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SOUND OF MUSIC

Live at Wagga Beach



Students from 14 Catholic Schools across the Riverina gathered at Wagga Beach last month for the inaugural Diocesan Catholic Schools Music Festival.

More than 1,200 primary and secondary school students played instruments, sang and danced as Wagga Beach was transformed into an open air performance space.

continued on page 4...



All photos: Frank Perri, Studio 212



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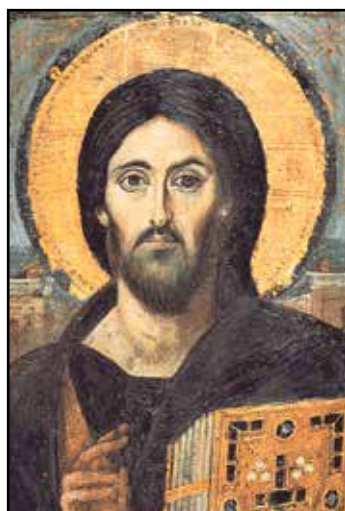


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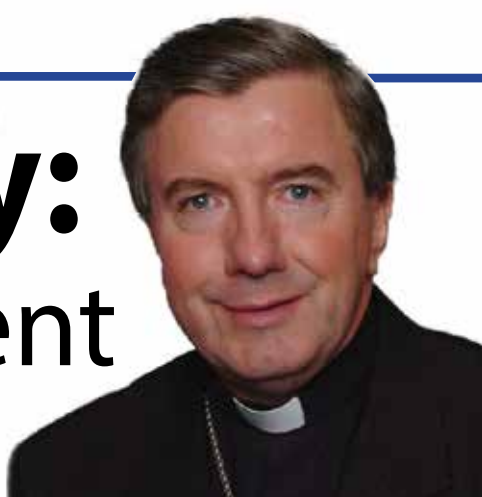
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Prayer for the election of a Bishop

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.

Co-responsibility: A Baptismal commitment



TOGETHER
IN THE DIOCESE OF WAGGA WAGGA

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Dear Friends in Christ,
THROUGH the sacrament of Baptism we enter into the life of Jesus, and “are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission.” (CCC 1213)

It is fascinating to see how Catholics live out their baptism in sharing this mission of the Church. We do this together. There is a co-responsibility in this mission. We imitate Jesus in this.

St Paul’s great hymn in his letter to the Philippians summarises it all: Jesus who “being in the form of God ... emptied himself, taking the form of a slave ... even to accepting death, death on a cross ... but God raised him on high ... and that every tongue should acknowledge Jesus as Lord to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil 2: 6-11)

Baptism gives us the “response – ability” to enter into this saving mystery by grace and faith.

Of course, the overwhelming majority of Christians live out their baptism in taking on missionary responsibility in their marriages, families, parishes, communities, work place, and society in general.

Daily I meet people responding in their particular ways with much missionary zeal, even if they do not express it in such a way. But in taking on co-responsibility for the spread of the Gospel they experience deep inner peace and hope.

Another example is more specific.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Apostolic Administrator of the Wagga Wagga Diocese

Recently, I have presided over the Funeral Masses of two remarkable parish priests who died within two weeks of each other: Fr Mayne Murphy and Fr Philip Harding. May they rest in peace.

They are especially remembered with great affection by parishioners in the parishes in Lake Cargelligo and Temora.

Co-responsibility is always extroverted and never introverted. It is ready to serve where the need is greatest – especially with the poor and marginalised.

Then, in the last few weeks, I have ordained to the diaconate, Adrian Chan and Namora Anderson, and to the priesthood, Joshua Scott. All three are fine men. They are so eager to surrender their lives in service of the Kingdom of God in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. This is their expression of their baptismal calling in co-responsibility with all the Church.

A final example was my Mass and gathering with the religious institutes serving in this Archdiocese. To hear their testimonies of the vast apostolates they take responsibility for over many years is truly inspirational.

In this month of November, we cannot forget in our prayers our loved ones who

have died but whose gospel examples still live on in our hearts and minds.

And so now, the baton of faith has passed into our hands. The key word remains CO-RESPONSIBILITY. Christianity is never our little private and pious world. This is a totally misunderstanding of the sacrament of Baptism. Co-responsibility is always

extroverted and never introverted. It is ready to serve where the need is greatest – especially with the poor and marginalised.

Let us all really have this understanding afresh in our hearts as we move towards the end of year activities and gatherings.

Also, it should animate us as we make our pilgrimage towards the 2020 Plenary Council of the Australian Catholic Church.

Surely a noble starting point for this historic gathering is to focus afresh on our baptismal vocation in a co-responsible manner alert to our current Australian challenges.

We continue to pray for each other with Mary and all the saints.



Monthly Prayer Intention for November Pray with Pope Francis

Universal: Christians in Asia

That Christians in Asia, bearing witness to the Gospel in word and deed, may promote dialogue, peace, and mutual understanding, especially with those of other religions.

Challenges for the month

Pray for Christians in Asia, particularly in countries where they are minorities, so that religious freedom and peace are always recognized.

Seek to know better the reality of Christianity in Asia, its diversity and wealth, in particular the evangelical enthusiasm of these younger Churches.

In the local community, seek to meet people of different religious traditions, know their habits, actions and establish good relations, which lead to some cooperation for the good of society.

Prayer for the month

God our Father, you teach us to live the faith in the coherence between our words and our works, between what we profess and what we live.

Help us to live radically the spirit of the Our Father, in which we realize that we are all brothers and therefore invited to share and to dialogue.

In this particular month, we pray for the Christians in Asia, who in many countries are a minority, that they may always be bridge builders among the various religious traditions in the societies in which they live, witnessing the charity of the Gospel through their lives.



Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network

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500 years after the Reformation: Lutherans and Catholics sign historic joint statement

by Jenny Brinkworth
Editor - The Southern Cross,
Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide

A national commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation on Tuesday October 31 has been described as an “ecumenical camino” by the Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn, Archbishop Christopher Prowse.

Hundreds of Catholics and Lutherans took part in the day-long program of events in Adelaide marking the posting of Martin Luther’s 95 theses in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517.

Archbishop Prowse, who is chairman of the Bishops Commission for Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations, said the commemoration of the Lutheran Reformation was historic at a national and international level.

Organised by the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) and the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide, the commemorative day called *Together in Hope* began with morning prayer in Bethlehem Lutheran Church and a presentation on the Lutheran and Catholic histories in Australia in St Stephen’s Lutheran Church, Adelaide.

“It was wonderfully planned and beautifully brought together – I would describe it as an ecumenical camino,” Archbishop Prowse said after he and Bishop John Henderson, national pastoral leader of the Lutheran Church of Australia signed a declaration of unity between the two churches.

The statement says that while much has changed in the world – and the church – since the time of Martin Luther, ‘the effects of the Reformation endure’.

“It’s been a journey not just today but also in terms of the future and the gratitude we have for all that has taken place to get to this point. There is a deep sense of repentance and regret for the terrible ways we have treated each other in the past.”

Referring to the impact of Vatican II and the Joint Declaration on Justification in 1999, Archbishop Prowse said it was as if an “impulse of the Holy Spirit” had taken over in the past five decades and a great deal had been achieved in a relatively short time.

Bishop Henderson said the joint statement was an important commitment between the Catholic and Lutheran churches in Australia to continue to work positively together for the sake of the gospel.

“It’s important for all Christians in the modern world to find their



Archbishop Christopher Prowse, left and Bishop John Henderson, National Pastoral Leader of the Lutheran Church of Australia, sign the declaration of unity in Adelaide on October 31, 2017. Photo by Ben Macmahon.

common voice and their common witness to the gospel,” Bishop Henderson said.

“I think that’s nothing less than Jesus would expect of us. This statement is built on 40 years of solid dialogue, challenging dialogue, between the LCA and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.”

“It’s been a journey not just today but also in terms of the future and the gratitude we have for all that has taken place to get to this point. There is a deep sense of repentance and regret for the terrible ways we have treated each other in the past.”

In a presentation on the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue prior to the signing of the declaration, Rev Dr Dean Zweck, Emeritus co-chair of the Dialogue, echoed the Bishops’ sentiments.

“Fifty years ago who would have thought Lutherans and Catholics would sit together in St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the

Reformation,” he said.

“Surely this is the work of Jesus Christ in our midst.”

Dr Gerard Kelly, president of the Catholic Institute of Sydney, said while there was “no timeframe” for the two churches coming together in full fellowship, the important thing was that “we take steps”.

“I don’t quite know what it (full fellowship) would be like. There are all sorts of different views and we need to talk about that in our dialogue,” he said.

Participants processed to St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral for another packed session, this time on Reformation history, and then to the Adelaide Town Hall where Caritas Australia and Australian Lutheran World

Service talked about how the two agencies worked together in providing humanitarian aid.

An ecumenical lunch followed in Victoria Square and Adelaide Archbishop Philip Wilson and Bishop Henderson planted a tree in Pilgrim Peace Park to mark the occasion.

The afternoon program included a screening of the film *Luther* and a choral performance and organ recital in St Francis Xavier’s Cathedral.

The evening prayer service was modelled on the service attended in Lund, Sweden by Pope Francis in October last year.

Archbishop Wilson said the day was an opportunity to rejoice in our common faith in the love of God in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.

“It is my sincerest hope that our communities will continue on the path of transformation in God’s love, and find our way even closer to one another,” he said.

To read the joint statement go to: www.50500.lca.org.au/joint-statement-on-the-reformation/

Music: Count Us In



Continued from front page...

The performers included all 13 pupils of St Francis, Urana who did bucket drumming; St Joseph's, Narrandera choir and band; Holy Spirit Albury, Stage 2 and Stage 3 dance group; St Patrick's Albury year 4 song and dance group; St Michael's Coolamon Ensemble plus bands from St Joseph's Wagga; St Brendan's, Ganmain; St Joseph's, Junee and St Joseph's, Lockhart; Henschke band and choir; Mater Dei Primary Wagga choir and the Kildare band. St Joseph's, Leeton sent the whole school, 220 pupils, to Wagga for the performance of their school band and choir.

St Patrick's, Griffith and St Mary's, Yoogali celebrated the Music Festival on the same day in Griffith. They filmed their celebration to be included in the Diocesan package which was shown on the live streaming **Music: Count Us In (MCUI)**

event on November 2 from Federation Square in Melbourne.

All the schools combined their talents for a mass performance of *Shine Together* which is the song for this year's **Music: Count Us In (MCUI)** event. **Music: Count Us In** is Australia's biggest school music education celebration where students across the country sing the same song, on the same day at the same time each year and the event is live streamed.

