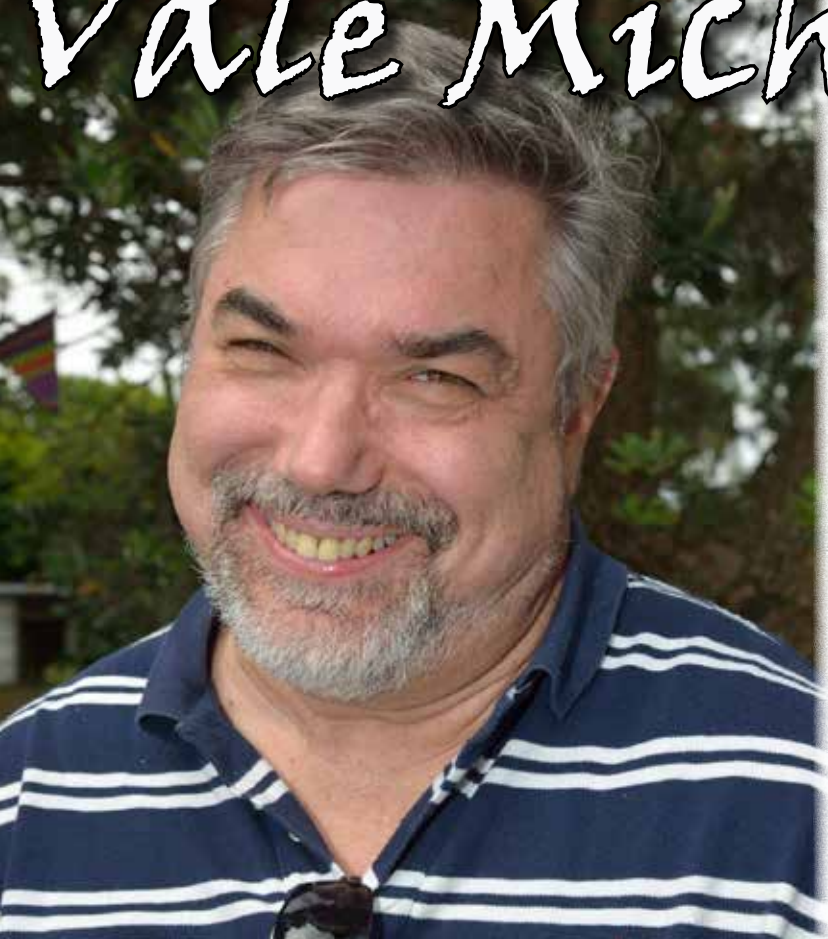


Refreshments Room

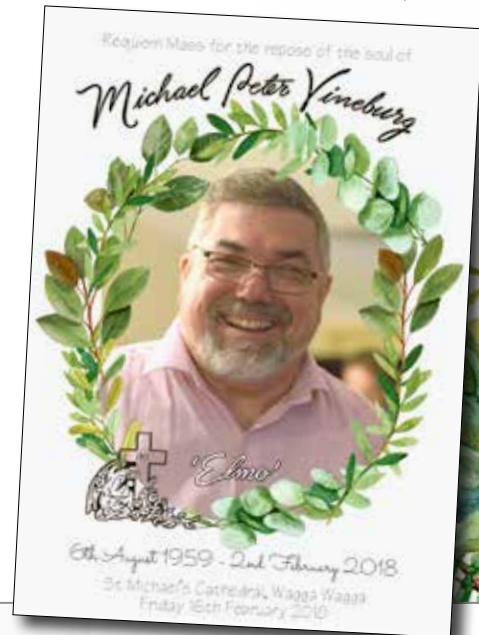


Vale Michael Vineburg

6th August 1959 to 2nd February 2018



God gives life,
and God takes
life away. And
the taking away
is so terribly
painful because
what he gives is
so very good.



Michael Peter Vineburg, known to his beloved family as 'Elmo' sadly left us on Friday, February 2nd, 2018.

Family, friends and colleagues from the Catholic Schools Office and McAlroy House staff farewelled Michael at a Requiem Mass in St Michael's Cathedral, Wagga Wagga on February 16, 2018. Father Kevin O'Reilly was principal celebrant for the Requiem Mass.

Michael was head of the Information and Communication Technologies Team at the Catholic Schools Office since 2000.

Prior to this Michael was Deputy Principal at Henschke Primary School, South Wagga from 1990 to 1999 and was a teacher at Sacred

Heart Primary School, Koorringal from 1986 to 1989.

Michael had a high profile across the Diocese of Wagga Wagga and was well known for his generosity of time and expertise. The highly sophisticated system of information technology that exists in diocesan schools can be rightly seen as a legacy of Michael's dedication and foresight.

Michael's reputation as a fixer; an innovator and a compassionate and generous helper extended beyond his professional life. His understanding of construction, carpentry, most things electrical and even cake making and decorating was known to many.

