

# Horizons

**OPENING  
THE DOOR  
FOR ALL  
TO KNOW  
JESUS**

**Project  
Compassion  
Round Up**

**Celebrating  
our Clergy**

**Plenary Council  
2020 Announced**

**#50  
MAY18**

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Diocese of  
Toowoomba



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## FROM THE EDITOR INGRID MCTAGGART

*It's kind of a strange thing to say, but working for the Toowoomba Diocese for some time, I can forget the priests are... well priests.* They sort of become “blokes at work”, you laugh and joke with them or get frustrated with them and they get frustrated with you, because you're interacting as people in a workplace.

But “the priest” pops up every so often to remind me. It usually hits me when I see them celebrate Mass, or deliver a thoughtful Homily, or interact with parishioners, or show a vulnerable moment of joy or sadness. Their priestly side is clearly evident in this issue of Horizons with communities celebrating special moments and celebrating their gratitude towards their priests. They are beloved and appreciated leaders of our parishes and are passionate, spiritual men who are “shepherds of their flock”.

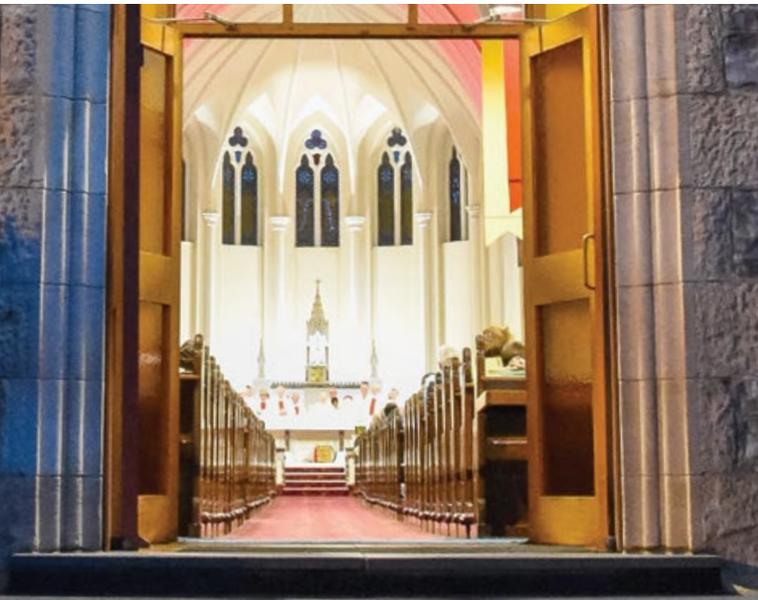
A moving moment for me in the past few weeks has been working with Loretta Coman at SPRED on the special feature for this issue. I have been aware of SPRED of course, but perhaps like many, a little fuzzy on the details. I thought the basic gist was spirituality for adults with disabilities. There is so much more to it, it's not about bringing church to a section of people, but making sure they are included in the congregation. There is nuance to it, but the articles in this Horizons are a great insight into faith, spiritual needs and disability.

Loretta is very passionate about the SPRED ministry, very detailed, methodical and knowledgeable about the ministry too. I have thoroughly enjoyed listening to her talk about the theology of disability, the history of the ministry and her work with SPRED. To see it in action too at Palm Sunday Mass at St Anthony's was quite something.

**SILENCE COMPETITION WINNERS: CONGRATULATIONS TO MARY DARR AND MARIE SULLIVAN WHO HAVE EACH WON A SIGNED COPY OF SHHH... GOD IS IN THE SILENCE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR BEAUTIFUL REFLECTIONS ON HOW SILENCE HAS BEEN A FRIEND TO YOU.**

Horizons is a quarterly magazine produced by the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba. Grateful acknowledgement to the Catholic Schools Office for their contribution to production costs, as well as to our advertisers for their support. Horizons is a member of the Australasian Catholic Press Association (ACPA). Opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily held by the editor. **Enquiries:** Ingrid McTaggart, Communications Office, PO Box 756, Toowoomba QLD 4350. **Phone:** 07 4632 4277. **Email:** horizons@twb.catholic.org.au **Front Cover:** SPRED at St Anthony's Parish for Palm Sunday Mass. **Graphic Design:** Thorley Creative 1300 883 454. **Deadlines:** Editions will be quarterly. Deadline for August Edition 2018 is 27 July 2018.

# THE RENEWAL OF OUR DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN



*Over the past several months our Diocesan Pastoral Council in close liaison with parish leaders in each of our six Deaneries has worked towards the renewal of our Diocesan Pastoral Plan.*

I am grateful to all who shared their insights so that we can be good stewards of the resources of time, talent and treasure in the mission Jesus has entrusted to us.

This is in keeping with the mandate: “Go, therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

Today we live in a society, when perhaps more than ever before, the emphasis is on an individualistic approach to life. In such circumstances all depends solely on the autonomous person who becomes the yardstick whereby everything is evaluated.

Even though we are subject to the temptations of the culture in which we live, our vision as Catholics is meant to be very different from the prevailing cultural vision. In many ways we are challenged to be like early missionaries, awakening the prevalent culture and its people to the healing light of the risen Jesus. The mandate of Jesus to “Go, make disciples” may not take us to foreign lands but today challenges us to offer our time, talent, and resources for the transformation of the very culture in which we live.

A pastoral plan is necessary to help us be active and joyful bearers of the Gospel, so that the “good news” of God’s inclusive love may reach every person from the ‘range to the borders’.

As the Pastoral Plan is launched, I invite you to reflect on it and its priorities in your parishes, your communities, your families, your circles of friends, and wherever you find yourselves, so that, like those first missionaries, we can give faithful witness to Jesus as we live out the mission entrusted to each of us.

***Most Reverend Robert McGuckin***  
***Bishop of Toowoomba***  
***May 2018***

“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

(Matthew 28:19-20)

# MENTOR PROGRAM AFFIRMS WOMEN OF FAITH

INGRID MCTAGGART

*In recent years there has been resurgence in interest and action on women's issues.* Recent issues like paid maternity leave, reassessing traditional gender roles and the #metoo movement have highlighted different facets of what it means to be a woman navigating today's society. This interest has spread to faith and spirituality and how women participate in the Catholic Church.

The Australian Church has been implementing initiatives and programs aimed at encouraging and celebrating women's faith and their role in the church. In mid-2017 Catholic Women's Mentoring was first launched. A program born from the Young Catholic Women's Interfaith Fellowship (run by the ACBC National Office of Participation of Women), this initiative aims to build the skills, confidence and networks of Australian Catholic women while encouraging them in their faith.

Christine Pace, a program coordinator, describes the program's creation, "It was in response to a belief that women need to organise to have an impact. On a personal level, I instigated the program (along with my cohort of the Young Catholic Women's Interfaith Fellowship) after my positive experience of mentoring through my professional association."

On International Women's Day this year, Christine told a 140 strong crowd in Canberra that she saw mentoring as a tool of empowerment which can help us to become what God created us to be, "I firmly believe that Catholic women who are strong and affirmed in their faith and their capabilities can do amazing things to transform society. Faith-filled women, on fire with the Holy Spirit, can be the hands and feet of God through their lives: we can help each other to do this well."

Catholic Women's Mentoring, a national program, is a channel for linking Catholic women together. The program provides guidelines which give direction on how mentoring



L to R: Victoria (mentee), Archbishop Christopher Prowse and Christine Pace on International Women's Day

might take place. Matches can contact and interact any way that suits the needs and schedule of both women and it's hoped that the friendships formed through this program are ongoing.

Any Catholic woman in Australia is invited to sign up - women from all walks of life, in any profession are invited. It is hoped that the program will give women a companion to travel on the journey of faith with, someone to encourage and provide ideas and thoughts and also open each other to new networks.

Caitlin, a mentee, said of her experience, "The benefits of being mentored by a wise, experienced Catholic woman and professional means I receive inspiration and holistic direction since she understands my values and goals as a person not just in terms of my professional career."

Giulia, who has served as a mentor, describes her experience as a privilege, "I hope many more will sign up to this program to put women with solid foundations at the very top of our society bringing with them light and life and love in all they do. This will change the world and bring justice to more people's lives."

**To connect with Catholic Women's Mentoring to find out more visit [www.catholicwomensmentoring.org.au](http://www.catholicwomensmentoring.org.au), or you can find them on Twitter or Facebook.**

**Want to Become a Catholic?**

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**Mobile:** 0447 074 807 **Email:** [rica@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:rica@twb.catholic.org.au)



Peter Albion discusses the data collation process and outcomes from the Diocesan Consultation Survey at the "Towards a Diocesan Pastoral Plan" meeting in February of this year

## DIOCESAN PASTORAL PLAN: OFFERING HOPE IN AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

FR JOHN QUINLAN

***Over the past twelve months the Diocesan Pastoral Council has been reviewing the Diocesan Pastoral Plan.***

This exercise began with the gathering of information from the parishioners in the Diocese through the Diocesan Consultation Survey. Through a series of meetings this material has been collated and discussed, and has formed the basis of the new Pastoral Plan to be promulgated the coming months.

In the years since the launching of the previous Plan the diocese has undergone significant change. We have fewer priests and fewer people especially in country areas. The desire and expectations still remain that the priests will still be able to provide Sacramental service as in years gone, yet the reality is that country towns have reduced in numbers with services such as banks, medical, shops etc. no longer being available. Added to this the ever increasing government legislation demand on the Church to fulfil their requirements which is unrealistic for a small group of people struggling to cater for all the needs of their dwindling parish or mass centre. Much of what was once done by the priest now falls to the laity who also have

demands from other sections of their ever decreasing town communities.

Not only are the numbers of parishioners declining but the age is increasing. There are questions which need to be asked such as how few people should there be before it is no longer viable for a priest to travel hundreds of kilometres to celebrate Mass. For example, Fr Peter Doohan is now covering the territory once serviced by four Parish Priests and is expected to travel more than 1200 kms to offer Mass for just 110 people and he is over 70 years of age. And when the congregation consists of only a handful of people how then do we offer Sacramental service? Do we revert to the practice of the early days of the Diocese where a priest provided a circuit ministry or do we offer Mass weekdays in a larger centre so people have the opportunity for Mass when they come to town for their other family needs.

The new Diocesan Plan is designed to provide for the needs of all parishioners – the difficulty into the future will be to devise ways of implementing it. This will be achieved through consultation with all God's people whether they reside in the country or larger centres.

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# MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: SPRED

LORETTA COMAN

*SPecial Religious Development (SPRED) has been running in the Toowoomba Diocese for over 30 years and continues to be a vibrant and important ministry.* Toowoomba is the only Diocese in Australia to pick up the full SPRED ministry as started by the Chicago Diocese, USA. Loretta Coman, Diocesan SPRED Coordinator, has written for Horizons before about the activities and face of SPRED. This time we asked Loretta to delve a little deeper, and so this issue we take a look at some of the principles and theology behind SPRED's ministry. Shining a light on how we can all take on board this 'theology of accessibility'.



## WHAT IS IT TO BE HUMAN?

*“Disability theology is an attempt by people with and without disabilities to reflect on what it means to be a human being and what it means to be a Christian, looking through the lens of people with disabilities.”* (Professor John Swinton)

The theology of disability poses a fundamental question for all Christians...“What does it mean to be fully human and at the same time have a profound disability?” When we delve into it, it challenges us to consider our own biases and how ‘culturally’ bound our ideas about ‘humanness’ really are. According to Disability Theologian John Swinton we often ‘project’ loss onto people with disabilities, “Wouldn’t it be awful to be like that?” when in fact we don’t know what it’s like to “be like that”. But as he points out, for them it is the way they are, the way they have to be, the way they’re comfortable being.

When we are challenged to dig more deeply into this question, he says we begin to realise that some of the key cultural preferences we have about humanness are quite wrong.

One assumption can be that because someone is dependent on others that somehow their personhood is diminished because they need someone to look after them, that they’re ‘unworthy’. But as Swinton points out, all of us are deeply dependant in some way, our identity exists only in relationship to others, ‘in reality, we are only persons in relationship’. I can only be a wife, mother, daughter, teacher, friend etc. because other people have called me into my identity. People with

disabilities remind us of who we are, and that to become who we are, we have to relate to others.

In his most recent exhortation Pope Francis speaks of the ‘call to holiness’, “growth in holiness is a journey in community, side by side with others.” (Pope Francis, *Gaudete et Exsultate* #141)

At SPRED we are called into relationship with one another. We are offered the opportunity to grow in holiness in community with our friends with and without disabilities. We start to see ‘Liam’ (not his real name), who likes country music and watching ‘Neighbours’, as my friend Liam, and not Down Syndrome Liam. We notice how ‘June’ becomes more relaxed when the classical music is played during our activity time. Our heart opens when ‘Barbara’ meets our gaze in the celebration room when we extend our hands to give her a personal message from Jesus, “Barbara, Jesus says to you today, ‘I give you life, I am always with you.’” These simple and yet profound experiences are transformative. The language of otherness becomes the language of ‘we’ and ‘us’, no longer ‘these people’ or ‘people like that’. Each and every one of us, in this time and place, comes to realise ‘I am enough’, accepted and loved just as I am.

What it means to be fully human is a question that should concern all of us and is at the heart of how we relate to people. How we answer this within ourselves will be reflected in how we treat others across a spectrum of cultural, gender, race, religious, and yes, diverse abilities too.



## WHAT DOES INCLUSION LOOK LIKE, SOUND LIKE, FEEL LIKE?

*Many years ago during my teaching career this 'look like, sound like, feel like' question was one I often used to examine my practice in the classroom.*

Somewhere within the mission and vision statements of every church organization and parish community would be a reference to being 'a welcoming and inclusive community', or similar words to that effect, but sometimes they can be 'just words', unless they are enlivened in our decisions and interactions.

While our churches and buildings may be 'handicap accessible' we also have to consider how much energy and effort is invested in making our liturgy and prayer accessible?

