

# Horizons



**ORDINATION  
A JOYFUL  
OCCASION  
FOR FR TOM**

**History in the  
Making for the  
Diocese**

**Mercy Girls at  
St Saviour's**

**Golden Moment  
for Fr Brian**

**#55  
AUG19**

FREE Publication  
of the Catholic  
Diocese of  
Toowoomba

# Horizons

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Horizons is a conduit for news and information, helping to bind the Toowoomba Diocese together. The magazine aims to promote the work of our Diocese's Parishes and Ministries so God's mercy, love and the joy of the Gospel are experienced, celebrated and shared.

We wish to acknowledge the Aboriginal people God placed upon this land, the first custodians and caretakers of the land upon which we now build our lives and gather to worship. We also pay respect to Elders past and present.

## FROM THE EDITOR INGRID MCTAGGART

*When I was in my early 20s, I remember my Mum being interested in family history.* Different members of the extended family were right into it and they would share their findings with her. One day, after revealing a fascinating tidbit and seeing my lacklustre response, she asked me, "So what do you think of this family history stuff?" I must admit it held no draw for me the past wasn't my thing. My response might have been "It's alright, I guess."

Now many years later, I get it. I understand what drew Mum into the past. It's more than just knowing history, it's the context that makes the story, makes it alive. Looking at dates as a straight timeline can be dull and it doesn't reveal the full story. What is happening concurrently? Who are the people and personalities? These are examples of contexts that can make a story about the past pop off the page. History also gives context for us, why we do and are the way we are.

Putting together the brief story of the beginnings of the Toowoomba Diocese in this issue, I found it endlessly

fascinating. I constructed a basic timeline revolving around 1929 and populated it with every event or key date I found. I then talked to Gabrielle and Fr Peter, who brought the details – the people and personalities, and suddenly the timeline transformed in a story.

I was also surprised that what I thought was going to be a dry article on history became a little insight into the people of the time. I loved the phrase that Fr Peter used constantly during our conversation, "people of faith". The phrase transformed people beyond the inadequate description "early Catholics". Faith is what drove them to continue to gather in their homes, want permanently placed priests in their area, seek their own place in the community. Faith is what enabled the early priests to journey weeks, even months, at a time on horseback across the west visiting these people.

That is still us. We aren't "current Catholics", we are "people of faith", and that is at the core of what we have in common with those who came before us.

Horizons is a quarterly magazine produced by the Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba. The Diocese acknowledges with gratitude the contribution made by the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office and Catholic Care Social Services to production costs, as well as the support by our advertisers. 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:** Bishop Robert congratulates Fr Tom during his Ordination, story page 6. **Graphic Design:** Thorley Creative 1300 883 454. **Deadlines:** Editions will be quarterly. October Edition 2019 is 9 October 2019.



Pope Francis greets Bishop Robert McGuckin and Australian Bishops ahead of their meeting. Photo credit ©Vatican Media

***June and July have certainly flown by and have been very busy months.*** Following the celebration of the Ascension of Our Lord and Pentecost, I was busy finalising preparations for my journey to Rome for the Ad Limina Apostolorum. From 17 to 22 June I joined all Australian Bishops as we made a retreat in preparation for the 2020 Plenary Council. The retreat was held at Ariccia near Castel Gondolfo, outside of Rome.

From 24-29 June the Ad Limina visit was in full flight. We commenced by celebrating an early morning Mass at the tomb of St Peter in St Peter's Basilica. Later that morning we met with Pope Francis for almost two and a half hours. This indeed was the highlight of the visit and showed the collegiality of the Australian Bishops with the Bishop of Rome. Our meeting was certainly a meeting between brother bishops. Pope Francis has a very warm and easy nature. This was clearly demonstrated by the free exchange of thoughts and experiences of between Pope Francis and ourselves as we discussed the challenges of our times.

In the following days, the Australian Bishops celebrated the Eucharist at the Basilica of St Mary Majors, St Pauls Outside the Walls, St John Lateran's Cathedral and at Domus Australia. On Saturday 29 June, we celebrated Mass with the Holy Father in St Peter's Basilica. I offered all Masses at which I concelebrated for the people of the Diocese of Toowoomba.

Although June is summer in Rome, there was something of a heatwave during our visit. Apart from the wonderful Eucharistic celebrations, we visited many of the various Vatican Congregations and Pontifical Departments, including the Pontifical Council for the Protection of Minors. Again, these meetings were very open where discussions were free flowing with listening and learning from both sides. Child protection, religious freedom and catholic education were among the many topics discussed.

I was privileged to lead the delegation to the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts. At that meeting, the

requirements for the forthcoming Plenary Council were discussed as we prepare for this important event in the life of the Australian Church.

At the Congregation for the Eastern Churches I was surprised by Prefect Cardinal Sandri's reference to our booklet "Eastern Catholic Churches in Australia", even suggesting that this could be a useful guide for other churches around the world. They praised the cooperation of the Latin Church with the Eastern Catholic Churches in Australia.

With all the travelling and meetings, it was great to arrive safely home in Toowoomba in the first week of July. Thank you for your prayers while I was on the Ad Limina visit.

Quickly getting back in stride, on 10 July we had the wonderful celebrations marking the Diamond Jubilee for Fr Hal Ranger (Ordained in 1959) and Golden Jubilees of Fr Brian Connolly and Bishop Bill Morris (Ordained in 1969).

On the evening of 18 July St Patrick's Cathedral I was privileged to ordain a young man from Miles, Deacon Thomas Duncan, to the priesthood. What a blessing it is for our diocese to have young men answering the call to priesthood. Congratulations Fr Tom as you begin your priestly ministry in the Diocese! I pray that our four seminarians continue on their journey to priesthood. Please pray for more vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

At both the Mass for the Jubilarians and the Ordination Mass I quoted part of what Pope Francis said to priests and bishops at the Chrism Mass in St Peter's earlier this year:

We have been anointed to anoint. We anoint by distributing ourselves, distributing our vocation and our heart. When we anoint others, we ourselves are anointed anew by the faith and the affection of our people.

May God continue to bless you as we journey together.

**Bishop Robert McGuckin  
Bishop of Toowoomba  
August 2019**



# EMPTYING OF SELF TO POUR OUT LOVE

## HOMILY FROM THE FUNERAL FOR FR JOSEPH PATRICK “PAT” HALL

FR HAL RANGER

Family, friends and parishioners gather at St. Patrick's Cathedral to celebrate the life and ministry of Fr Pat Hall on 14 June, 2019.

*Whenever we gather as believers in God, disciples of Jesus, we set aside some time to listen and to reflect upon what God has said and is saying to us.* Through the Words of Scripture; through the events of our daily lives; through the special experiences we are celebrating, this day the life among us of Pat Hall!

To begin with, we have listened to words addressed a long time ago to the Christian Community in Corinth. Life is a journey that begins in the silent safety of our mother's womb and continues into this world and beyond. Paul describes this world as life in a tent. Sometimes we feel at home in the tent, at other times we feel the uncertainty of the tent and sometimes the tent is a very fragile home – as tents are!

We live by faith not by sight. Faith in a God who loves us unconditionally and faithfully and we yearn throughout life in this world to feel completely at home with the loving God who called us into life. We believe, but seldom see! Pat Hall experienced very deeply the uncertainties of life in the tent, but he lived by faith and now he is at home. He is secure and safe in the knowledge and acknowledgement of the truth about God and about himself. We thank God with him.

Pat left a request in his will, more a directive that we should listen to and take to heart this day words written by Paul to the Christian people of Philippi: words Pat treasured and lived by. These words are a call to them and to us to allow God's Spirit to tenderly unite and draw us all into thinking and working together with a common purpose. No competition, no conceit, mindful always of the gifts and needs of others rather than our own.

Jesus' emptying of self, of all self-interest, is the mark of his divinity. God is the one who is continually emptying Himself to pour out love and life into the universe and

Jesus tells and shows us who God is and what God is like by emptying Himself.

Paul is saying to each of us, "Have that same willingness to do as God is doing, as Jesus did." Pat Hall read and embraced this call daily; he invites and challenges us today to do likewise; and the special gift he had to share was his own struggles, his own anxiety, his own uncertainties.

There are massive questions to be asked and to be answered around suffering, especially the suffering of innocent people. We're lost for answers, searching for anything we can say to bring comfort, to understand the mystery. The questions, sooner or later, have to be faced by all of us.

I want to put forward a few things to be pondered and shared. Is suffering, and ultimately dying, ever a punishment from God? I think not! Is suffering rather part and parcel of living, of being daughters and sons of a God from whom comes that eternal cycle of giving birth, emptying oneself, dying, new life. I think so!

Suffering and death are the consequences of being part of that cycle. I believe God suffers; God is as devastated as we are in the face of suffering. Our challenge is to embrace the opportunities and fruits of loving whatever the costs, whatever the suffering involved.

More than anything else I want to, with you, and on behalf of many hundreds of other people, thank Pat Hall for finding many ways of generously offering his struggles, uncertainties and anxieties as a gift to others. By being himself he brought insight and good out of us and left us enhanced. For affirming so many people, not just supporting them, in the midst of their mental and emotional struggles because they felt as well as knew that he understood. They came to understand that he felt as they felt and understood. He has truly been a figure of the suffering Christ among us!

# FR JOSEPH PATRICK “PAT” HALL

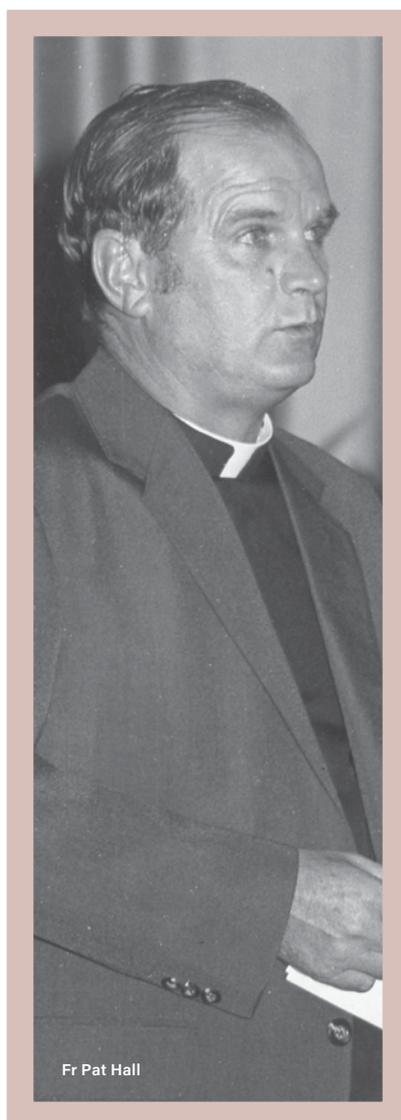
## FR MICHAEL COONEY

*As a small child in Warwick I stood in awe of new priests as they would appear in St Mary’s Church for the first time.* One such priest was Fr Pat Hall. Many years later I came to know the Hall family when my first priestly appointment was to St Thomas More’s Parish in Toowoomba, then under Fr Bill Hall (brother to Fr Pat) as Parish Priest. I learnt much from Fr Bill’s support and guidance in my early years of priesthood.

Since coming back to Toowoomba in January 2016 I found myself neighbour to Fr Pat Hall at Vianney Village in the grounds of Lourdes Home for the Aged. I came to know Pat well and found him to be a much loved neighbour and friend.

He was a true gentleman and the essence of kindness to myself and the many visitors who came to see him for guidance and for reminiscing of past life experiences. This was a true sign of his popularity and keen interest in people of all age groups. He had a beautiful priestly ministry right up to the time of his death on Monday, June 10th at St Vincent’s Hospital, Toowoomba.

Early in his priesthood Pat suffered a major breakdown with a deep sense of personal unworthiness to continue as a priest. However with the help



of the St John of God Brothers, the fatherly guidance of Bill McCormack and the encouragement of many friends, Pat recovered sufficiently to live his priesthood faithfully. He had an overwhelming kindness to any person who suffered and he was able to turn what was a dark cloud in his life into a wonderful gift to help hundreds of other suffering people.

Pat served in the parishes of Warwick, St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dalby, Charleville, Wallangarra and Millmerran from where he retired to Vianney Village at Lourdes Home in 2007. I came to know Pat well in the last four years, we enjoyed many a ginger beer and his witty banter. He had a very sharp memory for older Toowoomba generations and told many amusing stories about earlier life in Toowoomba.

Pat’s generosity was shown to me on many occasions. A few minutes before the last State of Origin football match he came over with a stubby of beer and a Mars bar for me to enjoy during the game. He had to give you something! Most of all he gave the gift of himself.

We will all miss Pat greatly. We gently commend him to his loving God and we pray together: eternal rest grant to him O Lord, may perpetual light shine on him. May he rest in peace.

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# ORDINATION A JOYFUL OCCASION FOR FR TOM

INGRID MCTAGGART

Bishops, clergy and seminarians in attendance at Fr Tom Duncan's Ordination.

*When first encountering Fr Tom Duncan, the latest priest to be ordained in the Toowoomba Diocese, you might think him a quiet and earnest type.* However listening to close friends and family speaking warmly of the young man after his Thanksgiving Mass, a more relatable and softer side emerges.

Fr Tom's Ordination was held on 18 July at St Patrick's Cathedral. During the celebration, Msgr John Grace, Rector of Holy Spirit Seminary, paints a picture of a man devoted to his calling to the priesthood. "Since his secondary college student days, Tom has possessed a fixed resolve to pursue a priestly vocation." Said Msgr Grace. "Therein lay two defining aspects of his character: a determination which is difficult to alter and a faith that prizes the nature of the Ministerial priesthood."

Msgr Grace went on during his Testimony to describe Fr Tom as being comfortable with ministering in the Toowoomba Diocese. Fr Tom hails from Miles, a community that is still very near and dear to his heart. After his Thanksgiving Mass, Fr Tom remarked there was no question as to where his first Mass would be. He wanted to share this special moment with friends, family and the community in which he grew up.

