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- October 2017 -

by Virginia Gawler
Editor of Together

Various faith groups in the Riverina came together in September to celebrate the United Nations International Day of Peace and to share their wisdom.

The gathering was timely in a world desperate for peacemaking and nonviolent alternatives to conflict and threats of war.

Harmony Through Unity was the theme of the interfaith dialogue afternoon which was organised by Our Common Word (OCW) – a multi-faith assembly of people which aims to celebrate common values and promote peace and harmony among different faiths in Australia.

Representatives from faith and spiritual traditions including Indigenous Australian spirituality, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism presented different perspectives on the topic of *Spiritual Attitudes Towards Materialism*. The speakers also discussed the role of religious education in promoting good ethics and the challenges for young people of consumerism versus good values in life.

The event was held in the Council Meeting Room in Wagga Wagga on 23 September as close as possible to the International Day of Peace which is observed around the world on 21 September.

“The International Day of Peace is a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples from various cultural and religious backgrounds,” said Dr Ata-ur Rehman, chairman of the Muslim Association of Riverina Wagga Wagga Australia (MARWA) and a member of the OCW organising team.

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HARMONY
THROUGH
UNITYMulti-faith gathering for
International Day of Peace

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Courage and hope in a ‘liquid society’

Dear Friends in Christ,

Some commentators describe today’s Western World as a ‘Liquid Society’. This means that the established values and ethical benchmarks of centuries are being questioned or in the process of being demolished. What seems to take their place is a formless ideological arrangement where nothing seems permanent and nothing is enduring.

In the context of the current public debates on same-sex marriage, euthanasia, refugees and funding in education, such a description seems worthy of consideration.

Living out our missionary discipleship in such a societal context is not easy. It never has been over Christian history. It requires from all of us great courage. Courage is a gift of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray for this gift fervently for our times.

SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The current issue of same-sex marriage and the proposal to change the basic definition of marriage in Australia raises issues that are central to a society seeking maturity.

We all know and love same-sex attracted people in our families, parishes and communities. They do feel particularly vulnerable in the current national discussions. Our respect and care reaches out to them as always.

That being said, traditional marriage must be considered one of the great treasures of humanity. Clearly, Christianity has given

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Apostolic Administrator of the Wagga Wagga Diocese



it a particular sacramental understanding. Yet, the exclusive love sharing of a man and a woman that is open to the possibility of giving life to children has been a central benchmark of healthy societies over millennia.

St John Paul II often wrote that society comes through the family. Strengthening

traditional marriage and its links with the flourishing of society.

Clearly, too, if overseas examples are a guide, many countries that have permitted same-sex marriage are now encountering all sorts of challenges regarding abuses to the fundamental rights of religious freedom and speech.

Various ideologies can be asserted in a subtle manner as the new “right”. Pope Francis warns us about the advance of an “ideological colonisation” in our world.

society means strengthening marriage and families. How can changing the basic and enduring definition of marriage assist a strong society?

Several recent Popes have also made the parallel with environmental ecology and human ecology. They rightly see their inter-connection.

For example, why be strong on protecting the natural beauties of Australia but less so on protecting proven human beauties, like traditional marriage?

Indeed, we seem to be strong on protecting the environment but seemingly more ready to endanger the delicate ecology of human relationships in re-defining marriage. Subjective considerations are significant but must be balanced carefully with objective truths about the value of

Various ideologies can be asserted in a subtle manner as the new “right”. Pope Francis warns us about the advance of an “ideological colonisation” in our world.

Let us do all we can to protect traditional marriage from any legal re-definition. Make sure you vote!

HOPE

Placing such matters aside, I have witnessed many great signs of hope in the Archdiocese in recent times. Four come to mind immediately:

- The launch of our pilgrimage centre in Eden in honour of St Mary of the Cross Mackillop and her mother, Flora <http://cgcatholic.org.au/catholic-voice/blog/archbishops-mackillop-pilgrimage-to-eden/>
- The 50th anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Archbishop Francis Carroll
- The Marian Procession and Youth Pilgrimage at the Galong monastery, St Clement’s
- The blessing and opening of our pastoral centre and residential apartments alongside St Christopher’s Cathedral.

We thank the Lord Jesus and Mary for making us people of hope in challenging times.

Be aware of my prayers for you and your families and friends always.

TOGETHER

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International Day of Peace

Continued from page 1

“Here in Wagga Wagga the International Day of Peace is the reason we gather here today to celebrate the peace and harmony we all enjoy today,” Dr Ata-ur Rehman said.

“The world does not need more successful people at a material level. The world desperately needs more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storyteller educators and lovers of all kind.”

Messages and prayers for world peace were delivered by representatives of different faith groups including Ms Cherry Lindsay of the Spiritual Assembly of the Baha’is of Wagga Wagga along with a member of the newly arrived Yazidi community. Our Common Word began as an interfaith dialogue group in Wagga Wagga more than 10 years ago.

“The Muslim Association of Riverina Wagga Wagga (MARWA) and the Catholic Diocese of Wagga Wagga, under the guidance of Bishop Gerard Hanna, brought together a group of like-minded Christian and Muslim individuals who met regularly for the past

10 years. These meetings resulted in establishing regular Christian-Muslim dialogue,” said Dr Ata-ur.

“This group has now grown to become a multi-faith group initiative including Buddhists, Hindus, Yazidis and Baha’is to tackle homelessness, destitution, domestic violence and youth related issues in our community.

“In short OCW is about encouraging all communities to unite for a common cause of helping the less fortunate to showcase how multiculturalism can effectively create a sea change in people’s lives and demonstrate inclusiveness,” Dr Ata-ur said.

Buddhist monk Geshe Tenzin Zopa who is originally from Nepal and now based at the Blue Mountains Buddhist Centre, summed up the message of the day:

“The world does not need more successful people at a material level. The world desperately needs more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storyteller educators and lovers of all kind.”

In his message for the 50th anniversary of the World Day of Peace, Pope Francis urges that to be true followers of Jesus today also includes embracing the Gospel’s teaching about nonviolence.

“For Christians nonviolence is not merely tactical behavior but a person’s way of being; the attitude of one who is so convinced of God’s love and power that he or she is not afraid to tackle evil with the weapons of love and truth alone.”

In his message Nonviolence: a Style of Politics for Peace, Pope Francis reiterates what he has said before, that the world is engaged in a “horrible world war fought, piecemeal” and states that “violence is not the cure, it only leads to more violence.”

The Pope prays that charity and nonviolence govern how we treat each other as individuals within society.

Proceeds from the interfaith event which was sponsored by the Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga, were donated to the Wagga Wagga Uniting Church and Micah House to help provide food for homeless people.

OCW meets regularly and welcomes new members. For more information contact ocwriverina@gmail.com



Cover photo: Pictured under the archway at the Victory Memorial Gardens in Wagga Wagga are some of the speakers who took part in the interfaith dialogue to commemorate the International Day of Peace. From left, Peir Woon, coordinator Potowua Buddhist Group Wagga Wagga; Anjanee Bichani representing Hinduism and Sai Wagga Community Group; John Nielsen, Leader of Mission, Kildare Catholic College, Wagga who spoke about Christian faith and the life of St Francis of Assisi; dialogue moderator Ron Lawler, of Wagga Wagga, treasurer of Initiatives of Change International; Auntie Gail Clark, Wiradjuri elder who spoke about Aboriginal spirituality; Geshe Tenzin Zopa of the Blue Mountains Buddhist Centre and Suhail Noor, of the Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia (ISRA), based in Sydney. Photo: Pedme Phua



Clergy learn to follow in Paul’s footsteps

*by Father Bernie Thomas**

St Clement’s Retreat Centre at Galong was the venue for the annual Diocesan Clergy Retreat in September.