The Wagga Diocesan Music Festival was filmed by a MCUI crew from Sydney and included in the coverage of the MCUI Celebration Day on Thursday 2 November. More than half a million students from over 3,400 schools throughout Australia joined in singing *Shine Together*. The song was written by five talented young school students with the assistance of MCUI Program Ambassador, musician John Foreman OAM and guest mentor,





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Making Music Matter

Australian singer-songwriter Taylor Henderson. **Music: Count Us In** – an annual event run by the Music Australia organisation - is Australia's largest schools initiative to celebrate Australian music and music education. It incorporates Music Education curriculum, providing teachers with teaching resources and culminates in a National celebration day.

The music festival was the culmination of two years' intensive Music Education (and hours of practice) in Catholic schools throughout the diocese. In an effort to promote music education in diocesan schools, the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) has funded music lessons and music workshops as part of the Diocesan Music Initiative program.

"Until we introduced the Diocesan Music Initiative in 2016, most of our primary students had not been given an opportunity

to learn instrumental music," said Fi O'Shaughnessy, Music Program Officer for the CSO.

"We have lots of gala sport days for schools but this has been the biggest celebration of music we have had in the diocese. Music is a common language and music education has so many neurological benefits for kids," Ms O'Shaughnessy said.

"Alan Bowyer (retiring Director of the CSO Wagga Wagga) campaigned for rural kids to have more Music Education in diocesan schools and the Music Festival is the result. It has been an amazing experience for all the kids as well as the teachers, principals and parents involved," Ms O'Shaughnessy said.

A highlight of the day was a performance workshop for the students with Sydney band *Craig Calhoun and The Brothers of Oz*.



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Women of Wagga changing the world



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A Caritas Kitchen is a reminder that what you do in your kitchen can, and does, have an impact on what others can bring to theirs.

Please join us at our Caritas Kitchen event and help us do something to end poverty.

Save the date:

Wednesday 22nd November at 11:30am - 1:30pm

St Michael's Parish Centre, Johnston Street

RSVP: Michelle 0428 212 711 or Ruth on 0413 454 215

We would love to see you there!



Photos: Caritas Australia

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\$500 Could buy a life saving food kit for 10 conflict affected families in **Lebanon**.

Women for the World is a new community fundraising initiative which was launched by Caritas Australia in September.

Women around Australia are joining forces as part of a global sisterhood aimed at raising money and awareness for women living in poverty worldwide.

They are gathering their friends and hosting events – morning teas, clothes swaps and movie nights – to raise funds for Caritas's lifesaving aid work.

The origins of the Women for the World community fundraiser can be traced to a meeting between Wagga Wagga doctor, Michelle Fernon and Caritas Australia staffer and former refugee, Lulu Mitshabu who lived in Wagga Wagga after her family was first resettled in Australia.

Inspired by Lulu's story of survival and flight from the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Michelle and two friends organised the inaugural Women for the World fundraising luncheon in Sydney in 2014 which was attended by 220 women.

On Wednesday 22 November, Michelle and a group of friends from St Michael's Cathedral Parish are hosting a Caritas Kitchen morning tea at St Michael's Parish Centre in Wagga Wagga to raise awareness of Caritas and the plight of women struggling to feed their families.

Guest speaker will be Lulu Mitshabu who is now Caritas Australia's Coordinator for the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"The kitchen is often the heart of the

home however in many countries around the world vulnerable families simply don't have access to nutritious food," Michelle said.

"Caritas Australia is trying to change this. Every day they are helping whole communities challenge injustices and build sustainable lives so women, men and children have access to year-round food.

"Women have an important and increasingly influential role in the fabric of our society yet 55 percent of the world's poor are women.

"We want to encourage people to host their own Caritas Kitchen events because it's a great way of feeling empowered – that we can do something positive to help the poorest of the poor," Michelle added.

Caritas Australia, part of one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world, works at community level in more than 29 countries.

If you enjoy sharing food with friends or would like to meet new friends who are passionate about social justice please come to the Caritas Kitchen event in the St Michael's Parish Centre in Johnston Street (opposite St Michael's Cathedral). The morning tea will start around 11:30am and finish at 1.30pm. Lulu Mitshabu will speak at 12.30pm.

"You don't have to prepare or bring any food," Michelle said. "A delicious morning tea will be supplied."

All you have to do is make a donation to Caritas Australia via the secure online Caritas Kitchen fundraising page. You can also leave a comment with your donation to confirm your attendance. Go to <http://my.caritasfundraising.org.au/waggacaritaskitchen>

For more information or to RSVP for the morning tea please phone Michelle on 0428 212 711 or Ruth on 0413 454 215.



Photo: Caritas Australia

Michelle Fernon, right and friends Nicole Murphy, left and Alison Green, of Sydney who organised the inaugural Women for the World luncheon in Sydney in 2014.

Please make your donation in person on the day or online via the website at:
<http://my.caritasfundraising.org.au/waggacaritaskitchen>

'A humanitarian disaster': Bishop urges government to solve Manus refugee crisis

by Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv
Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees

The Bishop of Parramatta, Bishop Vincent Long Van Nguyen OFM Conv. has called on the Australian Government to find a conscionable solution to the issue of asylum seekers and refugees 'according to this nation's proud tradition and the best nature of its citizens'.

In a statement released this week (November 6) on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Bishop Long who is also Bishop Delegate for Migrants and Refugees, said the safety and wellbeing of more than 600 asylum seekers on Manus Island are at risk following the closure of the regional processing centre.

'These men, most of whom are proven refugees were held in mandatory and indefinite detention under an agreement

between the Australian and PNG Governments. Now after more than four years, this agreement has not worked. It has failed to provide welfare and safety to the detainees. Furthermore, very few have been resettled elsewhere.

'Australia, which authorised the detention of these asylum seekers in the first place, cannot abrogate its responsibility. The situation on Manus Island is turning into a humanitarian disaster and it is a direct result of our governments' failed policy. As a nation that prides itself on its respect for the rule of law and its globally responsible citizenship, we must find a workable and principled solution.

'It is time for us to deal with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees according to this nation's proud tradition and the best nature of its citizens. We

can do a whole lot better, just as we did welcome "those who've come across the seas" after the wars in Europe and in Southeast Asia. The concern for maritime border security does not have to make us into a mean-spirited people. This is not who our First Peoples are, nor should it be the characterisation of all Australians today.

'The policy of offshore detention has cost Australia dearly. But it has cost the detainees and their families even more. I appeal to the government and political leaders to act in accordance with our honourable tradition. It is time to find an alternative and conscionable solution, including accepting New Zealand's offer of resettlement and bringing the remaining detainees on Manus Island to Australia. Those who are not refugees can be held here in secure detention until they are returned home. Those refugees

accepted for entry to the US can migrate when their vetting processes are complete. The other refugees need to be able get on with their lives here in safety.'

In conclusion Bishop Long said people seeking asylum are some of the most vulnerable members of our global community.

'It is imperative that they are treated humanely and with dignity. I urge the Australian Government to honour its international obligations and continue its work within the region and with non-government organisations to ensure the safety of those seeking asylum.'

It is time for us to deal with the issue of asylum seekers and refugees according to this nation's proud tradition and the best nature of its citizens.



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Compassionate Friends offer support for grieving parents and families



Chapter to launch in Wagga in December

by Virginia Gawler Editor of Together

The death of a child at any age is a devastating and life-changing experience for parents, families and loved ones.

Wagga woman, Maria Doyle knows this experience only too well. After the sudden death of her teenage son Joseph Thomson in an horrific accident in 2011, Maria had no idea where to find support in the grief which she and her other children were suffering. It was a confusing and isolating time for the family.

Following the loss of her youngest son Benjamin as a result of his anxiety and depression last year, the need for support and understanding was even more crucial.

"There is such misunderstanding around grief," Maria said.

feeling. It was such a relief to know I wasn't crazy, I was grieving!"

At present the only Compassionate Friends support group for people in the Riverina is at Howlong, near Albury.

Realising the urgent need for a similar group for bereaved families in the Wagga area, Maria and another grieving mother are setting up a chapter of The Compassionate Friends starting in February, 2018. The support group plans to meet monthly at the Wagga Senior Citizens Centre in Tarcutta Street.

"There are existing support groups in Wagga for parents who have lost a child to suicide. And also support groups for parents after the loss of a child at birth or early infancy or specific causes. Compassionate Friends is different

commencement of the hour-long candle vigil starting at 7pm.

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide Candle Lighting service is held annually on the second Sunday in December. It is a global service uniting family and friends around the globe as they light candles for one hour to honour and remember children who have died at any age from any cause.

TCF was founded in England in 1969 by Joe and Iris Lawley, whose son Kenneth was killed in a road traffic accident, and Bill and Joan Henderson, whose son Billy died from cancer, both in May 1968. The two families were made aware of each other by hospital chaplain

Canon Dr Simon Stephens. While their sons lay dying in hospital they found comfort and support from sharing their grief and decided to offer this support to others similarly bereaved. Thus The Compassionate Friends was born.

In order to make the Candle Lighting Ceremony as personal and as meaningful as possible, Maria would love anyone wishing to attend to contact her with their child's details.

For more information about The Compassionate Friends group please phone Maria on 0434 031 884 or see The Compassionate Friends NSW website <http://www.tcfnsw.org.au/>

"The weight of grief doesn't diminish with time. You are never 'over it'. One of the tragedies of grief is that it lasts far longer than sympathy does and here is where TCF groups are so helpful."

"The lack of knowledge and outdated views of some of the general community, professionals and even family and friends, can leave you feeling isolated, misunderstand and in some cases feeling the need to defend your grief. Living after such a devastating loss is exhausting already without the added pressure of feeling you are doing it wrong."

She describes finding The Compassionate Friends NSW (TCF) as 'like finding my tribe'. "Finding The Compassionate Friends was like a meeting of minds for me – connecting with people who understood how I was

because it doesn't matter how your child died; how long ago your child died or the age of the child – he or she could have been an adult child," Maria explained.

"The weight of grief doesn't diminish with time. You are never 'over it'. One of the tragedies of grief is that it lasts far longer than sympathy does and here is where TCF groups are so helpful."

The Compassionate Friends of Wagga Wagga will be symbolically launched at a Candle Lighting service to be held in Collins Park, corner of Forsyth and Fox Streets, Wagga on Sunday, 10 December gathering from 6pm, for the



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Planting Seeds of Hope was the theme of the annual Wagga Wagga Diocesan Retreat at St Clement's Retreat and Conference Centre, Galong from 8-12 September.