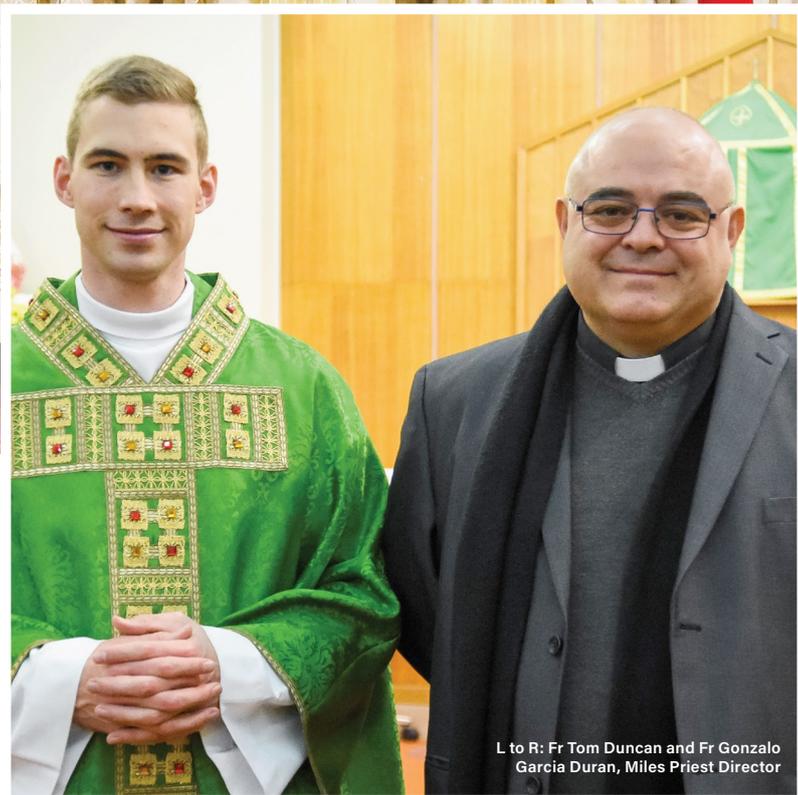
As his Testimony continued, Msgr Grace described something of what drives this young man saying, "Tom is a learner and an enquirer. He wrestles with not knowing

things. For him, that may be a thorn too difficult to extract. Nevertheless, it serves as a passage for growth in faith and trust. Tom's deep spirituality will enable him to direct his anxieties into positive outcomes."

Closing his Testimony, Msgr Grace said, "After enquiry among the Christian people and upon the recommendation of those responsible, I testify that Thomas Lawrence Duncan has been found worthy." This statement was met with applause from the congregation and a big smile from Fr Tom.

Fr Tom's Thanksgiving Mass was a joy-filled and happy occasion. During his Homily, Fr Tom reflected on the readings' themes of listening to the Word and the mystery of Christ in us, also touching on what must be the most commonly asked question of him. "The first step to doing this is actually recognising the great mystery that Jesus Christ already dwells within us through baptism. And it was this very discovery that changed my life forever. Many have wondered how and why I went from being a somewhat naughty boy from Miles to becoming a Catholic priest! It was the experience of recognising that I had always had someone else with me, and within me, that caused my priorities, interests, behaviour and desires to shift."

After Mass, everyone gathered in the parish hall for a warm home-cooked meal and a celebratory cake.

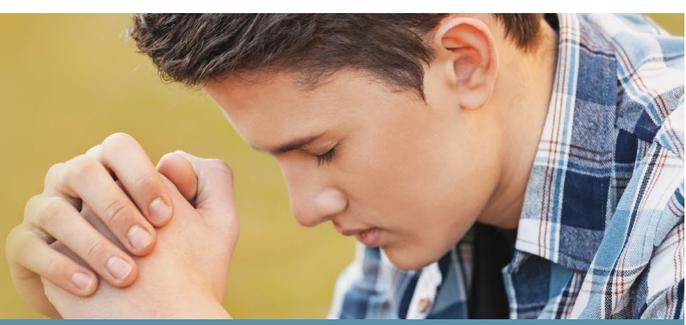


L to R: Fr Tom Duncan and Fr Gonzalo Garcia Duran, Miles Priest Director



Msgr John Grace offers blessings to Fr Tom Duncan during his Ordination

# 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

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# SPIRITUALITY IN MINISTRY

**We continue the conversation between Pastoral Care Coordinator Nicole Rangiira and her predecessor Lyn Cash as they share how their spirituality relates to ministry work in Pastoral Care. This issue the former colleagues reflect on hope and how it can illuminate the darkest moments.**

**Nicole:** How does hope come to be revealed in a hospital setting? What are your thoughts and beliefs about hope from your time in this ministry?

**Lyn:** There is a ray of light in all of us, it shines in the dedication of doctors, nurses and allied health staff, those on the ground in the hospital setting, who long to bring healing to the ill and to ease suffering. It is the same with the Pastoral Carers who also walk with those who are ill and at their most vulnerable. When we all stand together the light of our care shines brightest. It happens when the hospital staff from the various disciplines and the Pastoral Carers work together to attend to each patient holistically. This is how the light of hope manifests in a healthcare setting.

The spirit of hope is evident every morning in the Pastoral Care rooms. Team members from the various faith traditions come together and warmly greet each other and share a time of prayer and blessing.

I believe that the hospitality of the heart, which is offered daily by Pastoral Carers, is what makes a hospital ward, a

tender and hope-filled place. Hope is alive when Pastoral Carers willingly make a connection with patients, family members and staff to attend and to serve their needs. In fact, the Pastoral Carers become more than they were from the encounter for they too are served. When the Pastoral Carer and the patient meet in communion with each other, we become the sacrament of self to the other. We are an Easter people.

There is genuine hope when a Pastoral Carer is truly present to listen to the story of a patient. I believe that no matter how hard things get for a dying patient there is always room for hope. The hope of seeing one more sunrise, or to be there when a loved one visits, helps the patient to find joy in that moment. Listening to the story, being heard and truly seen and accepted may lead to a profound shift. The patient may move from anguish to freedom, from down-heartedness to peace, from feeling unloved to gaining trust, from un-wellness to healing. Pope Francis has asked Pastoral Carers to become the workers in what he has named the 'field hospital' and to minister to those who are sick and dying wherever they are.

There are so many experiences and events in the life of a hospital, often they are filled with pain and fraught with difficulties for patients and staff members. I have come to know that in these times as well as in the times of joy and blessing, the work of Pastoral Carers is to understand and to seek to find meaning in each experience in the light of our knowledge of God, our faith and the Gospel. The hope is that when this is communicated and shared with others in our midst it allows the light of revelation to illumine our lives and experiences.

**Nicole:** Lyn, you have so many rich encounters of caring for people over your time as a Pastoral Carer. These encounters exemplify the beauty of spirit within people! Could you please discreetly share one encounter you feel enables us to appreciate how the spirit within a person can lead them to wholeness and hope?

**Lyn:** Each of us has a song deep within. For some it is sung aloud in joy. Whilst for others the pain and suffering when on life's journey is so unbearable to endure that the song lies dormant...until!

One of my most memorable pastoral care encounters was with a patient in his 50 with terminal cancer. His oncologist referred him to the Pastoral Care Department saying, "Look I've tried everything I can and I have run out of treatment options. He is in pain, and I am wondering if his complex regime of pain control has lost its effectiveness or if his pain is emotional or spiritual – could you please visit him?"

I realised that we had known each other previously, so I decided to invite another pastoral carer to visit him. This would give the patient and the pastoral carer the freedom and privacy to explore his emotional and spiritual journey in this palliative stage of his life.

The man had two sons who were estranged and their mother had died some time previously. I remembered the two boys as they had attended the same schools as my children, so I knew that as a teen the youngest son had a troubled and difficult time.

One day I was walking through the palliative care ward, when I crossed paths with the youngest son. He was dressed in black, piercings on his face, art-work all over his body and he looked sad with his head hanging down. Remembering him I called him by his name. He was quite overwhelmed as I re-introduced myself and then introduced him to the nurse caring for his father. He told me that he had not spoken to his dad for two years and was somewhat anxious about how he would be received. He also said that he would return to his home in a nearby town that afternoon. I offered to buy

him food and he agreed to a chicko roll and a can of coke and I made arrangements to meet him after the visit.

The visit went well and he decided to stay on for a few more days. Each day after he visited his father, I would meet with him, share food and his story. The staff and I began to notice that he was coming into the ward with a new spring in his step and he would greet each of us by name. As his pastoral carer, I would listen to his story and with guidance he shared his story of pain. I heard about his very sad childhood living with an alcoholic and violent father, the absolute poverty they experienced, the heartache his mother suffered and of his own life fuelled by drugs. He talked about the bitterness he felt at what had befallen him, his feelings of isolation and he wept openly. His dad likewise shared his story with his pastoral carer who was guiding and sustaining where he was on the road to peace and reconciliation.

It was evident that as the father and son went through their struggles, they were coming to know the mercy of God and they were being graced by the joy of forgiveness. One day as the son and I were in communion with each other, he shared with me that he had apologised to his father. He apologised for being drug-addicted and he had sought forgiveness from his father for not understanding his father's struggle. In turn the father apologised to his son for the destruction of the family life, taking responsibility for the effects of alcohol and violence. Some days later the father received the sacrament of anointing in the presence of his son.

The son was feeling at ease, so much so, that each day he would massage his father's feet. This was their special time. Approximately ten days after his admission, I was called to the hospital with the news that the dad was dying. After his father's death the son came from his room and thanked us all. He had his guitar over his shoulder and told us how happy he was to have had this time with his dad and the staff and I embraced him. He told us, "I sat with Dad in his dying moments and prayed and then I sung his soul home."

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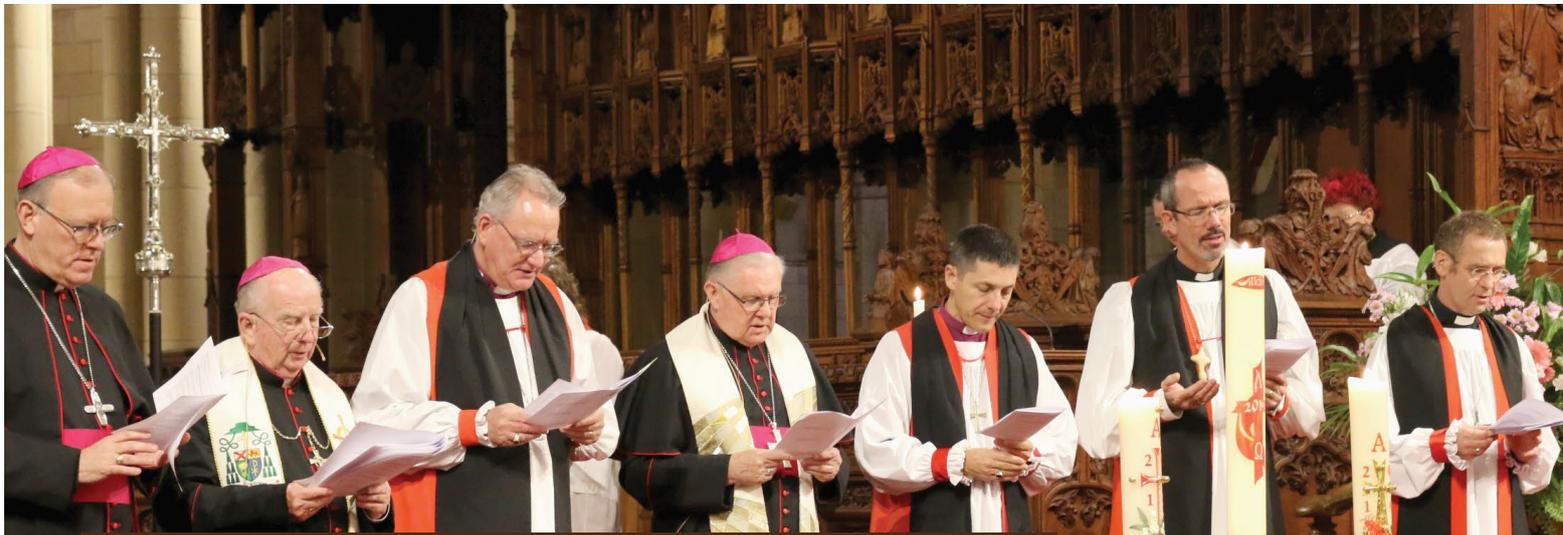


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# COVENANT CONTINUES TO BRING ANGLICANS AND CATHOLICS TOGETHER

INGRID MCTAGGART

L to R: Bishop Ken Howell, Bishop Robert McGuckin, Archbishop Phillip Aspinall, Archbishop Mark Coleridge, Bishop Jeremy Greaves, Bishop Cameron Venables and Bishop John Roundhill giving the final blessing. Photo courtesy of Michelle McDonald, Anglican Focus

*The Covenant between the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Brisbane and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Toowoomba is an important agreement for ecumenism in the local area.* Signed 10 years ago by Archbishop Phillip Aspinall, Archbishop John Bathersby and Bishop Bill Morris, the covenant itself was a renewal of the Common Declaration originally signed by Archbishops Francis Rush and John Grindrod in 1984.

At the time of the signing of this original declaration, Bishop Bill was secretary to Archbishop Rush. “In that time I observed his care to cultivate an atmosphere of ecumenism within the Catholic community; I was aware at the same time of a similar inspirational movement within the Anglican

community led by Archbishop Grindrod.” Bishop Bill wrote in *Horizons* (Issue 15, July/Sept 2009) just prior to the signing of the newly created covenant.

The covenant between the local Anglican and Catholic Churches serves to celebrate and share common ground in both practical and pastoral ways. Through this document the respective dioceses are invited to come together to pray, reflect, discuss issues of mutual interest and concern, and create social opportunities to gather. Over the years the document has been revisited and refined.

In May, representatives and leaders from the three dioceses gathered at St John’s Anglican Cathedral Brisbane to reaffirm the covenant at the 10 year anniversary.

## EXPLORING RECEPTIVE ECUMENISM FOR THE REGION

### DENIS MCALEER SECRETARY DOWNS AND TOOWOOMBA CHURCHES TOGETHER

*From Friday evening 31 May to lunchtime Sunday 2 June, people from four denominations (Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Uniting Church) spent time together at Kelly House, James Byrne Centre.* The group gathered to explore the subject of “Receptive Ecumenism” during the weekend seminar organised by Downs and Toowoomba Churches Together.