The theme of the retreat was *Treasure in clay jars* with the treasure being the Good News and the clay jars being its human carriers, the priests (and people).

Noted Australian Scripture scholar, Father Brendan Byrne SJ lead us on a journey through St Paul’s writings to glean some spirituality from him that would assist us in our personal spiritual lives as well as our ministries.

The reflections came from a number of Paul’s epistles and reflected Paul’s concept of ministry. They included Paul’s own conversion; his emptying of himself; being an instrument of God’s grace; the mystery of sin and freedom in the Spirit; the Eucharist as the communion of the Body of Christ and the victory of God’s love.

While the retreat is a spiritual occasion to renew one’s spirituality and relationship with God, it is also an important occasion for the priests of the diocese to come together and get to know one another. As we are spread throughout the diocese it is difficult to get to know one another and the four-day retreat gives priests the opportunity to share and better understand each other.

While the weather was cold, the hearts of all were warmed by the hospitality of the Galong centre and the genuine acceptance of each other in community. The priests gave a special thanks to Fr Brendan for his learning, warmth of personality and commitment to being pastoral in his outlook. The retreat was enjoyed by all.

*Father Bernie Thomas (Retired) was editor of *Together* from 1980 until 1986. He is also a former editor of *The Swag*, the magazine of the National Council of Priests of Australia.

Diocesan clergy at their recent retreat at St Clement’s in Galong



Back row from left: Fathers Anthony Oboshi (Leeton); Kevin O’Reilly (Wagga); Christian Obiekwe (Griffith); John Baptist (Koorringal); Ron Donoghue (West Wagga); Tony Loth (Retired); John Fowles (Thurgoona); John McGrath (Corowa); Sinisa Mikulek (Junee); Blaise Kurek (Darlington Point–Jerilderie) and Stephen Onyekwere (Albury). Front row: Mons. Michael Burgess (Retired); Fr Pat O’Neill CSsR (Galong); Fr Brendan Byrne SJ (Retreat Master); Mons. Doug George (Coolamon); Fr Paul Hart (Retired) and Fr Bernie Thomas (Retired).



A man of the people reflects on 50 years as a bishop

by John McLaurin
Editor - Catholic Voice

50

FIFTY years to the day of his ordination as bishop, Emeritus Archbishop Francis Carroll celebrated in Canberra reflecting with gratitude on his episcopal life.

To mark the anniversary on September 5, he was joined for a gathering at Archbishop's House by Archbishop Christopher Prowse as well as religious, priests, deacons and lay people of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

A thanksgiving Mass and dinner took place later in the evening with Bishop Pat Power and close friends.

Archbishop Carroll said he was initially surprised to be made a bishop, "way back in 1967" and showed his appreciation to those who have been with him to this point.

"I think the main sentiment would be one of gratitude, first of all to God who called me and has sustained me over these years and then gratitude to many, many people who have supported me," he said. "My family, of course, have always been very supportive."

Archbishop Carroll nominated being the first bishop to welcome Pope St John Paul II to Australia in 1986 as well as Archdiocesan synods in 1989 and 2003 as highlights of his ministry.

He paid tribute to the numerous

"wonderful lay people" whom he has encountered and said he has always received good support from clergy wherever he went, noting "many happy relationships".

He said the scourge of institutional child sex abuse by members of the Church had been most disappointing and had overshadowed much of the good work done by the Church over many years.

Regarding the 2020 Plenary Council, Archbishop Carroll said that with "good preparation of prayer and work" it could be a decisive event in the life of the Catholic Church in Australia.

Archbishop Carroll was Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn from 1982 to 2006.

He grew up on a farm at Ganmain and was educated at the local convent school before moving to Sydney and finishing his secondary studies with the De La Salle Brothers in Marrickville.

In 1946 he entered St Columba's Seminary, Springwood at the age of 16 and two years later went on to St Patrick's Seminary, Manly. He was ordained a priest by Bishop Henschke in St Brendan's Church, Ganmain, on July 27, 1954.

From 1967, he was the Coadjutor Bishop of the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, ministering alongside Bishop Henschke, who was ill at the time and died six months later.

"Bishop Henschke was a mentor to me. He confirmed me, ordained me a priest

and ordained me a bishop," Archbishop Carroll said.

Thirty-six at the time of his episcopal ordination, Archbishop Carroll is the youngest bishop to be ordained in Australia since Vatican II (1962-65). His episcopal ordination took place at the now removed Plaza Theatre in Baylis Street, Wagga Wagga, to allow 1,800 people to attend.

These days he is happily retired in Wagga Wagga and says he is in good health, having just turned 87.

He maintains a keen interest in both the Archdiocese and the Diocese of Wagga Wagga, regularly doing priest supply work when required.

He nominates Catholic education, Kairos Prison Ministry and the implementation of Vatican II, as three of the more important parts to his legacy.

"For me one of the great graces in my life was studying Canon Law in Rome during the Second Vatican Council," he said. "That became my ideal for the rest of my time as bishop."

Giving advice to Christians in tough times, amid an ever-more secular society, Archbishop Carroll said Catholics needed to stay strong, while taking on a more contemplative dimension in their faith.

Borrowing a phrase from St Mother Teresa of Kolkata, he said, "God has not called us to be successful, but he has called us to be faithful".

Congratulations on the milestone Archbishop Carroll!

Archbishop Emeritus Francis Carroll (1982 - 2006)



Portrait of the Archbishop as a Young Man: Archbishop Emeritus Francis Carroll sits beneath a portrait of himself, painted while he was Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn, from 1982 to 2006. He celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination as a bishop with a special Mass and afternoon tea hosted by Archbishop Christopher Prowse at Archbishop's House in Canberra on September 5. Archbishop Carroll is pictured with Auxiliary Bishop of Canberra-Goulburn, Bishop Pat Power, left and Archbishop Prowse.



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Concerned Catholics reform movement grows

More than 200 people attended a second forum in Canberra in August hosted by Concerned Catholics of the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocese to hear talks by lay and clergy leaders who shared their vision for the Australian Church of the future.

Speakers included Sister Ruth Durick OSU, president of Catholic Religious Australia (CRA); Dr John Falzon, National CEO of the St Vincent de Paul Society and Father Peter Day, founder of Home in Queanbeyan, which provides 24-hour long-term care for people living with chronic mental illness.

The chairman of Concerned Catholics, Professor John Warhurst, said that people's responses at the meeting and afterwards indicated there is a growing mood for change in the wake of a disappointing response by bishops so far to calls for a greater role for the laity, particularly women, in decision-making and for a more transparent and inclusive Church leadership.

At the meeting, comments from the floor called for greater inclusion of young people, women, Aboriginal people and people from regional parishes including the Wagga Wagga Diocese, in the lead-

up to the 2020 Plenary Council.

"Several speakers from the floor urged that action on reforms start now rather than waiting for 2020, to build a sense of empowerment among lay Catholics in order to ensure the Synod's decisions truly reflect the views of the faithful," Professor Warhurst said.

"Archbishop Christopher Prowse has appointed an Archdiocesan interim working party to advise on the 2020 Australian Plenary Council.