"It's not just about being able to get inside the church physically; it's also about being able to have each one enter into a conversation with God. As we engage in prayer, praise, listening, learning, confessing, serving and blessing, whether with family at home or our family at church, it's an opportunity to grow in our relationship with Jesus..." (Accessible Gospel, Inclusive Worship by Barbara J. Newman)

There is a real challenge in how we create these kinds of accessible conversations and activities for everyone, because scripture is clear that each of us has been given a gift to bring to the body of believers – a gift that can encourage and build community. We each fill a specific spot in his kingdom. God has given each of us gifts to use within the Body of Christ, and each is considered to be an honoured and indispensable member of that body.

If our faith communities are to be inclusive and 'accessible' in more than just words they need to move 'beyond the ramp' at the main door. Welcoming and inclusive churches are about sharing life more abundantly with everyone in the community, including people with disabilities. We need to develop, encourage and explore the 'theology of accessibility' and look closely and keenly at the attitudes that create barriers.

**If our faith communities are to be inclusive and 'accessible' in more than just words they need to move 'beyond the ramp' at the main door.**

Creating an environment where through the work of the Holy Spirit, everyone is encouraged to develop a relationship with Jesus so that God can use them to impact the world, requires creativity and flexibility, as well as an appreciation and openness to 'simplicity'. Simplicity does not mean that adults should be treated as children because this can be stigmatising for them, but it does mean acknowledging that 'complexity' which places high value in knowledge may exclude some people.

The SPRED mentality and method creates an environment where flexibility and simplicity open the door for all to know Jesus and to share the message of the Gospel.

Pope Francis's caution against Gnosticism, which says that 'what matters most is what you know', helps put into perspective that the correct 'intellectual approach' is not necessarily the only way to know God. Faith can never be 'entirely comprehensible', for "God transcends us; he is full of surprises." (Pope Francis, Gaudete et Exsultate #141)



## SO THEN, WHAT GOD FOR DISABILITY?

*Jennie Weiss Block proposes an image of God that opens the door for all – ‘the Accessible God’.* (Disability Studies Quarterly, Theological Accessibility: The Contribution of Disability, Deborah Creamer, Ph.D.)

Block sees the lens of access and inclusion as a useful one through which to examine images of God. So what does disability tell us about God? She believes disability is related to “the mystery of God’s love and the great paradoxes of the Christian message” from her Catholic tradition she writes “disability is a dramatic reminder that God’s ways are not our ways”. She says that while God cannot be fully known, the lens of disability highlights a God who is unfailingly committed to inclusion and access.

Rooted in the ‘Triune God’, the mandate for access and inclusion is central to our baptismal promise and

commitment. The message of Jesus teaching is clear: all are welcome, and all have a place, the gospel of Jesus is a gospel of access.... “Creating access for those on the margins is a Christian mandate.”

On Palm Sunday the SPRED community had the joy and privilege of sharing the celebration of the Eucharist with the parishioners of St Anthony’s. The St Anthony’s Pastoral Vision of “A Place at the Table for All” has created a culture in which the Gospel has been given ‘hands’ and ‘feet’. There were neither physical nor attitudinal barriers to the participation of everyone, we were welcomed and accommodated in every way possible ensuring the message of the Gospel was truly accessible to all. In our every interaction with the St Anthony’s community we experienced a culture and message that said ‘... around this table, all are welcome’.

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Bishop Robert McGuckin breathes over the Chrism before saying the prayer of consecration

# SACRED OIL: WHAT IS CHRISM?

JOHN BRIFFA

*Celebrated at St Patrick's Cathedral in late March, the Chrism Mass represents a pastoral highpoint in the life of the Diocese.* During this special annual event, the sacred oils used throughout the Diocese are blessed and the clergy renew their priestly promises. The use of sacred oils in our Christian liturgy has been adopted from the Old Testament practice of anointing kings, priests and prophets, as they foreshadowed Christ, whose name means 'the anointed one'.

Documents from the early Church, especially the 4th century writings of St Cyril of Jerusalem, detail how 'ointment' was symbolically applied to "the forehead, and the other sense organs, as a seal of the covenants" of baptism. Cyril taught that being "anointed with the Holy Chrism" was the sign of a Christian and represents "having received the Gift of the Holy Spirit", a meaning we still retain today.<sup>1</sup>

The Rite of Consecrating the Chrism directs balsam to be added to olive oil.<sup>2</sup> Balsam is a viscous oleo-resinous substance (a mixture of volatile oil and resin) exuded from some species of trees and shrubs. Oils derived from some balsams form the basis of the aromatics found in perfume. The first mention of balsam as an ingredient in the composition of Chrism is said to be found in the Gregorian Sacramentary, a work belonging to the sixth century. Later descriptions are found in the Gelasian Sacramentary from the seventh and eighth century, which also describes early liturgical practices, prayers, rites

and blessings of the Easter font and of the oil.<sup>3</sup>

The blend of the sweet smelling balsam used for our Chrism builds on the recipe in Exodus 30:23-25 which describes the aromatic oil used to anoint the ark and tabernacle, the temple vessels and priests. Its prime aromatic ingredient was myrrh, to which was added cinnamon and cassia oils. Our balsam, which is made in Cairns by Rev Dr Barry Craig, also contains myrrh as well elements of clove, elemi, cinnamon, Himalayan cedarwood and a mixture known as Peru balsam, which is sometimes used as a flavouring in food, drinks and toiletries.

For the mathematically minded, Fr Craig tells us that the blending rate of balsam to olive oil is 60ml to the litre, or 6%. Each individual ingredient of the balsam makes up less than 1% of the Chrism. Those who experience the pleasant perfume will know that a little goes a long way, something for which we can be thankful, as myrrh oil costs over \$1000 per litre.

During the Chrism Mass the oils are brought forward and presented to the Bishop who blesses the Oil of Catechumens and the Oil of the Sick. On receiving the Chrism the Bishop pours the sweet smelling perfume into the oil and breathes over the vessel before saying the prayer of consecration. In this way the Chrism Mass becomes one of the principal expressions of the fullness of the Bishop's Priesthood.

***Please contact the Liturgy Office if you would like a copy of the complete list of balsam ingredients.***

<sup>1</sup> *The Catechetical Lectures of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Lecture 21 on the mysteries III.* [www.newadvent.org/fathers](http://www.newadvent.org/fathers) accessed 19 April 2018.

<sup>2</sup> *Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments. The Roman Pontifical.* Vatican:Vox Clara Committee, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Tracey, T. *Catholic News Service. Oils consecrated at Chrism Mass central to church's sacraments, rituals.* [www.nwcatholic.org/news/national/chrism-mass-oils](http://www.nwcatholic.org/news/national/chrism-mass-oils) accessed 19 April 2018.

# THE LIGHTER SIDE

INGRID MCTAGGART

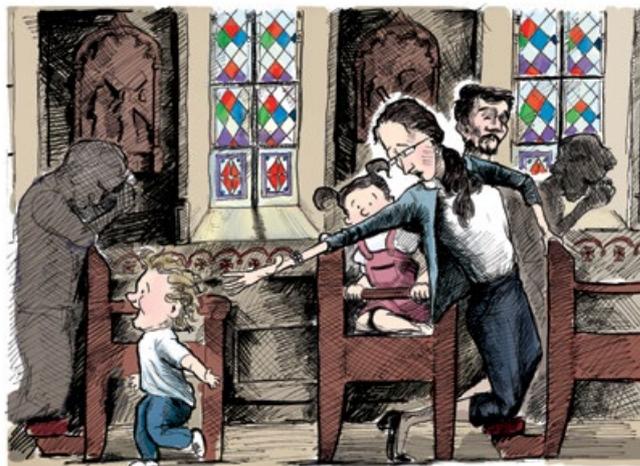
*There is a great tradition in Aussie culture to find the funny side of life.* Perhaps that's why *The Ultimate Catholic Comic Book*, full of silly puns and absurd laughs with a spiritual spin, is appealing. It doesn't poke fun, rather the artists pick the relatable moments and find the humour in them.

Coming together from their solo presences online, four American artists collaborated to publish a collection of original Catholic cartoons. This book contains work inspired by Scripture, the Saints, and everything else Catholics understand and love about their faith.

The *Ultimate Catholic Comic Book* has been a bit of a passion project for artists Tom Gould (Tomics), Jason Bach (Jason Bach Cartoons), Pat Cross (Pat Cross Cartoons) and John Smillie along with Matt Martinusen, who created and curated the book. The project was launched on Kickstarter late 2016 and successfully raised and exceeded the money needed to reach their goal. By mid-2017 the book was available for purchase online, as a hardcover book or digital download.

The four artists regularly draw comics and cartoons that are published online, you can find them individually on the web, Facebook or Tumblr. For this book however, all work is brand new and never seen before.

The *Ultimate Catholic Comic Book* delves into everything



"THE GREAT ESCAPE"

from pun loving Saints, to a Christmas Party in Heaven, a whale at the doctor and even a funny look at Catholic dating. The comics in this book cover all sorts of things that make us laugh in life and make us appreciate the lighter side of faith.

**Want a copy of *The Ultimate Catholic Comic Book*? Use promo code EMPTY on checkout for 50% off all orders (excluding postage). Visit [catholiccomicbook.com](http://catholiccomicbook.com) to view a free sample and order.**

## #BLESSED #MARY #FAITH #CHALLENGE

INGRID MCTAGGART

*For the Year of Youth, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Office for Youth has been hosting regular webinars discussing different topics relevant to the themes of this special year.* In the April webinar Fr Michel Remery, a speaker at last year's Australian Catholic Youth Festival, author of *Tweeting with God* and National Youth Chaplain of Luxembourg, spoke about Mary and her role as a leader and role model for the young people in our church today.

Fr Remery explored Mary's pivotal role in the church and why she is celebrated in such a big way through prayers and hymns. "Because she is the mother of God," said Fr Remery in the webinar, "She said 'yes', and it is through this 'yes' that God was able to save us through the coming of Jesus."

You can view the full webinar and previous webinars at [youth.catholic.org.au](http://youth.catholic.org.au).

The premise for *Tweeting with God* started with Fr Remery fielding questions from young people after Mass. After reaching out on social media, asking young people

to ask him any question they had about faith, the church and life, he was inundated with over 1000 questions and the title of the book was found.

With no topic off limit, *Tweeting with God* covers a range of questions from how the Catholic Church came to be, to body image, from what is a saint to why choose celibacy. Questions are grouped together under a common heading, with each question answered by Bible passages, quotes from modern Popes, discussion and reading suggestions from other sources like Catechism of the Catholic Church.

*Tweeting with God* is available as a book, website, app and, of course, social media. All of these sources can be used together, or choose what is relevant for the situation. These resources can be used to start a group working from cover to cover, or it can be used facilitate discussion, picking and choosing topics as you go.

**You can find out more about *Tweeting with God* at [www.tweetingwithgod.com](http://www.tweetingwithgod.com) or [www.freedompublishingbooks.com.au](http://www.freedompublishingbooks.com.au).**



# POPE FRANCIS BACKS DECISION TO HOLD PLENARY COUNCIL IN AUSTRALIA



***Pope Francis has given his approval for the Catholic Church to hold the first Plenary Council in Australia in more than 80 years.***

“The Council will be a unique opportunity for people to come together and listen to God in all the ways God speaks to us, and in particular by listening to one another as together we discern what God is asking of us at this time – a time when the Church in Australia is facing significant challenges.” said Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane, chair of the Bishops Commission for the Plenary Council.

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

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

“This is a significant moment for the Catholic Church in

Australia and I look forward to walking with the people of God as we look towards the future,” Archbishop Costelloe said.

“I am honoured by the appointment as President of the Plenary Council and am committed to listening to the Spirit.” Archbishop Costelloe commented. “I encourage all Catholics, whether devout or disillusioned, fervent or frustrated, to seize this opportunity to speak what is on their minds and in their hearts.”

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

“People are both curious and passionate about how all people – particularly people who are marginalised, vulnerable or distant from the Church – can be part of preparing for the Plenary Council,” she said.

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

## QUICK Q & A:

**What is a Plenary Council?** It is the highest formal gathering of all local churches in a country.

**How is the church involved?** Through its listening and dialogue sessions, the Plenary Council will give all people the opportunity to say what is on their mind and in their heart. It’s a chance to speak boldly but also listen with an open and humble heart.

**When is this happening?** The official launch is on 20/5/18

(Pentecost). From this moment on there will be opportunities for people to share all the way through to the actual Plenary Council sessions in 2020. Our own diocese will be starting our dialogue at the Diocesan Inservice in September this year.

**Visit the Plenary Council website at [plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au](http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au) for more information and sign up for regular updates.**



Bishop Robert McGuckin addressing participants at the Diocesan Inservice

# SAFEGUARDING A PRIORITY FOR OUR DIOCESE

*In mid March more than 85 members of the Diocese’s clergy, religious, lay leadership and volunteer Safeguard Representatives from Toowoomba, the Northern Downs, the West, and the Southern Downs gathered at the James Byrne Centre to examine the measures in place to ensure the safeguarding of children and the vulnerable that come into contact with parishes, schools and other pastoral ministry outreach activities.*

There was resounding support from all those present that protecting children and other vulnerable persons from any potential abuse or harm must be at the very centre of the Church’s mission.

Guest speakers including Ms Kathleen McCormack AM (recently retired from the Catholic Church’s Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors), Fr Frank Brennan SJ OA (an accomplished human rights lawyer and activist and CEO of Catholic Social Services Australia), and Ms Sheree

Limbrick (CEO Catholic Professional Standards Limited) while acknowledging the good work already undertaken within the Diocese in protecting the vulnerable from harm stressed the ongoing need to consider how best to implement the child safe standards as recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. This was a high priority. Greg Gebhart from eSafety Commissioners Office in Melbourne also contributed to these discussions acquainting those present on the latest measures available to combat cyberbullying and/or the exploitation of images.

In commenting on the Conference Bishop Robert McGuckin stated “I am delighted by the passion, commitment and interest of those present in these developments. Those who come into contact with the Church can be assured that we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment at all times for children and the vulnerable in our society and in our care.”