Keynote speaker, Dr Antonia (Toni) Pizzey, a Lecturer at Australian Catholic University Brisbane Campus, with able back up from Rev Canon Richard Tutin, General Secretary of QLD Churches Together, broke open the concept of Receptive Ecumenism. They explained how we receive what other denominations bring to the equation without any of us trying to convince one another that our ideas are right. It is not a competition or a situation where we meet each other at the lowest common level but a sharing of the gifts

that each denomination has to offer. It is unity in diversity not unity to form a mega Church.

On the Saturday evening four young people from Brisbane and surrounds, joined us for dinner and shared their perspective on Ecumenism. These young people had been involved with a Youth Summit in Brisbane late last year and are keen to have young people from this region be involved. It was good for our group to hear these young people’s views.

On the Sunday morning, as it was the first day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, Rev Canon Richard used the prayer service set for the week as a basis for our Worship Service.

At the final session of the Seminar we looked at how to move Ecumenism forward in this area and plan future activities.

# BEYOND PROJECT COMPASSION IS NO ORDINARY TIME

CATHERINE MCALEER

*In the Church's calendar we settle into Ordinary Time, sometimes described as a time for growth.* At Caritas it is no different. Our biggest season, Lent and with it Project Compassion, is over for the year and we begin to pause, plan and prepare for the time that is to come.

It would be remiss of me not to thank you all for your generous support of the past season. This year during Project Compassion, across Australia we raised almost \$11M. We certainly could not have done it without you, thank you for your contributions to the Project Compassion collection boxes, for challenges you may have set, for silly sock days, hill runs, muddy events, coin lines and everything in between. Thank you for your quiet and not so quiet advocacy, for the world's most vulnerable. Thank you for Giving Lent 100%!

In our season of growing Caritas still has a variety of activities going on that you might like to contribute to or invest in.

**Generation Earth** supports powerful action to combat climate change. It is about helping Australia transition to 100% clean energy for a safer climate and a secure future. It is about making it easier for everyone to switch from investing in fossil fuels to investing in renewable energy. At the heart of the message is that it is our climate, our future. Visit [genearth.org.au](http://genearth.org.au) if you would like to participate or learn more about this joint initiative.

In September, we celebrate **Women for the World**. This initiative encourages people to stand in solidarity with women in poverty around the world. The campaign

aims to highlight Caritas Australia's work to empower and support women and to raise funds that go towards our work in this area.

Women represent the greatest proportion of people experiencing extreme poverty around the world and are at greater risk of violence and human rights abuses. Many women remain marginalised and unable to participate fully in their societies.

I invite you to gather some friends, parishioners or community members to come together for this cause. Host a night in, a morning tea, run a raffle or go out with friends to raise funds and awareness for women around the world. Visit [womenfortheworld.org.au](http://womenfortheworld.org.au) to find out more or receive your host kit. Together we can make a difference.

Calling all schools and youth groups! Caritas Australia invites you to participate in our **Short Film Competition**. Create a 2-4 minute film suitable for children 5 years old to 12 years old that tells a story and addresses the key question: "How does the work of Caritas Australia show Care for our Common Home?" Each film should tell a story to viewers using practical and real life examples of the work of Caritas in local communities. The competition closes 8th November. Visit [www.caritas.org](http://www.caritas.org) for more details or to enter.

For more details about any of Caritas' projects, activities or to have me come and visit your school or parish, please contact me at [caritas@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:caritas@twb.catholic.org.au) or on Mondays on 4638 7977.

St Pat's *Best of Luck!*  
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# A VIRTUAL ENCOUNTER WITH THE SAINTS

## INGRID MCTAGGART



"Online With Saints" is story telling with a modern twist.

From the creator of "Tweeting with God", Fr Michel Remery, comes a new resource "Online with Saints". Using a combination of smart phone app and companion book, "Online with Saints" invites you to journey with over 100 holy men and women from the early church through to the newly canonised, from across the world in a great mix of young, old, lay people, religious, popes, princes and paupers.

The companion book is broken into two parts – Saints on Holiness and Vocation in Daily Life and Saints on Relationship with God and Others. In each of these parts, saints are sorted further into categories, exploring each of their characteristics and stories in the context of the category topics. The book offers prayers, biographies, quotes and further reading connecting the saints to questions of faith, morals and life experiences. The consistent and

logical layout of the book makes it an easy reference. It's not necessarily a book to read cover to cover (although you could), but a book you can journey with, jumping between stories and reflections without confusion.

The smart phone app is a little bit of fun and has the familiar look of a social media platform. Users interact with the saints through a profile containing pictures, video and status updates. This gives their stories an up-to-date feel and helps the user to interact further with the stories. The app is free and available at the App Store and Google Play. Visit [www.onlinewithsaints.com](http://www.onlinewithsaints.com) for further information.

"Online with Saints" is available now for \$33.95 RRP through Freedom Publishing Books [www.freedompublishingbooks.com.au](http://www.freedompublishingbooks.com.au).

## VINNIES CELEBRATES 125 YEARS IN QUEENSLAND

EMMA SIMPSON

*Members, volunteers and staff from the St Vincent de Paul Society in the Toowoomba Diocese celebrated 125 years of helping people in need with a Mass and morning tea at St Patrick's Cathedral on 30 June.*

The first Vinnies Conference (group of volunteer members helping others) was established in Queensland when churchgoers at St Brigid's Church Red Hill gathered on 18 February 1894 to respond to the needs of people still recovering from the great flood that inundated Brisbane in 1893.

Through 125 years of helping people in need, Vinnies has grown to 270 locations and 147 Vinnies shops and 9000-plus members and volunteers in towns and cities across Queensland. In the last financial year Vinnies assisted more than 331,500 Queenslanders and gave more than \$231 million in service and support to families and individuals in need.

This couldn't be achieved without the dedicated members and volunteers who give freely of their time, making a difference in the lives of disadvantaged Queenslanders. The society's vision is to give a hand up, not just a hand out to as many people who need help as possible, always respecting their dignity and encouraging them to take control of their own destiny.



L to R: Ron Caldwell (Sacred Heart Conference) and Bryan Bourke (St Monica's Conference) enjoy morning tea celebrating 125 years of Vinnies service to Queenslanders.



# CATHOLIC MISSION VISIT A LESSON IN EMPATHY AND JUSTICE

EMILY CONNORS

Pittsworth students participating in the "Have and Have Nots" workshop presented by Emily Connors, Catholic Mission

*The plight of children and their families in impoverished regions overseas has been brought vividly to life for students at Catholic schools in the western part of the Toowoomba Diocese.*

Hosting a visit by Catholic Mission Toowoomba Director Emily Connors, children at schools in St George, Inglewood, Millmerran and Pittsworth have learned about living with access to limited clean water, inadequate shelter, limited educational opportunities and insufficient medical supplies.

The road trip to the western region was part of a plan developed in late 2017 by Catholic Mission and the Toowoomba Catholic School's office. The purpose of the program was to support the schools of the diocese in remote areas with student formation, education on Mission and to encourage schools to support the work of Catholic Mission.

In 2018, the partnership saw visits to Quilpie, Cunnamulla and Charleville. This year, Emily spent a day in each of the schools and over the course of the week carried out 13 workshops with students from Prep to Year 6.

The content of the presentations and workshops was linked to the schools Religious Education program with Prep to Year 3 participating in the "Know Me" workshop

and Year 4 to Year 6 participating in the "Have and Have Nots" workshop. These workshops actively involved the students in situations of injustice and unequal distribution of resources, highlighting what it is like to live in someone else's shoes.

"It was wonderful to witness the student's reactions to the workshops," said Emily of this round of visits. She is looking forward to next year's road trip already.

Year 6 students at St Stephens School, Pittsworth, shared their experiences of the workshops, "During the Have and Have Nots session we experienced what it was like to live in developed and developing countries. We learnt a lot about their conditions of living and how fortunate we are.

We were amazed to learn about the amount of people who live below the poverty line and the lengths they go to for basic survival."

Another student remarked, "The facts we learnt about were very interesting and Catholic Mission have inspired our MacKillop Club to want to help in as many ways as possible".

If your school or parish youth group would like more information about the work of Catholic Mission please contact Emily on 0467 191 065 or email [connors@catholicmission.org.au](mailto:connors@catholicmission.org.au)



Witnessing the creation of the Toowoomba Diocese, the Enthronement of Bishop James Byrne

# A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE: ECHOES FROM THE PAST, FELT IN OUR PRESENT

INGRID MCTAGGART

***So much can happen in a year.*** Multiply that by 90, and well, there can be a lot to unpack. The world that existed 90 years ago when Toowoomba was made a separate diocese from the Brisbane Archdiocese was a very different place. However, the people who filled St Patrick's Church in Toowoomba on 1 September 1929 for the consecration of our first bishop, would have had some common ground with us.

The Catholic Church in Australia was well and truly established by 1929. Of the 27 dioceses/archdiocese in Australia, Toowoomba was the 20th diocese created. It had been 126 years since the celebration of the first Catholic Mass in Australia. It was also 86 years since the first Mass was held on the Darling Downs, celebrated by Archbishop John Bede Polding during his visit to the area in 1843.

It is impossible to delve into the history of this time without acknowledging the shared history with Australia's First Peoples. Several Aboriginal tribes called the area covered by our diocese home. The Jarowair and Giabal peoples are acknowledged as the Traditional Owners of the diocese's administrative hub of Toowoomba. In the same year the first Mass was held on the Darling Downs, the conflict between squatters and local Aboriginal peoples had reached its peak. The conflict culminated in the Battle of One Tree Hill.

By 1859, when Queensland was made a separate state from New South Wales, there was already high population growth by settlers on the Darling Downs and beyond. That same year the Brisbane Diocese (becoming an archdiocese in 1887) was created with James Quinn named the first bishop. It was around this time that Fr William McGinty regularly travelled to the Darling Downs from Ipswich to say Mass. Already people of faith were gathering and celebrating together. As private homes became too small a venue for Masses, grassroots movements emerged seeking permanent placement of clergy as well as more suitable sites for swelling congregations.

In 1862 the Parish of Warwick was established with Fr John Cani taking up residence. The Toowoomba Parish was established in 1863 with Fr Fulgentius Hodeberg residing in Toowoomba and also visiting Drayton. The following year Fr William Larkin was appointed to Drayton. Records show that Ipswich and Toowoomba/Drayton based priests travelled west to Roma to visit and celebrate Mass. The first recorded Catholic Wedding held in Roma was in 1864. Fr Larkin was recorded to have travelled to Roma in 1866. Later Fr Hodebourg moved to Roma to take up permanent residency at the mission.

There continued a great deal of growth for the church.



Large crowds gather for the consecration of James Byrne as the first Bishop of the Toowoomba Diocese

The arrival and spread of religious orders, especially orders like the Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of St Joseph and Christian Brothers, meant the rapid expansion of Catholic education in the area. The Sisters of Mercy, for example, arrived in Toowoomba in 1873. Over the next eight years, the order travelled establishing convents and schools in Warwick, Stanthorpe, Dalby and Roma.

By the time boundaries of the Toowoomba Diocese had been drawn, 14 parishes existed. Possibly 16 parishes counting Crows Nest and Helidon which were initially included in the Brisbane Archdiocese at the time of Toowoomba's excise. Foundation parishes were (in order of creation) Warwick, Toowoomba, Dalby, Roma, Charleville, Stanthorpe, Goondiwindi, Pittsworth, Clifton, Allora, Oakey, Chinchilla, Mitchell and Taroom.

Returning to the people who gathered 90 years ago to witness the historic occasion of the consecration of the first bishop, what might their life look like? It was a momentous time in history, some major events were still very recent for them, and equally significant events were just around the corner. It was nearly 30 years since Federation and 25 years since Toowoomba declared a city. World War I was a little over a decade passed, and World War II would not be for another decade into the future. While the Wall Street Crash was about a month and a half away, there was already economic uncertainty in Australia. The full effect of The Great Depression was a year or two away.

The Second Vatican Council, a defining moment for the modern Catholic Church, was over 30 years into the

future. The people gathered on that day in 1929 would have witnessed a very solemn ceremony. While they would have been prayerful witnesses, they would not have been active participants, and the Mass celebrated in Latin.

Yet, our experiences would not have been entirely foreign to each other. Today we are still burdened by vast distances between towns despite innovations in transport and improvements in infrastructure. Cars were indeed around by 1929; for example, the Ford Model T had reached our shores about 20 years earlier. Dust from lack of sealed roads meant that horseback and horse and buggy would still have been the preferred mode of transport. Even today with a modern car it can take 16 plus hours to travel from our eastern border to our farthest west Mass centre.

What will the next decade bring us in this diocese as we move towards our centenary? We are in the midst of our historical moment with Plenary Council 2020 in the not too distant future. What outcomes and world events will add to the next chapter of our story?

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Research and information provided by the Toowoomba Diocesan Archives. Assistance and fact-checking provided by Gabrielle Saide, Diocesan Archivist and Fr Peter Dorfield. Primary sources: Ansell, L. (1989). *Stones that Speak*. Toowoomba: Diocese of Toowoomba  
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# SPIRITUALITY LIBRARY POSSIBLE THROUGH THE GOOD WORKS OF MANY

SR ELAINE MORZONE

L to R: Sr Stancea Vichie, Sr Mary Cleary, Liz McAloon, Debbie Bowdler, Clare Smith, Sr Elaine Morzone and Sr Bernadette Wallis

*SYCHAR House of Prayer and Spirituality is a work in progress.* At this stage, no opening date has been set as this is dependent on work that needs to be done to the building to make it fit for purpose. Nevertheless, a significant amount of preparation has been done within the building to move this initiative along. In the previous issue of Horizons, the article “What’s in a Name?” explained how SYCHAR House of Prayer and Spirituality has been so named to draw on the symbolism of the encounter of Jesus with the Woman at the Well related in John’s Gospel, which took place at the Samaritan town of Sychar.

While it is just one aspect of a more comprehensive vision for SYCHAR, I would like to focus here on the establishment of a quality spirituality library which you will be able to access to enrich your spiritual journey once our House of Prayer and Spirituality is officially opened. Clare Smith, Debbie Bowdler and Sheila Sarquis, have generously given time to cover, process, catalogue and shelve books over a period of many months. “I have been amazed at the quality and quantity of books which have passed through my hands on their way to the shelves. There is a lovely range of books,” said Clare of the SYCHAR library. “Even people who are not normally inclined to read can find something that might interest and give food for thought to enhance their personal faith. There are authors and titles to tempt anyone interested in their personal faith development.”