"I am one of the people included on what was initially a six-person team including one woman. Another two women were added to the group after criticism of the lack of gender balance," Professor Warhurst said.

"The unilateral process employed to select these appointees was also evident in the appointment of a separate national executive committee to advise on the Plenary Council. This in-house decision-making by the Church hierarchy in preparation for what is billed as a major step forward for the Church indicates that the inward-looking mindset of the leaders continues," Professor Warhurst added.

"Australia's bishops are suggesting that the 2020 Plenary Council will provide a way forward after the ignominy afflicting the Church as a result of the damaging

evidence of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

"Concerned Catholics is fortunate in that many well-qualified people have offered their advice and support as to how we develop our aspirations for a renewed and community-based Church and harness support for that renewal," Professor Warhurst said.

The next public forum will be held on Thursday 15 March, 2018 following the release of the Royal Commission's final report. Francis Sullivan, CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council will be the sole presenter.

Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn is a group in the Archdiocese concerned about a number of governance, cultural and structural issues arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. We seek an effective voice for lay people in the administration and direction of our church.

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Another highlight of the series is Catholic couple Francis and Susan Sullivan, who share their passion for meditation and talk about how they meditate and, more importantly, why.

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Kairos Outside Weekend for Women



And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: *Ezekiel 37:22*

A residential weekend for women who have had family members, partners or friends in prison or juvenile detention will be held in Wagga Wagga in November.

Bind Us Together is the theme of the weekend which has been organised by Kairos Prison Ministry, a voluntary community-based Christian ministry which serves both those in prison and the families and friends of those in prison.

Kairos Outside for Women is a non-denominational program which supports women who are currently (or have been in the past) impacted by the imprisonment of someone serving time in a correctional centre or juvenile offender program.



For many Kairos Outside participants the weekend may be the first time they have experienced a loving, safe place in which to work through their emotional pain or anger and their sense of isolation and rejection.

Kairos Outside for Women starts with a live-in weekend which will be held this year from Friday evening, 10 November to Sunday evening 12 November at St Martin's College, Charles Sturt University (CSU) campus, Wagga Wagga.

On this weekend the all-women team members and guests share their stories and how they manage life's challenges. Some guests have never had the opportunity to do this previously as they have found it too difficult or painful to talk about their situation or feel silenced because of embarrassment and

fear of people's judgement.

They can share their experiences and work through their emotional pain and their sense of isolation and rejection in a safe environment where there is commitment to maintain confidentiality.

There is real compassion among women who share a similar experience. Some women benefit so much from the weekend they are able to make significant changes in their lives and create healthier relationships for themselves and their families.

The weekend is free to those who want to come along for support and friendship from people who understand and care. It is open to any adult female relative or supporter of a current or former prison inmate.

Guests come from all over the Riverina including Griffith, Albury, Cootamundra, Tumbarumba, West Wyalong and anywhere in between.

The Kairos Outside team includes Christian women from all churches who come together to support other women. It is an ecumenical ministry. Some share the experience of having someone close to them in prison.

While the program is based on Christian principles, women don't have to be a Christian or belong to any denomination to attend. Kairos Outside for Women is open to women from all backgrounds. Travel arrangements are made for those wishing to come to the weekend.

Ongoing support is available after the weekend as monthly reunions are held.

If you would like an application form or more information please phone Nola Baker on 0458 224 430 or email kowriverina@gmail.com



Inside or Outside: Kairos is about changing lives

Kairos is a mission to those inside prison and to those affected by having someone inside.

Through a 40-hour program given over three to five days inside prisons (called a 'Short Course') and 25 hours over a weekend for outside programs, Kairos presents the possibility of a different, positive life through supportive, compassionate and non-judgmental words, actions and examples.

Kairos with the help of more than 2,000 volunteers around Australia reaches out to:

- **male and female inmates** saying "You have a choice"
- **family and friends** of those inmates, saying "You are not alone"
- **juvenile offenders**, saying "There's a better way ahead".

Kairos commenced with a course

(based on Cursillo) in Union Correctional Institution, a maximum-security prison at Raiford, Florida, USA in 1976.

From that experience a model was developed that could be presented in any prison without changing the content or format. It was aimed specifically at one environment: that of correctional institutions. It was called Kairos from the Greek word for time used in the sense of 'special time' for a particular event.

Kairos was found to be a word of very special significance in the environment of the correctional institution where the word time carries so many connotations.

'Kairos Outside' began in 1989 when the chaplain at San Quentin State Correctional Facility in California saw a need to help the families of those incarcerated. The families on the outside were often having as many

problems as the person on the inside.

The first Kairos course outside the USA was piloted in June/July 1995 at the Parramatta Correctional Institution. Kairos Outside commenced in Australia in Sydney in May 1999. 'Kairos Torch' – a program

The families on the outside were often having as many problems as the person on the inside.

for juvenile offenders - was introduced in Australia at the Frank Baxter Juvenile Justice Centre on the NSW Central Coast in April 2001.

Today Kairos is active in over 400 prisons worldwide. Kairos Outside operates in over 80 regions while Kairos Torch operates in over 30 juvenile centres. Kairos currently has more than 30,000 volunteers around the world.

In Australia, Kairos is operating in over 20 correctional centres; Kairos Outside in over 11 regions and Kairos Torch in two juvenile facilities. Kairos Australia is in a growth phase, with regional and developmental committees in all states and

territories planning and negotiating new opportunities.

At Kairos, we know we can't fix their problems or solve the causes, as people have to be allowed to make their own decisions. But we can help people to recognise, choose and live new lives.

For more information about Kairos please see their website <http://kairos.org.au>

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Reclaiming *Virtue* in a rapidly shifting culture

by Emily Shaw

Virtue Ministry Graphic Designer and Writer

Stina Constantine is the very image of femininity; long flowing hair and fashionably modest. It is easy to see why God has called her to a ministry to help others recognise and form their own virtue.

Her presentation at the Patricians' group gathering last month at St Michael's Parish Centre in Wagga was a celebratory one. Though her presentation was on the potential of habit to become either virtue or vice, and contained a challenge for her audience, Virtue Ministry was marking its first year.

And, like all first birthdays it was preceded by a lot of hard work, prayer, discernment and ... surprise.

"I was in a period of my life where everything was smooth sailing. I had moved out to Australia on my own, independent, in a committed relationship. But I had found myself having the same conversations with a variety of different people when it came to relationships," explains Constantine.

"I stumbled upon one of Sarah Swafford's earliest talks. A lot of what she spoke about intuitively made sense but it also started to click in my head as to why I was seeing the patterns and having the same reoccurring conversations."

Swafford, who advocates for 'Emotional Virtue' in the United States, would later play a bigger role in the genesis of Virtue Ministry. But at this moment in time her talk was a one off and Constantine looked no further.

"A couple of years on life started to change. The long term relationship I was in ended and my future in Australia was also in jeopardy."

A rushed trip to New Zealand in order

to resecure a visa to live in Australia proved an excellent situation to spend time petitioning Heaven; not only for a return to her adopted country but in time to attend the parish mission at St Michael's Cathedral that she had helped to organise.

That mission proved a turning point.

"Every evening I had virtue, virtue, VIRTUE screaming at me from the pulpit," admits Constantine.

She accepted the Virtue Challenge on May 19, 2014. Though in a slightly different format to the Virtue Challenge she now endorses, her focus on traits of virtue, particularly around femininity, confidence and commitment

were exactly the same

traits Sarah Swafford

was advocating.