## NEW ADVISORY BODY CRUCIAL TO CATHOLIC REFORMS

*The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) and Catholic Religious Australia (CRA) have established a new advisory group that will play a crucial role in influencing and monitoring the Catholic Church’s ongoing response to the child sexual abuse scandal.*

Archbishop Denis Hart, president of the ACBC, explained that the new Implementation Advisory Group will monitor the response to the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse and the recommendations of the Truth, Justice and Healing Council, which led the Church’s engagement with the Royal Commission.

Sr Ruth Durick OSU, president of CRA, said, “There is a huge body of work completed by survivors, the Royal Commissioners and the Truth, Justice and Healing Council.

“The task of the Implementation Advisory Group is to be propositional as to the necessary reforms that Catholic institutions and communities will have to implement to be places of safety and transparency and places where we authentically live out our commitment to the values and vision of the Gospels.”

Three key groups will take forward the work arising from

the Royal Commission and the work led “prophetically and generously” by Francis Sullivan and the Truth Justice and Healing Council: Catholic Professional Standards Ltd, a National Redress Reference Group and the Implementation Advisory Group.

“It is necessary that the groups work together to identify gaps in response and monitor progress to date in all areas of reform for the Church in Australia as it responds to the crisis, the recommendations of the Royal Commission and the work of the Truth Justice and Healing Council,” Archbishop Hart said.

The members of the Implementation Advisory Group are: Ms Kerry Boland, Professor Anne Cummins, Mr Jack de Groot, Sister Berneice Loch RSM OAM, Ms Kath McCormack AM, Bishop Robert McGuckin and Justice Neville Owen.

Mr de Groot, chair of the Implementation Advisory Group, said the members met recently and identified a program of work. “The role of the group is to provide leadership by influencing all Catholic organisations – whether lay, religious or episcopal – in ensuring that we move to build a healthy culture that lives from a theology that has learned the lessons of the child abuse tragedy,” he said.

# CLERGY LIFE: CELEBRATING OUR PRIESTS

## FR HERMI RAFADA

CELIA WARR

*“Once there was a little boy... let’s call him Hermi.”* And so began Fr Hermi’s signature opening lines to his Sunday homily, the St Anthony’s congregation tuning in for his latest joke and message of his homily.

Fr Hermi will be taking his jokes and thoughtful reflections to the parishioners of Goondiwindi as his transfer from St Anthony’s takes effect. On Easter Sunday he celebrated his last Eucharist with St Anthony’s prior to taking his annual holiday back home in the Philippines.

St Anthony’s farewelled Fr Hermi in fine style, first at a pot-luck dinner, this one on the feast of St Patrick, and then at a smaller gathering after his final Mass in the parish on Easter Sunday. Fr Hermi quipped, “Two farewells to ensure this little priest doesn’t come back to St Anthony’s!” Which of course couldn’t be further from the truth.

Being St Patrick’s Day, his first farewell from the parish saw much wearin’ o’ the green, Irish melodies (which became increasingly maudlin as the evening wore on), many souvenirs and symbols of the Emerald Isle and Irish jokes. Suitably attired in a green hat, Fr Hermi was celebrated with a specially written song in his honour, courtesy of the resident parish songbirds. Over 150 people gathered for the biggest pot-luck dinner yet, with the multicultural nature of the parish reflected in a wonderful array of food from many nations, all being topped off with a pig on the spit from the Filipino community.

Fr Hermi’s second farewell was a quieter affair with a morning tea after Easter Sunday Mass, celebrating both his birthday and the gift he has been to the St Anthony’s



community. Fr Hermi sported an Akubra, a present from a parishioner, as we farewelled him with cake, a parish donation and a survival kit to take with him to Goondiwindi. He reiterated his thanks to the parish for the warm welcome and friendship he had experienced during his three years with us. He was sad to be leaving, but was looking forward to his new appointment and a new Aussie experience.

St Anthony’s will miss this “little” priest with his love of the Eucharist, dedication to his priestly role, ready smile, infectious laugh and his jokes about “a little boy named Hermi.”

## FR TERRY HICKLING

PATRICE RIORDAN

*Fr Terry Hickling celebrated his 80th birthday in early March with a celebratory morning tea at Assisi Place, hosted by St Mary’s Parish, Warwick.*

A presentation was made by Fr Franco Filipetto to Fr Hickling on behalf of the parish. Fr Hickling has been a part of the Warwick Parish for many years and hopefully many more. Parishioners turned out in force to mark this special occasion and celebrate with Fr Hickling.





Fr Tom Keegan, flanked by his nieces, cuts the birthday cake

# FR TOM KEEGAN

GAIL MOROSINI

*In mid April Holy Name Parish gathered for a Thanksgiving Mass and luncheon to celebrate Fr Tom Keegan's 90th birthday as well as 65 years of priestly service.* It was a day to remember for Fr Keegan, his three nieces Geraldine, Pauline and Breda who travelled from Ireland joining with the Holy Name community to celebrate. The event was heralded in with a Thanksgiving Mass celebrated by parish priest Fr Darrell Irvine and joined by Fr John Quinlan, Fr Ray Johnson, Fr Matthew Kootianiyil, Fr Don Murray, Fr Lino Valente, Fr Pat Hall and Fr Mick Carroll.

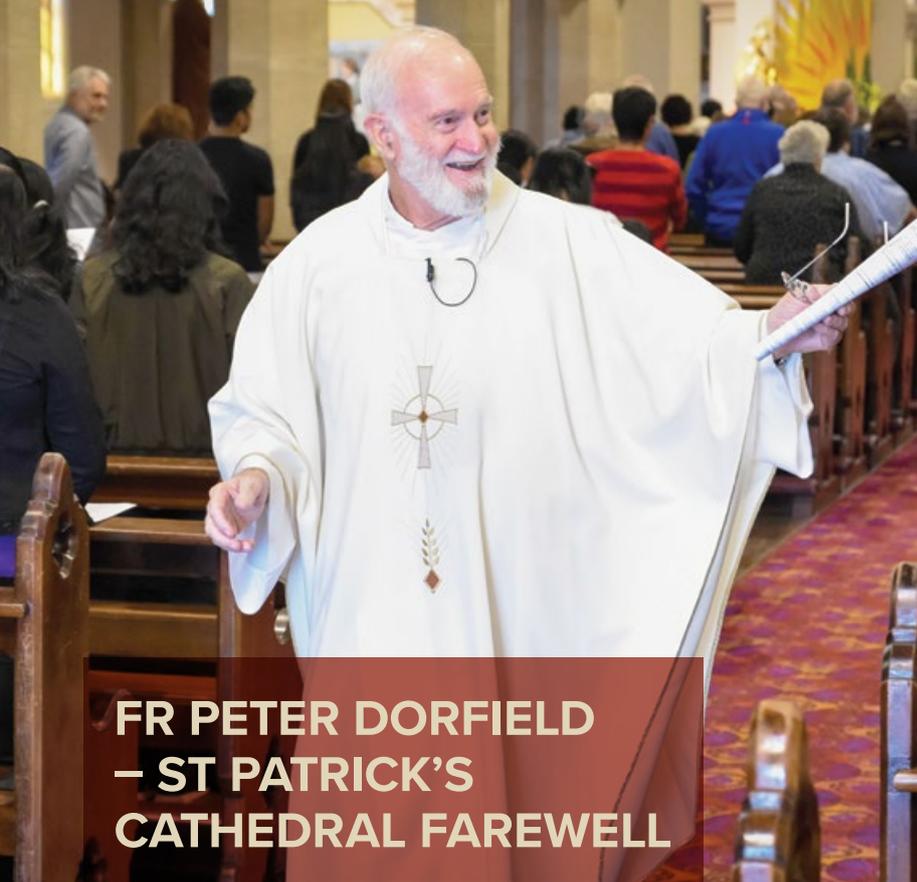
Traditional Irish hymns were sung by the choir and wonderful resounding responses echoed through the church

thanks to a crowd about 150 friends and well wishers.

The joy, happiness and goodwill continued in the Parish Hall with a wonderful morning tea courtesy of the Holy Name Care and Concern Committee. A very Irish theme filled the room with Australian and Irish flags, green, orange and white balloons and leprechauns. There were letters and greetings for Fr Keegan from the Irish Embassy, federal and state MPs and absent friend Fr James Byrne. A delicious birthday cake was cut and the crowd sang Happy Birthday. Fr Keegan organised for a couple of his favourite Irish tunes to be played by the Webb family and Sr Margaret Norris. Many thanks to all who attended and those who sent greetings.



Holy Name Parishioners with Fr Tom Keegan for his 90th Birthday



## FR PETER DORFIELD – ST PATRICK’S CATHEDRAL FAREWELL



Fr Peter Dorfield with fellow Parramatta Eels fan, Lachie Ottobriano after Mass

### MARY SCHWARTZ AND KATHY PINGEL

***Late April saw the Cathedral parish community and friends gather to bid a fond farewell to their Priest Administrator and dear friend, Fr Peter Dorfield.***

Offering words of thanks, long-time parishioner and member of the parish Finance Council, Kerry Shine acknowledged the gift Fr Dorfield has been to the parish and the wider Toowoomba community.

His advocacy for and cultivation of environment, policies and procedures where children’s safety and well-being are at the centre of thought with sincere championing of the rights of victims of abuse, together with his involving a large number of the laity in the many parish ministries, were cited as hallmarks of Fr Dorfield’s faithful service and commitment to the parish.

Ninety-two year old Merv Quigley acknowledged the compassion and care Fr Dorfield had for his ‘flock’ and together with Simone Ottobriano and her son, Lachie, presented to Fr Dorfield on behalf of the

parish, gifts of gratitude.

In a show of solidarity for his and Fr Dorfield’s favourite football team, Lachie proudly donned a Parramatta Eels jersey. Happily, young Lachie’s assertion that the Eels “simply had to win their game for Father that day”, was realised.

The parish community presented Fr Dorfield with a journal complete with personal heartfelt messages for the way the community has flourished during the 10 years of his leadership.

Extending hands in blessing and raising their voices in song, the community, led by the choir, offered Fr Dorfield a Blessing for Life, wishing him love, strength, faith, wisdom and God’s sweet peace in his every day.

Although his days of priestly ministry at St Patrick’s may have drawn to a close, Fr Peter will remain very much in our hearts, prayers and thoughts. Our lives are forever enriched by his gentle and loving care and by his warmth, kindness and ability to see Christ in each and every one of us.

## FR PETER DORFIELD – ST THOMAS MORE’S FAREWELL

### BEVAN DIVINE

***Fr Peter Dorfield said his farewells to St Thomas More’s Parish Toowoomba after celebrating Masses on a weekend in late April, retiring as Priest Director.*** The Chair of the Parish Council, Julie Hintz, spoke on behalf of the parishioners at the Saturday evening Mass and Parish Leader, Michael Birmingham, spoke on Sunday morning. A wine and cheese function on Saturday evening and morning tea on Sunday provided many with the opportunity to speak personally with Fr Dorfield who is respected and loved within the parish. At the morning tea the Men for All Seasons group presented Fr Dorfield some wine from their recent trip to Stanthorpe.

“[Fr Dorfield] has provided pastoral care and support to parishioners. He has always been available to the Parish Leader as a mentor. He has been a faithful member of committees including Parish Finance and Parish Pastoral Council. Myself and present and past parish council members are most grateful for his always thoughtful and wise contributions.” Said Julie during her speech.

“The two most important words I can say are ‘Thank you’. . . Thank you is not nearly enough but I hope these two words express to you our appreciation of all you have done for the parish of St Thomas More’s.”



# FINANCE WORKSHOPS BRINGS PARISHES TOGETHER

JEANNETTE COONAN AND KATHY HERDEN

Lesley, Narelle (Dalby) and Fr Jack (Tara) at the Toowoomba workshop

*During February, the Diocesan Finance Office (DFO) conducted three very successful workshops across the Diocese in Roma, Toowoomba and Warwick.* The workshops proved a wonderful opportunity for parish finance staff and volunteers to come together and further their knowledge on many finance and payroll matters.

The workshops were organised by Jeannette Coonan who is the Parish Financial Services Accountant at the DFO. Jeannette presented to parishes the updated 2018 Parish Finance & Administration manual. Kathy Herden, Diocesan Accountant, presented the 2018 Human Resource (HR) Manual at the workshops.

“It was great for parishes to come together and meet employees and volunteers from other parishes and also meet diocesan staff.” Jeannette commented. Jeannette also emphasised that many of the topics covered in the workshops were essential for compliance with legislation and are complex areas. Topics covered in the workshop included GST, donations, accounting practices, DDF lending, applying for grants, HR and payroll, volunteers and much more.

All workshops were well attended and participants were provided with the latest information regarding finance and HR matters in very comprehensive manuals. The manuals are recommended as an important guide to managing parish finances, staff and volunteers. Parish volunteers are



Pamela and Winton (Sacred Heart Parish, Toowoomba) at the Toowoomba workshop

encouraged to obtain a copy of the Volunteers Handbook.

Appreciation is extended to the parishes who hosted the workshops and to those people who were able to assist with setting up and catering. Also thanks goes to the diocesan staff who helped in bringing these workshops together.

**Additional copies of the Manuals and the Volunteers Handbook are available from the DFO (Phone 4632 7589 or email [admin@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:admin@twb.catholic.org.au)).**

# LOCALS ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT 2018 PROJECT COMPASSION



Project Compassion Week4 – Evangeline, Senior Artsworker for Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation

## CATHERINE MCALEER

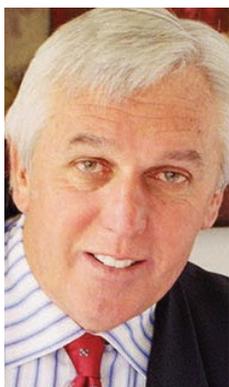
*What do milkshake sales, walking for water, going without technology for the day, buying chickens, making pancakes and a mud warrior run all have in common?* These were some of the creative ways schools around our Diocese raised money and just as importantly raised awareness for Caritas Australia's 2018 Project Compassion.