Initially I began sourcing books for the library from sisters of my own community but before long books were also coming from other religious communities and individuals who were happy to donate to a good cause. As our library volunteers began to work on organising our books into a library, Trudi Burgess from the Catholic Schools Resource Centre (and her predecessor Kayleen Commens) were an enormous help in getting us launched. Their advice and readiness to offer practical help was invaluable. Thanks also to the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office who made

available to us a number of spirituality books, DVDs and CDs that were part of their Resource Library as well as a significant amount of furniture that was not required in their new premises. Very early in the piece, we were also pleasantly surprised by the unsolicited gift of a computer which Madeleine Taylor generously organised for us from Taylor’s Removals. This was a great bonus to our librarian volunteers who set about cataloguing our books online with consistency and enthusiasm. Your thoughtfulness, Madeleine, was a great source of encouragement and support in those early stages. Thank you!

We are rejoicing also in a successful application to Highways and Byways for funds to buy computer software and a printer/copier/scanner to help set up our library administration hub. The software is now installed and the printer is set to begin its part in the mission of assisting the people of this diocese, wherever their location, to keep abreast of the materials available in the library and so contact us if they wish to borrow. We are grateful for the opportunity to express our gratitude in person for this grant money to Liz McAloon, Executive Officer of Highways and Byways, and to Missionary Sisters of Service, Srs Stancea Vichie, Mary Cleary and Bernadette Wallis, when they joined our library taskforce for morning tea recently.

SYCHAR will be home base for the library resources with a welcome for those of you who would like to drop in and enjoy the peace and quiet of the surroundings. As well as a comprehensive selection of spirituality books from which to choose, you will also be able to make use of one of the CD players with headsets or a smaller TV set provided for individuals to make use of the extensive media resources in the restful setting which SYCHAR provides. Books will also be able to be taken out on loan while work is already in progress to create opportunities for interested out-of-town parishes to access library resources.





# JUBILEE MASS MARKED WITH PAPAL BLESSINGS

L to R: Bishop Robert McGuckin congratulates jubilarians Bishop Bill Morris, Fr Brian Connolly and Fr Hal Ranger.

*On 10 July, the diocesan community came together with Bishop Robert McGuckin, diocesan clergy and other clergy to celebrate the annual Jubilee Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral.* This year's Mass recognised Fr Hal Ranger's 60 years of ordination along with Fr Brian Connolly and Bishop Bill Morris' 50 years of ordination. It was a joyful celebration and an opportunity for parishioners, friends and family to give thanks

for the ministry of these men to the community over the years. At the conclusion of Mass, Bishop Robert presented each of the three jubilarians with framed personal Papal Blessings to commemorate their significant milestones.

After Mass, Bishop Robert and clergy joined with family and close friends of the jubilarians at a special lunch at the Cathedral Centre.



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# AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS MEET WITH POPE FRANCIS

ACBC MEDIA

Australian Bishops meet with Pope Francis. Photo credit ©Vatican Media

*Pope Francis has given his apostolic blessing to the Australian Catholic Bishops and encouraged them to explore new ways of being missionary in Australia at this time.* Almost 40 Australian bishops met with Pope Francis in June for more than two hours as part of their Ad Limina Apostolorum visit. It was a high point of a memorable first day of the Ad Limina, which began with the bishops celebrating Mass at the tomb of St Peter.

“To celebrate the Eucharist at the tomb of Peter and then to engage in pastoral dialogue with his successor was a unique and grace-filled way to start our week in Rome,” Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge said.

The bishops raised with Pope Francis a number of topics that are of deep concern to the Catholic Church in Australia. Among them were the Church’s work to eliminate child sexual abuse and to accompany survivors of abuse, the bishops’ desire to support and minister to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the hopes for the Plenary Council and the need to find new ways of witnessing to Jesus Christ in Australian society in a time of change.

“There was an ease and a fraternal warmth in the way Pope Francis spoke and an attentiveness in his listening to the questions the bishops asked,” Archbishop Coleridge said.

“For a man of his years, the Holy Father’s energy through a long and complex conversation was amazing.”

Conference vice president Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP said the meeting with Pope Francis was “moving and deeply encouraging”. He said it showed the benefit of the Petrine ministry, “of being our solid ‘rock’ and ‘confirming the brethren”.

“The Holy Father clearly understood our situation in Australia. It was a real moment of grace,” Archbishop Fisher said.

Bishop Charles Gauci, the most recently ordained of the Australian bishops, having become Bishop of Darwin last September, said he was “deeply impressed” by Pope Francis. “I was impressed by his humanity, his compassion, his sense of collegiality, his passion for working with all the people of God in a synodal Church and his true commitment to the Gospel,” Bishop Gauci said. “I felt a deep sense of connection with the Holy Father as a fellow member of the College of Bishops, as bishops in service of the People of God and in partnership with the People of God.”

Melbourne Archbishop Peter Comensoli posted on social media that the meeting with the Holy Father was “an extraordinary conversation, brother to brothers”. He said it was “spiritually intense, deeply honest, pastorally astute, free and frank”.



# WHAT IS THE AD LIMINA?

FR PETER SCHULTZ

Bishop Robert McGuckin receives a parting gift from Pope Francis at the conclusion of the Australian Bishop's meeting with the Holy Father. Photo credit ©Vatican Media

*The Code of Canon Law requires that each Diocesan Bishop (or his equivalent) make a regular report, usually every five years, to the Holy See regarding the state and his governance of the local Church entrusted to his care.*

Having forwarded a written report, the bishop usually makes a personal visit to the Holy See with other bishops of his Episcopal Conference. During the visit, the bishops meet with the various Congregations, Commission and other apparatus that assist the Holy Father in his role as chief pastor of the Universal Church.

This formal report and visit is called the ad limina, which translates as “to the threshold” and indicates that the bishops are visiting the doorway to Saints Peter and Paul. As well the formal meeting with the Holy Father and others, the bishops visit and pray at the historic tombs of the saints. The visit includes times of prayer at all four major Basilicas: St Peter’s, St Paul’s, Beyond the Walls, St Mary Major’s, and the Cathedral Church of Rome and mother Church of the world St John’s, in the Lateran.

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

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## Holy Spirit Seminary QUEENSLAND

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# CATHOLICCARE INTERPRETING IS A LANGUAGE OF SUPPORT

RACHEL SMITH, TRAMS CASEWORKER

*The complexities of settlement in a new country are a very real experience for those newly arrived in our Toowoomba community.* New people, new systems, new environments, and for many people, a new language, are significant adjustments for those establishing their new home.

As we meet families from all different parts of this world we encounter a wide variety of languages now represented in our Toowoomba community including Arabic, French, Swahili, Farsi (Persian), Dinka and also, perhaps less familiar to those of us born and raised in Australia, languages such as Hazaragi, Lingala, Kurdish

Kurmanji, Kinyarwanda and so many more.

For those of us who only speak one language and have always lived in a country where that language is spoken, it may be hard to imagine negotiating a community in a language we do not understand. Imagine sending your children to school not knowing how to communicate with the teaching staff or being able to understand the many notes that are sent home. Imagine going to the mailbox to receive a handful of letters that you are overwhelmed to open because the text cannot be understood and you are not sure what is important or required of you. Imagine trying to access healthcare for your family without knowing if you will be able to explain what you feel or understand the instructions or medications you are given.

In recognition of the needs of some of our newest neighbours, CatholicCare Interpreting is an exciting new initiative providing local interpreting support to the culturally and linguistically diverse communities of our Toowoomba Region. Supported by funding provided as part of the MUSTER Initiative (Mutual Understanding, Support, Tolerance, Engagement and Respect), through the Strong and Resilient Communities Program through the Department of Social Services, CatholicCare Interpreting aims to ensure equitable access to services for all Toowoomba residents by ensuring high quality interpreting services are available in our local community. As an organisation committed to social justice, CatholicCare is passionate about ensuring the newest families in our community have access to interpreting services that are professionally delivered, accurate, unbiased, and maintain strict confidentiality. Through a fee for service system, local interpreters will be available to organisations seeking interpreting support for their clients.

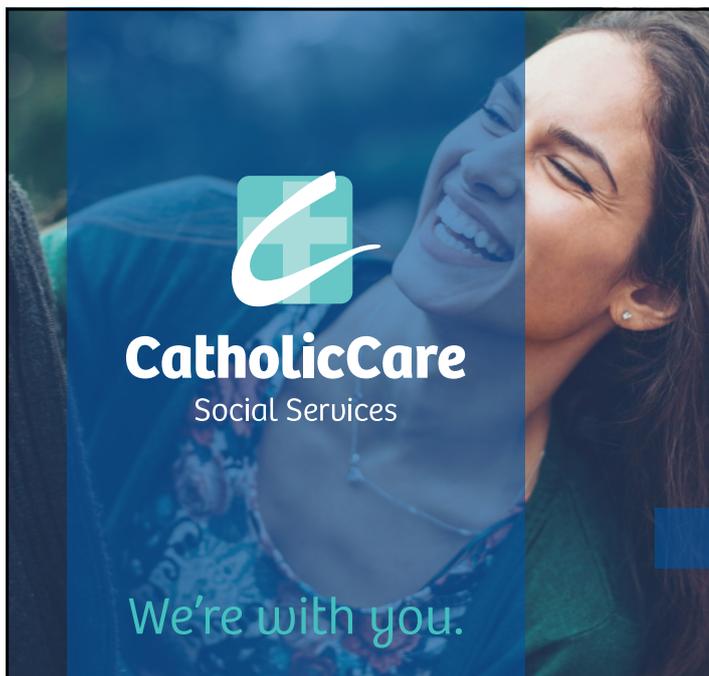
Interpreters for CatholicCare Interpreting will be

recruited from the Toowoomba community. Initially joining our program as interpreting interns, candidates for the program will be selected based on demand for languages, English proficiency, availability of places and other suitability criteria. An initial cohort of ten highly skilled interpreting interns have recently commenced their training program. Further cohorts will be welcomed in 2020 and 2021. Considering the needs of our local area, priority has been given to the in-demand languages of Kurdish Kurmanji, Arabic, Swahili, Dari and Farsi.

The interpreting interns will be supported through the process of certification through the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters. Certification acknowledges their ability to meet the professional standards expected in Australia for translating and interpreting. Training will take them through the role of the interpreter, developing professional interpreting skills, and understanding the responsibilities and ethical obligations of interpreters. Candidates who successfully engage with the program will be considered for casual employment through CatholicCare Interpreting. Although limited intern positions are available, the program will also include initiatives to upskill other members of the community who wish to begin a pathway toward future interpreting work and certification.

In a genuine win-win situation, CatholicCare Interpreting is a great opportunity for supporting Toowoomba locals into employment pathways through developing interpreting skills while also supporting the community by enhancing access to local professional interpreting services in in-demand languages.

For more information about CatholicCare Interpreting, including queries about accessing interpreting services or to find out how you can be involved with or support this program, please contact Rachel Smith at CatholicCare on 1300 477 433.



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# PLENARY COUNCIL 2020 A SPRING OF HOPE

MARY OTTO

*For the Catholic Church and our world today, how apt are the opening lines of “A Tale of Two Cities” by Charles Dickens?* “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...” Since Dickens first penned these words 160 years ago, humanity has witnessed advances in science and technology, social and political changes and increasing awareness of the fragility of this planet. These advances have made a positive impact on society in general. Despite these apparent advances, many still have restricted social rights, no access to sufficient food and water, and the health of our planet is in decline.

In this country, the extent to which the Catholic Church engages in social and environmental justice, pastoral care of the vulnerable, education, and health issues are significant and positive. On the other hand, many have indicated that the institutional aspect of the church no longer holds significance for them believing it to have disconnected itself from the real world. Compounding this matter is the publicity surrounding the experience of child abuse by those in authority, leaving many of the faithful feeling deeply wounded and ashamed.

In what might seem, to use Dicken’s words, as the “winter of despair”, it has been heartening to see that over 222,000 people responded to the Australian Bishops’ invitation to speak boldly and to listen with a humble heart. It gives hope that the church can move forward to all that it is called to be as it journeys towards the Plenary Council of 2020.

In recent weeks following the work of the National Centre for Pastoral Research, along with the Bishops Commission for the Plenary Council, the Plenary Council Executive Committee and the Facilitation Team, six National Themes for Discernment have emerged. Each of the newly selected

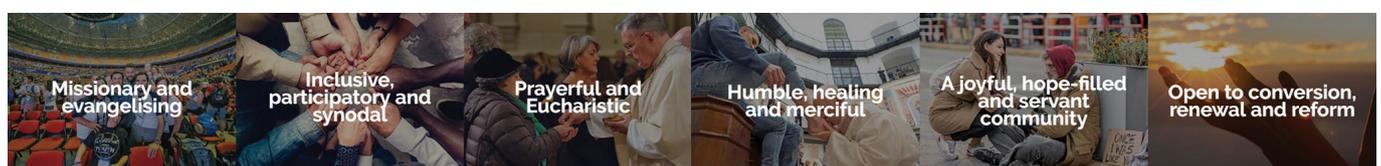
Discernment and Writing groups will deeply consider one of these emergent themes over the coming months. After much thoughtful discernment, prayer and reflection, their members will prepare documents for the Plenary Council of 2020.

We do not have to look far into scripture to find a reference to each of these themes. According to scripture, Jesus himself spoke of the need to be missionary and evangelising, inclusive, prayerful, humble, healing and merciful as well as the need to be a servant to others. Scripture also illustrates how the early leaders of the church reiterated the need to live the way of Christ.

These emergent National Themes for Discernment are the outcome of the sharing of stories of people on the ground, living their lives with all the joys and struggles life brings. The shared stories, accompanied by the deep listening of others, are no less important than those of any other age. They reflect similarities and raise the same question of who and what are we called to be and do, as a people baptised in Christ. These themes draw us all to the eternal need to recognise the Christ present in all aspects of our lives.