"Although I had an amazing accountability partner, I knew myself well enough to know I wouldn't make it through nearly a full year of the challenge if I didn't raise the bar for myself, so I made the challenge public," Constantine admits.

"Anyone who knew I had embarked on the challenge was invited to keep me accountable."

Towards the end of Constantine's personal challenge, which lasted 43 weeks, she and a few friends embarked on a 'Yes Year'.

'Yes Year' was an initiative to discern and say yes to everything God put in their path, to have the courage and faith the way Our Lady did at the Annunciation.



In addition to this, Constantine attended a 10-day training session by All.U.Re and presented a talk on her role model, Sarah Swafford. Before presenting her talk she received Swafford's permission and blessing to present on her work.

"After the presentation all the girls were astounded. They all wished they had heard this before and said, 'I would have made different choices'. They were desperate for others to know," she recalls.

"When you hear that kind of feedback you know you can no longer keep it for yourself. You have to give it."

Constantine's challenge ended in time for Lent 2015 but her work now with separated families and their children solidified the desperate need she saw in the world. Afterwards she continued to pray and discern, ultimately taking her ideas for potential ministry to a couple of her friends whom she considered to be far better versed in the Christian

faith than her.

Their support and encouragement proved a blessing in itself.

Virtue Ministry was launched in 2016 and Constantine's first speaking engagements involved presenting at a training weekend to seminarians and at an all-girls' retreat.

Now the team has grown to include two additional presenters, Matthew Bayley and Andrew Flores and a writer and graphic designer.

"Virtue Ministry was launched as a Christian initiative with a mission to guide people into discovering who they were uniquely made to be," says Constantine.

"It is made possible through prayer and practice; self-knowledge and relationships; character and lifestyle. Becoming someone, no one else in all of creation can ever repeat. Someone who will move the world. Someone capable of Christ-like love. A virtuous son and daughter. That is our mission for every person, because that is at the heart of us all."

To find out more about Virtue Ministry or to book a talk or presentation go to www.virtueministry.org.au/



"Virtue Ministry was launched as a Christian initiative with a mission to guide people into discovering who they were uniquely made to be," says Constantine.

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If you regularly or semi-regularly consume Catholic media, whether it's traditional newspapers and magazines or web-based publications and social media platforms, then the Australian Catholic Media Council wants to hear from you!

The Council has developed a short survey to find out what you value in Catholic media.

Do you find that it helps to educate, form, challenge and deepen your faith; connect you to the local Church or to the universal Church?

What is the particular character and role of Catholic media in Australia in 2017 and

what might you hope it will be in the future? How can we strengthen Catholic media in Australia?

Just click straight through to the survey at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CathMediaUsers2017>

The survey will only take a few minutes but your contribution is vital.



COALITION FOR MARRIAGE

Dinner and fundraiser

A dinner and fundraiser for the Coalition for Marriage (C4M) is being organised in Albury on the 24 October by the National Association of Catholic Families (NACF).

A spokesperson from C4M will be giving a keynote address on the 'No' campaign for the same-sex marriage (SSM) postal plebiscite and marriage-enrichment presenters, Maureen and Patrick Coyne from Melbourne, will give a presentation on 'Making Time for Marriage and Family'.
"Prime Minister Malcolm

Turnbull has stated that he is asking all Australians to give the Federal Government a 'blank cheque' with regards to SSM, since no legislation has even been drafted should the 'No' vote lose," said Mark Mannering, NACF president.

"Australians are being asked to vote on an important issue without even knowing how it might be implemented or what safeguards will be in place if same-sex marriage is voted in.

"Malcom Turnbull has also stated that if the 'No' vote wins, then SSM will be 'off the table, off the agenda' for the next few years. If that

does happen, the fight for the truth, goodness and beauty of marriage must still continue."

Mr Mannering said organisations such as the Coalition for Marriage (C4M) will still need to continue their good work and they will require much-needed funds and donations to assist them.

For more information, see the accompanying advertisement or phone NACF Presidents Mark and Jenny Mannering on 0419 411 161

COALITION FOR MARRIAGE

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Walking in love

by **Leonie Napier**

Founder of Unique Life Centre



Helen Ryall (left), a volunteer support person with Unique Life Centre in Leeton and Leonie Napier (right).

Several years ago I went along to an afternoon tea event in Leeton where there was a guest speaker from the USA who was sharing her story about her abortion and how the decision impacted her life.

It was quite a heart-wrenching

story which opened the door of understanding and compassion to me.

Speaking to some ladies afterwards I discovered that the Catholic Church had put forward the *Walking in Love* initiative <http://www.walkingwithlove.org.au/why-walking-with-love> from the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference for Pastoral Life. Former Bishop of Wagga Wagga, Gerard Hanna (now retired) was a very committed supporter of this initiative. He believed it was extremely important that women felt loved and supported and able to receive forgiveness and healing.

Bishop Hanna gave me a book to read called *Giving Sorrow Words: Women's Stories of Grief After Abortion* by Melinda Tankard Reist which gave personal stories of women who had chosen to have an abortion and the pain and isolation they felt.

This whole experience opened my heart to the pain many women and men and their loved ones experience from the loss of unborn babies from abortion, miscarriage and IVF in addition to those who have had a stillborn baby, particularly many years

ago when the stillborn baby did not even have a funeral.

Subsequently I became friends with a woman who shared her story of her abortion many years ago. The result was that we arranged a private memorial service that was extremely beautiful and cathartic. I have an ongoing relationship with this beautiful soul and she encouraged me to speak with Bishop Hanna as we talked about the significance of having a memorial area to place value on each precious life.

Through Bishop Hanna's compassion and generosity the Diocese of Wagga Wagga donated \$5,000 for a memorial area to be set up in Leeton Cemetery. I spoke to our Leeton Shire Council and they were willing to provide additional funding as well as the labour component. The result is a very peaceful and simple area that allows us to have services and memorial plaques.

This month we will have our first memorial service at the Leeton Cemetery for a stillborn baby who was born 60 years ago. The grief and loss remains raw for this family who are so grateful that they are able to mark

their son's memory with a service and plaque.

A small group of Leeton women are available at any time to help anyone needing counselling support in decision-making or support walking through grief as well as help to organise a memorial service.

It really is such a privilege and an honour to share in the stories of people and it is a part of living out our faith in love, grace and mercy just as Jesus Christ has taught us through action.

Leonie Napier can be contacted on 0428 557 125



The Remembrance Wall at Leeton Cemetery which was built in 2017 to honour the memory of unborn and stillborn babies.

It also provides a special place for families to have a memorial service for babies they have lost.



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Vianney College Open Day



**Vianney College Open Day
Sunday 8th October 2017**

Mass - 11:00am

Light Luncheon - 12:30pm

Concludes - 2:00pm

*Come and meet the seminarians
and see the seminary.*

Vianney College will hold its annual open day this weekend on Sunday 8 October.

Originally organised for the families of the seminarians, the Vianney College Open Day has expanded to become a general invitation to all to visit the seminary; meet the students and staff and learn something of the life of a seminarian.

The Open Day program begins with a late morning Mass at 11am in the Vianney College Chapel followed by lunch with the seminarians and staff and a tour of the seminary.

The day will conclude with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.



Diocesan Spirituality Day for Women

Women 'an unacknowledged resource in the Church', speaker tells diocesan women's gathering

Women giving homilies; opportunities for ministry and leadership training for lay people and investment in adult faith formation were among suggestions for future action at the Diocesan Spirituality Day for Women in Wagga in August.