St Clement's Retreat Centre, a mission of the Redemptorists, is set on more than 300 hectares of peaceful, rural land which is conducive to reflection and prayer. The retreat was organised by Sr Margaret Walsh pbvm and the team from the Breath of Life Ministry of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

The retreat director was Sally Longley who is currently a spiritual director and retreat leader on the staff of the Canisius Centre for Ignatian Spirituality in Pymble, Sydney.

Sally has been involved as a spiritual director since 2004.

Planting Seeds of Hope

Pope Frances: "Planting seeds of hope is needed today. It's not easy, but with Christ at the centre of one's life, it will be Christ who gives us the strength, the patience, the hope and the consolation needed to live in harmony."

She facilitates silent retreats as well as speaking at conferences for different denominations on topics such as Praying for Friends and Enemies; Healthy Approaches to Conflict; Wisdom for Daily Living and Spiritual Direction as Justice and Peacemaking. Sally - who is married with two adult children - is also qualified as a giver of the Ignatian Exercises and regularly facilitates labyrinth walks and labyrinth retreats.

The retreat team also included chaplain, Fr Tony Loth and spiritual directors, Anne

Friedlieb, Barbara Geale, Liz Rothe and Margaret Walsh. The retreatants expressed their appreciation for the wisdom of Sally as she led the group through reflections on the Scriptures, guided prayer and shared experiences.

One retreatant said of the experience: "I am so pleased I was able to make this retreat as it was a special time of healing and deepening my relationship with God. Sally's talks related to my life and they have inspired me to walk in trust and hope, knowing God is with me always."



Retreat director Sally Longley, left, of Sydney with retreatants Susan Dickson, The Rock and Marie Curtis, Coolamon at St Clement's, Galong.

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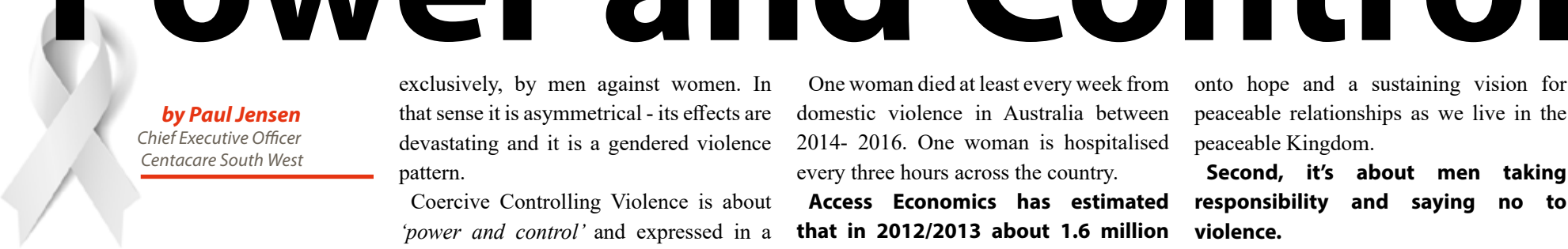
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Family and Domestic Violence is about Power and Control



by Paul Jensen
Chief Executive Officer
Centacare South West

Saturday November 25 is the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and is celebrated in Australia as White Ribbon Day.

Relationships, marriages and families should be about practising the virtue of ‘mutual submission’ or ‘equality’ and not domination writes Paul Jensen, CEO, Centacare South West NSW

Rosie Batty is an Australian domestic violence public advocate. Her role as a campaigner began in 2014 after the brutal murder of her 11-year-old son Luke Batty by his father Greg Anderson. Rosie’s grace, dignity, assertion and national advocacy shown in the wake of her son’s death and her suffering saw her awarded the honour of the 2015 Australian of the Year.

Despite Rosie’s intervention and recent national focus, rates of Domestic Violence remain unacceptably high.

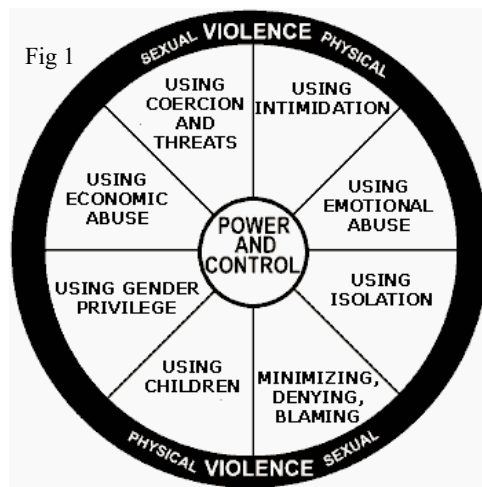
Global research identifies four patterns of Domestic Violence differentiated according to partner dynamics, context and consequences. Situational Couple Violence and Separation-Instigated Violence are symmetrical and perpetrated by men and women against each other.

‘It’s a Friday night; the couple have too much to drink and begin a visceral conflict about financial stress’ is an example of Situational Couple Violence. ‘The couple separate; he denies child support; she denies access’ is an example of Separation-Instigated Violence.

Coercive Controlling Violence is perpetuated predominately, if not

exclusively, by men against women. In that sense it is asymmetrical - its effects are devastating and it is a gendered violence pattern.

Coercive Controlling Violence is about ‘power and control’ and expressed in a variety of ways such as emotional, sexual, psychological and economic violence. The Duluth model (See Fig. 1) <http://www.theduluthmodel.org/> illustrates this well including the power and control tactics associated with this violence such as using intimidation, threats, emotional abuse and isolation.



The impacts of such tactics on women include the erosion of self-esteem, depression, suicidal ideation and PTSD (nightmares, flashbacks, avoiders or reminders of the event and hyper-arousal) (Saunders, 1994).

Over the last two years, there has been a significant spike in instances of domestic violence leading to death.

Domestic Violence is responsible for more ill-health and premature death in Victorian women under the age of 45 than any other of the well-known preventable risk factors, including high blood pressure, <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/Programs-and-Projects/Freedom-from-violence/Intimate-Partner-Violence.aspx>

One woman died at least every week from domestic violence in Australia between 2014- 2016. One woman is hospitalised every three hours across the country.

Access Economics has estimated that in 2012/2013 about 1.6 million Australian women have experienced domestic violence in some form.

One woman died at least every week from domestic violence in Australia between 2014- 2016. One woman is hospitalised every three hours across the country.

These are not sterile statistics but society’s wives, female friends, sisters, daughters, nieces and mothers.

Some of the reasons associated with the spike in domestic violence are alcohol and substance abuse; financial and mental distress and social contagion – in other words ‘he did it, so can I’.

Responding to family violence in church communities:

While we might understand the reason for the spike there is no excuse for domestic violence. We cannot condone it. Sadly, incidences of domestic violence in church communities approximate incidences in the general community.

So how can the community of faith respond to problem of domestic and family violence? Let me draw from the best of the Christian tradition in how we can model and live in relationships.

First, in his section on household ethics in the last part of the letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul places *mutual submission* – not power and control – at the heart of marriage, relationships and family. The Apostle writes in Ephesians’ 5:22 when referring to the husband, wife, children, and servants:

‘Submit yourselves therefore one to another’.

To reiterate: relationships, marriages and family are about mutual submission or ‘equality’ as the second Duluth model (See Fig.2) asserts. Imagine what it would look like for Christian families and couples if men and women and children in their respective roles practiced and promoted the virtue of mutual submission.

Domestic violence would not feature and marriages and families would be safe, nurturing and transformative spaces.

I know this sounds idealistic but we must hold

onto hope and a sustaining vision for peaceable relationships as we live in the peaceable Kingdom.

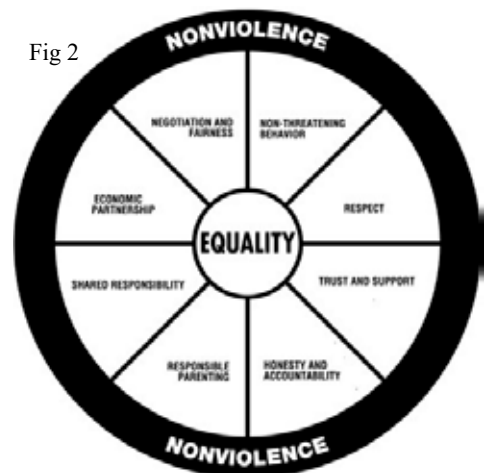
Second, it’s about men taking responsibility and saying no to violence.

Yes, men are victims; yes certain less visceral patterns of domestic violence are

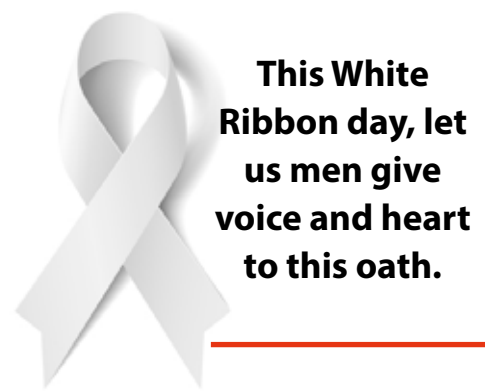
symmetrical. In fact Centacare delivers support services for men who are victims in the south west corner of the Wagga Wagga Diocese and Centacare runs a support group for **Dads Caring for Kids**.

However overwhelmingly Coercive Controlling Violence, the most destructive and salient pattern of violence, is a male phenomena for which we men need to account.

We cannot deny or minimise this fact. Relationships Australia in the Riverina has a program supporting men change their behaviour. Check it out at <http://www.racr.relationships.org.au/courses/Men-s-behavioural-change-group>.




In 1999 the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (IDEVAW). Since then the White Ribbon has become the symbol for the day. On this day men are invited to swear an oath ‘never to commit, excuse or remain silent about violence against women’.



This White Ribbon day, let us men give voice and heart to this oath.








Centacare South West NSW
Wagga Wagga | Albury | Griffith | Finley

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www.centacareswnsw.org.au

Office locations:

Wagga Wagga	Griffith
201 Tarcutta Street	140 Yambill Street (PO Box 2330)
Albury	Finley
440 Wilson Street (PO Box 3143)	2 Coree Street (PO Box 391)

We also outreach to the following locations:
Leeton, Narrandera, Junee, Cootamundra and Hay

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Aspect Riverina

Providing educational programs for children with autism

Are you looking for an alternative educational program for your child on the spectrum?

Are they struggling with school?

Would a 1:3 ratio in the classroom better support their learning needs?

A series of Open Days, to experience an Aspect program, is being offered to better assist in sharing what we can offer

Parents and their children are invited to
Satellite Class
Open Days
Yenda

When: Monday 20th & Tuesday 21st, November, 10.00am to 2.00pm
Monday 27th & Tuesday 28th, November 10.00am to 2.00pm

Aspect Riverina School is seeking to expand their educational programs in the Griffith region for commencement in 2018. These Open Days are an opportunity for prospective parents and caregivers to learn about our school, spend consecutive days with us in a typical Aspect classroom to see if this would suit your young person.