As we continue to move towards Plenary Council 2020, we are invited now to take up the concerns of the people of the Australian church. Let us gather in our faith communities, as did members of the early church, to look more deeply into these matters. Together we can ensure that we remain authentic to our calling as the baptised. To be the face of God to all we encounter and be aware of the presence of Christ in our lives. May this era in the history of our faith, through our endeavours, become what Dickens described as “the best of times” and most importantly “the spring of hope”.

## The 6 NATIONAL THEMES for DISCERNMENT





# OLD CELEBRATION OFFERS NEW APPRECIATION FOR OUR COMMON HOME

JOHN BRIFFA

***Did you celebrate the Ember Day on the first Friday in March?*** To be honest, if I was asked to describe my experience of celebrating ember days I would have nothing much to say. However the ongoing cycle of drought around the country and devastating floods of north Queensland experienced earlier this year may be cause for us to re-embrace the two special days of prayer and abstinence known as Ember Days.

Originally instituted to ask God's blessing for a bountiful harvest or a good vintage, ember days also call us to be aware of the impact of our relationship with the environment and the responsibility placed before us to care for our planet.

The first Friday of March and September are set down in the liturgical calendar as 'days to offer penance, fasting and special prayers for the needs of all people and the productivity of the earth (GNLYC 45)'. On our Australian liturgical calendar they are all that remain of a tradition which at one time celebrated ember days at the beginning of all four seasons, each with a period spanning three days of abstinence at a time.

At a time when empires were built on the success of agricultural prosperity and the human labour required to sustain it, seeking God's blessing on the harvest and on the workers was naturally embraced. The ritual was well established by the fifth century when Pope Leo I preached a series of sermons on ember days. The reform of the Second Vatican Council retained ember days in principle, but left it to local bishops' conferences to determine the form of the observance. In 2008 the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC) decided that the Australian Church would observe the first Friday of March and September as Autumn and Spring ember days.

Even though many around our country no longer have a direct relationship to working the land, everyone has some experience of the variability and brutality of the extremes of our climate. Regardless of where we stand politically on the question of climate change, as people of faith, a relationship to the Creator charges us with a responsibility to care for creation. In his encyclical

letter *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis uses the creation stories of Genesis to say that '*human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself (LS 66).*'

Issues around sustainable and socially responsible ways of living are increasingly in the spotlight. This is not lost on the young members of the church, as interest in the environment is a cause often championed by the youth. Perhaps this creates the perfect point of entry for re-engaging our communities with observing ember days. Parishes with schools could celebrate a liturgy with a creation focus. This would help express the connection between liturgy and life, something which is often questioned by young people today.

At Masses the previous weekend, the faithful might be reminded that the upcoming Friday is a day of fasting and abstinence in recognition of our responsibility to be good stewards of the world's resources. Pew bulletins could include suitable prayers for families to say together on the day. The Prayer of the Faithful on the day itself could feature petitions such as, *for the productivity of the earth and for human labour; for the victims of famine and exploitation; for the grace to be good stewards of God's gift of creation.*

Fasting and abstaining from things we like encourages us to be restrained in our exploitation of natural resources. School tuckshops could ban the sale of pre-packaged or over packaged and processed food. Home meals could be simple salads or plain rice. A day of penance expresses our solidarity with those who are disadvantaged, especially those who suffer through famine and the inequitable distribution of the world's goods.

If you missed the ember day on the first Friday in March, look to Friday 6 September. On caring for our common home, Pope Francis writes, '*in nature God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness (LS 12).*' Promoting and observing ember days provides an opportunity to encourage all to do something more to protect the natural world and to share God's beauty and goodness in creation.



# WORKING FOR JUSTICE

DR DAVID TUTTY

***I am new to Toowoomba.*** I arrived at the end of March this year and started work as the Executive Officer of the Diocesan Social Justice Commission on 1 April. As my first contribution to “Horizons”, I would like to share my key areas of work and the hopes that I have in this role.

As Executive Officer, my work is set by the mandate of the Social Justice Commission. Arising from the Pastoral Plan, the Commission has been tasked to work on issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to refugees and asylum seekers and on issues concerning care of the earth. The commission has the role of raising awareness, educating, advocating and practically working to seek greater justice. Aware that many of the issues are far larger than our diocese, the commission works alongside many other social justice focused organisations, both secular and church related, to achieve its goals.

The church’s desire to respond to these issues arises from the challenges of the Hebrew prophets to act justly and from the Gospel’s call to see Jesus in those most in need (Matt 25). Alongside this, over the last 120 years or so, our popes and bishops have offered substantial social teaching in response to current issues. Our Social Justice Commission draws on one quote from the 1971 Synod of Bishops’ document “Justice in the World” as its guide and inspiration. It says, “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appears to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel.” The Synod of Bishops name that working for justice as at the core of announcing the good news. We cannot preach the gospel without working for justice.

I come to this role with training and experience in working for justice. I would best describe myself as a Catholic theologian with a specialty in Christian mission and social and ecological justice. My theological background has given me a good understanding of the faith basis we have for working for justice. It also gives me skills to analyse issues, to reflect on them in the light of faith and to offer resources to parishes, groups and individuals as they seek to respond to injustices.

I come with experience doing a similar job for 12 years for

the Bishop of Auckland. There, I worked directly on issues as well as conducting faith formation on social justice with parish and diocesan groups. I was blessed to work with many Maori, refugees and environmental activists on issues that we had in common.

Following this, I spent nine years in South Africa. I went to study and ended up living and working in a poor rural area for six and a half years. At the head level I was researching conversion and what leads to conversion to justice, while my personal day to day journey was an ever deeper exposure to, and immersion into, the lives of some of the poorest in rural South Africa. Being the only non-African in the local area was a very humbling experience. It was a difficult learning experience but I feel blessed to have had the opportunity.

Now I am in Toowoomba, and I’m grateful to be here! I enjoy the challenge of working for justice and I enjoy the dynamic of connecting with people, seeking where I can best contribute. I am also aware that I have much to learn about the local context being a New Zealander.

With that said, I do have hopes for what I can contribute in the role of Social Justice Commission Executive Officer. Our Church has made strong stands on ecological, refugee and indigenous issues. My hope is that I can help the Diocese of Toowoomba understand better how these issues are experienced here in Australia, what the Church is teaching, and how best to respond as Catholics. I hope to raise awareness of Pope Francis’ teachings. For example, he has recently declared that we are at the point of an ecological crisis, not only because of human-induced climate change, but also because of our unsustainable consumer lifestyles. Pope Francis stands with refugees pleading with the world that we act more compassionately and humanely. He argues that indigenous peoples must have the decision-making rights over their traditional lands and not governments or mining companies. Each of these papal stands has significant import for us in Australia and for the call we have as Catholics.

Any parish or group that would like me to visit, I would be more than happy to respond. I can be contacted at 0428 130 895 or [dtutty@twb.catholic.org.au](mailto:dtutty@twb.catholic.org.au).



## THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY: WHO IS BOBS? SR DI PHILLIPS

L to R: Mary Porter,  
Sr Di Phillips and  
Catherine Sandric

***Bobs was the name of a companion dog given to St Mary MacKillop when she used a wheelchair towards the end of her life.*** At the time of her beatification, an interview with Sr Canisius, an Ursuline Sister from Lewisham appeared in “The Australian Women’s Weekly” (McDermott, P. (December 1994). The Australian Women’s Weekly, page 42). Between 1902 and 1909, Sr Canisius and her sister visited their aunts who were both Sisters of St Joseph living at Mount Street, North Sydney for the Christmas holidays. There they spent a lot of time with Mother Mary, as Mary MacKillop was known.

Each morning they would race each other to see who could get to Mother Mary’s wheelchair first. Sr Canisius said that Bobs was always there and he was very protective of Mother Mary. When Mary died, there were a lot of people who wanted to take Bobs to their homes. Sr Canisius said that the little dog was sent to the Blue Mountains to live with Sisters he knew and associated with Mother Mary. There he settled down.

A few years ago, while I was on the annual Mary MacKillop

Pilgrimage, a priest who was also on the pilgrimage, remarked that a story about Bobs would interest children. That remark set me thinking about how I might write that story. I had already written stories about horses that were associated with Mary MacKillop, so I thought, why not write about Bobs the dog.

Lots of consultations followed, and there were several drafts. I sent the drafts to schools in Brisbane and the Toowoomba diocese. I collated remarks and recommendations until I was satisfied the story could go to my contacts in Sydney in the hope of publication. Meanwhile, I had to find an illustrator. On a visit to Penola, South Australia, I met Catherine Sandric, an artist from Tasmania. I invited her to work with me, and together we created the storybook about Bobs.

I am grateful to everyone who helped to bring this book into being. Special gratitude goes to the Sisters of St Joseph in Queensland for their support and belief in my ability. I hope that everyone enjoys this account of a woman and her dog.

## LAUNCHING “BOBS THE DOG” MARY PORTER

***Celebrating the launch of “Bobs The Dog”, written by Sr Diane Phillips, was an inspiring occasion.*** On 9 July people passionate about Sr Di’s work and the life of Mary MacKillop gathered for the launch of Sr Di’s latest book.

Sr Margaret Andersen was MC for the event and introduced each of the speakers and their support of Sr Di’s work. Illustrator Catherine Sandric shared that she had always had a warm space in her heart for Mary MacKillop. Catherine revealed the Spirit urged her to illustrate Sr Di’s book.

I was honoured to speak at the book launch because I consider Sr Di to be my friend, mentor and spiritual advisor. I know only too well the passion she has for her work, God’s work. I would describe Sr Di as a storyteller who readily brings scripture to life through story and the lives of ordinary people and animals doing everyday things extraordinarily well.

When writing her books, Sr Di asked those with

Josephite connections from schools in Queensland, to read and provide feedback on her animal narratives about Mary MacKillop. She responded to our feedback when writing, “Horse Tales of Mary MacKillop”, “Dear Little Bennie” and now her latest book, “Bobs the Dog”.

Told from the little dog’s perspective, this is an excellent story for children covering change, grief, the Sisters of St Joseph and Mary MacKillop’s later years. It deals with Mary’s death in a sensitive, practical and loving way. This story is a fantastic text for children that helps students make sense of change and loss to be able to live with joy again. As Bobs comes to terms with change, students can also learn how God’s plan for them can be revealed so they can do ordinary things with great love. In doing their bit, they too can make the world a better place for others like Jesus and Mary MacKillop before them.

With great delight, I declared the book, “Bobs the Dog”, ready for readership!

# OUR SACRAMENTAL JOURNEYS

*After months of preparation for sacraments in schools and parishes, many across our diocese have been celebrating the sacraments of First Communion and Confirmation. Thank you to parents, teachers and parishioners who have helped guide the children through these important milestones in their faith journey in the Catholic Church.*



First Communion candidates from Oakey, the children were prepared for the sacrament by Teresa Fisher and Lisa Cavanagh. First Communion celebrated by Frs Thomas Areekuzhy with Mick Carroll.



16 Confirmation candidates from Oakey Parish, prepared for the sacrament by Teresa Fisher and Lisa Cavanagh. Confirmation celebrated by Bishop Brian Finnigan with Frs Thomas Areekuzhy and Mick Carroll.



First Communion candidates from Charleville, celebrated by Fr Peter Doohan.



3 Confirmation candidates from Wallumbilla Parish. Confirmation celebrated by Bishop Bill Morris.



Confirmation for candidates from St Saviour's Primary School celebrated by Bishop Robert McGuckin with Fr Michael O'Brien.



Confirmation for candidates from Millmerran Parish celebrated by Bishop Robert McGuckin with Fr Thomas Areekuzhy.



*Bishop Bill Morris speaking to the Candidates for Confirmation at Roma.*

*Full circle: Bishop Bill confirmed Toni (and her husband) over 20 years ago when they attended school in Toowoomba and now he has confirmed one of their children as part of this year's Roma candidates.*





FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## CELEBRATING LEARNING AND LIFE

DR PAT COUGHLAN

Dr Pat Coughlan  
addresses assembled  
staff at the Bishop's  
Inservice Day  
Charleville

***Queensland Catholic Education Week is a time for the 306 Catholic school communities across the state to celebrate Catholic education, its many achievements and substantial contribution to the broader community.***

The theme for this year's celebration is 'Many Voices. One Spirit.', which acknowledges both the vast diversity of our communities, and the one Spirit which unites this diversity in purpose and mission.

The 'Many Voices' are students, staff, families, parishioners and community members. Our 31 schools extend hospitality and welcome to diverse student and family groups and highly qualified, principled educators irrespective of race, religion, ethnicity, gender or physical ability. It is with such students and staff that we witness to Christ's mission.

'One Spirit' signifies our unity of purpose. Catholic schools are places of faith and reason where the Gospel message and scholarship are entwined to liberate the human spirit, stimulate life-long learning and call all students to live a meaningful life and contribute to a better world. Students learn about and from the Catholic faith and are disposed to embrace it as their identity in life. The intent is to empower students to think of themselves as agents not dependents and further their social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

Catholic Education Week brings together 9,000 students and over 1,700 staff in our 31 schools across the Diocese. Schools celebrate locally with events including

Masses, grandparent days, friendship days, book week parades and visits to aged care facilities and community service activities.

A feature of Catholic Education Week in the Toowoomba Diocese is the annual Bishop's Inservice Days. These days are an important occasion for staff to gather to celebrate, reflect and learn together. This year's keynote speaker is Professor Br David Hall who will speak to the topic of Catholic schools in turbulent times. Br David is well grounded in the daily challenges of school life and his keynote address emphasizes the significance and meaning attached to what we do. These days are held in Charleville, Roma and Toowoomba.

During this week we also take the time to acknowledge the outstanding contributions and service of staff with the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Excellence Awards. These awards showcase the exemplary leadership, teaching and classroom support evident in our schools as well as acknowledge the long service of staff who have given many years of dedicated service to education.

As executive director I am exceptionally proud of our staff, students, parents and parish staff who together make up the school community. These communities enable us to share the privileged responsibility of educating, nurturing and caring for our young people.

I thank all families who are sharing their journey with us and invite others to discover the difference a Catholic education can make.



# BISHOP'S INSERVICE DAYS IMPORTANT FORMATION OPPORTUNITY

Br David Hall speaks about the daily challenges of school life at the Bishop's Inservice Day Roma.