Beyond food, flowers and feather dusters: Women an untapped resource was the theme of the day which was attended by more than 120 women from throughout Wagga Diocese as well as women from communities in Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese.

It was the first women's spirituality

day to be held in Wagga Diocese since 2014. The day was sponsored by the Diocese of Wagga Wagga and the Council for Australian Catholic Women.

The day's program included workshops on Aboriginal Spirituality: yarning and weaving; Centering Prayer; Encountering Women in Scripture: the embodiment of suffering in the lives of biblical women; Planting seeds of hope: walking with our refugee women and families and a workshop on encountering God through Christian and Muslim spirituality.

Keynote speaker, Sister Megan Brock rsj, urged women in the Church to reclaim what has been denied to women for generations and take our official place at the Eucharistic table.

"Women's ministry must be honoured but unfortunately women's role in the Church today remains largely domesticated," Megan said.

"Ironically, down the centuries, the defining characteristic of the domesticated woman has been the making and breaking of bread for those at her table!" Megan said.

"The Church, however, has marked out a clear path for women within its hierarchical structure. Religious women, for example, who take up a public position as Church women, have been applauded by the Church for their commitment to education, health care, social work and care of the poor."





"I sometimes wonder if women have become just ecclesial gap-fillers?" Megan speculated.

"We are an unacknowledged resource in the Church today. Women's everyday ministry remains non-sacramental by virtue of our gender alone.

"We must return to the sources of scripture to look at the ministry of women in the early Church. Since apostolic times women have been ministering to God's people as Jesus sent them out to do but the tentacles of patriarchy have clawed back the gains of Jesus."

Megan said it was time women began to "quietly or noisily erode the edifice of the patriarchal institution that is the Church today".

"Within patriarchal institutions, men regulate the lives of women. In patriarchal institutions such as the Church, it is men who create the rules/truths which construct and regulate the lives of women within that system. In the Church all positions of ultimate power and authority are occupied by men; the dominant symbolism is masculine and there exists a cultural privileging of male over female. This has a particular impact on the experience of women as women in the Church."

She suggested the way forward for women's gifts to be recognized could include:

- That women be given positions of

authority within Church structures

- Reclaiming the Order of Deacons for women in the Catholic Church – (there are many women deacons known by name in the early Church and not so early Church, particularly the Eastern Rite churches)

- Women preachers be invited to give homilies

- Studies in spirituality, history, psychology etc from a feminine perspective be an obligatory component of seminary courses

- That women and lay men be trained by dioceses to take up Church service

- That public acknowledgment of the legitimate place of women in decision-making roles be given by Church personnel.

"We as women also need to support each other to upskill ourselves and take our place with confidence to get our voices heard above the din of the patriarchal hubbub. We must not give up otherwise we will go backwards," Megan said.

"In summary, I believe, women are not an untapped resource in the Church. We are an unacknowledged resource in the Church. Women have been actively ministering to the people since apostolic times and continue to do so.

"In conclusion, then, I believe we must all continue to work towards reclaiming what has been denied to women for generations. Our official voice in the Church must be heard.

We must take our equal place at the table, and I include the Eucharistic table.

"Women must claim the right to raise a voting arm where it counts in the Church. The sacramental nature of women's ministry must be honoured. And finally, we must be offered and accept an invitation to a truly equal partnership in proclaiming the Gospel to the people of our own time."

- Sister Megan Brock rsj is a Sister of St Joseph, Lochinvar Province.

She is a practising psychologist and Congregational Leader of the Sisters of St Joseph, Lochinvar. Megan has shared her wisdom nationally and internationally at conferences, retreats and prayer days.



Photos by Barry Kennedy

Clockwise from top left:

L to R: Sally Puckeridge, Wagga; Catherine Dawe, Yanco and Therese Cubis, Wagga.

Jane Plum, facilitator and member of the coordinating team for the Diocesan Council for Australian Catholic Women

Sister Margaret Walsh pbvm, (left) a member of the organising team with Moira Coombs, of Canberra

Keynote speaker Megan Brock rsj

Margaret McAuliffe (left) and Kay Sutton

L to R: Noelene Hogan, Jannette Cameron and Jeanette Reynolds, all of Wagga

L to R: Nola Baker, Melissa Dawson and Kelly Humphrey, one of the workshop presenters on Aboriginal Spirituality

Sister Barbara Webber pbvm (left) and Susan Dickson, of Uranquinty

Eartha Sobolewski, one of the panel of young women who shared their experience of faith

Adou Arop, of Wagga presented a workshop on walking with refugee women

Andrea Dean, Director of the National Office for the Participation of Women (OPW), in Canberra spoke to the gathering about the work of OPW

Margaret Garraway (left) and Kay Humphreys, both of Wagga

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Vietnam focus for World Mission Month Appeal

The theme for this month's Catholic Mission World Mission Appeal is inspired by the Gospel of John: *'Whoever drinks of the water I shall give, will never thirst again'* (John 4:14).

October is World Mission Month and World Mission Sunday is October 22.

This year we invite you to prayerfully and financially support missionaries such as Sister Mary Hoaian (pictured) and the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who are based in the coastal mountain diocese of Nha Trang, as they seek to provide clean drinking water to the forgotten farming families of Vietnam.

suffer from stunted growth due to the impacts of malnutrition, polluted water and a lack of accessible health services.

With the help of Catholic Mission, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary are seeking to install a new clean drinking water filtration system at the rear of their kindergarten. Sister Mary and the 50 orphaned and disadvantaged children who attend the daily lunch program located on this site, have been praying to receive this new service. They know that it will greatly improve their daily health and general wellbeing as well as that of the whole community.

There are over 12 million forgotten farming families in Vietnam who desperately require access to clean drinking water and nutritious food as they struggle to survive on less than \$2 per day. Thanks to Catholic Mission, together we can provide them with essential community health, education and spiritual growth resources to ensure they can have a future filled with hope.

To donate to the World Mission Month Appeal please contact

John Goonan

Catholic Mission Director

Diocese of Wagga Wagga

phone 0428 970 445 or email

wagga.wagga.director@

catholicmission.org.au

A third of all children born in the coastal mountain regions needlessly suffer from stunted growth due to the impacts of malnutrition, polluted water and a lack of accessible health services.

Despite decades of struggling with limited religious freedoms, Sister Mary and her community of Sisters work tirelessly to provide critical community resources including kindergarten education, nutrition and medicines for the isolated families.

Today Vietnam is home to almost 95 million people. However over 12 million families still lack access to basic health services such as clean drinking water and medical care.

Sadly throughout the country, poorer children under the age of five are twice as likely to die before their fifth birthday when compared with children in Australia.

A third of all children born in the coastal mountain regions needlessly

"If we could just get a new water filtration service, this will allow us to meet the foundational need of this isolated community. And it will enable us to dramatically impact the health outcomes of the children and the families here within our care," Sister Mary said.

The Sisters currently provide five community programs to the villagers of Xuan Son. These include: scholarships for kindergarten children in need; a daily lunch program for children who are orphaned and disadvantaged; a new chapel to share the Word of God; a community garden and a regional doctor and medicine service.

However the community's greatest need for a new clean drinking water system remains unmet.



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Justice Matters Camp

Dignity is priceless - what IS the cost?

by Jane Plum
CSO School Services Officer



Justice Matters group photo.