Enrolments still being taken for 2018. Kinder to Year 6.

To attend any of these sessions, please contact Jo Gillespie at Aspect Riverina Albury on (02) 6057 3777 or email jgillespie@autismspectrum.org.au



Aspect School to open at Yenda

St Therese's Primary School at Yenda which closed at the end of 2016 is set to have a new life as a school for children with autism.

Aspect Riverina which provides educational programs for children on the autism spectrum is planning to open a satellite school on the former St Therese's site in 2018.

Aspect Riverina School is holding a series of open days in November for parents, caregivers and students to ascertain if the Aspect program is suitable for individual families in the Griffith area. Currently the closest Aspect schools are located in Albury and Wagga Wagga.

The open days will be held on Monday 20 and Tuesday 21 November and Monday 27 November and Tuesday 28 November from 10am to 2pm at the former St Therese's site, Mirrool Avenue, Yenda.

"The open days are an opportunity for prospective parents and caregivers to learn about our school, spend consecutive days with us in a typical Aspect classroom to see if this would suit your young person," said Jo Gillespie of Aspect Riverina.

Ms Gillespie said Aspect Riverina is still taking enrolments for 2018 for students in Kindergarten to Year 6.

St Therese Primary School, Yenda closed on 20 December, 2016 following 79 years of Catholic education in the MIA. It was established by the Sisters of St Joseph in 1937.

Following the school's closure a group of former school board members got together

to investigate opportunities for the seven-acre site. They formed a committee called 'St Therese Administration Authority 2681' or simply 'staay2681' because they were determined to find another purpose for the school site.

In consultation and collaboration with the Wagga Diocesan Business Manager, Dennis Purcell the group has secured Aspect Riverina to use part of the site and offer a service to families and children who are on the autism spectrum.

"We are pretty excited and chuffed to have Aspect consider our facilities as it is a purpose-built educational facility ready to go, in exceptional condition. We are also centrally located, only 15 minutes from Griffith, 20 minutes from Barellan and 30 minutes from Leeton," said Gavin Raccanello, secretary of staay2681.

"We are excited to see these facilities used for their intended purpose and that students will be once again lovingly cared for and educated in beautiful surrounds with dedicated teachers."

Subject to regulatory approvals and registrations, Aspect Yenda will open in 2018 and will be a satellite school for Aspect Riverina.

All enquiries and to book your attendance please contact Jo Gillespie at Aspect Riverina Albury on (02) 6057 3777.

Please note that ASPECT is an independent school providing education for children on the Autism Spectrum and not affiliated with the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.



White Ribbon Day Ceremony 2017

The Wagga Wagga White Ribbon Ambassadors in support of the Wagga Wagga Women's Health Centre invite the community to join in a simple (but significant) ceremony to acknowledge the beginning of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gendered Violence on the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (White Ribbon Day) on Saturday 25 November.

White Ribbon Day is the official day we publicly make a stand against violence against women in all its forms and acknowledge all women who have

experienced violence and died because of it.

So far this year, 39 women have died in Australia as a result of violence. The White Ribbon Ambassadors and the Wagga Wagga Women's Health Centre wish to acknowledge these women. As we have in previous years, we will be tying white ribbons, one for each of the 39 women, to our railing on White Ribbon Day and inviting all those in attendance to say the White Ribbon oath.

Details: 10am Saturday 25 November, Wagga Women's Health Centre, 22 Peter Street, Wagga Wagga

Marian Catholic College Vinnies Sleep Out



On Thursday 26 October, the Year 10's were invited to attend the Marian Catholic College Griffith Vinnies Sleep Out. With over 50 participants and over 30 choosing to rough the night and sleep at school, and then attend the following day to really experience some of the effects a young homeless person might suffer day to day.

The students were able to break down several of the myths surrounding homelessness and hopefully change their perception of homeless people. A big thank you must go to Sue Hone, without whom the night would not have been as meaningful and successful. Thank you to the five amazing teachers who stayed the night with the students: Mr Moore, Mr Lyon, Miss Crofts, Miss Suidgeest and Mr Neville and to Mrs Dickie who helped throughout the evening.

Submitted by Francine Dilozenzo.



Feast day celebrations for first Filipino saint

Albury's Filipino community gathered on 28 September at St Patrick's Church, Albury to celebrate the feast day of the first Filipino saint, St Lorenzo Ruiz.

Father Joel Wallace, parish priest of St Patrick's Albury, celebrated the Mass at which he spoke about St Lorenzo's martyrdom for his faith. Fr Wallace encouraged the congregation to nourish their faith with prayer and the sacraments in order to have the moral strength to stand for their faith when faced with trials and challenging times just as St Lorenzo and his companions stood up for their faith.

celebration also formed part of the choir.

The MACE Sisters are a religious congregation which was formed by Sister Angelita Marave in the Philippines in 1987 to work with the most disadvantaged in the community. Several Filipino MACE Sisters are based at Lavington.

A similar celebration was held at Sacred Heart parish church, Griffith on 1 October. The feast was celebrated on a Sunday instead of on the feast of St Lorenzo itself to give the chance for more people to participate. The famous words of St Lorenzo Ruiz: *'I shall be willing to die a*

**The famous words of St Lorenzo Ruiz:
'I shall be willing to die a thousand times for my faith,'
was a theme of the homily given by
Fr Andrew Grace, Sacred Heart parish priest.**

Offerings of flowers, baskets of fruit, boxes of groceries and wine were brought to the altar at the Offertory procession together with the bread and wine. The choir, headed by Leeny Mason as organist, sang beautifully. Members of the Missionary Apostles of Christ in the Eucharist (MACE Sisters) who organized the feast day

thousand times for my faith', was a theme of the homily given by Fr Andrew Grace, Sacred Heart parish priest.

A sumptuous lunch followed the event with some special cakes prepared in honour of St Lorenzo. The MACE Sisters encouraged the people to be as arduous and fervent in the practice of their faith,



Above: Sister Asuncion Lorenzo, MACE, surrounded by some Griffith parishioners and children at the feast day celebration for St Lorenzo Ruiz at Sacred Heart parish church, Griffith : Right: A selection of celebratory cakes

just as they showed so much enthusiasm in celebrating St Lorenzo's feast day.

Lorenzo Ruiz was born around the year 1600 in Manila to a Chinese father and Filipino mother who were both Catholics. As a young man Lorenzo joined the Dominican Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary. He later married and had three children.

St Lorenzo, along with several companions, were tortured and killed in Nagasaki in 1637 for refusing to recant their Catholic faith. The rulers of Japan at



the time, the Tokugawa Shogunate, were persecuting and killing Christians.

Lorenzo Ruiz was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 18, 1987 as the first Filipino saint and martyr. He is the patron saint of Filipino youth and the whole Philippine nation. *Submitted by Sister Angelita Marave, MACE Sisters.*



Sacred Heart Ladies Conference

Griffith Sacred Heart Ladies Conference longtime members, Margaret Polegato, left and Joan Forlico were recently honoured with a special afternoon tea to thank them for their many years' service on the executive committee.

Joan has been a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Griffith

for more than 20 years while also holding the position of chairperson of the Sacred Heart Ladies Conference, in a shared capacity, for 20 years. Margaret has held the position of secretary for six years.

Yvonne Couper, of Griffith was elected president at the October meeting of the Sacred Heart Ladies Conference while Odette Dotter,

of Griffith is the new conference secretary and Coral Morrison will continue as treasurer.

The Sacred Heart Ladies Conference is extremely grateful to have such dedicated members in their group and thank Joan and Margaret for their many years of service to the Ladies Conference and to the Griffith community.

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Fun, faith and family at Melbourne conference



Children enjoying the many activities.

More than 200 husbands, wives, mothers, fathers, priests, babies, children, teenagers and young adults converged on Belgrave Heights east of Melbourne for the third annual National Association of Catholic Families (NACF) conference in September.

There was much joy and fellowship as well as daily Mass; candlelight Rosary procession; adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; Divine Mercy Chaplet and morning prayers.

The younger children were kept busy with activities organised by the National Evangelization Team (NET) while volunteer parents and the Missionaries of Charity ran sessions on making candles and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Inspiring and informative talks were presented by great speakers including Steve and Annie Lawrence who gave a practical talk on parenting; Fr Andrew Grace spoke on the *Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary* and Fr Paschal Corby gave an address on marriage called *More Than Natural Law - A Response in Faith to Marriage and Family*.

Andy Mullins spoke on the challenges of raising children and shared some practical ways to engage better with our offspring.

"Finding out what they want to do, what their interests are and then helping them to live those out, is an important way to connect and affirm children," he said. "Many parents focus too much on just quality time but kids need quantity of time as well."

James Parker, well-known activist for traditional marriage, gave an inspiring and emotional presentation on maintaining the sanctity of marriage.

"We are currently going through nothing new with the persecution of our faith and attacks on what is true, good and beautiful but that's no excuse to become apathetic about it. We've got to forge on and keep fighting," James said.



Peter Stevens speaks to attendees.

Peter Stevens spoke on the difficult subject of pornography and in particular its obvious harmful effects on children. He made available an extensive report titled *The Porn-Harms-Kids Report* which details the many ways being implemented, some taking more time than others, to block pornography being channelled online. He also leads the campaign for obtaining clean-feed internet in Australia, similar to the standard in the UK.

The conference was a wonderful opportunity to strengthen faith, make new friends and receive and give support to all who were there. Many families said it was their first-time attendance at such an event, and that it cemented and enhanced their sense of belonging to the Catholic Church. It is expected another national conference will be organised in 2018.



Many families having fun at the bush dance.

*by Mark and Jenny Mannering
Wagga Wagga Presidents, National Association of Catholic Families (NACF)*

From gay activist to God activist



James Parker, left with Jessica Morgan and Lyle Shelton at the Coalition for Marriage meeting in Wagga last month.

The result of the plebiscite will be announced by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on Wednesday 15 November.

James Parker who was formerly in a long-term gay relationship in the UK, is now a happily married father of one daughter and is living in Perth. He is also a passionate advocate for heterosexual marriage and a committed Catholic.

James resigned from his job as head of media and communications for the Catholic Archdiocese of Perth to help with the Coalition for Marriage "It's OK to Vote No" campaign.