Some schools chose one particular activity and did it on a weekly basis, others chose a new one each week and others still made a particular focus on a given day in Lent to share their Project Compassion message. Regardless of how the message was conveyed, staff and students eagerly got on board with this year's theme of "For a Just Future". The theme reflected the Year of the Youth and our six feature stories focused around young people in Nepal, Cambodia, Jordan, Mozambique, Central Australia and the Philippines. Donations have been coming in and it has been an absolute privilege to visit schools to receive your cheque on behalf of Caritas.

Thank you also to Parishes throughout the Diocese for your continued support. Caritas Australia could not do what we do, without your support. I have spoken with some parishes who are delighted, and rightly so, with contributions this year. Thank you for the warm invitations and hospitality I received throughout Lent.

Although Project Compassion is over for the year, please continue to keep Caritas in your thoughts and prayers. We continue to keep our website updated with campaigns, educational and parish resources, acts of solidarity and the latest stories from the field around the world. Once again thank you for your generosity towards Project Compassion 2018. We are certainly heading towards a Just Future.

**Caritas Australia, Diocesan Director –  
Catherine McAleer: Phone: (07) 4638 7977,  
Email: caritas@twb.catholic.org.au  
Web: www.caritas.org.au**



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# WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

MICHAEL PYKE

## *The Holy Spirit is the third Person in the Blessed Trinity.*

He abides with us because Jesus said "I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you." John 14:16-17

He awakens our faith and through him we come to know God the Father and the Son. He will teach us everything and lead us into all truth and will glorify Jesus. (CCC 683)

He gives us gifts, first and foremost in the form of graces which justify and sanctify us. He gives us Sacramental graces (CCC 2003) which help in building up ourselves as individuals. He also gives us special graces called Charisms (CCC 799 -801) which are to be used for the common good of the Church. In 1 Corinthians 12, St Paul calls these 'Spiritual Gifts'. The 'gifting' of the Holy Spirit however go far beyond this. More than 25 gifts are mentioned in the New Testament, predominantly in St Paul's Letters. If you would like to know more about these

Gifts contact Michael Pyke (see contacts below).

In today's world, where we have so much scandal, strife, hardship and suffering, we can all reach out in a greater way to the Holy Spirit. We can allow Him to heal and strengthen our lives and accept the Gifts he can give us for the building up of our families and our Church – the Church of God.

## INTERESTED IN CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL?

To know more about CCR contact Michael Pyke 0458 300 880 or michael.pyke56@bigpond.com

## LOCAL PRAYER GROUPS:

**Sacred Heart Parish Tmba**, Lisa Minz (07) 4615 5218

**Warwick**, Trish Seaby (07) 4661 3133

**St Anthony's Parish Tmba**, Night Prayer Group,

Colleen Schicker (07) 4659 8094

**St Anthony's Parish Tmba**, Day time Prayer Group,

Kay Hohn 0400 436 498

# NO ONE IS BORN A PRIEST...



"A vocation is a fruit that ripens in a well cultivated field of mutual love that becomes mutual service, in the context of an authentic ecclesial life. No vocation is born of itself or lives for itself. A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people, in the experience of fraternal love. Did not Jesus say: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:35)?"

Pope Francis, Message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2014

## CONTACT [VOCATIONS@TWB.CATHOLIC.ORG.AU](mailto:VOCATIONS@TWB.CATHOLIC.ORG.AU)

FR GONZALO DURAN

Phone 07 4662 7031

Our Lady Help of Christians Parish

8 Villiers St, Chinchilla QLD 4413

or FR JAMIE COLLINS

Phone 07 4622 1075

All Saints Parish

PO Box 119, Roma Qld 4455

# BRINGING COMFORT THROUGH KINDNESS

NICOLE RANGIIRA

***Pastoral Carers throughout the Toowoomba Diocese are privileged to reflect on God's generosity as we hold others having listened carefully to their stories.***

Whether we are listening to the story of someone who is dying, a bereaved loved one, someone experiencing chronic health issues or dealing with trauma or isolation, we seek to create a safe place to allow their stories to be heard and their feelings to be acknowledged and cared for.

The many opportunities we witness of God's love whether it be in the tenderness of a loved ones vigil by the bedside, the compassion of a dedicated staff member or the incredible resilience of a suffering patient enable us to affirm God's goodness.

The inspiring story this article shines a light on comes from Pastoral Care Coordinator of St. Vincent's Care Services Lourdes Home, Paul Howard. Paul's reflection is about a complete stranger whose random act of kindness has touched the hearts of many.

*Recently, Linda our receptionist was diligently working through her day, when a lady arrived with some flowers and said, "I would like to give these flowers to someone here as it is my birthday, I don't have any family here in Toowoomba. Perhaps someone here is having a birthday?"*

*The flowers were a bunch of 6 red roses. Linda & Emily at reception thought and realized there is such lady in palliative care, who was celebrating her birthday in a couple of days.*

*Kate, one of our Lifestyle ladies visited the woman for her birthday and left the roses on her table, as she was sleeping at the time.*

*Our resident subsequently passed away. Linda was able to share the story of the roses with the family.*

Palliative is derived from a Latin word palliate, meaning cloak. Perhaps the roses were a cloak for this lady on

her journey in life? The wearing of a cloak can relate to protection and comfort.

When did we last experience a random act of kindness, either as the giver or the receiver?

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# CATHOLIC IDENTITY IN A CHANGE OF ERA

DR PAT COUGHLAN AND GERARD HORE

L to R: Genny McNair, Sr Annette Arnold, Dr Pat Coughlin, Sr Margaret Anderson, celebrating Sr Margaret's contribution to the Quilpie community

*In the last ten years discussing our 'Catholic identity' has become a constant in the conversations of those who lead Catholic education in Australia both at system and school level.* This is because of the fundamental changes in our society and that many characteristics of Catholic school communities now mirror the profile and attributes of this wider society.

Pope Francis signalled the enormity of the challenge faced by all agencies of the Catholic Church in shaping our Catholic identity into the future when he said, "You can say today we are not living in an era of change but a change of era." (November 2017).

Close to 20% of Australia's school students attend a Catholic school and while parents do not specifically state a religious reason, they do support a faith-dimension in the education of their children. So how do our schools support the faith development of students, in this change of era and invite students to know Jesus?

Our Catholic schools continue the tradition of supporting the spiritual formation of students. To do this staff have to communicate and model the Catholic narrative in a way which is inspired by the call of Jesus expressed in the Gospels and in a language which connects to the life experiences

of our students. Therefore, we demonstrate our Catholic identity through:

- Those who lead the school and those who teach there speak often and confidently about Jesus and his story.
- Prayer of various kinds, is a regular non-negotiable part of each school day.
- There are meaningful rituals to mark important events in the school's life.
- Students are engaged in a high-quality Catholic Religious Education program led by qualified, confident teachers.
- School leaders give teacher development in Religious Education a high priority as a part of the school's program of professional development.
- School leaders and teachers help students and their families to see that a 'Catholic approach' can be applied to subjects in the curriculum alongside Religious Education.
- Religious symbols and art speak to people of twenty-first century Australia.
- Students are offered appropriate opportunities to be of service in their local communities.
- The school community is aware of its history as a place of Catholic education.



## IN THIS YEAR OF YOUTH, WE CAUGHT UP WITH SOME OF OUR SECONDARY COLLEGE STUDENTS TO GAIN AN INSIGHT INTO HOW THEIR EXPERIENCES AT A CATHOLIC SCHOOL SHAPE THEIR VIEW OF THE WORLD.



Julianne Rasmussen (Assistant Principal - Mission), Genevieve Spalding, Eloise Young, Ethan Hughes and Patrick O'Brien

## FAITH IN ACTION

### ANDREA FROST

***For one group of Year 11 students at St Joseph's College Toowoomba, it is their work in supporting young people at a breakfast club at Clifford Park Special School that helps them to frame and talk about what it means to be Catholic in Toowoomba in 2018.***

Ethan Hughes, who recently donned a bunny outfit to bring Easter joy and beaming smiles to the Clifford Park students, says attending St Joseph's College has helped him to further understand how bringing joy to those around him is so personally rewarding.

"The Christian belief in being selfless and respecting all people really shines through and comes to life in the work we do at the brekkie club," Ethan said.

Before and after the outreach, students are given time to reflect upon the experience, the exchanges they've shared and to make connections with their own lives.

For Patrick O'Brien, it is the way his Catholic school strives to ensure every student reaches their full potential that he values most. "I think what is really special about our school is the way it tries to bring out the best in each of us. We are encouraged to continue to grow throughout life, to further develop our faith and move on to become better people," Patrick said.

"One of the big things that this school is really good at is our liturgical life. Our school Masses and liturgies really bring us together as a school community. Events like Edmund Rice Day and our feast day also bring us together and form us in our understanding of Edmund Rice and St Joseph and their

relevance to our lives," Patrick concluded.

With all teachers in the diocese expected to uphold the values and beliefs of the person of Jesus, as understood and passed on by the Catholic Church, those working in schools have a unique opportunity to share their own faith with students.

For Eloise Young, this fosters a spirit of respect and openness to discuss issues that are important for the world today. "Because our teachers are also part of the Catholic community, we have a common starting point to discuss and debate certain issues. This creates a sense of equality and a shared vision for how the world could be."

Eloise also appreciates the wide array of structured opportunities to give back to the community. "I really value the experiences we have to help others, it allows us to develop our faith and to develop as people."

Genevieve Spalding agrees and believes the faith experiences and education she's had at school will stick with her throughout her life. "The values you are taught in a Catholic school are so important at the moment but also in my later life, I can see myself discovering faith more and being able to fall back on the things I've learnt and experienced here at St Joseph's."

One of the experiences that springs to mind for Genevieve is prayer. "Through the prayer life of the school, sharing the stories of Jesus at assembly and praying in our Pastoral Care classes in the mornings, it is always in our minds that we are relating what we do back to Jesus," Genevieve concluded.

## WHAT I VALUE ABOUT MY CATHOLIC EDUCATION

### CLAUDIA THOM, ST JOHN'S SCHOOL ROMA

#### WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST ABOUT BEING EDUCATED IN A CATHOLIC SCHOOL?

I value the day-to-day teaching of faith and values, praying together, and putting our faith into action through service to others most. It has been a wonderful journey, which has allowed me to mature holistically and develop my perspectives of Christianity and to deepen my relationship with Jesus.

#### THE YEAR OF YOUTH THEME IS 'OPENING NEW HORIZONS FOR DISCOVERING JOY', WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO YOU?

To me this means challenging myself, through God, to find meaning and value in life and reaching my full potential as a compassionate, contributing, life-giving member of society.

#### HOW CAN YOU SPREAD A MESSAGE OF JOY AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND YOU?

I believe spreading joy and making a difference in the lives of those around me can be achieved by considering other people's needs and helping them to meet those needs, through

encouraging rather than criticising, being patient, remembering that we are all made and loved by God, and above all making a conscious effort to 'treat others the same way you want them to treat you' (Luke 6:31).



Claudia Thom

#### WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE SOME LESSONS YOU'VE LEARNT THROUGH ATTENDING A CATHOLIC SCHOOL THAT YOU WILL CARRY THROUGH YOUR LIFE?

Throughout my schooling at St John's I have learnt:

- To 'cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of life'; We live in a world full of unfortunate occurrences, but we are taught to turn our focus to Christ and see the good in all situations.
- When you don't get something you want, you get something better – experience.
- Choice, not just chance determines your destination.
- You make a living by what you get; you make a life by what you give.

## FAITH IN GOD IS THE CENTRE ANDREA FROST

*St Mary's College Toowoomba principal, Michael Newman, believes his success as a principal rests on making God the centre of all that happens at the school.*

"One of the reasons I became a principal was that I really wanted to teach students about God. I could have continued being a teacher, but I believe that a principal sets the tone of a school, so for me, that's always been my wish for the students, to understand more about God's great love for each one of them."

Michael says working to keep a focus on the charism of the school and the Edmund Rice touchstones, all leading to a personal faith in God, is one of his key priorities.

"Whilst we strive to do our work in a way that reflects a Catholic way of operating, we also have a focus on presenting our undertakings in a manner that the boys can respond positively to," Michael said.

When St Mary's College students, Jonathon Egart and Nick Kuhnemann both say that they believe there is something unique about St Mary's College, their conviction shines through on their face.

Both young men are senior students at the College and confidently shared what they value about being educated in a Catholic school.

For Nick, the call to be kind and caring to all people, not just those who are his friends, was at the front of his mind. "I come from a Catholic family. I'm not afraid to stand up for someone who may be struggling or doesn't have the voice to

stand up and speak for themselves. St Mary's has further put this kind of faith action into context, especially through the example of Edmund Rice and the Christian Brothers," Nick said.

Jonathon, who's uncle and grandfather both attended St Mary's, is grateful for the opportunities he's had to meet like-minded people at the school. "St Mary's has taught me the value of a structured and disciplined life and to always give 100%."

"I try to attend Mass every Sunday and St Mary's has helped me to understand my faith better, particularly through the bond of the 'brotherhood' and the way we at St Mary's stand up for each other," Jonathon said.

Both also paid testament to the teachers at the school, saying that their genuine concern and desire to bring out the best in every student was as an excellent example in how to live.

The theme for the Year of Youth also struck a chord with them, mirroring what the College teaches them. "I believe the Year of Youth theme, 'Open new horizons for discovering joy' points to opening new doors for young people and spreading the message of positivity and happiness," Jonathon said.



Nicholas Kuhnemann



Jonathon Egart



The Surigao community worked together to create a beautiful mandala after a demonstration on how it can be used to teach counting and shapes

# A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY AND EDUCATION

CATHERINE MCALEER

***How do you encapsulate ten days into a few paragraphs when you have experienced every emotion from frustration to joy, amazement to hope, wonderment to confusion and everything in between?*** I have been travelling to the Philippines since 2010 and each trip I am honoured to share the stories of those I encounter and travel with.

Helen Gillam, from St Mary's School Warwick, and Amy Davis, from St Patrick's School Mitchell, joined me for this trip with the purpose of helping to set up a small school library for the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart in Cordova, to run some professional development days for volunteers and Sisters from Surigao who run a tutorial program for the Badjao people and a separate professional development day for Kindergarten and Special Education teachers from Marigondon Elementary School.