As I write this report I acknowledge that it is exactly 4 months since the 2017 Justice Matters Camp concluded on the 12th May. For many of the Year 10 and 11 students who attended from the 5 secondary schools it may have become a distant memory, for others the camp will still be impacting on their thoughts, words and actions.

Looking back over the responses that were shared via the survey following the camp I remember the wonderful time that was had and the depth of understanding and empathy that was reached. The theme, *Dignity is priceless - what IS the cost?* was effective in encapsulating the focus and involving a wide variety of issues from Australia and beyond. Students were able to meet new people and learn about social issues sensing they were free to voice their own opinions without fear of judgement. This enabled reflections on the daily struggles of the less fortunate and fostered a passion for justice and a collaboration within each school group through the planning of a school based justice response.

Over the three days many insights

were gained. Some key insights are listed below:

- We need to look past people's skin and religion to become one peaceful world
- Everyone is unique
- Refugees in detention is a big issue that is often overlooked.
- Companies that we are purchasing from might be using human trafficking to produce products.
- The global slave trade is currently worse than any other point in history.
- Human trafficking exists in Australia too, particularly in rural areas.
- We can make a change - everyone should be involved in helping those in need
- The impact that expert presenters and people of lived faith and spirituality can have on our students.
- The hope that youth continually provide
- Persistence is key, change happens only when we keep pushing relentlessly for what is right.
- We have more power than we think, we just need to be prepared to use it.
- Aboriginal people still feel the pain of

past wrongs

- The history of the massacres of Aboriginal People was very confronting but good to find out about.
- The community could be more accepting of the LGBTIQ community
- The bible can be related to anything
- A renewed sense of common purpose
- The creation of the 'other' in society
- The horrific day-to-day lifestyle of those affected by human trafficking, aboriginal suicide and the other workshops.

We asked participants to record their Social Justice goal. I wonder to what extent these goals have been achieved?

In Refugee Week we will have adverts leading up to one day of music and a BBQ Create more awareness and welcoming of those who identify as LGBTIQ.

Ensuring the dignity of all those around us through our actions - being more mindful of respecting the dignity of others

Embracing the other, which includes

interfaith, LGBTIQ+, people with disabilities, refugees and basically any group or individual that has been singled out as the 'other'. We plan on creating a more welcoming school environment, whilst educating students on these 'other' people and how we can affect them positively and negatively.

We plan to make posters to post up around the school such as on bathroom doors and bubblers where people are not distracted by something else.

Get through to the junior years by having a talk with the year group about social justice issues and what they can do to help.

Using one of our community days to represent the different colours of the LGBTIQ flag and give a speech to the school on how we can personally support them in our daily lives.

The goal the students wish to address is Domestic Violence. We will approach this goal through aligning with White Ribbon Day.

Raising my voice in my own community



Luke Tobin Catholic Mission, Sourosh Cina ISRA, Peter McPhee St Francis Leeton, John Goonan Catholic Mission, Sr Genny Ryan osu ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking of Human) Jason Jolley Aboriginal Education Worker, Mater Dei Catholic College.

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Richie Allen from Canberra conducts a smoking ceremony.

and educating people about these world issues that aren't known. To inform my peers and encourage them to make a change.

To open my eyes always to different situations and people that come from them

The Stolen Generation, it is important to me as it shaped Australia's history. Informing people about the struggles Aboriginal People went and go through.

The significant moments of the camp are what stay with us and what we can tap back into to reignite the passion that we sensed at that time. Here as some of those significant moment:

The most significant moment of the

camp for me was the pouring of each school's town's water into the basin because I felt as though it was a good way for each school to come together in order to help others in this camp. It was a gathering of open-minded people coming together in faith to achieve a common goal: to learn ways to help others.

- Liturgies and prayers
- Meeting new people and making new friends from all over the Diocese.
- Meal times when I met a lot of new friends.
- Trivia Night because everyone got into it and you had to sit with people from other schools
- Level of student involvement was



Gathering water.

excellent at all times.

- Selling almost \$700 of fair trade items for Trading Circle
- The workshops - we truly got to learn about others from a first hand basis which made it very powerful.
- Developing a connection with the 2 Islamic speakers.
- The impact of the inter-faith workshop with the students. That was pretty special... A few eye opening aspects for the students... Very worthwhile.
- Being bombarded with facts makes people highly aware of what's really going on and it boosted by motivation to change the horrifying facts.
- I found the issues most significant as I'm already doing research on some

in Legal studies the activities broaden my view.

The last liturgy. It was the final thing that brought us all together and made us go home feeling renewed and educated. The final liturgy allowed you to reflect on all of the social justice issues that we learnt about on the camp and then being able to go back to school with motivation to actually do something.

The final session, prior to the closing liturgy, involved staff and students from each school working together to plan a social justice action in each school. We look forward to these secondary schools sharing stories and photos of their initiatives.



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National Encounter marks 50 years of Cursillo in Wagga Wagga Diocese

Wagga Wagga will be the first regional diocese in Australia to host the biennial National Encounter of the Catholic Cursillo Movement later this month, October 20, 21 and 22.

Lord Show Us The Way – A New Beginning is the theme for the National Encounter at the Quality Inn Carriage House Motel in Wagga Wagga. More than 60 Cursillistas from interstate in addition to local Cursillistas have registered to attend the three-day gathering which will feature talks, meditations and reflections and social get-togethers.

In 2017 Wagga Wagga Catholic Cursillo Movement is also celebrating 50 years of Cursillo in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

George Simon, president of the Wagga Wagga Catholic Cursillo Movement reflects on the history and impact of Cursillo over the past 50 years.

‘As we celebrate 50 years of Cursillo in our Diocese and remember the hundreds of men and women who travelled, and

still travel, this Cursillo journey, It’s interesting to note that Cursillo has been alive for half the 100 years existence of our Diocese.

“Cursillo” (meaning a short spiritual course) is a recognised lay movement which was started in the Spanish Catholic Church in the late 1940s by a group of young men. Over time Cursillo spread to other parts of the world and is now recognised by the Church worldwide.

In our diocese, Cursillo was highly regarded by our former Bishop Gerard Hanna whose support was both spiritual and practical. Our former Bishop Francis Carroll was an original member of Cursillo in 1967 and will give a talk at our National Encounter in Wagga Wagga.

Cursillo is also a movement within the Anglican Church and the Uniting Church where it is known as Emmaus.

Cursillo is not a club or organisation we join. It is a movement which we live in faith. In other words who we are and how we live and how we treat those around

us are more important than what we say.

Cursillo has a central core of Piety (prayer); Study and Action where we share with other Cursillistas and friends and try to change the environment we live in for the better.

Simply put we try to live the Good News supporting each other and engaging with family, friends, strangers and within our Catholic Church with its sacramental gifting and scriptural study and learning.

Cursillo has also been a springboard for the Antioch Youth Movement and the inspirational Kairos Prison Ministry. (See Kairos story page 6)

Our National Encounter weekend will feature talks on topics such as:

Nourishing the Good Earth; Planting the Seeds of Hope; What is an Authentic Cursillo?; Christian Life and Good Times and Challenging Times.

Presenters include Cursillo National Spiritual Adviser, Father John Armstrong; Fr Paul Hart, Nola Baker, Bishop Francis

Carroll, Bert Adams, Fr Tony Loth and Sr Margaret Walsh pbvm.

There will be good food - both spiritual and other as well as friendship in Christ, prayer, song, laughter and Mass each day.