*A feature of Catholic Education Week in the Toowoomba Diocese is the annual Bishop's Inservice Days which provide an important occasion for staff to gather, to celebrate, reflect and learn together.*

This year's keynote speaker was Professor Br David Hall who spoke to the topic of "Catholic schools in turbulent times". Br David is well grounded in the daily challenges of school life and his keynote address emphasised the significance and meaning attached to what we do. He highlighted the multi-faceted and counter-cultural nature

of our work in bringing a life-giving message of hope and liberation to students who live in a largely secular world.

The days are powerful, unifying events for the Diocese and Toowoomba Catholic Schools and a public affirmation of the highly regarded contribution of Catholic education to the life and vitality of communities in Toowoomba and further west. "It is a privilege to experience the high staff morale and firm commitment to our mission which is such a distinctive feature of our organisation" said Executive Director: Catholic Schools, Dr Pat Coughlan.



Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office staff and western teaching staff with Bishop Robert McGuckin and St Mary's Charleville Parish Priest Fr Peter Doohan.



# LONG SERVICE AWARDS RECOGNISE STAFF DEDICATION

L to R: Shelley Murphy, Madonna Sleba and Judy Smith from St Saviour's Primary School Toowoomba.

***Toowoomba Catholic Schools has recognised those staff throughout the diocese who have achieved a significant tenure within the organisation.*** Each year during Catholic Education Week we acknowledge those who have given 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years of service, whether in the Toowoomba Diocese or other dioceses within Australia.

Two staff are celebrating 40 years of service, one of which is Alwyn Rix. For 36 of those years, he has been at St Mary's College Toowoomba. During this time, Alwyn has held many middle leadership positions, and regularly volunteers to assist at different social events at the college. One of Alwyn's proudest initiatives was establishing sailing at the college.

"St Mary's has been a wonderful place to teach. As a young teacher, you think you can change lives. With time you realise you're the one that changes. Now I hope my teaching influences students to make changes," said Alwyn.

Principal, Michael Newman, himself celebrating 30 years service, said, "Alwyn has been an outstanding educator over many years. He is always positive, a wonderful role model and professional in his dealings with the young men of St Mary's College."

St Saviour's Primary School Toowoomba has three staff members presented with a Long Service Award. Among them is Madonna Sleba, the Principal, who has worked within Catholic education in Brisbane and Toowoomba for 25 years. Madonna said, "Catholic education has motivated me to reach my greatest potential as a leader of education. Providing high-quality educational opportunities for

students each day is an incredible privilege that I don't take lightly. I will be forever grateful to the families and friends I have met and continue to meet through working in the Catholic system for their support and inspiration."

Judy Smith, also at St Saviour's, is celebrating 35 years. She has many fond memories of her first teaching position at St John's School Roma, where the school community was like a family to her. "We worked together and socialised together, making the most of our time out west. Since 1987 I have been in Toowoomba, first at Sacred Heart, then St Saviour's. I feel blessed to have spent time in these wonderful communities," said Judy.

Shelley Murphy has been a School Officer at St Saviour's Primary School for 20 years. "I have been very fortunate to work with some great principals and staff. I have really enjoyed my time here as every day is never the same," said Shelley.

Nicole Davies is another teacher who is celebrating 40 years in Catholic education. Nicole has spent the past 30 years at St Joseph's College Toowoomba and is currently the Middle Leader for Science. Nicole is a passionate biologist and energetic teacher.

Also at St Joseph's, Scott Edwards and Jaye Singleton are both being recognised for 20 years of service. Both Scott and Jaye have worked at St Joseph's College for the entirety of their service. Jaye is a teacher aide who has worked in many areas of the college. Scott is passionate about student's personal growth through sport and is a Pastoral Leader.

## WE CONGRATULATE AND THANK THE FOLLOWING STAFF FOR THEIR DEDICATION AND HARD WORK.

### 20 YEARS:

Carol Sharp - Assumption College  
 Loretta Simmons - Mary MacKillop Catholic College  
 Rhonda Gath - Sacred Heart Primary School  
 Steve Swires - St John's School  
 Jaye Singleton - St Joseph's College  
 Scott Edwards - St Joseph's College  
 Sharon Cox - St Joseph's School, Millmerran  
 Frank Strachotta - St Mary's College  
 Shelley Murphy - St Saviour's Primary School  
 Janelle Whitbread - Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office

### 25 YEARS:

Kerri Collins - Assumption College  
 Kim Jones - Holy Name Primary School  
 Heidi Robinson - Mater Dei Primary School  
 Louise Pflugst - St Anthony's Primary School  
 Linda Fogarty - St Francis de Sales  
 Michelle Chinnery - St John's School  
 Brian Cantwell - St Joseph's College  
 Katherine King - St Mary's Primary School, Warwick  
 Madonna Sleba - St Saviour's Primary School  
 John Coman - Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office

### 30 YEARS:

Angela Brennan - St John's School  
 Carmel Treasure - St John's School  
 Donaugh Shirley - St John's School  
 Megan Mahoney - St Joseph's School, Stanthorpe  
 Brian Steer - St Mary's College  
 Michael Newman - St Mary's College

### 35 YEARS:

Jackie Cash - Mater Dei Primary School  
 James Armstrong - St Joseph's School, Stanthorpe  
 Mary McLucas - St Joseph's School, Stanthorpe  
 Phillip Cutler - St Mary's College  
 Maria Richards - St Mary's Primary School, Warwick  
 Shelley Lindores - St Patrick's School  
 Judy Smith - St Saviour's Primary School  
 Barbara Wuersching  
 - Youth & Community Learning Centre

### 40 YEARS:

Nicole Davies - St Joseph's College, Toowoomba  
 Alwyn Rix - St Mary's College, Toowoomba



L to R: Angela Brennan, Carmel Brennan, Donaugh Shirley, Steve Swires and Michelle Chinnery from St John's School Roma.

## TOOWOOMBA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS EXCELLENCE AWARDS - FINALISTS AND RECIPIENTS

*These awards showcase the exemplary leadership, teaching and classroom support evident in our schools.* This year we received over 100 nominations for the awards celebrating the passionate and inspirational people who make up the Toowoomba Catholic Schools community.

Finalists and their nominators were invited to attend

the TCS Excellence Awards presentation dinner at Preston Peak Winery, when the recipients of each award were announced.

Award sponsors for 2019 were Australian Catholic Superannuation and Retirement Fund, Data#3, Salary Packaging Australia and Toowoomba Toyota.

### FINALISTS AND AWARD RECIPIENTS

#### Teaching and learning support

Rebecca Brownhall, Eileen Moyle and Anne Woodcroft-Brown

#### Administration, finance and facilities support

Debbie Menkins, Angelina Sims and Bryan Vickery

#### Volunteer support

Darryl Betzien, Leah Maree Moore and Carolyn Wishart

#### EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

##### Early career teacher

Kirsty Cameron, Callum Duncan and Chloe Lobegeier

##### Primary expert teacher

Joanne Cavanagh, Michelle Chinnery, Sandra Gleeson and Debbie Hawkins

#### Secondary expert teacher

Tamara Broughton, Christopher Grierson and Bronwyn Mearthur

#### Professional Learning Community (PLC)

Feed me 'Pi' PLC and the Mater Dei Visible Learner Team

#### EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

##### School leadership

Sharon Collins, Pollyanna Crawford, Cara Craig, Donaugh Shirley and Jennifer Smeed

##### Middle leadership

Samuel Hannant, Melissa Irwin and Katie Shellshear

##### Emerging leader

Rachel Coggan and Piers Dudin



Excellence in Teaching and Learning - Early career teacher award. L to R: Dr Pat Coughlan, Chloe Lobegeier (Mater Dei Primary Toowoomba), award recipient Callum Duncan (St Monica's School Oakey), Kirsty Cameron (Holy Name Primary Toowoomba), David Hutton OAM (TCS Council Chair) and Kevin Berry (Director: Information Services, Toowoomba Catholic Schools)



Excellence in Education Support – Administration, finance and facilities award. L to R: Dr Pat Coughlan, Bryan Vickery (St John’s School Roma), Debbie Menkins, (Sacred Heart Primary Toowoomba), award recipient Angelina Sims (St Joseph’s School Stanthorpe), Brad Young (Toowoomba Toyota-Sponsor) and Bishop Robert McGuckin.



Celebrating excellence in Catholic education in the Toowoomba Diocese.



Staff from Holy Name Primary School, Toowoomba. L to R: Kerri-Ann Manthey (APRE), Carolyn Wishart, and Kathy Bliss (Principal). Carolyn was the recipient of the Excellence in Education Support - Volunteer Support Award.

# BRIEF

## EDUCATION NEWS



*St John's School Roma, held its St John's Day Mass and Leadership Induction recently. The leaders for each house: Marian, Xaverian and Theresian were inducted into their prefecture positions for the next 12 months. The 740 students of St John's filled All Saints Church to the brim and it was a wonderful celebration of our school patron saint and our students.*

*L to R Back row: Chelsea Weyman-Jones, Rileigh Lawson, Lucas Crawford, Peyton Horn, Sarah Upton.*

*L to R Front row: Shauna Fisher, Maddy McInnerney, Fr Jamie Collins, Sr Nora Fitzgibbon, Hannah Coonan, Kaitlyn Lucas.*

***Australian Catholic singer and songwriter, Andrew Chinn visited St Stephen's School Pittsworth to share his songs with the students.*** Andrew's well-known songs are used in our classrooms and celebrations throughout the year. The students participated in workshops and rehearsals throughout the day in preparation for an evening concert in front of the school community. It was a wonderful way to celebrate the end of semester one.





*Before the first State of Origin match, Charleville was excited to host the Maroons for one of their training days. Thanks to the local council the town was granted a holiday, so for the children, not to mention the adults, all roads led to the showgrounds. Getting a photo with one of your heroes was essential and watching their team train was an added bonus.*



*As part of the fundraising efforts during Lent, the Year 6 students coordinated an event they called "Snippity-Snip for Caritas". The students purchased tickets to cut Year 5/6 teacher, Kaylene Keleher's hair or shave Principal, Paul Barrett's head. The raffle raised \$490 for Caritas. St Monica's parent and local hairdresser, Leesa Lindenmayer, was on hand to assist the students. Kaylene's hair was collected and donated to an organisation that creates wigs for cancer sufferers or to help clean up oil spills in the ocean.*



Students from St Monica's School Oakey listen to stories in the Yarning Circle.

# ACTIVITIES BRING TO LIFE INDIGENOUS CULTURE FOR NAIDOC

LISA CAVANAGH

*On the last day of Term Two, St Monica's School Oakey students engaged in a day of NAIDOC Week activities.* The day began with a school Mass celebrating the term, followed by a selection of activities.

St Monica's School Officer and local Indigenous community member, Mrs Ann-Marie "Aunty Ree" Tyrie, engaged the students in a talk about bush tucker and served a selection of traditional foods including kangaroo, crocodile, barramundi and lemon myrtle biscuits. Her niece, Katlin Peterson, ably assisted her. Toowoomba Catholic Schools Education Officer – Indigenous Support, Mr Joshua Waters, taught the students some traditional dances.

Toowoomba Catholic Schools Education Officer – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education, Kim McCosker, shared stories with the students in the Yarning Circle at Oakey State High School. St Monica's appreciates the generosity of the OSHS community, particularly the Principal, Daniel Keenan, for allowing us to share in their beautiful Yarning Circle. Students created beautiful works of art using ochre painting and natural weaving techniques. Students participated in some Indigenous games on the oval including Gorri and Wana.

The day concluded with a liturgy led by the Year 3 class to celebrate NAIDOC Week.

# PAST STUDENT VISIT SPECIAL FOR OAKEY

LISA CAVANAGH



St Monica's School Oakey welcomes past student Captain James Martin (second from left) for a visit.

*Former St Monica's School Oakey student, Captain James Martin, came to visit his old school before his deployment to Iraq.* At the request of the Iraqi government, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) as part of a broader coalition is sharing techniques and skills with the Iraqi Security Forces to help make sure they have a sustainable and professional military to defend its citizens. The ADF's commitment to the region helps support wider efforts to defeat terrorism both globally and within our own region. They are increasingly focusing on supporting the re-establishment of civil society and the rehabilitation of areas that have been greatly affected by conflict.

Australian and New Zealand soldiers have built very close professional relationships with Iraqi soldiers over recent

years through Task Group Taji and Captain Martin, along with the rest of the task group, will be working to continue to forge these strong and important relationships. One of the training teams within Task Group Taji is Training Team Sierra, which is made up of 29 ADF personnel from across the country. Captain Martin is part of this team.

Several of Captain Martin's colleagues visited St Monica's School before deployment. They gifted the students with "Digger", an Army Bear. Digger will be participating in school activities and will get to go home with a lucky student each week. The school will be in regular communication with Captain Martin and Task Group Taji, sharing our experiences, as part of a wellbeing initiative.



# PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND AFFIRMATION CELEBRATED

STACEY COLTHUP

St Joseph's School Stanthorpe students tie ribbons to the school fence for National Reconciliation Week

*National Reconciliation Week is celebrated across Australia between 27 May and 3 June and is an important event for St Joseph's School Stanthorpe each year.* These dates commemorate two significant milestones that helped our nation chart a course towards reconciliation and healing, the 1967 Referendum and the Mabo High Court decision.

For St Joseph's School, the event provided an opportunity to organise and attend commemorative events as a way of strengthening understanding and engagement with reconciliation and reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to students.

The theme of this year's National Reconciliation Week was "Grounded in Truth: Walk Together with Courage". Reconciliation is ultimately about relationships and like all effective relationships the one between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians must be built upon trust and truth.

Not only did St Joseph's School students participate in both prayer and classroom activities around the theme, but students were also invited to tie a ribbon to the school fence in acknowledgement of peace and reconciliation.

The individual ribbons tied together symbolised the journey of reconciliation – coming together and crossing over at points, but still not totally tying together. The ribbons also symbolised the bonds of healthy communities and ties of friendship between neighbours who care for and love each other.

To mark the end of another school term, staff and students of St Joseph's School Stanthorpe gathered at the Bathersby Centre on 27 June for a prayer service. The theme was "You

are precious in My eyes", with students and staff gathering in a circle and participating in a symbolic action of affirmation. Each student took turns holding a candle, while other students affirmed the gifts and qualities that each individual brings to our community.