The days were long and as I mentioned at times frustrating but they were perfect. What an honour and a privilege it was to work with both Helen and Amy. Helen took to the task of setting up the library like breathing. Under her guidance, books were sorted, catalogued and prepared for borrowing. In five days the library was set and ready for the children to enter when they return from their summer break. Thank you Helen for what you were able to achieve, words seem insufficient.

The sign of a great teacher is flexibility and adaptability and Amy exemplified both these qualities and many more. She quickly established relationships with those she worked with and we worked together to share teaching strategies, planning techniques and classroom management ideas with people from all walks of life and with people of all sorts of educational backgrounds. Thank you Amy for your willingness to give anything a go, for enthusing others and for your passion for life.

This trip would not have been possible without the

assistance of those who fed us in Cordova, Olive, Christian and Sr Marivic. Sr Betty, who began the ministry in Surigao, you are a constant source of inspiration and love. Thank you Sr Cetah for dreaming big and allowing us to be part of that dream of a school library. Sr Che and Sr Emma in Manila, thank you for looking after and out for us in Manila. Sr Sally the Regional Leader of the Philippines thank you for your unwavering faith and confidence in us. Thank you to the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office for your financial and prayerful support in making this trip happen and finally for our families and friends, thank you for loving us and supporting us in the thousands of ways that you do.

## HELLEN GILLAM

Arriving back in Australia after ten days in the Philippines had a profound effect on me. Sunday morning travelling from Brisbane Airport heading to Toowoomba seemed very calm and ordered and the space around us seemed enormous.

No one had told me about the noise, the traffic and the large numbers of people in Manila and Cordova, it all overwhelmed me really. The hospitality and generous nature of the Filipino people cannot be measured. They were extremely welcoming, gracious and willing to show us around.

Our first day in Manila was an eye-opener for me. We met a little family who lived in a box on the street. What made this all too hard to understand was that this very street also had residences that were obviously owned by those with extensive financial resources. This family would soon be growing with a baby on the way. Sr Che provided some money to them for an ultrasound and food.

We continued our walk to an area that Sr Che works with. We met a woman who makes "rags", sewn pieces of fabric to be used for cleaning but to me could it be used for placing hot pots on. She makes about three of these per day and earns



L to R: Helen, Sr Cetah, Sr Betty, Catherine, Sr Marivic and Amy outside the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Integrated School

two pesos each. This particular community also scavenges through the rubbish to sell items for recycling.

Even though this seems rather negative, there are positives in this community. Family is number one and the importance of education is demonstrated by the fact that a special room has been developed where children can be taught by volunteers. These volunteers have been in similar situations and are assisting others to get an education that they themselves have received.

One of the schools we visited was a kindergarten to grade 6 school with an enrolment of 3800 students. The teachers of the kindergarten classes taught about 70 students each day. I will never complain about large class sizes again!

As far as setting up the little library went, we developed a manual borrowing system, remember the cards in the pockets system from the olden days? We ended up with about 350 books in the library. Some new ones we bought from Australia, some we purchased in Manila from money given to us by our school communities and some that were old books donated from schools in the United States.

That to me was the essence of our trip to the Philippines. It raised more questions for me than provided answers. How can this unequal distribution of resources be solved? How can we in more fortunate circumstances assist? Do I live simply so others may simply live? So much to ponder and wonder.

## AMY DAVIS

It's hard to believe that this adventure has been and gone. It was the final day of school last year that I was told that I had been selected to spend 10 days in the Philippines, supporting teachers with basic pedagogical practices and helping to set up a small school library.

I had never been to the Philippines so I could only imagine what it would be like. I knew there would be poverty and

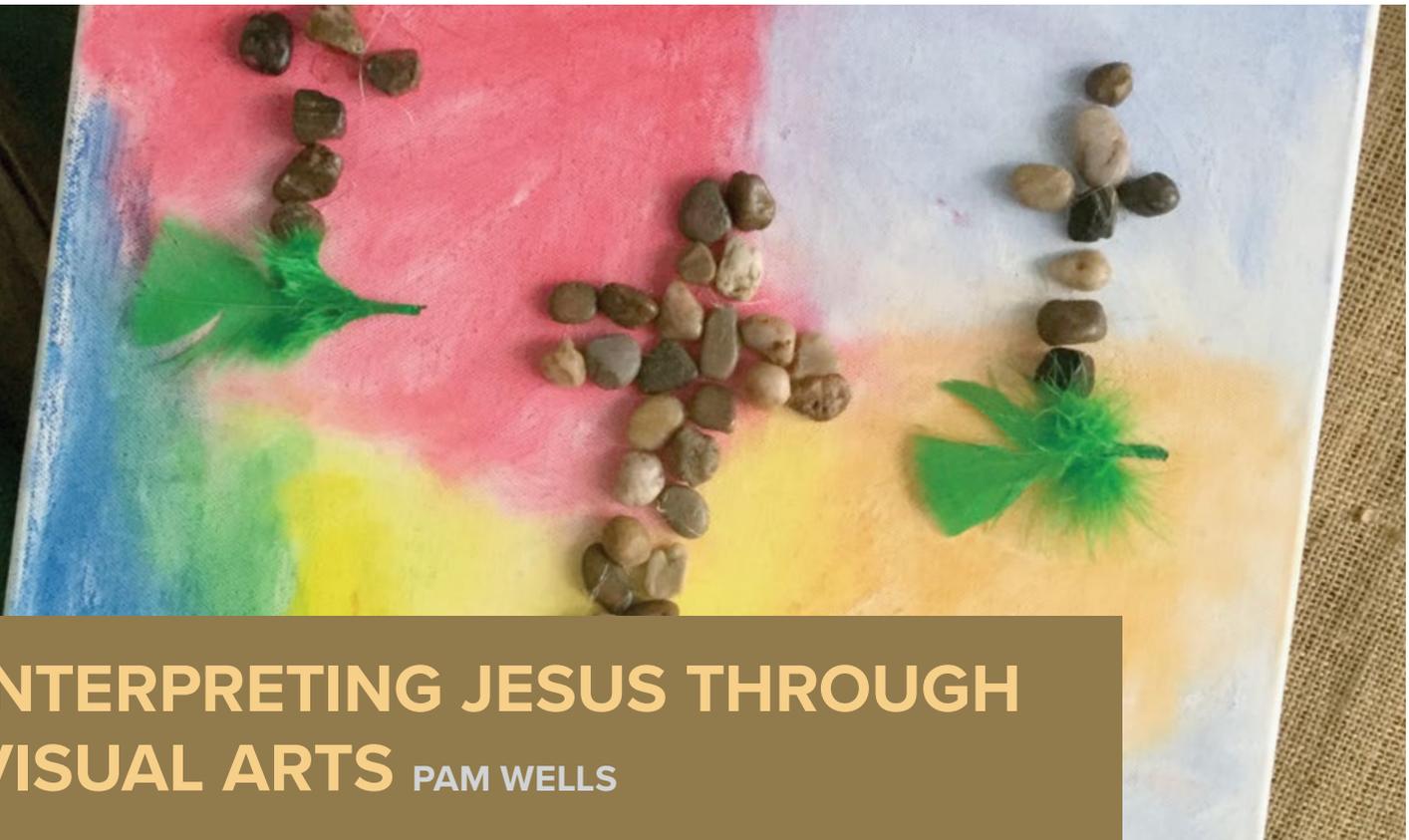
some children receiving little to no education but the reality of this was not what I expected. The contrast between the wealthy and the poor was extreme. There were people driving the latest cars past massive shopping malls while there were people living on cardboard boxes or in carts that they shifted when they needed to.

The community that we visited in Manila was another eye opener. Their homes were stacked one on top of the other with a basketball court in the middle. The people of the community were very welcoming and the children greeted us with blessings and then followed us, as we were shown around the community. They were very proud of the room that was their school and were excited to take photos with us.

It was a great experience meeting Abdula, Ayin and Venus from the Badjao community in Surigao and learning about their community. Their houses and learning centre are on stilts over the water and their main focus for education in their community is personal care. They teach children and young mothers whilst also running a feeding program once a week.

We spent one of our days at the Marigondon Elementary School with the Kinder (Prep), Year 1 and Special Education Teachers. They are teaching on average 30 students in the morning and another 30 students in the afternoon in very tiny classrooms. We assisted them with teaching practices and classroom management. It was an unbelievable experience standing in front of so many educators, supporting them in developing their professional practice. I personally believe I learnt just as much as those educators about my own teaching practices.

This journey was an amazing one and I love the fact that I get to share it with my own students, school and wider community. I am so appreciative of all the people who made this journey possible and supported me throughout.



## INTERPRETING JESUS THROUGH VISUAL ARTS

PAM WELLS

Artistic talent on display at St Joseph's School Chinchilla

**Years 4, 5 and 6 Students at St Joseph's School Chinchilla have used Jesus as their theme for Term 1 of Visual Arts.** After experimenting with Fauvism, portraits and the use of soft pastels, students planned and created their own pieces.

These were on display in the school hall for family and friends to view. Students had so many thoughts about Jesus which was translated into their artwork.

Leading into Easter, many students focused on the pain

and suffering experienced by Jesus, while others showed a risen Jesus and His spirit alive within us. Others reflected on who Jesus is for them, identifying Jesus as love and that He is everywhere, in nature and our minds and hearts.

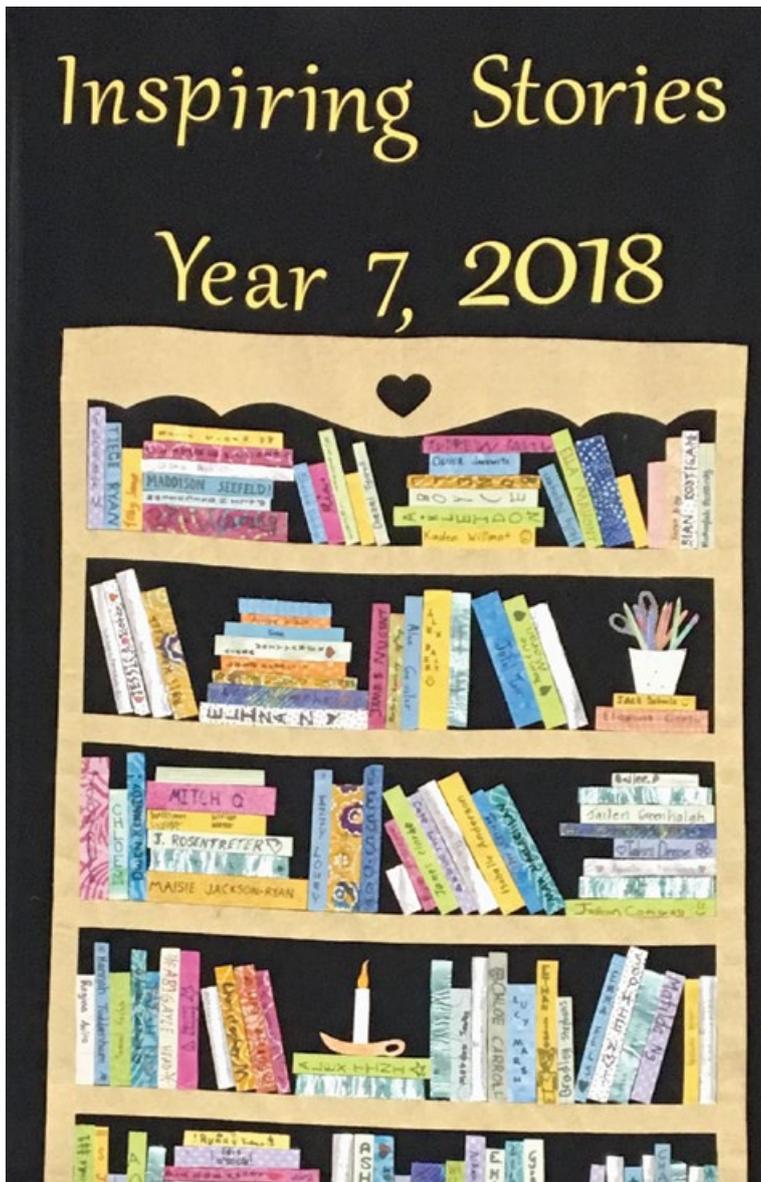
Students used many different mediums in the creation of their work. Using canvas, clay, soft pastels, fabric, paints and wood. Congratulations to all students on their unique and truly individual pieces.



## SHARING THE LAUDATO SI MESSAGE

**Each year the staff at St Stephen's School Pittsworth work together to put together a display for the local show.** Year 2 teacher, Ellen Witham and Year 1 teacher, Chloe Barwick, organised the display for the Pittsworth Show which was held in February. Staff and Students at St Stephen's School are very passionate about Laudato Si and wanted to share their story with the local community on how we live out this vision in our school.

Year 1 teacher, Chloe Barwick



# CREATING AN INSPIRING STORY

JULIEANNE RASMUSSEN

*In February St Joseph's College Toowoomba formally welcomed their Year 7s.* It was an opportunity for families to meet with their son or daughter's Pastoral Care (PC) teacher and the other members of their PC.

In the weeks leading up to the Year 7 night, the students wrote their name on a strip of material. During the prayer, they placed their strips of material in a basket.

These strips were then sewn to a banner forming a bookshelf. As our theme this year is 'Inspiring Stories' we believe that each of our Year 7s is indeed an inspiring story.

The banner has been hung in the MacKillop Centre and will be there for the year. In 2023 the banner will be rehung for their Year 12 Graduation.

Thank you to Mrs Patricia Jefferies and Mrs Jane McAuliffe for their help in making the banner.

St Joseph's College Toowoomba Year 7 students' banner

# PASSION PLAY TEACHES FORGIVENESS

KATE CULLEN

*This year's Passion Play focused on the Gospel of John and the key teachings at the Last Supper that Jesus shared with his disciples.* Stephanie Lockhart, Year 12 student and College Leader for Faith & Social Justice, shared with us during the play, "There are many messages within the Washing of the Feet. The story teaches that Jesus has come to cleanse our sins, but if we do not allow or accept him to cleanse or wash us, then our sins cannot be cleansed away. He washes the feet and offers cleansing to all at the table although he knows some will betray him in significant but also lesser ways. The story represents that any who ask for forgiveness are offered forgiveness."