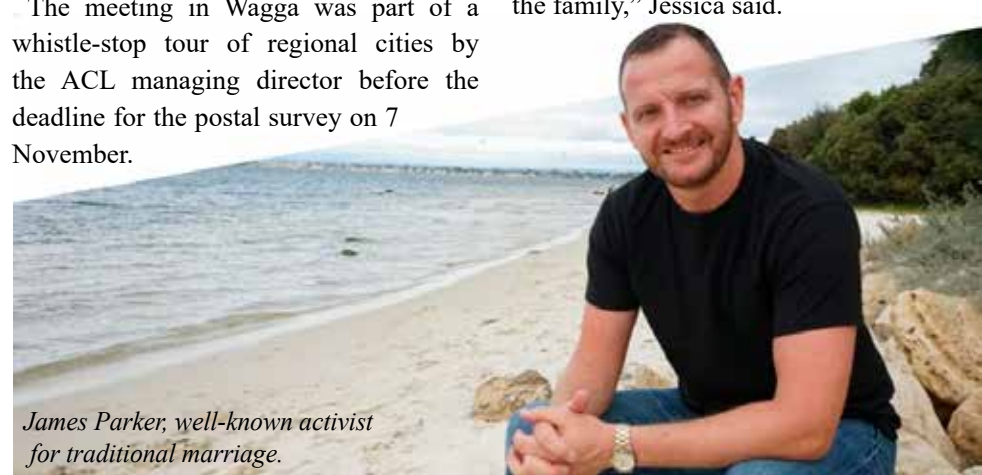
"I know from my gay activism work that many LGBTIQ people are in pain about this issue as they don't agree with same-sex marriage," James said.

"If we lose the vote we need to keep fighting. As Christians we are to be the dissidents as we are on the right side of history."

Jessica Morgan, of Coolamon, local campaign organiser for the 'It's OK to Vote No' campaign said she had been inspired by the energy, enthusiasm and love shown by hundreds of local volunteers in the Riverina.

"I have been encouraged by the amazing show of Christian unity as people from many churches and walks of life have joined together on this issue.

"I was eager to be involved in this campaign so that all Australians, especially our children, might have the freedom to know and live the joy of our Catholic faith, particularly in this area of marriage and the family," Jessica said.



James Parker, well-known activist for traditional marriage.



Orange Sky Australia young co-founders to speak at ACYF17

Among the keynote speakers at next month's Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) will be the two young men behind ground-breaking charity Orange Sky Australia which offers a free mobile laundry service for the homeless.

Lucas Patchett and Nicholas Marchesi, both from Brisbane, came up with the world-first mobile laundry idea three years ago when aged just 20, wanting to provide dignity and respect as well as clean clothes to those living on the street.

They will join a stellar line up of headline presenters and performers including world renowned Canadian Christian singer Matt Maher; speaker and worship leader Emily Wilson and fellow American singer songwriter, Steve Angrisano along with local artists and Church leaders.

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival is a national gathering of Catholic young people established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC).

The aim of the festival is to provide young people with opportunities to

deepen their relationship with Jesus; be empowered to be disciples in the world today and encounter and celebrate the vitality of the Church in Australia.

The Archdiocese of Sydney is hosting the event at Sydney Olympic Park from December 7-9 with more than 18,000 young people from around Australia expected to attend.

Wagga Wagga Catholic Schools Office (CSO) will be attending the Australian Catholic Youth Festival from Wednesday 6 December to take part in the 'Lights of Christmas' at St Mary's Cathedral.

The theme for the 2017 festival is Spreading Joy for New Horizons. More than 100 students from the five Catholic high schools across the Wagga Wagga Diocese will be attending the event accompanied by 24 adults including chaplain, Father Reece Beltrame of St Michael's Cathedral parish.

Our five high schools have been participating in pre-formation activities in preparation for the event based on the three themes: joy, love and faith. Our youth will be able to experiences a diverse

range of concurrent initiatives including workshops, live music, expos, prayer and service projects.

The purpose of the festival for our young people is to:

- Provide a high quality formative and experiential opportunity for young Catholics to encounter Jesus Christ in the context of the Catholic Church in Australia;
- Listen to and discuss the issues and challenges in the lives of young Catholics in Australia;
- Evangelise young people and empower them to be evangelisers;
- Provide young people with local examples and connections for vocations, social action, liturgy and prayer, Catholic music and catechesis.

The Australian Catholic Youth Festival will launch the Year of Youth 2018, celebrating 10 years on from hosting World Youth Day 2008, where the Catholic Schools Office will be continuing the celebrations here at a local level with our own Wagga Wagga Festival.

Peace and Blessings: *Charlene Robson, ACYF Coordinator, Diocese of Wagga Wagga.*

Virtue Ministry debuts at ACYF17

Virtue Ministry, a burgeoning Australian youth ministry based in the Riverina, will make its debut at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF17) next month.

Despite the daunting company of internationally renowned speakers including Matt Maher and local favourites, Father Rob Galea and Father Chris Ryan MGL, Stina Constantine, founder and managing director of Virtue Ministry, was pleasantly surprised to be included as a presenter at ACYF17.

"We are honoured to be asked to present and humbled that the ACYF organisers recognise the potential of our emerging ministry," Stina said.

Virtue Ministry is, as the name suggests, a ministry that helps men and women develop

an understanding of virtue as a habitual good and centre their worth on Christ so that they are fully equipped to make an indelible mark on the world.

The VM team speak to students, local communities and church groups and to those in caregiving roles about topics such as character-development; authentic love and being used; relationships and inherent worth which are difficult areas to navigate in a rapidly changing world.

Miss Constantine will present on December 8 at 3pm. Her presentation, entitled *Unleashing your capacity: 3 things you need to know to win at life* will showcase the essence of what Virtue Ministry has to offer.

"Young women often approach us after a talk to express how true the talk rang to their

lives and the hurt they have experienced but also felt affirmed in their dignity and worth; young men often express how eye-opening the talks were and having gained a sense of confidence in their identity," explains Stina.

Virtue Ministry is based in the Riverina region and celebrated its first birthday on September 8 this year. The team are in increasing demand to present at schools, seminaries and retreats and have recently expanded to include more presenters as well as a graphic designer and writer.

For more information about Virtue Ministry, or to inquire about inviting them to present please visit <https://www.virtueministry.org.au> or email contact@virtueministry.org.au. You can also follow them on Facebook and Instagram.



NOVEMBER VIRTUE CHALLENGE:

Put your relationship with God before everything else in your life.

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!

First Holy Communion at Hanwood




Father Peter Stojanovic who celebrated the beautiful First Holy Communion Mass is pictured with the First Communicants:

Justin Armanini; Alexander Carbone; James Dal Broi; Lauren Gilbert; Rhys Rvin; Ryan Irvin; Katrina Laviano; Angelo Macri; Paige Munday; Mikaela Patane; Leila Ratcliff; Therese Romeo; Alex Schirripa; Jacob Serafin; Josh Serafin; Benjamin Sinclair; Tulsa Stevenson and Connah Vecchio. Also pictured are Elvio and Maria Suine, far right and Vera Sergi, front right.




First Holy Communion





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^a Comparison rate based on a loan of \$150,000 over a 25 year term. This comparison rate is true only for the examples given and may not include all fees and charges. Different terms, fees or other amounts might result in a different comparison rate. MyLife MyFinance Limited trading as MyLife MyFinance. ABN 54 087 651 750. AFSL/Australian Credit Licence Number 245606. Level 1, 535 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000. Issued by CSF Pty Limited (ABN 30 006 169 286; AFSL 246664), the Trustee of the MyLifeMyMoney Superannuation Fund (ABN 50 237 896 957; SPIN CSF01004U). Transport Super is part of MyLife MySuper. Catholic Super and MyLife MySuper are divisions of MyLifeMyMoney Superannuation Fund. The information contained herein is general information only. It has been prepared without taking into account your personal investment objectives, financial situation, or needs. It is not intended to be, and should not be, construed in any way as investment, legal or financial advice. Please consider your personal position, objectives, and requirements before taking any action. MF035 091017



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Diocesan clergy and safeguarding children standards

The Safeguarding Children Officer for the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, Mr Dave Collie has met with the majority of parish priests and the seminary rector to discuss the diocese's ongoing commitment to the safety of children, young and vulnerable people in all our communities.

A copy of the diocese's endorsed *Child Safe Communities* standards statement was provided at each meeting. This document, based on the research of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, outlines the standards the diocese has committed to for

the achievement of child-safe communities in all of its parishes and agencies.

This standards document is also publicly available on the diocesan Safeguarding website: <http://safeguarding.wagga.catholic.org.au/policies.html>

Valuable feedback was also received from the clergy which will be included in the diocese's plans for 2018 and beyond. A number of opportunities for improvement were identified including;

- Fine tuning the training and education of clergy and parishioners in child-related activities
- The establishment of a parish based

safeguarding volunteer

- Clarification of parish safeguarding requirements
- Fast access to accurate safeguarding advice and resources
- Regular information updates for clergy and parish communities

The diocesan Safeguarding Panel will add this information to its planning, along with the Royal Commission's Final Report to be released in December 2017.



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE PEOPLE
in the Catholic Diocese of Wagga Wagga



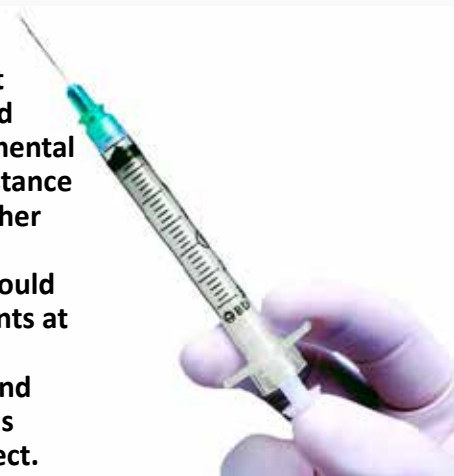
Doctor, Nurse or Allied Health Professional?

Please sign this open letter against the legalisation of assisted suicide

www.healthprofessionalssayno.info

Proposed legislation to legalise assisted suicide and euthanasia will be debated in the Parliament of New South Wales on the 16th of November. Similar bills are expected to be introduced in other states in the near future.

Let your members of parliament know that you support increased access to better aged care and mental health services, disabilities assistance and excellent palliative care, rather than the legalisation of assisted suicide and euthanasia which would place the most vulnerable patients at risk as well as undermining the relationship between patients and healthcare professionals which is based on trust and mutual respect.



This is an independent petition which has been organised by concerned healthcare professionals.

Petition opposing assisted suicide in New South Wales

Proposed legislation to legalise assisted suicide and euthanasia is expected to be debated in the Parliament of New South Wales on 16 November. Similar bills are expected to be introduced in other states in the near future.