The prayer service was a special way to end a busy term, and a thoughtful beginning to the start of the school holidays for St Joseph's School Stanthorpe.



Coming together at end of term to affirm "You are precious in My eyes".

# DOWNLANDS SHARES THEIR STORY FOR SACRED HEART DAY

CATHERINE MIMS



Downlands College Toowoomba celebrates Sacred Heart Day.

*As a Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC) College, a very special day for Downlands and for all MSC communities is Sacred Heart Day.* This year, Annual Sacred Heart Day celebrations took place at the College on 14 June.

Our theme “Telling Our Story” focused the community on the stories that abound in and about the College – our building names, our religious icons, our Day and Boarding Houses, our Heart Spirituality, the Jules Chevalier story, our annual events, the list is endless, not to mention that we are all currently writing a chapter of the Downlands’ story. This theme was emphasised during our community Mass at the commencement of the day. Celebrations started with a procession of students carrying printed records of our story, as well as decorated hearts and the blankets donations for the Vinnies Winter Appeal. The blankets were purchased with funds from student donations in pastoral care as well as profits from the Jules Social Justice group hot chips stall. We were delighted to welcome Fr Bob Irwin MSC, Director of MSC Education to

join Fr Vince Carroll MSC to preside at our Eucharist.

The beautiful tree-lined driveway at the College became a canvas as more than 70 teams of students used colourful chalk art to interpret the Sacred Heart Day theme during their lunch break. It was as always a happy day of painted hearts on faces, Sacred Heart Day wristbands and “Have-a-Heart” ice creams for morning tea!

Principal, Mr Stephen Koch believes that the development of strong, life-giving relationships forms the cornerstone of a Downlands education, and our unique MSC heritage ensures that this journey is intertwined with an education of the heart.

“Our MSC Ethos is integrated through our social justice programs, retreats and the over-arching pastoral care program. Students, staff and parents are encouraged to reflect on how they weave courage, strength and leadership into their interactions with others. Being a humble, kind and compassionate person who lifts up those around them, should be at the core of each true Downlander,” Mr Koch said.



# Downlands

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# MERCY IN THE MODERN WORLD? ASK A MERCY GIRL!

KATE HALL

St Saviour's College Toowoomba students workshop their new school song with musician Josh Arnold

*“Once a Mercy Girl always a Mercy Girl”, is a key line in the new school song for the students at St Saviour’s College Toowoomba.* This year the College has spent time looking to its’ founder Catherine McAuley and what it means to follow in her footsteps. Catherine McAuley was a woman of great faith and action, she believed in preparing girls for a life where their actions would always be for the betterment of themselves and others.

In helping to interpret what it means to be a person of mercy in modern times, the College employed local musician Josh Arnold, to work with the students. Through a creative consultation process a new song with mercy at its heart was created. Josh and his company made an accompanying film clip that includes many students from the College singing and proclaiming their Mercy Girl status in the world. Mercy International, the international website of the Sisters of Mercy has featured the song with its re-imagining of mercy in contemporary times. If you would like to view the clip it can be found on YouTube on Josh

Arnold’s Channel, Small Town Culture.

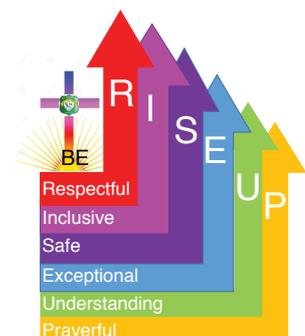
Catherine McAuley instilled in her sisters and students to act from the heart and never let an opportunity to assist pass by. The college has a strong social justice programme that includes awareness raising and mercy action. When the United Nations Youth Ambassador Kareem El Ansary recently visited the Toowoomba area, students from the college eagerly volunteered to assist with the public forum at the Toowoomba CUA Hub. Our students joined with other students on a panel to ask the ambassador about his recent tour of Australia as well as his consultation panels with other groups of young people across the country. The ambassador was also warmly welcomed to the college where he conducted a workshop with the students and was eager to find out their opinion and concerns for the future of youth in Australia and especially regional centres. The comments from the students were eagerly sought and will be used in a submission to the General Assembly later in the year.



## St Mary’s School Warwick

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# FR VINCE REFLECTS ON THE HEART OF HIS MINISTRY

CATHERINE MIMS



Family, friends and past students with Fr Vince Carroll MSC (centre) in 2015 to celebrate his 50th anniversary of ordination.

**IN MARCH 2019, MISSIONARY OF THE SACRED HEART FR VINCE CARROLL MARKED 60 YEARS SINCE HE WAS PROFESSED, AND IN JULY IT WAS 54 YEARS SINCE HIS ORDINATION. WITH FR VINCE OFFICIALLY APPOINTED TO MSC MINISTRY AT DOWNLANDS, I ASKED FR VINCE TO REFLECT ON HIS JOURNEY TO THIS POINT.**

**Catherine:** I understand that you grew up in Taroom then went to school, and later taught at Downlands. Can you tell us a bit about that?

**Fr Vince:** Yes, Taroom will always be home to me – I love going there! I enjoyed a year and a half in Taroom as Priest in Residence (2005-2006), 50 years after I left. Same people. Same places in church! Downlands in the 50s was great for me as a boy because of the opportunities it opened up. Coming from just one other in my class at Taroom, to 100 boys in Grade 8 (Scholarship) at Downlands! The priests, and especially the brothers with their prayer life and humble service, made a deep impression on me.

**Catherine:** And you've worked in MSC Schools and Missions around the world?

**Fr Vince:** Yes, I had six weeks at Chevalier College in Bowral and four years at St John's in Darwin. I loved the outdoor life there with the kids, canoeing, camping, fishing, motorcycling, and seven years in Rabaul and Milne Bay in PNG where I moved into Pastoral Centre work. The boats in Milne Bay are a beautiful way to travel and the foreign cultures, a challenge. Then in South Africa for 16 years, eight years in a school (St Brendan's) as chaplain and teacher; then parish work, mostly in AIDS care; and finally in an orphanage with 70 kids. The main job in the orphanage was just trying to live as a good grandfather! I think the years in SA were my best time as a priest/missionary. I helped there with many projects to do with providing water. I thank God for the call to be a Missionary of the Sacred Heart. It has been all gain for me, including my school days. I am up to 23 years at Downlands, and so 39 years in Toowoomba Diocese - half my lifetime.

**Catherine:** It must be interesting to be back at Downlands - how do you think we are going?

**Fr Vince:** Oh just great! But there are great things happening in all our schools - check "Horizons" for that! I've been back almost a year now. The opportunities have increased, the kids are great, they are friendly and happy and it's the same with the staff. It's like coming home. My second home? Or third, counting South Africa? Home is where the heart is. I have been amazed at the strength of the MSC Ethos within the College.

**Catherine:** What keeps you going?

**Fr Vince:** Fr Jack Tyler MSC was asked that question in his older age. He replied that he just kept his interests up! Look, I take lots of exercise – walking mostly, up to an hour a day. We have beautiful walks in Toowoomba. Then I have a few projects that I am doing, mostly historical. I don't have enough hours in the day, really. Then there is trying to keep up a solid prayer life. I'm an ordinary member of St Theresa's Parish. You've got to work at it. I try to take an interest in as many activities at Downlands as I can: rugby, volleyball and netball are my spectator sports, then I'm interested in art, music and debating. I have my own little garden! It's great to be back here among my family and friends.

**Catherine:** When bombarded with injustice and calamities in the world, how can Downlanders and the wider community remain strong in faith?

**Fr Vince:** We certainly are bombarded with bad news. In some ways, perhaps we should thank the tyrants of the world for keeping us on our toes, as it were, and stirring us to action. I think it comes back to the individual - what you believe and find worth fighting for. It's both an interior journey to the heart to discover your real convictions (i.e. your faith), and an outward journey as you try to bring those convictions to practical reality (i.e. whatever strength you can muster and put into it).

**Catherine:** Is there anything else you want to say in this interview?

**Fr Vince:** It's been a great life, an interesting life, being a missionary and a priest. I'd recommend it to anyone. Its pure gain for me, I reckon. I seem to have friends and family all over the world and can understand the issues that really touch people's lives. I think I've made a contribution to many people and many places. Certainly, I have no regrets. Certainly, it's been a lot of fun. Downlands was my launching pad.

# FAITH JOURNEYS SHARED AT ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE



Tamika Robinson and Hamish McIlveen share their faith journeys with the St Joseph's College Toowoomba community

## JULIEANNE RASMUSSEN

*With an air of faith, hope and love, the St Joseph's College Toowoomba community welcomed Fr Ray Crowley, Hamish McIlveen and Tamika Robinson's family and friends and the 2018 graduating class to our Liturgy for the Feast of Edmund Rice as Hamish and Tamika were initiated into the Catholic faith.*

Hamish, current College Captain, and Tamika Robinson, Year 12 2016 and current staff member, were formally welcomed into the Catholic community. Hamish's sponsors were Peter McIlveen (father), Gavin Beccaria (uncle), Annabelle Lynch and Patrick O'Brien (current Year 12 students). Tamika's sponsors were Kellie-Marie Ford (current staff member) and Pamela Sullivan (former staff member and teacher of Tamika).

Hamish was baptised and both he and Tamika were confirmed in their faith through their being anointed with the Oil of Chrism by Fr Ray. On behalf of the College community, we would like to thank Hamish and Tamika for choosing to mark this important occasion with us. We feel honoured to be part of their faith journey and

thank them for the example they have shown us.

College Principal, Mr Nicholas Lynch presented a gift to Hamish and Tamika. May it remind them of how loved they are.

We joyfully welcomed Bryana and her sponsors Annabelle and Patrick through the Rite of Acceptance held in May. In the weeks to come, Bryana will prepare for her initiation into the Christian faith through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. When asked by Fr Ray what does Bryana ask of the Catholic community she responded, "A deepened awareness of the love of God."

Fr Ray concluded with the words, "Now is the time to hear God's word and, in our company, come to know God and to love your neighbour. Are you ready, with the help of God, to live this life?". Bryanna responded with, "I am."

The entire community raised their hands to bless Bryana. She will be formally initiated into the Catholic community in July at our annual Grandparent's Day Mass. We look forward to sharing this special occasion with her.



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Toowoomba

Years 5-12



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# OLD BOYS NETWORK SUPPORTING OUR FUTURE WORKERS

BRONTE LATHAM

St Mary's College Toowoomba students balance academic achievements with practical skills for future employment.

*For senior students, trepidation around the end of school is fast approaching, as the boys get closer to stepping out into the big wide world of employment or future studies.* Here at St Mary's College Toowoomba, we work to ensure each individual student has the skills and qualifications needed to follow a path of their choosing.

Principal, Michael Newman, says students are offered clear and flexible pathways, transitioning graduating students to further tertiary studies, training or successful employment.

"At St Mary's College, when our boys depart the gates for the last time, our aim is for them to have embedded the diverse 21st century skills which will enable them to move into real jobs, many which have not yet been created in Australia. In reality, our boys partake in an education which promotes excellence, equity, successful learning, creative thinking, confidence and future active citizens, all of which are the fundamental characteristics outlined in the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians."

Not all students look at university as their direct path of choice after school. Some choose a pathway of school-based apprenticeships, participate in and gain qualifications in certificate courses, or have direct links to Old Boys for support in their chosen future fields of employment. Regardless of the pathway of their choice, future employers view all these options as extremely valuable, enabling our boys to have the best opportunity to be employable as soon as they walk out of the gates of St Mary's College. In the meantime, students continue to enjoy the full range of activities and experiences that a school provides, including sport, cultural and spiritual undertakings and friendships.

As a part of this selection, St Mary's College offers its students a School Based Apprenticeship (SBA) Program, allowing senior high school students the opportunity to commence an apprenticeship with an employer while at school, along with being paid. While correspondingly

studying for their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE), some boys complete school-based apprentices part-time and undertake the first stage of their formal or off-the-job apprenticeship training.

St Mary's College Vice-Captain, Sam Elara, is involved in the SBA program and says not only is it a good balance with his school life but it has also widened his options as he nears graduation.

"I enjoy giving myself fully to my final year at St Mary's College, being a part of the rugby league team, giving my best to my academic studies, and enjoying being surrounded by my mates; but also, being able to work during the week at my SBA to gain valuable experience and financial support. This has been immensely beneficial, while maintaining the fun of school and giving me the confidence to form my future."

Students are also able to study courses that not only contribute towards their QCE, but also give them an industry-recognised qualification upon completion of school. Vocational Courses may be studied at St Mary's or at TAFE, through the TAFE delivered VET in Schools Program. Courses vary from Agriculture and Horticulture, to Construction, Engineering, Furnishing and Manufacturing; Business and IT to Tourism and Hospitality and Creative Arts; and Sport and Recreation to Entertainment. Being part of these certificate courses means that if a boy wishes to study at TAFE after he graduates from St Mary's, he will be deemed to have completed part of that TAFE course already.

Along with this, St Mary's College is proud of its growing "Men at Work Program", which directly links Old Boys with a student in their future field of employment. This rich program enables the Old Boy mentor to connect with a St Mary's College young man, nurturing and providing him with experienced advice as he transfers into his future dream job. A mentor acts as a guide, a source of information, and a practical sounding board for his mentee by offering guidance and even industry visits at his place of employment.

## CELEBRATING LIFE IN CUNNAMULLA

SR MAUREEN ANDREWS

*Life in the southwest corner is rather humdrum at present.* The scenery has changed since the rain of April and even though the grass is still green, winter calls it to slowly die. The spotted bowerbird has built its nest under the olive tree and the roos have vanished.

We were delighted to have John Briffa from the Liturgy Office visit to run a workshop on celebrating Liturgy of the Word with Communion and conducting a Lay Led Funeral Service. Of those in attendance, two were women from Eulo who participated in the day to prepare for the possibility of celebrating Liturgy of the Word with Communion there in the future.

In July we celebrated the first Funeral in Hungerford since 2007. About 100 hundred people gathered to farewell 90 year old man of the bush Ian (Mac) McKechnie. There are currently only 7 residents in Hungerford, so many people were ex-residents who travelled from Brisbane and New South Wales. That speaks for itself of the high regard he was held, some of the younger people described him as a gentle man and a gentleman who always doffed his hat to the ladies. Graham, the publican, visited Mac twice a week in the last couple of years when he was in Yapunyah Lodge and the Goondiwindi Hospital.