Thank you to all the students who lead the Passion Play, giving up their own time in rehearsals for the day and did an excellent job.





## OUR LADY OF LOURDES GIVES GENEROUSLY

JANICE MOORE AND ANGELA GILBERT

Ella and Gracie enjoying their pancakes

*Our Lady of Lourdes Feast Day was celebrated in February with the school and parish joining to hold a special Mass.* This year the school and parish combined to hold a special Mass. Parishioners and school families enjoyed fellowship and morning tea after the Mass.

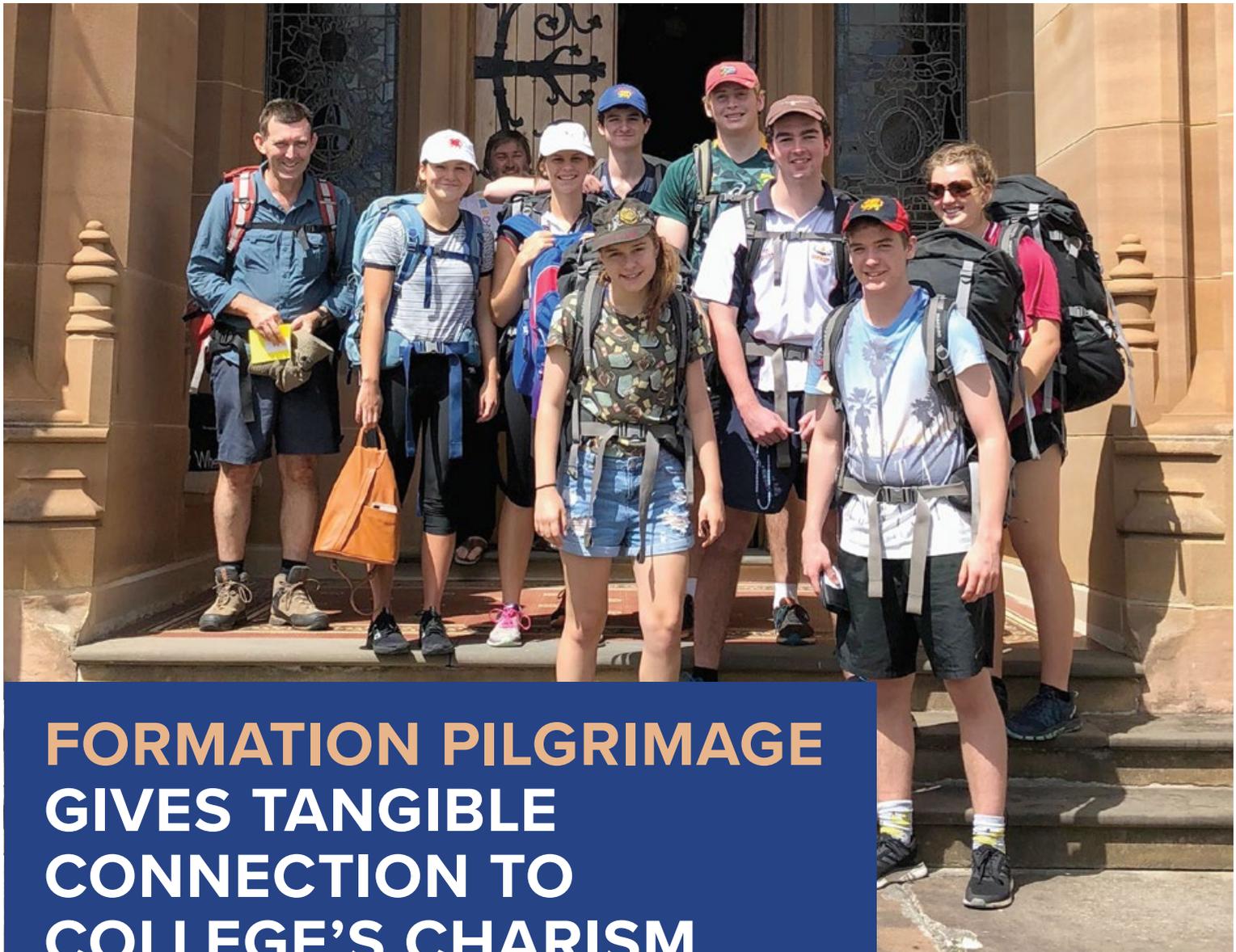
Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School Toowoomba marked the beginning of Lent with a pancake breakfast run by the Year 6 Mini Vinnies group. The students and teachers spent the morning cooking pancakes which were then sold to raise money for Project Compassion. The morning was very well supported and we were able to make a generous donation for their important work. Holy Week concluded with a special liturgy based around the Stations of the Cross. Each class presented a Station to the rest of the school, using acting, miming and singing to share their part of the Holy Week story.

During Term 1, students also enjoyed dressing in green for St Patrick's Day, raising money for our local St Vincent de Paul chapter. Year 6 students also attended a leadership retreat day at Murphy's Creek, which was followed by the presentation of their leadership, house and school captaincy badges at a special assembly.



Year 5 students during the ANZAC liturgy

ANZAC Day was commemorated with a whole-school liturgy, planned and organised by the Year 5 students and teachers. We were privileged to welcome Warrant Officer Sean Nilon to speak with the Year 5 and 6 students about his experiences and to also be our guest speaker for the school liturgy.



# FORMATION PILGRIMAGE GIVES TANGIBLE CONNECTION TO COLLEGE'S CHARISM

ANNA BARTLET AND CATHERINE MIMS

Downlands Senior Student Leadership group visited the MSC monastery in Kensington, NSW during their formation pilgrimage experience

*As a Catholic school situated in the charism of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC), the Downlands community has a story to enter in which we are called to be the heart of God on earth, and thus, “a language to speak; a group to belong to; a way to pray; a work to undertake; and a face of God to see.”* (Fr Claude Maréchal, Assumptionist Superior General, 2001)

It is for this that each year, the Downlands Student Leadership group is given the opportunity to journey to MSC heartland for the formation pilgrimage experience. The pilgrimage provides our student leaders with a better understanding and appreciation of MSC history, traditions and ethos that are integral to Downlands as a Catholic, MSC school, while also greatly enhancing team-work skills and strengthening bonds among the students.

The students' journey takes them to St Mary's Cathedral and Mary MacKillop Chapel in Sydney, the Mary MacKillop trail at The Rocks, the Wayside Chapel in Kings Cross and St Canice's Church Potts Point, the national shrine to Our Lady - Our Lady of the Sacred Heart MSC parish in Randwick, the MSC monastery in Kensington, dinner with MSC Provincial Fr Chris McPhee at Treand/Provincial

House in Coogee and finally joined by College Principal Mr Stephen McIllhatton at St Mary's Towers MSC Retreat Centre at Douglas Park for reflection. This leg of the journey affording students the opportunity have dinner with their counterparts at one of the four Australian MSC schools, Chevalier College in Bowral.

Those who work with the students during the pilgrimage always recount the experience with each new group of student leaders as being a privilege, and this sentiment is echoed by the students themselves.

“I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate in the formation pilgrimage. The experience deepened our understanding of the MSC ethos and greatly improved our team dynamic,” said third generation Downlander and College Captain, Eloise Tighe.

Following this experience, our hope always is that the students return to the College in possession of a significant degree of ease with the MSC spirit and 'heart' language. To be able to articulate and to stand with and for the charism, in possession of a strong sense of the contributions of MSC who have gone before us as well as a clear understanding of our Catholic heritage and the MSC charism, ethos and values.



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## TRIBUTE TO ANZAC SACRIFICE

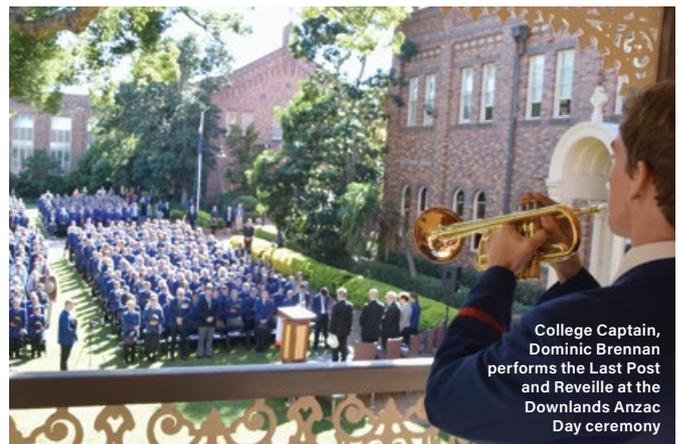
### ANNA BARTLET AND CATHERINE MIMS

*The Downlands College community gathered to commemorate Anzac Day and to remember all those Australians who have lost their lives serving their country during war.* This year marked 100 years since the end of WW1 in 1918.

The sound of bagpipes, played by Mr Andrew Codd and his son, Past Student, Mr Wade Codd created a moving atmosphere before and during the ceremony.

A number of students were involved in the ceremony. Zoë Hulme-Peake, Year 12, recited Anthem for Doomed Youth by Wilfred Owen, School Captains Dominic Brennan and Eloise Tighe delivered a moving address on the meaning of Armistice Day and Year 6 students Daniel Beirne and Ella Pitts read a letter from a Gallipoli veteran.

Our guest speaker was Vietnam Veteran, Mr John Toohey OAM. Mr Toohey is from Goondiwindi and has been president of his local RSL sub-branch for more than 40 years. Having spent much of his life giving back to his community, Mr Toohey was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in June 2017. His grandsons, Tom and Michael Toohey, attend Downlands. In his address, Mr Toohey spoke about his experiences in Vietnam in 1968/69 as well as the invincible spirit of ANZAC



College Captain, Dominic Brennan performs the Last Post and Reveille at the Downlands Anzac Day ceremony

“There was a determination, a zest, a drive which swept up from the beaches of Gallipoli Peninsula as the ANZACS thrust forward with their torch of freedom ... Today we stand safe and free, clothed with all the privileges and rights of citizenship and all these things – liberty, security, opportunity, the privileges of citizenship – we owe to those men who fought, endured, suffered and died for us and for their country. Their deeds and their sacrifices gave us the invincible, the intangible – the spirit of ANZAC.”



# RUGBY LEAGUE HERO AN INSPIRATION

JULIE BAKER

*It's not every day you get to meet your hero but when thirty-five, starry-eyed school boys met rugby league legend and St Mary's College Old Boy, Johnathon Thurston, their dream came true.*

In February, St Mary's College Toowoomba Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students travelled to Brisbane where they met their hero and participated in the launch of the Johnathon Thurston Academy as ambassador students.

Founded by Thurston in partnership with property group, Lendlease, the Academy was inspired by civil rights activist Marcus Garvey who said "Intelligence rules the world, ignorance carries the burden". The Academy's mission is to support and enable Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students to achieve the best possible education outcomes and reach their potential.

Focused on placing young people on a path of success, the Academy offers employment initiatives and training programs aimed at health, wellbeing, sport and education across Australia.

During the launch, Thurston generously gave his time, signing hats and posters, taking photographs and chatting with the St Mary's College boys.

St Mary's College students, Samuel Elara and Logan Werribone remarked that just shaking Thurston's hand was the highlight of their visit to the Academy. "We were so lucky to meet Johnathon and shake his hand," Samuel said. "I learnt that it's not just that he's a hero because of footy; outside of footy he is also a legend... He has real respect for the Indigenous community and non-Indigenous people also."

Logan Werribone said he looked up to Thurston and meeting him was a once in a lifetime opportunity. "The highlight was shaking his hand and getting his signature. I was shocked when they told us we were going to meet him. He's an upstanding man and I am inspired by what he's achieved and his generosity and kindness."

St Mary's College Principal Michael Newman believes Thurston is an inspiring role model for their Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander boys. "Johnathon made the day totally about the boys. He generously gave of his time signing hats and posters, answering questions and taking many photos with the students. He spoke at length about his gratitude for the opportunity to attend St Mary's College and the lifelong relationships he had formed. It was certainly a proud occasion for the boys of St Mary's who were present and also a proud moment for their Indigenous culture. The College is proud to call Jonathan an Old Boy and to have him inspire St Mary's boys."

St Mary's College  
Toowoomba | Years 5-12

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# SVDP BUDDY CAMP AN OPPORTUNITY TO OFFER SUPPORT

LINDA CREEDON

L to R: Margaret O'Reilly, Jana Dela Cruz and Tileta Murray

*During the Easter school holidays three of our senior students gave up holiday time to attend and represent St Saviour's College Toowoomba at a St Vincent De Paul Youth Buddy Camp.* College Captain, Jana Dela Cruz, Interact President, Margaret O'Reilly and McAuley House Captain, Tileta Murray, travelled to the Sunshine Coast to take on the role of group leaders working with younger people in team building skills and activities.

The camp is part of the St Vinnies Buddy program which meet on the first Saturday of each month. It is a mentoring program that aims to provide support and good role models to children who are living in difficult situations. The Buddies Camp is offered to children aged 5-12 years of age from families experiencing hardship or disadvantage for a variety of reasons. One of the purposes of the camp is to allow these children, who don't often get the opportunity to go on holiday, a chance to enjoy themselves and just have fun with kids their own age.

Our three volunteers were each assigned to a group of children who became their buddies for the camp. Margaret said, "The first day was a little difficult as many of the buddies were home sick. They also took some time to mingle, as there were children from Toowoomba, Gatton and the Brisbane region; so many of the buddies didn't know each other. But by the second day a multitude of new friendships were created."

As volunteers, Jana, Margaret and Tileta helped supervise the children and set up activities that created a supportive and fun environment.

Our three volunteers said they enjoyed the experience and were quite sad when it came time to go home. They spoke about the experience at our recent College assembly and strongly encouraged all St Saviour's students to get involved in any opportunities that may come their way to support and give back to the community. Mrs Julie Inskip, organiser of the camp was delighted with the work of the girls and complimented them on their fantastic efforts.