Let your members of parliament know that you support increased access to better aged care and mental health services; disabilities assistance and excellent palliative care rather than the legalisation of assisted suicide and euthanasia which would place the most vulnerable patients at risk as well as undermine the relationship between patients and healthcare professionals which is based on trust and mutual respect.

This is an independent petition which has been organised by concerned healthcare professionals including doctors, nurses and allied health workers. HOPE: Preventing

Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide is a coalition of groups and individuals who oppose the legalisation of euthanasia and assisted suicide and support measures to create an effective social and civic barrier to euthanasia and assisted suicide.

Please sign this open letter against the legalisation of assisted suicide at the following link: www.healthprofessionalssayno.info

For more information contact HOPE: Preventing Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide at their webpage:

<http://www.no euthanasia.org.au> or phone 1300 284 317.

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Golden Jubilee for West Wagga parish

The parish of West Wagga Wagga, which includes Holy Trinity Church at Ashmont; Loreto Home of Compassion, Ashmont; Glenfield Park; Our Lady of the Blessed Eucharist Church, San Isidore and St Michael's Church, Collingullie, is celebrating its Golden Jubilee on Saturday, 16 December 2017.

All past members of the parish are invited to join the parish community

for Mass at 6pm at Holy Trinity Church followed by a parish meal and celebration in the hall in Bardia Street, Ashmont. Please bring a plate to share. All contributions will be welcome.

For more information about the Golden Jubilee celebrations please phone the parish office on (02) 6931 3601 or email westwaggaparrish@hotmail.com

Mission in action: one backyard at a time

The Green Team is a group of committed students, staff and parents from Mater Dei Catholic College in Wagga who complete gardening work for clients of Vinnies such as pruning, weeding, planting, mowing and general cleanup of waste.

The team's aim is to support those in need, giving a 'hand up' and strengthening relationships within our wider community. The team also offers friendship and companionship to clients.

The team cleaned up their very first yard on a weekend in October after several years of planning and training.

In 2015, Year 11 students went on their annual Street Retreat to Melbourne. Here they participated in a yard clean-up for the disadvantaged within the Exodus Community in West Heidelberg. Students thought, "Why can't we do this locally?"

The College is fortunate to have had the

support of Cindy James from Vinnies who has offered volunteer training for students, staff and parents and joined the team in cleaning up their first yard. The College was also supported with generous donations for yard equipment from the Catholic Schools Office, Bunnings and K Mart.

Becoming active members of our community will allow us to provide particular attention and care to those most in need and align with our College's mission and vision statement; making present the spirit of Nano Nagle, Edmund Rice and Mary, Mother of God.

It has been wonderful for students, staff and parents to join together in this act of service to our community. Parents have loved being able to take part in such selfless and empathetic work alongside their children. This is mission in action!

Submitted by Mrs Rebecca Gill, Assistant to the Principal: Mater Dei Catholic College.



by Andrew Kennedy
Communications Officer,
Serra Club of Wagga Wagga

Vianney College Open Day

Serra Club of Wagga Wagga have been meeting regularly on the second Tuesday night of each month with a short meeting covering any happenings regarding vocations, followed by mass and a beautiful dinner as each member brings along a plate to share.

St John Vianney College in Wagga Wagga held its annual open day and tour of the seminary in October.

The day began with a special Mass celebrated in the Vianney College Chapel.

More than 80 people then joined the seminarians and their families for lunch in the College dining room. Visitors travelled from all points of our diocese including Griffith, Albury and Koorringal.

The seminarians who are undertaking their studies at Vianney College are an impressive and welcoming bunch of young men who are dedicated in their studies and, God willing, make it all the way to priesthood.

It is great to see that with all the bad publicity the Catholic Church faces in the modern world, men are still answering God's call to serve.

Prayers are needed for the next crop of men for our seminary and hopefully more local men from our diocese will answer God's call.

The Serra Club of Wagga Wagga is hosting an end of year Mass and BBQ at St Michaels Cathedral on Thursday 16 November commencing at 6pm. We extend an open invitation to all in the diocese to attend and enjoy a Catholic 'bash' to celebrate the end of the seminary students' year.

Serra Club of Wagga Wagga meets regularly on the second Tuesday night of each month at 6.15pm at Vianney College, Durack Circuit, Boorooma (near Charles Sturt University). The short meeting is followed by Mass and a beautiful dinner as each member brings along a plate to share. Everyone is welcome.

Please call 0428 475 869 if interested or for more information.



Serra Club of Wagga Wagga members, Barbara Parnell (left) and Di Kennedy enjoyed lunch with seminarians Connell Perry (second from right) and Paul Lu at the Vianney College Open Day in October.

Marian Catholic College Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award



Students from year 8 and 9 made their way to Biloela in Belanglo Forrest to complete their practice journey for the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Each student carried their own gear and navigated their way to the camping ground to set up for the night. The next morning was an early and wet start in which students had to scramble their way up the gully back towards the staging area. The hike is mentally and physically challenging and all students involved are to be congratulated.

Submitted by Francine Dilozenzo.

Catholic Life: Italy's Pilgrim Trail and Days of Devotion

We are offering a truly hassle free tour that includes travelling Italy's Pilgrim Trail and Days of Devotion departing 13th May 2018 for 25 days.



Your tour commences with a pick up from many Gippsland towns and then arrival at Melbourne airport. There is assistance with all the departure procedures to make your way to Italy with no hassles. On arrival in Venice, you will have your Trafalgar tour representative meet you and transfer you to your hotel for the next two nights.

Your pilgrimage will take you through the stunning country of Italy visiting many places including Assisi, the birth place of St Francis who was born in 1182. Visit the Shrine of Monte Saint' Angelo one

of the world's most celebrated shrines where St Michael the Archangel appeared. Travelling across to Rome to visit the Sistine Chapel and Vatican; whilst hoping to attend the Papal Audience for a chance to see the Pope and receive a Papal blessing and many other highlights.

After finishing in Rome your pilgrimage will take you to Barcelona then onto the French medieval walled city of Carcassonne and the world's most famous place of pilgrimage, 'The Grotto of Massabielli' in Lourdes. Follow the 19th century way

of St James through Burgos and Santiago Del Conpostela with your journey culminating in Fatima for a morning mass at the Shrine of Fatima before journeying onto Lisbon.

Our final day is in Lisbon and, for those completing the tour, you will be transferred to Lisbon airport before boarding your flight back to Melbourne where you will be met and transferred safely back to Gippsland.

If you wish to extend your travels please contact Jessica or Chelsea to discuss your many options.

New acting Assistant Principal for Kildare College



Ms Christie Scoble has been appointed Acting Assistant Principal of Kildare Catholic College, Wagga Wagga for the 2018 school year, the Diocesan Catholic Schools Office (CSO) has announced.

Christie is a graduate of Charles Sturt University, having completed a Bachelor of Arts and a Diploma of Education (Secondary) with Distinction. Last year Christie completed a Professional Certificate of Instructional Leadership through the University of

Melbourne, graduating with First Class Honours. Currently Christie is working towards a Masters of Instructional Leadership.

Christie commenced with the Diocese of Wagga Wagga in 2008 as a teacher at Kildare Catholic College where she held the position of Social Justice and Liturgy Co-ordinator. She was also a member of the College Leadership Team.

Christie held the position as Assistant Principal at Marian Catholic College, Griffith from 2014 until July this year when she commenced as School Service Officer - Learning and Teaching, Curriculum and Pedagogy (7-12) at the Catholic Schools Office, Wagga Wagga.



Education (Acting) for the Catholic Diocese of Wagga Wagga until the end of the 2018 school year, following the retirement of long-serving Catholic Schools Office (CSO) Director, Mr Alan Bowyer.

Announcing Mr MacLean's appointment, Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Apostolic Administrator for the Diocese of Wagga Wagga said: "Mark will bring a deep faith, understanding and commitment to the mission of the Diocese and its schools. Mark's appointment will begin on the first day of term four to allow a handover and transition period

CSO announces acting Director of Education for 2018

from Alan Bowyer's eleven years of serving the Diocese as Director. This is due to the fact much preparation for the next school year is undertaken in the previous year and Mark should be to the forefront in that while having the opportunity to avail himself of Alan's advice." Archbishop Prowse said.

"Mark has previously worked in the Cairns and Lismore Dioceses before joining the Wagga Diocese in 2011 as Principal of Holy Spirit Primary School, Lavington and in recent years as a Consultant in the Catholic Schools Office. He also has experience in working in remote areas of the Northern Territory with schools that operate under very difficult circumstances.

"His desire for progressing

and leading learning and development opportunities motivated him to take on this role and the challenge to make a difference to the students and teachers in our care.

"I take this opportunity to congratulate Mark on being appointed to such a significant role in the Diocese and its work in Catholic Education.

"I invite all in the Diocese to welcome Mark into the role and take up the challenge of making our contribution to education the best it can be." Archbishop Prowse said.






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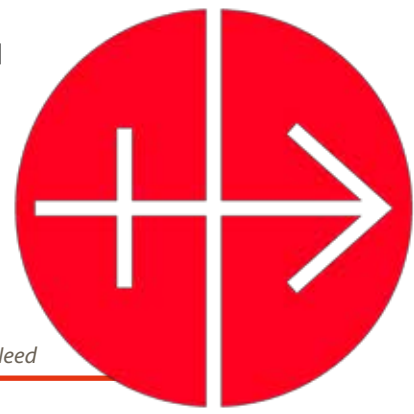
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Dominican Sisters offer children a safe place after ISIS terror

by Jaco Klamer

Aid to the Church in Need



Although Sr Ilham and her order suffered terrible losses when ISIS invaded Iraq, she manages to speak with an inspiring calmness: "None of us wanted to abandon our place - but as the attacks didn't stop, we had to save our lives and flee," reflects Sr Ilham quietly.

The 57-year-old Dominican nun was serving in a Mosul church in northern Iraq when the rapid advance of ISIS forced her and the community to flee, taking only what they could carry. Today she serves those remaining Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Christian city of Telleskuf in northern Iraq's Nineveh Plains.

"In 2016, around 6,000 people had to leave Telleskuf. When I returned to this area, all the houses were abandoned and many of them were destroyed. In Telleskuf a lot of buildings have been reduced to rubble. The school and the children's home have been obliterated; the doors of the convent were forced and the nuns' residence was robbed."

The Dominican Sisters started

restoration of their convent in Telleskuf located 19 miles from Mosul, in May. "I worked from 7am until 7pm to make the convent ready for the children. This does not only refer to the place and equipment. It has also to do with the handling of emotions," Sr Ilham explains.

"We have daycare for children who are three, four and five years old. From 8am until 1pm we host around 150 children, aged six to twelve and from 5pm to 7pm we welcome the children who are 12 years and older. We also visit the people of the community at home and we give the children Catechism: we prepare them for their First Communion.