We are blessed in this work and pray younger folk will join us and our executive with fresh ideas and enthusiasm to help Cursillo move on.


We plan to hold a men’s three day Cursillo weekend in June 2018 and a women’s three day Cursillo in October 2018.’

For enquiries and registration for the National Encounter please contact:

George Simon on 0427254493 or gsbcmgt@bigpond.com;


John Knobel on 0260260527 or jandgknobel@bigpond.com

Lorraine Amarant on 0407955882 or lulubet@bigpond.com



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The Mystics in Europe

“All our life is grounded and rooted in love...” Julian of Norwich, *A Revelation of Love*, ch 49

We will begin our mystical journey in the silence of Julian’s cell in Norwich, travel across to Spain to encounter the spirit of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross, then go on to Italy to meet Clare and Francis of Assisi. We will conclude the pilgrimage in Germany enjoying the beauty of the Rhineland and surrounds with Hildegard, Gertrude and Mechthild.

DATES: Depart Sydney Tuesday 20 March 2018

Return Sydney Tuesday 10 April 2018

COST: \$9,850 twin share. Extra: Insurance, tipping & single supplement

Contact Sr Margaret Walsh pbvm for further details about the pilgrimage and for the application form and information brochure.

Email: mmwalsh@wagga.net.au Ph: 02 6971 7140

13 Marns St, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

The Travel Agent we are going through is *Harvest Journeys*. As this is a private pilgrimage all enquiries at this stage go through Sr Margaret Walsh pbvm.

Harvest Journeys-11th Floor, 133 Liverpool St. Sydney NSW 2000

Monica Mansour Operations Manager – Private Groups

Pilgrimage: Ref No. 8PVO7 tel: +61 2 9390 5460 toll free: 1800 819 156

www.harvestjourneys.com

Open Day to celebrate ErinEarth's evolution

ErinEarth – the sustainable living education centre in Wagga Wagga founded by the Presentation Sisters - is having an open day on Saturday 4 November to celebrate its new structure.

ErinEarth has recently been through an exciting period of change in its governance structure as the management committee and volunteers look to the future.

Established in 1998 by the Presentation Sisters with a mission to model a sustainable and just lifestyle; respect for the earth and a culture of peace,

ErinEarth relies on the involvement of community volunteers as integral to both its management and maintenance.

ErinEarth is transitioning from its former structure as a ministry of the Presentation Sisters to its new structure as a not-for-profit company. The Riverina community is invited to come and help celebrate this important occasion on

Saturday 4 November from 9.30am-1pm.

This special open day will be an opportunity to thank the Presentation Sisters for their gift of ErinEarth which is a vibrant example of local environmental reconciliation to help safeguard our common future.

Set on half a hectare of land, ErinEarth runs educational programs for schools and members of the community that focus on encouraging the protection and enhancement of the natural environment; minimising energy consumption and water use and supporting a lifestyle that sustains the whole person and strengthens community bonds.

ErinEarth is a place that emulates and teaches practical skills for sustainable living and a gathering place for reflecting on and developing spirituality more closely linked with the earth. It is a place that radiates passion about sustainability, environmental social change and education which enhances and protects

the environment as a community of life.

ErinEarth is open to the public Monday to Wednesday from 9am to 4pm and Thursday afternoons. Open Garden Days are held on a Saturday each season to showcase the beauty of the garden and changes throughout the year.

There are a great bunch of volunteers and supporters who keep ErinEarth running and looking good. If you would like to become involved in gardening or becoming a Friend of ErinEarth, please keep in touch with the details below:

Where:

ErinEarth, 1 Kildare Street, Wagga Wagga

For more information:

Phone: 02 69 257 150

Email: erinearth.wagga@preswagga.org

Website: www.erinearth.org.au

You can join ErinEarth's email subscriber list or become friends on Facebook to find out about events and further opportunities to become involved.



ErinEarth Open Garden Day

**Saturday 4th November,
9.30 am - 1pm**

@ 1 Kildare St, Wagga Wagga

Relaunch



Come & see how our garden has grown...

As we celebrate the Presentation Sisters handing over ErinEarth as a Company for the Wagga Wagga community and the future.

Official launch by Kay Hull starting from 11am

Café open at 9:30am



BBQ from 12 noon



Plant sales



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Wagga Presentation Sisters

Two beloved members of the Wagga Presentation Sisters are remembered for their loving commitment, ministry and service in the Wagga Diocese

Sr Frances Dengate pbvm

Frances grew up on the family farm "Calmsley" at Uranquinty with her parents Arthur and Mary Dengate, sister Joan and brothers Archie and Frank.

Over the years she had a great interest in and love for the growing extended Dengate family as was evident at the celebration for her 90th birthday in 2016.

Frances entered the Wagga Presentation Sisters in 1960. She had just turned 34 and was an accomplished demonstration teacher for the NSW Department of Education. She was professed on 3 September, 1962.

Frances's ministry covered a broad spectrum. After 16 years of teaching in city and country schools including Hay, Berrigan and Wagga, she became involved in a variety of ministries.

Her spirituality was grounded by her faithfulness, her integrity, trustworthiness and a deep sense of the meaning of life even in times of uncertainty and anxiety.

She was a librarian; a carer for the older Presentation sisters; worked as a Pastoral Associate and was a devoted member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

When she officially retired, her fine needlework, knitting and crochet were much sought after on sale days at local craft stalls supporting various charities.

Frances had a great appreciation for art, good literature and beautiful music. In fact, she had a great love for all of life as a wise, gentle and loyal woman who lived simply and was quietly appreciative of all around her. Her spirituality was grounded



by her faithfulness, her integrity, trustworthiness and a deep sense of the meaning of life even in times of uncertainty and anxiety.

For many years Frances was an ardent follower of the Tour de France - hence she had some very late nights as she enjoyed the sights and scenery she had

visited during travel times with friends as a young tourist.

As Archbishop Carroll said in his homily at Frances' Requiem Mass: "God's word can also speak of, and to, the life of a faith-filled person who answered God's call to consecrated life and lived it out doing good. In the words of the Book of Proverbs, Frances was, and is, more precious than jewels; she was a precious jewel beloved by God and precious too, to her twofold families and her friends."

Frances Dengate entered eternal life on 19 September 2016.

Sr Mary Clancy (John) pbvm

As Mary struggled with dementia over the last six years of her life the words of spiritual writer Henri Nouwen were uppermost in our minds: "We couldn't cure her however we could always care for her".

Mary was the second child in a farming family of eight from the central Riverina. Her early life was largely devoted to being a help for her parents and a carer of her younger siblings. Mary's first school years were spent in homeschooling with her siblings and cousins at 'Shandon', her aunt and uncle's farm. Mary's brother, John Kerry, died suddenly from an eczema-asthma attack so she experienced death early in life.



Mary's ministry involved primary school teaching and education. She was principal of many schools while teaching at the same time. One of Mary's most endearing traits was her love and support of children

In later years Mary worked in Pastoral Care at the Wagga Base Hospital. Those who were sick and grieving during those years remember with gratitude the loving care and compassion she gave them.

Mary's father prepared Mary for her First Holy Communion which she made at Urangeline. From there Mary and her sister, Margaret went to boarding school at Stockinbingal when it opened. After the Urangeline East Public School was established Mary spent a year there.

By this time the Presentation Sisters had opened a boarding school in Urana and so Mary and Margaret were among the first enrolled at St Francis Xavier's School. After her completion of the Intermediate Certificate Mary was invited to go to the Presentation Juniorate at "Nagle Holme", Hunters Hill, Sydney.