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# LENTEN CHALLENGE MET BY SACRED HEART

SALLY YIN AND BRIDGET RILLIE



L to R: Grace Batterham (School Captain), Ms Bridget Rillie (APRE) and Tedy Chikono (School Captain)

*During Lent, students at Sacred Heart Primary School, Toowoomba have been working towards raising money for Project Compassion.* This began with the Caritas Just Leadership day hosted at the school. Each class was given the challenge to raise \$40 over the 40 days of Lent, the 40/40 challenge. The challenge culminated with a coin trail after our Easter Pageant during the last week of term 1. The children placed their coins along the word GIVING to create an action and a visual reminder of reaching out to those in need.

The year 5/6 class took on an individual challenge and showed an act of solidarity as a way of raising both money and awareness. In March the students held a power and technology free day. Each child asked for sponsorship from

their family and friends for the day. Their \$40 challenge was surpassed with the class raising \$415 for Project Compassion. The total sum raised by the school was \$835. This is an outstanding achievement! Whilst there are many ways it might be used, it is sufficient to provide training for a group of 25 women to run an income-generating project in the Philippines and to support as many as 22 students to go back to high school in the Philippines.

Holy Week concluded at our school with our Easter Pageant, Retrace and Relive. Each class was involved in retelling the Easter story through song and dance, ending with the Crucifixion. In the first week of term 2 we celebrated Jesus' Resurrection through a joyful and stirring Come Alive prayer celebration.

# CUNNAMULLA TAKE ON LEADERSHIP AND ANTI-BULLYING LESSONS

POLLYANNA CRAWFORD



Cunnamulla students support no bullying

*Term 1 was an action packed time for leadership learning for our Year 6 students at Sacred Heart School Cunnamulla.* Students who were eager to take on a leadership role presented a speech to our school community on the qualities they would bring to a school leadership position and what they could do to help and improve our school community. Votes were made and our school leaders for 2018 were elected.

Angela Travers (Education Officer from TCSO) travelled to Cunnamulla to hold a leadership workshop. Students explored the Parable of the Mustard Seed, discussed qualities of past and present leaders in our world including Catherine McAuley and Jesus and created a mandala for prayer. Our school leaders

thoroughly enjoyed Angela's workshop and were involved in deep discussions on the important qualities of leaders.

In mid-March Sacred Heart School participated in the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence. Students viewed a video clip about bullying and agreed to take an anti-bullying pledge.

All students wore an orange ribbon as a symbol that they say, NO WAY TO BULLYING! In our school family groups, students explored the definition of bullying and appropriate responses to different bullying situations. Outback Patrol performed for our students a play covering the theme based around anti-bullying actions. The students thought it was very valuable and hilarious!



Photo by Cooper Wren Videographer

## STANTHORPE TAKES A STAND TOGETHER

ANGIE SIMS

***In March, St Joseph's School Stanthorpe participated in National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.*** It was a sea of orange as staff and students united in strong support against bullying and violence.

The day commenced with Student Council Representatives distributing wristbands and anti-bullying cards. Students and staff then combined for a whole school "Take a Stand Together" assembly with special invited guests, Honourable James Lister MP and Tamsyn Rosenberg, CEO of ALIVE Organisation.

Mr Lister was delighted to accept the invite. "This National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence is a tremendous thing. It's very important for all society with participation in schools for there to be conversation about bullying," he said.

Tamsyn Rosenberg, founder of one of Australia's leading youth and family support services in emotional wellbeing and fulfilment, was thrilled to be invited for this special event at St Joseph's School. Ms Rosenberg shared her own personal story about bullying, how it made her feel and how she developed the strength to overcome it.

"I'd like to see our children and students feel powerful. Resilience in themselves to not need to bully and to feel strong, and if being bullied, then resilience to overcome and thrive," Ms Rosenberg said.

Students participated in various activities during the day such as special lessons activities delivered by teachers from

Prep to Year 12 and a morning tea for both campuses. At this time, students were invited to sign a pledge to take a stand against bullying. Secondary students also participated in a Generation Next National Livestream.

Primary students assembled to spell out No Way!, while on the Secondary Campus students assembled to spell out Say No. "This was a good day to highlight these issues. But we need to remember it's a continual process to build resilience to our students and continue the message," Principal, Mr Kendall said.

"The ALIVE Project workshop was received extremely well by the Year 7 and 8 cohorts, with students connecting instantly with the messages communicated by Tamsyn and her team," Head of Pastoral Care and coordinator for this day, Mrs Lorien Kirby said. "I am extremely proud of the way the students participated and hope that we have begun to further build on crucial life skills that will assist students with the way they respond to difficulties in life. We look forward to welcoming Tamsyn and the ALIVE team back later in the year to continue her highly beneficial work with our students." "Today was a wakeup call to everybody who bullies, and who is bullied. As a school we have united - one community against bullying and violence to join the thousands of other voices out there who 'say NO to bullying!' Our staff are constantly working on cultivating the strength and skills within our students to stand strong, and to 'speak, even if your voice shakes'.

## BANNER A REMINDER OF A JUST FUTURE

ANGIE SIMS

***As part of her Mercy Value of Compassion, School Captain Ann-Mary Vincent was busy promoting Project Compassion at St Joseph's School Stanthorpe during Term 1.*** Being an advocate for compassion by supporting Caritas, who help alleviate the suffering of those living in poverty and providing a just future, was one of Ann-Mary's goals this year.

To highlight the important work that Project Compassion undertakes, Ann-Mary and some of her classmates, spent some lunch breaks with the primary students placing hand prints on a banner. The students were eager to be involved in this project, enjoying the painting and friendship with these Year 12 students.

The completed artwork now hangs in the multi-purpose room on the Primary Campus as a constant reminder of the important work that Project Compassion undertakes.



Ann-Mary Vincent working with other students on the hand print banner



# THEIR LEGACY WILL REMAIN

GENNY MCNAIR

Sr Margaret Andersen presented a gift from the Quilpie community by Darcy Hunter, St Finbarr's School Leader

***After 25 years of service in the Quilpie community, Sr Margaret Andersen is relocating to Brisbane to respond to a call of the Sisters of St Joseph to take up a leadership position at Nundah.*** Sr Margaret's departure also marks the end of the Josephite presence in Quilpie.

The Sisters of St Joseph came to Quilpie in 1950 at the request of Bishop Basil Roper. Srs Macrina, Carmel and Magdalen arrived by train to be met by locals carrying lamps and lanterns as there was no electricity or street lights in the town.

Parish Priest Fr Michael Cronin had begun the construction of St Joseph's School which was opened in 1950. By the end of the first year there were more than 60 children enrolled. In 1951 the Convent and Boarding School were ready with girls and boys from outlying districts enrolled. Due to dwindling numbers, the Boarding School closed in 2008.

Sr Margaret has been actively involved at St Finbarr's School Quilpie for many years and recently celebrated over 45 years of service to Catholic Education. In the spirit of Mary Mackillop, she has promoted and supported the education of children of remote and rural towns of Quilpie, Inglewood, Taroom, Julia Creek and Childers as a dedicated teacher, Principal and APRE. She served as Principal of St Finbarr's School from 1982 to 1984 and again from 1996 to 2008. During this time she ran the school, taught classes and supervised the boarding house. Since 2008 she has continued to be a valuable member of the school staff as

APRE and Advisory Visiting Teacher Religious Education to Charleville, Cunnamulla and Quilpie.

Sr Margaret has also been instrumental in fostering an ecumenical spirit within the community through the sacramental preparation of both Catholic and Anglican children. She has been called upon to conduct funerals for families of various denominations and is well regarded for her compassion, sensitivity and individual attention when assisting families. Sr Margaret also liaised with the shire, local committees and clergy of other denominations to conduct Christmas, Easter and other community services.

Sr Margaret is well known for her love of rural people and communities. She has a wonderful sense of hospitality and has built strong partnerships with the whole community through her promotion of education, health and other services within the Quilpie Shire.

In mid April a farewell dinner was held in honour of Sr Margaret held in 'Jeff's Shed', a covered area at the school named in memorial of Fr Jeff Scully. Approximately 130 locals came to bid Sr Margaret farewell, joined by Josephite sisters, Srs Annette Arnold, Mary Sheridan and Kathleen Mooney who travelled from Brisbane, and Dr Pat Coughlin and Gerard Hore also attended on behalf of the Toowoomba Catholic School's Office.

The evening was a wonderful tribute to a remarkable lady. Many stories were shared, a couple of tears shed, but overall it was a night of celebration and the sincerity of the appreciation that everyone expressed was remarkable.



◀ St Finbarr's School today

▼ Opening of St Joseph's School Quilpie in 1950



Sr Margaret cutting her farewell cake



Sr Margaret's final Mass at St Finbarr's Parish was also dedicated to the Sisters of St Joseph. Sr Margaret has tirelessly continued the work the Sisters began in Quilpie 68 years ago. She is a trusted friend, valued colleague and an inspiration to all within the community. We are very pleased for Sr Margaret to be able to accept a role that is very suited to her skills and one in which she will

feel great reward.

The words of our school song, written by Josh Arnold in 2013, will ensure that Sr Margaret and the Josephite Sisters will always be at the heart of our school and indeed our community.

'Little did they know when they got off the train the Sisters' legacy would always remain'.



## Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential, short-term counselling service to assist employees with work or personal issues impacting on their personal wellbeing, work performance and team morale.

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Miss Joelyn Smith demonstrating a guided reading lesson with some of her students

# STUDENTS PROVE TO BE ENGAGED READERS

SR ELIZABETH O'KEEFFE

*St Mary's School Charleville is proud to have been recognized by the Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority for demonstrating substantially above average gain in its NAPLAN results.* The gains were seen in the Year 3's progress to Year 5 in reading.

The positive gain is a result of years of developing an evidence-based reading program and increased teacher capacity to teach outstanding reading strategies. An intensive focus on reading was implemented in 2015 by former Principal Mrs Louise Pfingst and her leadership team.

St Mary's Principal Michael Ward was more than impressed with the result. "You can increase how well your students do in any subject by teaching them how to use relevant strategies," he said. "When teaching children to read you need to teach them how to work out unknown words, as well as strategies that will help their comprehension."

Mr Ward said a big part of the reading process St Mary's

incorporated in its strategies was asking questions to check for understanding. "Our students are learning how to find answers in the text and also use their prior experiences to talk about how the text impacted their thinking," Mr Ward said. "This makes them very engaged readers." St Mary's will continue to strive for excellence in reading and in all areas of the curriculum.

St Mary's is also proud of its students who are always ready to lend a hand where needed. Recently Charleville was hit by a dust storm which left our town under a thick layer of dirt and dust. Years 5 and 6 students were happy to come lend a hand to clean St Mary's Church. They were thorough too, even crawling under the seats to clean. No one thought cleaning could be so much fun. Again our children were in the action when the school held a working bee. There were a few sore muscles at the end of the day but great feelings of satisfaction as well. A big thank you to the children for their generosity.

"The Seminary that educates must seek really and truly to initiate the candidate in the sensitivity of being a shepherd."



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# MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

ANDREA ROBERTS

*At St Patrick's Church, Augathella in February following morning mass, family and friends gathered for an enjoyable morning tea to help Peg Butler and Beryl Barnsley celebrate their joint 90th Birthday.* Both Peg and Beryl have been valuable members of the Augathella community for many years. After Fr Peter Doohan congratulated them on their special milestones and commended them both for all their years of dedication and hard work towards our church, a beautiful cake was presented to them. Augathella has been fortunate to have two such lovely ladies in the community, who have continually shown great support to the church and to all parishioners.



# BLESSINGS FOR ROMA



L to R: Beryl Power, Kelsey Fitzgerald, Fr Jamie Collins, Viv Bruton, Fr Michael O'Brien, Rita Brennan, Margaret Wichlacz, and Jean Clancy

*A surprise visit to Roma by Fr Michael O'Brien brought great joy to the members of the local branch of Catholic Women's League.* Fr O'Brien travelled from Goondiwindi to present a Papal Blessing to the CWL Roma Branch to honour 50 Years operation. It proved a fitting way to end a year of celebration marking this great milestone and the many achievements of the CWL in Roma.

The Papal Blessing was presented to Michael's Godmother, Mrs Rita Brennan, who accepted the framed blessing on behalf of all who have been a part of CWL in



Dennis Hickey, daughter Anita Beutel, grandsons Hunter Beutel and Jett Beutel, Fr Jamie Collins and Joan Hickey

Roma, particularly Michael's mother, Mona who passed away earlier in the year and was immediate Past President of the local branch.

The Parish also marked another special occasion with a presentation of a Papal Blessing, the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Dennis and Joan Hickey. This was combined with a special morning tea to farewell the couple as they retire to Toowoomba. Both have been very active in parish and community life in Roma. Joan is a lifetime resident and Dennis came to Roma in 1964 with his trade as a builder.

# HIGHFIELDS INSPIRED TO SURRENDER FOR LENT

PATTI MCNAUGHT



Highfields parishioners come together to reflect on Lent

*This year our parish had the privilege to participate in a Lenten Program, hosted again by Warren and Carolyn Hartung (despite being in midst of renovations).* After Tuesday Mass, we arrived at their home where a hot cuppa awaited us, giving us time to relax and get to know each other a little better. This year it was extra special as it was actually Warren's birthday on one of the Tuesdays of the program.

This year we followed the Lenten Program developed by the Wollongong Diocese, Surrender. This was a marvellous program with an extra feature of short, digestible daily reflections aimed to help us reflect in Lent, a precious time of retreat for all of us. It enabled us to be renewed in faith, hope and love as we prepared for the sacred Triduum of Christ's Last Supper, his suffering and death on the Cross, and his resurrection conquering sin and death so that we all could be saved, redeemed, forgiven and loved by God.

Although this is more than we could ever imagine, this

wonderful program, starting with the "Temptation" and progressing through to the Transfiguration", "the Cleansing", "the Serpent", "The Hour" and finally the "Passion", truly convinced us that Jesus loves us all unconditionally.