"Before the invasion of ISIS we worked in the convent with five sisters but now there are just two of us. Luckily, we will receive backup soon."

A safe place for the children

Instead of looking back, Sister Ilham now tries to look ahead: "I am glad

to see people return to their houses and getting on with their lives," says Sister Ilham smiling.

"It is a shame that the government has barely restored the road – they should contribute more to the rebuilding of the villages and cities. However, our biggest concern is the safety in this area. Our first priority is the children. They have been changed by the control of ISIS: by the increase in fighting, I can tell that they have become more nervous and more aggressive."

There is still plenty of work to be done but as Sister Ilham stands to leave she shares a final thought in the midst of such destruction: "Everyone is trying their best to live with each other harmoniously. We try to help the children by giving them peace: at the convent, we offer them a safe place."



Sr Ilham out at the local market shopping for fresh food for the children in her care.

© Jaco Klamer/ Aid to the Church in Need

Iraq: It's now or never - please help Iraqi Christians return home

FOR displaced Iraqi Christians forced from their homes and living in displacement camps, the moment they have been longing for has finally come.

After three years of occupation, the terrorist group Islamic State (IS) has been driven out of the area. Now, thousands upon thousands of people have the chance to go back to their villages in the Nineveh Plains – their families' homeland since before the time of Christ.

But the task of repair and renovation is huge and the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) – the largest contributor of emergency help since their escape from the Nineveh Plains – is determined to continue to stand with them.

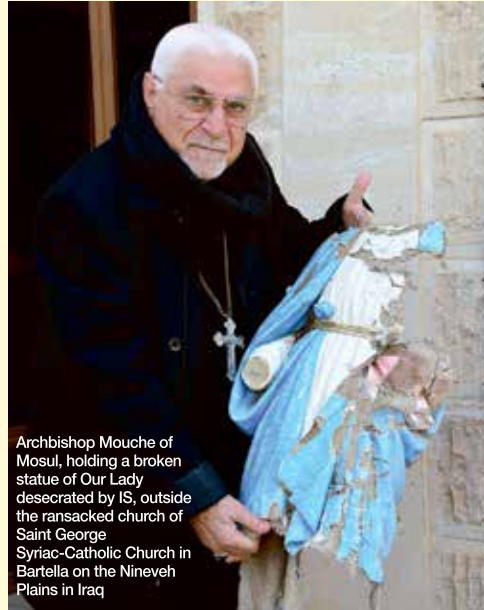
It is now or never. Their future is in your hands.

With your help, we can fulfil two key objectives. The first is to assist the work of the Christian Churches to roll out plans to restore thousands of homes devastated by IS, a vital step to enable the families to go back. The other is to continue providing emergency and pastoral aid for Christian families awaiting resettlement.

Displaced communities in Erbil and elsewhere in Kurdish northern Iraq have been totally dependent on their fellow brothers and sisters in Christ to survive. Bishops and faithful alike are encouraged by the recent successes against IS in Mosul.

Thanking Aid to the Church in Need, Syriac Catholic Archbishop Petros Mouche of Mosul, whose flock make up 60 percent of the displaced community, said: "I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to all those who can assist this work. **With your help, we will be able to rebuild our houses. It is a great mercy to know that we can count on your support.**"

A beautiful olive wood Comfort Cross made in Bethlehem, will be sent to all those who assist this cause with a donation of \$20.00 or more and tick the box in the response coupon below.



Archbishop Mouche of Mosul, holding a broken statue of Our Lady desecrated by IS, outside the ransacked church of Saint George Syriac-Catholic Church in Bartella on the Nineveh Plains in Iraq

The Comfort Crosses are handcrafted in Bethlehem from olive wood pruned from olive trees in the Holy Land. Comfort Crosses are designed to fit comfortably into the palm of one's hand as an aid to prayer or meditation. It is ideal as a spiritual companion for easing children's fears, comforting the worries and stresses of adults and focusing the prayer of the sick and elderly. The Comfort Cross would also be a lovely gift idea for someone you love or care for. The Comfort Crosses (also known as the Hand Cross, Palm Cross or Healing Cross) are lovingly hand carved by poverty stricken families in Bethlehem and your donation helps them survive. (Size: 9 cm x 4.5 cm) If you would like to receive the Comfort Cross **please tick the box below.**

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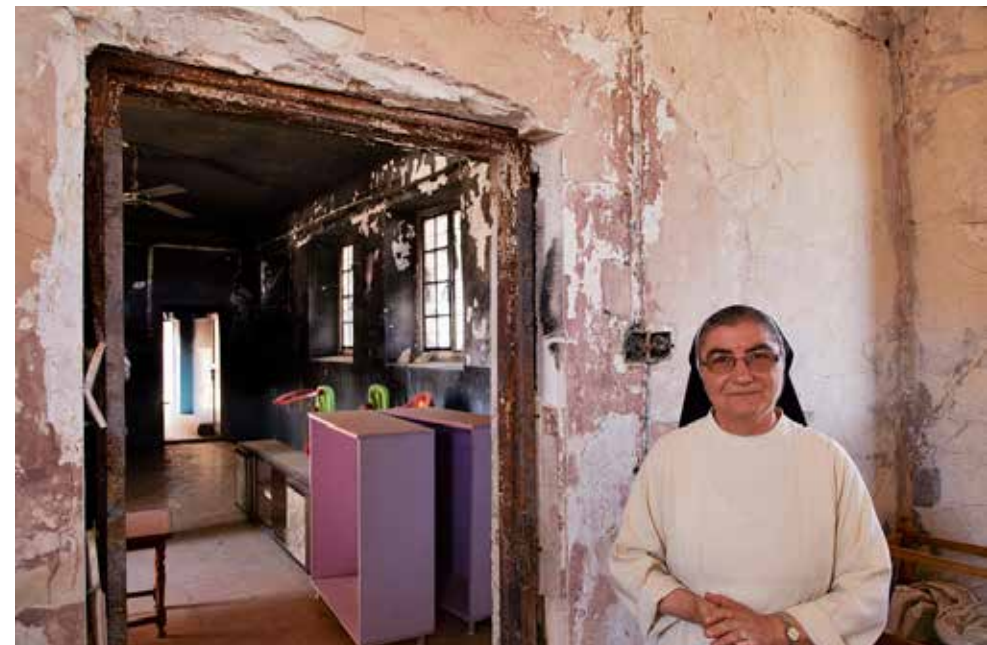
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Aid to the Church in Need a Catholic charity dependent on the Holy See, providing pastoral relief to needy and oppressed Churches



Sr Ilham stands in the burnt out shell of the convent

© Jaco Klamer/ Aid to the Church in Need

The Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) has supported the restoration of the convent of the Dominican Sisters of St Catherine of Siena in Telusquf (Telleskuf) with a grant of 45 thousand Euros. Since 2014 and up to September 2017 ACN has provided over 34.5 million Euros for projects in Iraq, of which 7 million Euros were dedicated to housing costs

and 11 million Euros to food and other basic necessities for IDPs in Erbil as well as 1,8 million Euro for the reconstruction of houses and churches in the Nineveh Plains. The pontifical foundation has already helped to renovate nearly 200 houses (188 exactly) and pledged to renovate 404 in Qaraqosh/Baghdada and 150 houses in Bartella.

For more information or to make a donation to help the work of Aid to the Church in Need, please contact the Australian office of ACN on (02) 9679 1929;

Email: info@aidtochurch.org or write to Aid to the Church in Need, PO Box 7246, Baulkham Hills NSW 2153.

Online donations can be made at www.aidtochurch.org

Going Forth in Hope: National Encounter elects new team



Fifty years since the first Cursillo was held in Wagga Wagga Diocese in 1967, a woman from Wagga Wagga was elected national president of the Australian Catholic Cursillo Movement.

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Kate Dunn was elected president of the National Secretariat of the Australian Catholic Cursillo Movement at the recent National Encounter which was held in Wagga Wagga.

The National Encounter gathering on the weekend of October 20 - 22 brought together more than 60 Cursillistas from around Australia including Perth, Cairns and Brisbane. It was also the first time a regional diocese had hosted the biennial Cursillo National Encounter.

Lord Show Us The Way – A New Beginning was the theme for the weekend which featured reflections, meditations and talks by guest presenters including Emeritus Archbishop Francis Carroll; Cursillo National Spiritual Adviser, Father John Armstrong; Nola Baker and Fr Paul Hart and Elvio and Maria Suine, of Griffith who presented on *The Three Glances of Christ*.

Nola Baker, of Wagga shared her personal journey with Cursillo which began in 1979 in her Rollo presentation with Fr Paul Hart entitled *Good Times and Challenging Times*.

“My involvement with the

Cursillo Movement began in 1979 and what a huge impact it has had on my life. In those days there was very little spiritual nourishment around and I was touched to the core by the sharing and witnessing that occurred,” Nola said.

“I loved hearing the talks given by some very courageous women – so much of what I heard resonated with my own story. I have always had a deep faith but Cursillo opened up a new way for me - instead of following rules and “saying” my prayers, it challenged me to become a thinking Catholic and I ended up with a new friend – Jesus.

Women were not encouraged to take on roles within our Church then but due to the circumstances and given the opportunity of course we could manage and we did.

“The Church still has a long way to go in acknowledging the gifts and talents of women – there is such a resource of lay women who now have degrees in theology and spiritual direction. Women minister to one another beautifully and I see this happening in so many of the groups that I am involved in,” Nola said.

In his presentation on Christian Life, Archbishop Francis Carroll spoke about the challenges facing Christians in Australia today.

“The church is fast becoming irrelevant in many areas of our national life. According to a recent poll, two of three Australians think that religion does more harm than good. If that is even reasonably accurate, it’s a very disturbing finding. Nowadays we need to be more courageous and perhaps more “street-wise” than in a former more conservative and supportive environment. As many know from experience, to live a Christian life today is to swim against the tide.

“But Cursillo was and still is a call to take Christ into our environment, the context in which we live. We are to give witness to the good news, the gospel of Jesus Christ. We are still to be a friend, and make a friend for Jesus. The commission we received at the close of a Cursillo weekend still rings in our ears: “Christ is counting on you”.

“Where will we find the strength to live our Christian life and carry out our Christ-given mission, when faced with so many obstacles in a secularized world and a wounded church? If we are to live our Christian lives we will need all the help we can get.

“For many Cursillo was an experience of the Holy Spirit being active in their lives. We must never lose sight of these truths but draw confidence



Among Cursillistas from Wagga Diocese who attended the recent National Encounter were from left : Bernadette Milne, Ganmain; Nola Baker, Wagga; Lorraine Amarant, Albury and Genevieve Knobel, Culcairn.

from them. God’s love for us is unchanging,” Archbishop Carroll said.