Ian (Mac) McKechnie in 2011.

In the first week of the school holidays the Junior Rugby League competition was run with nine teams competing. Monday morning we were up at 7.30am standing by the roadside for the march past headed by the fire truck, the ambulance and the police. Peieta Mills, from the Club Boutique, provided a free barbeque breakfast for spectators, competitors and their families. There was great excitement especially at the news that the Cunnamulla Rams beat the Wynnum team for the first time ever. The shopkeepers had windows in the colours of the various teams and wished them all good luck. As it is in a small community many of our local church and school members were assisting in cheering, cooking and welcoming. It is part of our mission to be people of hospitality and what a delight it is to be part of it.

## MUCH LOVED FAMILY UNITED IN FAITH

PATTI MCNAUGHT

*On 23 June at Mary of the Southern Parish Highfields Winston Apel was initiated into full Communion with the Church having participated in the RCIA journey over many months.* Winston has attended our Masses and supported his family in the many ministries they are involved in for several years and now by becoming a Catholic, the entire family are united in faith.

Winston was born in Chinchilla and spent his early years in the Auburn area north of Chinchilla. Later after he started school, his family moved to a farm near Condamine. Life was a little less carefree, but much more social and convenient. When he finished his primary schooling, he later attended boarding school in Brisbane.

Boarding was so different to what he was used to and there were more things to do and see that he had ever imagined were possible. After high school, he studied farm management at Gatton, planning to follow in his parents' footsteps. When he completed his studies there, he worked on the family property for a while. It was during these years that he met his lovely wife Loretta. After time spent living in Brisbane, the couple moved back to Condamine to start their family. Their time at Condamine was spent building both family, welcoming children Loren, Eloise and Claire, and a business, until mining arrived on the scene which forced them to move on to Highfields.

Winston looked back on his time spent growing up,



L to R: Winston Apel, Fr Brian Noonan and Paul Brennan.

preparing for life and working and felt that his attitude was self-centred without much regard for other people or their needs. Winston says he would never have been introduced to the Catholic faith if he had not met his wife or committed to bring up his children in the Catholic faith. So, over several years whilst attending Mass with his family, he started to question life's goals, the type of person he was, who he wanted to be and how he wanted to relate to others.

Winston felt that converting to the Catholic faith was an opportunity for him to contribute to and participate more fully in the community and broader society as a better person. On the day, he thanked his family, the RCIA team, the parish community, his sponsor Paul Brennan and Fr Brian Noonan for their support and acceptance of his decision.

We think we are very fortunate to have Winston as a member of our Parish, and we welcome him with open arms. May the Holy Spirit continue to guide him over the coming years and may God bless him always.



# WELCOMING AND SPIRITUAL RENEWAL AT ST THERESA'S

MONICA BRENNAN

L to R: Jan Rowland, Henna Oh, Jordan Graney, Mary Otto, Liz Newman and David Wilson

*Late in May, Jordan Graney was received into full Communion with the Church at St Theresa's Parish Toowoomba.* Members of the parish community welcomed Jordan in a most moving and uplifting sacramental ritual.

Leading up to this special occasion, Jordan had met each week for many months with members of the St Theresa's Parish RCIA team lead by Mary Otto. Jordan's fiancé, Henna Oh, accompanied him on the journey. Liz Newman, Jan Rowland and David Wilson supported Mary in facilitating each of the preparation sessions. Jordan and all members of the team had an opportunity to deepen their faith and spirituality as they journeyed together through extensive reading, reflecting and much sharing. A shared meal along the way gave everyone an opportunity to relax and enjoy each other's company getting to know

each other a little better.

When members of the St Theresa's Parish Care and Concern Team met early in July, they chose to visit the yet-to-be-opened SYCHAR House of Prayer and Spirituality. The centre is in the process of being developed by Sr Elaine Morzone. After their meeting and morning tea, the group spent some time deepening their spirituality. With the gentle guidance of Sr Elaine, team members were drawn to the realization that the peace they hold in their hearts is shared with those they encounter in their ministry. Sr Elaine provided team members with a wide variety of passages, film clips and images from both scripture and spiritual leaders, giving the team an opportunity to tap into their own hearts through sharing and quiet reflection leading them to recognise the peace present there.

## ROMA DEBUTANTE BALL

DAVID BOWDEN:

*The All Saints Parish Council hosted the 2019 Roma Community Debutante Ball with 15 debs being presented to Mayor Tyson Golder at the Roma Cultural Centre.* This was a combined Catholic and Anglican event with approximately 180 family and friends in attendance.

A Dedication Service, including a blessing by Fr Jamie Collins and presentation of the debs' bouquets by representatives of the Catholic and Anglican communities in All Saints Catholic Church.

The Roma Cultural Centre Ballroom was spectacularly presented in a pink and white theme. White linen table clothes were set off by runners and chair covers with big pink bows. There were other pink ornaments on the tables. Mrs Heather Mc Hugh was the main Organiser assisted by many mothers, friends and other volunteers. The dance co-ordinator was Mrs Lynn Bowden assisted by Mr Clem and Mrs Chris Boughen.

The Official Party was Fr Jamie Collins, Sr Nora Fitzgibbon, Mayor Tyson Golder, Mrs Natalie Golder, Anglican



Cutting of the cake with the debutantes and their partners at the Roma Community Deb Ball (combined Catholic and Anglican Churches).

Representative Mrs Sheryl Arnold, Catholic Representatives Dr Alwyn Rapasta and Mrs Pelle Rapasta, Matron of Honour Mrs Lynn Bowden and her husband Mr David Bowden and Maid of Honour Miss Meg O'Brien.

The Debs danced the Maxine as the Presentation Dance. The music was supplied by Nathan and Trinnette Walmsley and band. The vote of thanks was given by debs Shauna Fisher and Amy Shaw.

The evening was not without incident. A fire evacuation order was given just on supper time. Everyone left the building until the Fire Brigade found the fault and allowed the festivities to continue.

# BANNER PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIVERSITY IN PARISH

MICHAEL BERMINGHAM



The St Thomas More's Parish community highlights and celebrates the diversity of the congregation.  
L to R: Elaine Jennings, Majella Albion and Vivian Bermingham.

*Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?...in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power." (Acts 2:7-11)*

Last year the Liturgy Committee at St Thomas More's Parish Toowoomba agreed that the time was right to undertake a project to celebrate the cultural diversity of our community, noting the varying national and cultural backgrounds of those who make up our faith community. We opted for the development of a wall hanging that would highlight that diversity.

Aided by the amazing sewing group who are a force for much good in our community, twelve squares were prepared and the invitation went out to people in the community to volunteer to prepare a square to represent a particular national or cultural identity. We were blessed

with a very positive response.

Over the next few months finished squares were submitted until all twelve spots were covered. The squares were given to the sewing group who put their skills to work to combine the squares into a banner. The banner was completed earlier in the year, leaving the Liturgy Committee with the task of deciding on an appropriate weekend to bless and display the banner.

Inspired by the story of "The Coming of the Holy Spirit" in the Acts of the Apostles, in particular the above quote, we chose Pentecost Sunday as the day for the launch. At each Mass on that weekend those involved in its creation processed in with the banner. The banner was blessed along with congregation to acknowledge our cultural diversity.

The banner is now on permanent display in the north eastern corner of the church.

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Fr Brian Connolly with some of the children from Stanthorpe Parish

# GOLDEN MOMENT FOR FR BRIAN

SELINA VENIER

***Stanthorpe Parish Priest Fr Brian Connolly had an extra spring in his step on the Feast of the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, or Corpus Christi.*** It was the Sunday before his 27 June jubilee anniversary of priestly ordination. St Joseph’s Church Stanthorpe was overflowing with locals and visitors.

The faithful, including Fr Connolly’s brother John and sister-in-law Mary, from Warwick, and brother Peter from Brisbane, were gathered to recognise the significant date on the Church calendar and the ministry of their passionate pastor, brother and friend.

“Fr Brian loves his ministry and he takes it very seriously,” parish representative Dan Manahan said at the conclusion of the Mass. “He understands the challenges we all face, such as the pressures of modern life, financial stress and the drought. He’s also there to share our joys with us. Just talk to him about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and you will see his passion bubbling out.”

Fr Connolly said the gospel of Jesus feeding a 5000-strong crowd in Galilee is a relevant message for today. “The gospel is never just something historical,” he said. “It’s always for today and we are the people in it. Jesus made the crowds welcome, he talked to them about the Kingdom of God and he cured those who were in need of healing. Jesus wants us to enjoy his presence, to feel his presence.”

Reminiscent of other priests who’ve ministered in Stanthorpe over the past century, Fr Connolly spoke about

chalices he’d restored in recent years. He said they are special to him because of the connection to the past and the celebration of the Mass, what he described as “the heart of the priesthood” and “the summit and source” of the faith.

“Today’s Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ is so fitting for celebration of a priest’s Golden Jubilee,” Fr Connolly said. “We need food to live but we need more than food. We need people in our lives, our family and friends, those we love.”

Fr Connolly thanked those who’d assisted with jubilee preparations and recognised prayerful and practical support throughout his five decades of ministry, saying he was grateful.

“Priests are not ordained themselves, they serve God’s people,” Fr Connolly said.

Born in Warwick on February 22, 1945, Brian James Connolly was the youngest son of Frank and Vera Connolly, both deceased. Fr Connolly said he felt the presence of his parents “who are with the saints in heaven” at the jubilee. He has ministered in Stanthorpe and Wallangarra (since 2003), Warwick (1970, 1982-89), Toowoomba (1971-73), Goondiwindi (1974-76), Dalby (1977-81) and Inglewood (1990-2002).

The parish hospitality centre, beside St Joseph’s Church, was filled with laughter and sharing as the celebrations continued after the Mass. A photographic and editorial display captured Fr Connolly’s life and ministry.

# BRIEF

## PARISH NEWS



*On 6 July representatives from Quilpie and Charleville Parishes were guests at the Golden Jubilee of Profession celebration of Sr Margaret Anderson held at Corpus Christi Church, Nundah. Sr Margaret spent more than half of her 50 years as a Sister of St Joseph in Quilpie as a teacher, APRE, Principal, Parish Leader and friend to many. Also celebrating their jubilee of profession with Sr Margaret were fellow Josephite Sisters Joan Finucane, Valerie Huston, Kathleen Mooney, Di Phillips and Sr Yvonne Tobin, a Sister of Perpetual Adoration. L to R: Janelle Jarzembski, Sr Elizabeth O'Keeffe, Fr Peter Doohan and Sr Anita Hoey. Front: Sr Margaret Anderson.*

### ***Sacred Heart Parish Toowoomba celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi with a magnificent procession.***

Under a beautiful canopy made by a parishioner, Fr Warren Padilla carried the Blessed Sacrament around the Church grounds followed by the entire parish. Led by the altar boys and flower girls, the congregation processed to the accompaniment of hymns.

One Parishioner commented that the occasion was a very uplifting experience, a joyful expression of our faith. Benediction in the church concluded the procession where beautiful flowers adorned the altar.





*The St Vincent de Paul Society Roma hosted a dinner for visiting Toowoomba and South West Queensland level St Vincent de Paul (SVDP) representatives.* Margaret Lawton (Diocesan President), Kathie Brosnan (CEO) and Whitney Clift (Retail Co-ordinator) were welcomed to Roma by Gerard Mulligan (Roma President) and the local SVDP Conference.

The three representatives were touring the western area of the diocese visiting Vinnies stores, meeting volunteers, staff members and conference members in various towns.

While in Roma, Margaret took the opportunity to present Roma Vincentian, Noela Clohessy with an award in recognition of her outstanding service in providing comfort and assistance to people affected by the drought.

L to R: Mark Brennan, Fr Jamie Collins, Gerard Mulligan, Margaret Lawton, Kathie Brosnan, Whitney Clift and Noela Clohessey.



*Warwick Parish recently hosted a morning tea to farewell Sr Margaret Murphy who is leaving Warwick to take up residence at Emmaus Home for retired Sisters of Mercy.* Sr Margaret has been an active member of the Parish community for around 20 years being instrumental in the formation of a Parish Liturgy Group as well as a member of the Parish Choir.

Chairman of the Parish Pastoral Council, Michael Gaffney, delivered a tribute to Sr Margaret and presented her with a gift on behalf of the Parish Community.

L to R: Kev Stephens, Fr Terry Hickling, Fr Franco Filipetto, Pat Sheil, Tom Lawton and Sr Margaret Murphy (seated) – Photo by Gerard Walsh



Oakey community gathers to celebrate 100 years as a parish.



L to R: Fr Mick Carroll, Bishop Robert McGuckin, Fr Thomas Areekuzhy and Fr Don Murray after unveiling of the commemorative plaque at St Monica's Oakey.

# CENTENARY MARKED BY MEMORABLE CELEBRATION

OAKEY PARISH

*Oakey parishioners pulled out all the stops to celebrate the parish's centenary in May. The festivities included unveiling of a commemorative plaque at the church, the release of a book celebrating 100 years and a special Mass followed by cake and entertainment.*

Bishop Robert McGuckin celebrated the special Mass, concelebrating were Fr Thomas Areekuzhy, current Priest Director, and Frs Mick Carroll and Don Murray. Bishop Robert thanked parish council members, volunteers and parishioners for their service to the parish over the years, paying special tribute early parishioners and the first Parish Priest, Fr Denis O'Keefe. After Mass, Bishop Robert unveiled the centenary plaque located at

the back of the church.

The community and special guests gathered after Mass for morning tea, which included cutting the centenary cake. Parishioners Ron Sly and Kath O'Brien with Parish Council chair, Gerry Donohoe cut the cake. A commemorative book, compiled by Louise Connellan, was launched at the celebration. The book follows the story of the parish's creation, from it's early days through to modern day events, as well as touching on some general local history.

Members of the Filipino Australian Community, students from St Monica's School Oakey and Kerala, Indian Toowoomba Catholic Community, provided entertainment for the day. It was an enjoyable and memorable occasion.

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# Horizons

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For more information about contributing to Horizons contact us at:

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