Highlights of this program were the Gospel Reflection by Fr. Graham Schmitzer and the questions that followed (all being shared by those present), which were very inspiring. The Spiritual Direction by Sr Hilda Scott was presented naturally, simply and beautifully and then questions were very well received and shared by all present. Some of the content inspired us to do further research ourselves. We could have gone on forever with this program,

Thank you once again Carolyn and Warren, for your hospitality, your patience in allowing us to participate in sharing, as we all wanted so eagerly to do and the love you both showed to all of us throughout the program. You are an absolute treasure to our Parish.

# ECUMENICAL STATIONS ONCE AGAIN A HIGHLIGHT

PATTI MCNAUGHT



L to R: Kerry Shine, Sandy and John Whybird, Jorja and Theresa Caldwell, Front: Shaun Canway-Soso

*Once again an Ecumenical Stations of the Cross was held at beautiful Peacehaven Park Highfields, the perfect setting for this solemn occasion.* Each year it seems that the park is an even more beautiful sight as we mingle and meet our Anglican brothers and sisters, and others who joined in along the way. The numbers who attend have increased each year.

The service commenced at 10am as Fr Brian Noonan with Gwen Rees from St Anne's Anglican Parish, Highfields led the crowd in prayer. This year we had some of the St Mary's College students attend, who assisted with the prayers.

As usual, banners representing each station were held high for each of us to see to reflect on Christ's suffering. Following

the prompts on the sheets given to us on arrival, the quiet and peaceful surroundings enabled us to reflect on the way we have led our lives this past year."

At each station we all prayed together as one in worship and as we progressed to the next station John and Sandy Whybird provided music on a lone guitar to the beautiful hymn "Were You There When They Crucified My Lord". How wonderful to see them both here this year, their music provided that special touch.

At the conclusion of the celebration, everyone was invited to a morning tea. Thank you to Fr Noonan and Gwen for giving us this very moving experience.



**Crows Nest** - As the parish celebrated the risen Christ, the Crows Nest Parish community welcomed Annie Frost through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist. Annie was prepared for her special day by Julie Nairn and her companion on her journey was Janine Kanowski. After Mass, everyone gathered in the Church Hall for morning tea. L to R Eligh Frost, Fr Dave, Annie, Janine, Julie Nairn and Grace Frost



**Daymar Baptism** - There was plenty of action at Our Lady of Lourdes, Daymar on Easter Sunday, with five baptisms. Fr Michael O'Brien thought it would have been a long time before there were five baptisms at the same time in Daymar. Congratulations to Aiden and Seth Spittles, Lilly Smith, Noah Hall and Angela Hall

## LOCAL ROSARY GROUP JOINS WITH WORLD WIDE MOVEMENT

ELLEN MOROSINI

**A Children's Rosary group has begun in Toowoomba.** This special prayer movement for children was first established in America and has spread to more than 32 countries around the world, with a number of groups in Australia.

The Toowoomba group has been gathering at Sacred Heart Church Toowoomba on the 4th Sunday of the month at 10:30am. The children participate as much as they are able in leading the recitation of the Rosary. A different Mystery of the Rosary is said each month and a little meditation on the five Mysteries is given before each decade. Rosary beads and booklets are provided.

Before the Rosary begins the children are encouraged to offer their Rosary for a special intention, and if they wish, they can write their intention on a piece of paper provided and place it in the petition box beside Our Lady's statue. This petition box is being circulated around the Catholic primary schools in Toowoomba so students can add their

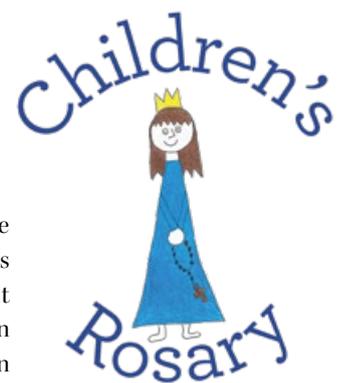
own petitions. These will be prayed for at the next Children's Rosary group gathering and it is hoped that other children will feel encouraged to join with the group.

Children volunteer to lead a decade each and at the end of each decade one of the children places a flower at the feet of the statue of Our Lady and the special Grace applicable to that decade is read out.

At the end of the Rosary a special song, "We are Rosary children", is sung by the children. This song is sung by all the groups in the world.

For more information about this simple but powerful prayer movement visit [childrensrosary.org](http://childrensrosary.org).

For further information about the local group, please contact Theresa Blatchly 0434 528 904 and Ellen Morosini 0412 435 030.





# OLD AND NEW MEET IN PARISH FACILITIES

PATRICE RIORDAN

L to R: Fr Franco Filipetto, Regan Henderson, Jia O'Dea, Saskia Scheiwe coming and Bishop Robert McGuckin

*On Palm Sunday the Warwick Parish were joined by Bishop Robert McGuckin for the celebration of the Eucharist and the Blessing of the new Parish centre recently built beside the church.*

The new parish administration and meeting rooms along with the old church have been named Assumption Place after the patroness of our parish, Our Lady of the Assumption. The parish of St Mary's takes its name from the first church built in Warwick, St Mary of the Assumption. It was opened in August 1865.

Assumption Place has made possible the movement of most parish activities within the vicinity of the church. This should make the administration of the parish much easier and lead to a more unified parish community. It has been greatly appreciated by parish staff because of the

compact work space and it is much more convenient for parishioners as well.

The transepts of the old church were restored over a period of twelve months commencing in 2016. By demolishing later alterations, the beauty of the original church was unveiled. It is now possible to see the rose windows and the large western window. During renovations we also discovered the original resting place of Fr James Horan when the vault was uncovered underneath the concrete floor.

It is hoped that Assumption Place will meet the needs of St Mary's Parish for some time to come. Buildings like the Presbytery, the old Christian Brothers residence and even the old church have all served the parish for over one hundred years.

## HOLIDAY FUN FOR HOLY CYA

PATRICE RIORDAN

*On the middle weekend of the Easter school holidays St Mary's Parish Warwick took 19 eager youth members to The Granite Belt Maze and Mini Golf for the morning. After getting lost in the maze and battling it out on the mini golf course we stopped at MacDonald's in Stanthorpe for lunch. On our return, the youth had a Movie Marathon Evening and games night planned. Several movies were watched; BBQ dinner was served along with a 21st birthday celebration for one of our leaders. A great time was had by all including the leaders.*



Fun times for Holy CYA Youth Group

# CATECHUMEN AND CANDIDATES WELCOMED

ERIN KEMPTON



L to R: Kath Byrne, Pieta Moller, Sarah De Byl, Cheryl Anderson, Mary Otto, Fr Thomas Areekuzhty, Erin Kempton, Rebecca Booth and Geraldine Hoare.

***On Easter Sunday, St Monica's Church Oakey was filled with joy and excitement as the Feast of the Risen Christ was celebrated.*** Adding to the excitement was the witnessing of Catechumen Rebecca Booth and Candidates Cheryl Anderson and Pieta Moller received into the fullness of the Catholic Church.

Their faith journey began formally in the latter months of last year with Catechists Erin Kempton and Ros Phillips. Mary Otto, Diocesan RCIA Coordinator, guided the catechists by staying in regular contact, and assisting Sr

Elaine Morzone conduct a Twilight Retreat for candidates and parishioners during Lent.

Cheryl Anderson and Rebecca Booth both work at St Monica's School, and Pieta Moller is a nanny, moving to Jandowae halfway through the course, completing her journey by email and phone. All were strongly supported by school Staff, family and friends.

Oakey Parish Priest, Fr Thomas Areekuzhy, celebrated the Mass and presented each of the ladies with a beautiful certificate and a gift of a Sunday Missal.

## CUNNAMULLA BRINGS COMMUNITY TOGETHER

SR MAUREEN ANDREWS

***This year is passing so quickly but we barely noticed in Sacred Heart Parish Cunnamulla as we spent February and part of March preparing for the fete where the school and wider community gather.*** We were heartened to see that our efforts paid off and we raised a tidy sum that will help us to move through the first six months of the year. The parish was blessed that the teachers from the school provided assistance with the children performing dances and running activities. Special thanks to Wendy McKellar who trains each class to dance, she is a blessing to us.

Easter this year really came to life for Sacred Heart Church in Cunnamulla. The small congregation actually had nine children attending the Vigil. Four children were visiting with their parents and were delighted that they were attending a small congregation where we all knew each other. Nicky Barrington, the Library Aide from the school, is in charge of the Easter fire where everyone gathers and joyfully marches in after the Paschal Candle singing Jesus Lives. One of the smaller children kept whispering to various adults that they had a baby joey at home which had fallen out of its mother's pouch. Such an



Students dancing with their parents at the Sacred Heart Fete

injection of the simplicity and joy of children will remain in our memory for some time.

Now the congregation is looking forward to the visit of Bishop Robert McGuckin who is coming in June for First Communion and Confirmation. In fact, we also have three adults for confirmation and another two who are thinking seriously about it. Life is good.



# PARISH REFLECTION DAYS A JOURNEY IN FAITH

SR MARIA JOYNER

*In February this year St Anthony's parish welcomed Br Damien Price CFC.* Each year the Parish Pastoral Council organises an opportunity for parishioners to deepen their spiritual life by participation in reflection days.

Br Damien is well known in Toowoomba, having spent his early years in Pittsworth before his family moved to Proserpine. Br Damien has conducted many workshops and in-service days for school and parish communities in the Diocese. Over the past twenty years he has been involved in working with disadvantaged youth, the homeless, refugees and asylum seekers and he has inspired many young people to reach out to those in need and live their faith in practical ways. He is passionate about the power of youth to change our world, the power of story and the possibilities we all share in "being the change we want to see in the world".

Br Damien spent a weekend with our community engaging us in discussions and prayer around various topics including 'Our Beer Garden God - spirituality for the everyday' and 'When in doubt tell a Story'. He also spoke at our weekend Masses and gave a wise session on nurturing boys.

During our days together we felt Jesus was truly in our midst through Br Damien's engaging retelling of the Gospel, taking us on a journey through time from the Palestine of Jesus to today. He led us in a process that gave us a language to share with one another our faith life and how we see God's Spirit alive in times of deep joy and sadness as well as in the ordinariness of our lives.

All those present in these reflection days were grateful for the time together as a parish community and the gift of Br Damien's expertise and presence among us. Thank you Br Damien. We hope you return to St Anthony's in the near future.

**James Byrne  
Centre Highfields**

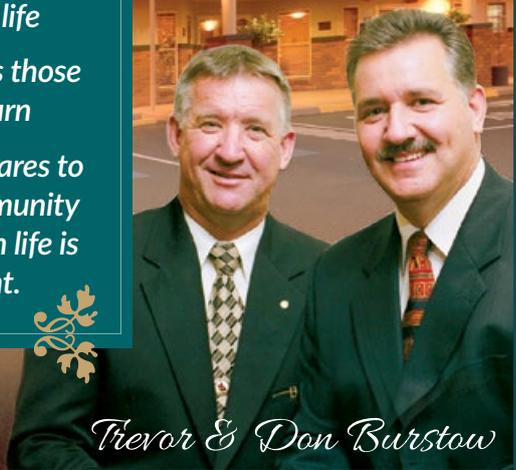


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## BISHOP ROBERT MCGUCKIN

68 Lindsay Street, PO Box 756  
Toowoomba Qld 4350  
Tel: (07) 4632 4277 Fax: (07) 4639 2251

## SECRETARY TO BISHOP

Colleen Way Tel: (07) 4632 4277  
bishsec@twb.catholic.org.au

## VICAR GENERAL

Fr John Quinlan Tel: (07) 4634 1453

## CHANCELLOR

Fr Peter Schultz B.Th., JCL Tel: (07) 4632 8835  
pschultz@twb.catholic.org.au

## ABORIGINAL APOSTOLATE

Fr Peter Dorfield Tel: (07) 4637 1500  
peter@stpats.org.au

## ARCHIVES

Archivist: Gabrielle Saide Tel: (07) 4632 7484  
dioarch@twb.catholic.org.au

## CARITAS

Diocesan Director: Catherine McAleer  
Tel: (07) 4638 7977  
caritas@twb.catholic.org.au

## CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OFFICE

Executive Director: Pat Coughlan  
Tel: (07) 4637 1400  
enquiries@twb.catholic.edu.au

## CATHOLIC MISSION

David McGovern  
Tel: (07) 3336 9239 or 0431 481 731  
mcgovernd@bne.catholic.net.au

## CATHOLICCARE

Director: Kate Venables  
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enquiries@catholiccare.services

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Nicole Rangiera Tel: (07) 4616 6415  
nicole.rangiira@health.qld.gov.au

Chaplain: Fr Michael Cooney  
Tel: 0418 112 193

## COMMUNICATIONS

Communications Officer: Ingrid McTaggart  
Tel: (07) 4632 4277 Mob: 0429 489 748  
communications@twb.catholic.org.au

## ECUMENICAL COMMISSION

Fr Brian Sparksman D.C.L.  
Tel: (07) 4632 7619  
e.vicar@twb.catholic.org.au

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND SAFEGUARDS

Executive Officer George Keryk  
Tel: (07) 4638 1379  
gkeryk@twb.catholic.org.au

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Financial Administrator: Tom Jolley  
Diocesan Development Fund  
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Managers: Paul and Wendy Ladewig  
Tel: (07) 4630 8339  
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## LITURGICAL COMMISSION

Liturgy Officer: John Briffa  
Tel: (07) 4632 0989  
jbriffa@twb.catholic.org.au

## SPIRITUALITY AND MISSION

Sr Elaine Morzone  
Tel: (07) 4632 7619  
Mob: 0458 020 906  
emorzone@twb.catholic.org.au

## RCIA COORDINATOR

Mary Otto  
Mobile: 0447 047 807  
rcia@twb.catholic.org.au

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTRE

Trudi Burgess Tel: (07) 4687 4345

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Tel: (07) 4613 0895  
justice@twb.catholic.org.au

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Fr Gonzalo Duran Tel: (07) 4662 7031  
vocations@twb.catholic.org.au

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