The National Encounter concluded with a Rollo entitled *Go Forth in Hope*, presented by Sr Margaret Walsh pbvm and Fr Tony Loth.

The new National Executive for the Australian Catholic Cursillo Movement is; President: Kate Dunn (Wagga Diocese); Vice President: Dianne Garland (Wollongong Diocese); Treasurer: Jeanna Montgomery (Canberra / Goulburn Archdiocese); National Co-Ordinator: Anne Moloney (Maitland/Newcastle Diocese); International Representative: Jeannette Rairibi (Sydney Spanish Cursillo); Palanca Secretary: Thelma Martinez (Perth Spanish Cursillo).

Kate Dunn said her election as Cursillo national president was as much a surprise to her as it

was to everyone else as she did not nominate for the position.

“I did not seek this position but I will perform this role to the best of my ability. When all is said and done, I said ‘yes’, so did Mary; I’m in good company! De colores.”



Newly elected national president of the Australian Catholic Cursillo Movement, Kate Dunn with George Simon, president Wagga Wagga Diocese Catholic Cursillo at the National Encounter in Wagga Wagga

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Launch out into the deep!

A Message from the Principal

Welcome to our school. St. Brendan's is a small, caring community and we like to extend a warm welcome to you and your family. I invite you to familiarise yourself with our wonderful faith and learning community.

Our rich catholic heritage provides the foundation for all aspects of school life. Our school is an integral part of the Ganmain parish and we work very closely with parish priest, Father Scot Armstrong. Whilst learning about, and living, our faith are paramount to us, we also respect other faith traditions. Teachers work with staff and students to further the mission of Jesus by teaching his message and helping the children to realise the importance of Jesus teaching for their lives today.

Our school motto is "Launch out into the deep", and at St Brendan's we are dedicated to providing an education for our students which will assist them to become confident, resilient learners who will grow into well rounded adults of tomorrow. Technology is integrated into all learning programs



enabling students to utilise and extend their skills and research.

St Brendan's has a very dedicated staff, a very generous and supportive parent body and Parish Community who assist spiritually and financially to bring the Gospel values to the students and the very best education possible.

Enjoy learning about our school.

Megan Masterson

Principal

The history of St Brendan's Primary School

The Presentation Sisters founded St. Brendan's school in 1906. Classes were conducted in the original Church building. In 1931 a new brick

building was opened with additions to this in 1967. A secondary department was added and continued until 1969 when, owing to insufficient enrolment, it was closed. Throughout the years there has been an active interest taken by the parents in work at the school. The Sisters maintained a presence in the school until the end of 1986. Without their dedication and commitment, the school would not be what it is today. Our school continues in the fine tradition laid down for us by the Sisters. In 1988 the Dominican Sisters took up residence in the convent and remained involved in the school until 2002. 2006 marked the 100 year anniversary of the opening of St Brendan's School.



Word Search answers from page 22

C	R	U	C	I	F	I	X	J	E
A	C	O	Z	Y	T	C	B	E	S
H	M	N	S	A	I	N	T	S	A
O	X	E	O	A	J	I	U	C	I
L	C	W	N	L	R	E	R	P	W
Y	H	B	M	A	R	Y	S	N	H
C	A	T	H	O	L	I	C	U	X
S	A	C	R	A	M	E	N	T	S



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Jokes

What gets wetter the more it dries?

Answer: A towel!



What do you call cheese that's not yours?

Answer: Nacho cheese!

What do elves learn in school?

Answer: The elf-abet.

Why couldn't the pony sing himself a lullaby?

Answer: He was a little hoarse.

How do bees get to school?

Answer: They take the school buzz, of course!

Word Search

C	R	U	C	I	F	I	X	J	E
A	C	O	Z	Y	T	C	B	E	S
H	M	N	S	A	I	N	T	S	A
O	X	E	O	A	J	I	U	C	I
L	C	W	N	L	R	E	R	P	W
Y	H	B	M	A	R	Y	S	N	H
C	A	T	H	O	L	I	C	U	X
S	A	C	R	A	M	E	N	T	S

Amen
Catholic
Crucifix

Holy
Jesus
Mary

Rosary
Sacraments
Saints

See page 21 for the answers

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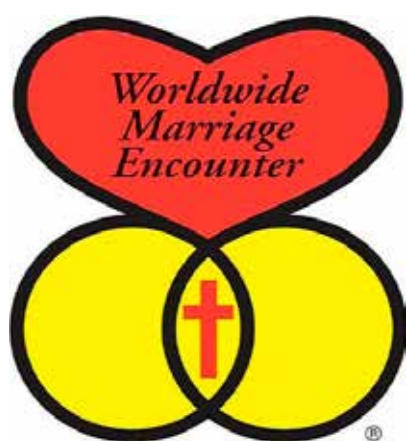
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Weekend date:

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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



Vale Fr John Airey CSsR

(1920-2017)



The sudden death last month of Father John Airey CSsR, rector of St Clement's Retreat Centre, Galong has shocked and saddened the community and staff at Galong as well as the wider Redemptorist community.

time at Galong he grabbed the place with both hands and with the Manager, Sue Rolfe, did much to further its life.

John loved Galong and was looking forward to celebrating with us all Galong's centenary in 2018. In a sense his return to

With John, what you saw was what you got. He was transparent and in that sense was grace among us. Vivat in aeternum.

Fr Airey who was rector at St Clement's since January 2016 passed away on Tuesday 24 October, aged 83 years.

His passing came just a fortnight after he led 800 pilgrims in Benediction at the Canberra Goulburn Archdiocesan Marian Procession at St Clement's on October 8.

Earlier this year Fr Airey celebrated a special Mass in the beautiful St Clement's Boys' Chapel for the 100th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of the residence and Redemptorist juniorate at Galong by then Bishop of Goulburn, Dr Gallagher on 22 April, 1917.

A Mass of Thanksgiving and Farewell for the life of Fr John was held at St Clement's on Thursday 2 November.

Fr John's funeral will be held in his home city, Auckland, New Zealand later this month.

A statement on the Redemptorist website paid tribute to a remarkable and loved member of the Congregation:

'John was in leadership much of his life and was the last superior of the Region of Aotearoa New Zealand. He was energetic and generous, participating in the journey to us becoming the new Province of Oceania. A symbol of his awareness and sensitivity in a new but fragile province was his volunteering to lead the community and mission in Galong. From the beginning of his appointment it was always his and the council's understanding that he could return to New Zealand at any time. In his short

Galong brought his CSsR life full circle. Those that knew John would no doubt have enjoyed his humour, take on life, and dedication to the Congregation. Many of you will have witnessed similar. With John, what you saw was what you got. He was transparent and in that sense was grace among us. Vivat in aeternum.'

Fr Airey by the years:

1920 - Father John was born in New Zealand. He was educated by the Sisters of Mercy and the Christian Brothers. He studied further at the Universities of Otago and Fordham. He spent two years working with the NZ Broadcasting Service.

1961 - He began training with the Redemptorists at St Clement's Retreat Centre Galong.

1969 - He was ordained a priest. He worked on Redemptorist missions and retreats in New Zealand and as parish priest and assistant in five parishes.

1997 - He was made Regional Superior of NZ and served three terms in this capacity. He was bursar of the region for 15 years and spent four years as chaplain at the Canterbury University and the Christchurch Teachers College.

As chaplain to the US Naval Deepfreeze Task Force, he completed three missions in the Antarctic.

2016 - He was appointed the Rector at Galong.

2017 - He passed away at St Clement's Retreat Centre, Galong.

Big turn out for Priest



Cutting the cake: Fr Wilf 'Plunky' Plunkett cutting his birthday cake.
Birthday celebrations: Fr Wilf Plunkett (front left) with (from left) Des Lane, John Goonan and John Gray.

Milestones: Fr Plunkett married (from left) Debbie and Patrick Condell, and also baptised Patrick, and then Debbie and Patrick's four children. Pictured with Fr Plunkett (centre) and Debbie's parents
Next generation: Fr Plunkett with the next generation who, collectively, make up the same age as Fr Plunkett's 90 years.



Fr Wilf 'Plunky' Plunkett turns 90

by Marguerite McKinnon
originally published in the Daily Advertiser

"He'd marry anyone, baptise anyone and bury anyone."

It's a description rarely, if ever, heard, but parishioner John Goonan said Wagga Catholic priest Father Wilf Plunkett has been a priest for the people, regardless of their religious background.

Reflecting this, both Catholic and non-Catholics gathered to celebrate the 90th birthday of a priest who looked beyond a person's religious badge to see their individual worth.

Born in Albury on October 9, 1927, Wilf Plunkett joined the priesthood at the age of 27.

Described as a roll-up-the-sleeves kind of priest, Father Plunkett is credited with building Mater Dei Primary School in 1990 and paving the way for Mater Dei Catholic College in 2004.

Never one for airs and graces; he is universally known as, and answers to, 'Plunky' or 'Plunks'.

It was 1955 in Albury and a young Connie Keogh sang the penultimate strophe of the hymn written by St Thomas Aquinas, Panis Angelicus, at Father Plunkett's ordination. Now a grandmother, Connie Lane (nee Keogh) said she wasn't missing 'Plunky's' 90th birthday. "He has always been about the people and I really wanted to be here as he has been a part of my life for decades," Mrs Lane said.

Patrick Condell was baptised, later married, and then had his four children baptised by Father Plunkett. Wife Debbie said Father Plunkett has always been generous with his time to others. "It's very special. The best thing about him has been his support," Mrs Condell said.

The 90th celebrations followed a mass at Sacred

Heart Parish, Koorinal where Father Plunkett was concelebrant.

"(It) started off here in a tin shed," Father Plunkett said. "And then I decided when I came back, when I'd stayed for 30 years, 'Oh I've got to do something about it', so I built this present Sacred Heart church, and I'm very proud of it.

Father Plunkett recalled a conversation he had with the then Bishop William Brennan about the need to build another church at Lake Albert, now the location of Mater Dei Primary and Mater Dei Catholic College.

Bishop Brennan questioned the logic of building at a site, stating, 'there's nobody there,' however Father Plunkett persisted, and in 2017 said, 'well, look at it now.' "So we built that and I was on the board of the Mater Dei High School," he said.

Looking healthy for his 90 years, Father Plunkett said if genes have anything to do with it, he should be around for a few more years yet.

"Well my father's mother went to 103, so I'm going to have a go." Father Plunkett said.



Memories: Connie Lane was 12-years-old when she sang at Fr Plunkett's ordination in Albury in 1955.

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