Finding creative solutions to problems was one of Michael's

joys, especially when the problem was challenging and the solution not obvious.

"You can find out anything on the Internet," he would often say.

Michael is the loved husband of Stephanie; father and father-in-law of Erin and Ivan; Genevieve and Matthew; Luke and Sarah and Mark (deceased). Adored grandad 'Elmo' of Ella, Jobe, Reuben, Isla, Vann and Taj. Cherished son of Judy and Leo (deceased). Treasured brother of Stephen, John, Louise, Catherine, Patricia, Frances and Peter.

Michael will be sadly missed by all his family, friends and workmates.



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Journey of faith and learning



Birrang of Winhanga Bilinya and Yalbliinya means to take a journey of faith and learning in Wiradjuri language.

The theme of walking together in partnership with our Aboriginal brothers and sisters on Wiradjuri country was central to a traditional smoking ceremony held to celebrate Harmony Day 2018 (March 21) outside McAlroy House in Tarcutta Street, Wagga Wagga.

Staff of McAlroy House (head office of the Wagga Wagga Diocese and the Catholic Schools Office) gathered outside for the smoking ceremony and blessing of the Journey of Faith and Learning Cross which now hangs in the foyer of McAlroy House.

The magnificent Cross which was painted by young Aboriginal artist Tyronne Hoerler symbolises the connection to country of the Wiradjuri people and acknowledges the location of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga and Catholic schools within Wiradjuri country.

The Cross acknowledges that we are people of Faith and Jesus represented by Baiame- the Creator Spirit. Central to the design is the Goanna or Gugaa, the Totem of the Wiradjuri people.

The footprints remind us that we

are walking with each other on a journey and symbolic meeting circles acknowledge the importance of sitting, listening and yarning together in our Diocesan schools and communities.

"Aboriginal people belong to country," said Aunty Mary Atkinson, Aboriginal School and Community Liaison Officer for the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) Wagga Diocese.

"Whenever we talk on country and in community we are walking together on a journey and showing spiritual connections as a community of faith," Aunty Mary said.

Tyronne Hoerler, 19 who painted the Cross was born and raised in Wagga Wagga and has lived on Wiradjuri land all his life.

While he was still a student at Mount Austin High School he also danced and performed for four years with the Bangarra Dance Theatre in Sydney.

Since childhood Tyronne has always drawn patterns related to his culture and his Aboriginal ancestors.

"It just comes out. I don't know

where it comes from," Tyronne said. "I just follow my hand. I can't explain it."

Tyronne's prolific artwork earned him a \$10,000 Young Regional Artist scholarship from Creat NSW to enable him to continue his painting fulltime.

Last year Tyronne was commissioned to paint a mural in the fore court of the Wagga Wagga Council Chambers during national Reconciliation Week.

Tyronne's next projects include painting a mural at a school in Hay and working with local Indigenous artist Aunty Fay Mosely to paint a wheat silo at Ladysmith near Wagga.

In his 'spare' time Tyronne is designing football jerseys for the Wagga Dindima Football Club (formerly Wagga Crows) as well as doing painting workshops with young people in the Juvenile Justice Centre in Wagga and mentoring young Indigenous students at Mount Erin Boarding School.

Check out his Facebook page: Tyronne Hoerler's Aboriginal Art



Clockwise from top:
Wiradjuri man and 'keeper of the flame' Peter Ingram, of Wagga performs the smoking ceremony

Fr Kevin O'Reilly, Administrator of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, blesses the Diocesan Cross in the foyer of McAlroy House

McAlroy House staff gather for the smoking ceremony on Harmony Day Aunty Mary Atkinson and Mark MacLean, Director of Schools

Four generations together: artist Tyronne Hoerler, left with his mother Phyllis Morris and brother Tremaine, 3 of Wagga; great grandmother Phyllis Smith of Brewarrina and grandmother Patty Morris, of Wagga.



JOURNEY OF FAITH AND LEARNING

Birrang of Winhanga Bilinya and Yalbliinya
(Wiradjuri Language)

Artist - Tyronne Hoerler
(Wangkumara)

As people working for the Catholic Church, we are called to joyfully receive the cultural genius of the First Peoples of Australia (St John Paul II, 1986)

This work of art talks about our connection to country. The land, water rivers and animals are very important to Aboriginal people. It is essential for their survival.

The cross acknowledges that we are people of Faith and Jesus (Baiame)

The Goanna or Gugaa is the Totem of the Wiradjuri people and pays respect to the local people and the lands on which this office sits.

Each of the four large shaped areas with different coloured dots represents the Clans, Deaneries and Communities that make up this diocese. The Three large black dots next to each are Goanna eggs.

The footprints remind us that we are walking with each other on a Journey.

Meeting circles throughout the painting acknowledge the importance of sitting, listening and yarning together in our Schools and Communities.

The colours each represent an important part of the land that surrounds us, with blue paying particular respect to the life-giving Murrumbidgee river.

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