It was at "Nagle Holme" that she met Mary Silk and others with whom she was later to enter the Presentation Sisters. In January 1947, Mary's father had a farming accident and died a couple of days later. This was a severe shock for Mary who was especially bonded to her father. Mary completed her Leaving Certificate in 1947 and after a holiday at home entered the Presentation Convent with four companions on 11 February, 1948. Mary was professed on 16 January, 1951.

with special needs - whether they had learning difficulties; behavioral or family problems. She always managed to see their good side. She could pinpoint where their learning was not improving and she would do something about it.

Mary was also involved with State School catechetics in the inner western suburbs of Sydney. She trained catechists and prepared huge Italian migrant classes for the sacraments. This provided the opportunity for Mary to be open to change and to develop a real sense of pastoral care for her pupils and their families. Mary taught in primary schools at Como and Drummoyne in Sydney and Urana and Tarcutta in the Riverina.

In later years Mary worked in Pastoral Care at the Wagga Base Hospital. Those who were sick and grieving during those years remember with gratitude the loving care and compassion she gave them.

Mary died at the Loreto Home of Compassion in Wagga Wagga on the 5th November, 2016 in the 65th year of her profession.

Women deserve better: Doctors debate the future of reproductive medicine

Renowned Chilean gynaecologist, Professor Pilar Vigil and the University of Newcastle's Laureate Professor John Aitken will examine the future of reproductive medicine at the Australasian Institute of Restorative Reproductive Medicine's National Fertility Conference on October 27 and 28 in Melbourne.

A free public forum will open the conference with a frank discussion around the ever increasing use of assisted reproductive technologies (ART) as women delay pregnancy and seek quick solutions.

"We need to understand this headlong rush into ART is going to have a long-term impact on the health and wellbeing of future generations," Professor Aitken warned.

Restorative Reproductive Medicine (RRM) offers a re-focused approach to diagnosing the underlying causes of infertility. Unique to RRM is the goal to restore optimum health allowing conception to occur naturally.

The first priority for timely and accurate investigation is for women to understand the physical signs – or biomarkers – indicating normal, healthy patterns of fertility and infertility in their

menstrual cycle.

"Only 3 percent of women around the world know what their cycle is telling them; our challenge is to inform women – they don't know what they are missing," Professor Vigil explained.

"This knowledge is so important for a woman's wellbeing; the power in a woman's cycle is found in the story each cycle tells about her health."

Established in 2014 after the first National Fertility Conference in Melbourne, the Australasian Institute for Restorative Reproductive Medicine (AIRRM) brings together medical practitioners and fertility awareness instructors working toward effective fertility treatment, informed by cutting edge medical research.

Registrations are now open for the National Fertility Conference to be held on 27 and 28 October 2017 at the Australian Catholic University in Fitzroy, Melbourne. Register online at www.nationalfertilityconference.com.

Free Public Forum: Friday 27 October; refreshments from 6:30pm

Masterclass: Saturday 28 October; registrations from 8:15am

Conference Website:

www.nationalfertilityconference.com

Newly appointed Chair of CSO



From left Chris Cotter and Prue Horan (Catholic Schools Office Assistant Directors); Steve Sedgewick AO (Chair of Catholic Schools NSW) and Dennis Purcell (Diocesan Business Manager).

Steve Sedgewick AO, recently appointed Chair of Catholic Schools NSW, visited the Riverina last week where he met Prue Horan and Chris Cotter, Assistant Directors of the Catholic Schools Office (CSO), Diocese of Wagga Wagga.

Steve has been seeking the views and concerns of CSO leadership across NSW as he prepares to head up Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW), an independent company owned by the Catholic Bishops which will become the peak body for governance and

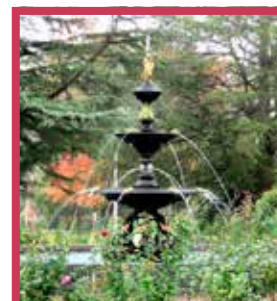
funding of all Catholic schools in NSW from the beginning of 2018. CSNSW will replace the NSW Catholic Education Commission.

Steve comes into the role after a 40-year career in the public sector which included five years as Australian Public Service Commissioner and 10 years as Secretary of the Departments of Finance, Employment and Education, serving governments of all political persuasions. Earlier in his career he was a senior economic advisor to Prime Minister Bob Hawke from 1985 to 1988.



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Sharing knowledge at the World Indigenous Peoples Conference

by Matthew Humphrey and Karen Gardiner



Ava Atkinson, left and her grandmother Aunt Mary Atkinson with Kelly Humphrey who gave a presentation on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education.

The World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education (WIPCE) attracts people from around the globe to celebrate and share diverse cultures, traditions and knowledge with a focus on world Indigenous education.

In July this year, the Diocese of Wagga Wagga sent delegates from across our system of schools to Toronto, Canada to share their experiences and learn from more than 3,000 educators including representatives of First Nations (Canada); Native Americans (USA); Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (Australia); Maori (New Zealand); Ainu (Japan); Sami (Norway) and many more.

WIPCE has been running triennially for the past 30 years and has grown to become a major international event in the Indigenous education movement.

The focus of this year’s conference was *A Celebration of Resilience* which celebrated the significant role and impacts of Indigenous education on truth and reconciliation around the world.

Delegates were welcomed at the opening ceremony at Chiefswood Park Six Nations, Ohsweken, Ontario alongside the Grand River on which guests were delighted to see local Elders arrive by canoe. The Chiefs metaphorically cleansed the visitors and declared the conference open with a stirring parade of nations.

One particular highlight of the conference is always the community tours which aim to give delegates the opportunity to visit grassroots communities for a full day of experiential learning. This year the tours included walking tours of inner

city Toronto to meet and talk with some of the city’s many homeless people; on-country cultural experiences and historical tours.

Representatives from Wagga Wagga Diocese gave four presentations during the formal part of the five-day conference.

A message that was consistent with this theme was that all Indigenous people have a deep spiritual connection with the land and as a consequence there is a deep commitment to protecting the land.

In the words of Chief Hill: “The

**In the words of Chief Hill:
“The Creator gave us thanksgiving to give thanks, it’s a constant cycle.”**

Staff from Xavier High School, Albury shared their experience of embedding a highly successful series of cultural exchanges and on-country experiences with a variety of Aboriginal communities which has promoted sustained change in their school.

The Catholic Schools Office presented *Indymarra Ngungilanna* (Learning through Respect) which chronicled the ongoing journey of Indigenous education and community engagement at a system level.

Kelly Humphrey and Aunt Mary Atkinson presented as part of the Council of Catholic School Parents ATSI committee and Kelly also facilitated a panel discussion.

A key theme running through the WIPCE experience was ‘Journey with an open mind and restful heart’. Chief Leroy ‘Jock’ Hill (Cayuga Chief and faith keeper) spoke about this at one of the morning keynotes and the theme was explored through many of the workshops and master classes.

Creator gave us thanksgiving to give thanks, it’s a constant cycle.”

As Catholics this resonates with our own commitment to service - service to our people and the world. We are called to know our history; to know the people who have shared the history and to share this knowledge. We must have a commitment to listening, learning and taking action.

Matthew Humphrey and Karen Gardiner attended the World Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education 2017 as representatives of the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Wagga Wagga.



Delegates from NSW Catholic Schools



First Nations people address delegates