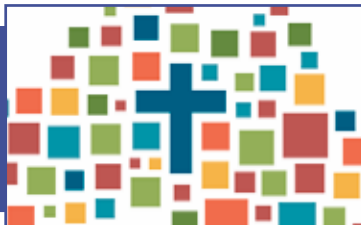


VALE HIS EMINENCE  
EDWARD IDRIS  
CARDINAL CASSIDY p3



PLENARY  
COUNCIL  
UPDATE p12



UPDATES ON  
SCHOOLS IN OUR  
DIOCESE p26



# TOGETHER

In the Diocese of *Wagga Wagga*

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APRIL 2021

## Easter Mass

*Christ is Risen*

*Read more on page 2...*

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# Bishop's Voice

*Bishop Mark Edwards OMI - Bishop of Wagga Wagga Diocese*



**TOGETHER**  
IN THE DIOCESE OF WAGGA WAGGA

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*Photos from Bishop Mark's first Easter Mass at St Michael's Cathedral:*



## Easter Homily, Holy Saturday night 2021, St Michael's Cathedral.

**To all:** Tonight, I talk particularly to our catechumens, Lydia, Peter and Emmett. You are welcome to listen in.

**To Lydia, Peter and Emmett:** 'Who will roll the away the stone for us?' At one level, the question of Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome is eminently practical. They knew what the narrator makes clear. It is a big stone and they can't move it by themselves.

But at another level, it asks about access to Jesus, crucified and risen. I wonder if you or those being received into the Church tonight, Jody, Damien and Rebecca have not asked in some form: 'Who will roll away the stone for us?' We are all Mary of Magdalene, Mary the mother of James or Salome. How do I get access to Jesus? How can I encounter him? How can I give my heart to him? I assure you, in some form, all of us have faced this question as we encountered huge rocks blocking our life.

So who will teach us how to enter Christ, to enter into his power, his love, his death and resurrection? The women find the one who will do it waiting for them in the tomb. I take the person in the white robe to be the baptised Christian, or even the Church. And the message from this person to all of us has three parts:

Don't be afraid. Anxiety and alarm get in the way. We, the Church, who are on the journey also will help you with your search. Trust in us and trust in God.

We know that Christ is here in our midst tonight, alive, risen, powerful. And if he is really here, he can really do stuff. Tonight, he will lead us in prayer; he has spoken to us through the readings; he will baptise you

and feed you with his own body and blood. You will be immersed in his love, mercy and power. He will lead us in the way we are to go, individually and as a Church. We call this vocation.

Come and experience for yourselves. What does the young man say? 'See, here is the place he has been laid.' Come, look, experience. Christianity is not a work of persuasion but an experiencing of real power. To experience the risen Christ, we have to be on the way, immersing ourselves in the experience, taking a chance on Jesus. Being Christian is not a spectator sport. We have to take the risk of following Christ, make the experiment of walking the walk. To the one who asks him about eternal life, Jesus says "Come, follow me".

Tell others that Christ is risen. Our culture is averse to religious enthusiasm, so, while there is a place for the full-frontal assault, typically we do better, in my experience, to ask something like: Would you like me to pray with you about that? This is risky. We might be worried about how the other person will respond. Also, we are taking a chance on Jesus. Will he come to the party? Always. Be sure that no matter how much you want the good of your loved one or friend, or even a stranger, Jesus wants it even more. And he will have gone before us in the life of this other person and prepared the way. Here you and she or he can experience the power of the resurrection. You become the person sitting on the right in the tomb helping people to enter Jesus.

In a few moments, you will be literally dripping with Jesus' death through your baptism. You join us in dying to selfishness and fear and living in Jesus. It is a great swap. Come and take a chance, with us, on Jesus.

## Prayer Intention for April - Pray with Pope Francis

### Fundamental rights

We pray for those who risk their lives while fighting for fundamental rights under dictatorships, authoritarian regimes and even in democracies in crisis.

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

<https://thepopevideo.org/>



**Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network**

APOSTOLSHIP OF PRAYER

<https://www.popesprayer.va/>

The first chapter of the book of Genesis tells us that humanity was created "in the image of God" (Gen 1:26-27). This phrase still echoes with fundamental importance for our world today, because the image of God in us is our source of human dignity. While we would hope that thousands of years after these verses were written for us, the human family might have established a greater mutual respect for what it means to be free and responsible creatures, still today many people have their most fundamental rights denied them.

These fundamental rights – to life, to food and water, to shelter, to education, to religious freedom, among others – flow from being made in God's image and cannot be denied to any member of our human family. Thankfully, many people's consciences are touched when they see or learn of the injustices suffered by others; and they put themselves

into action. Often, those who stand with the oppressed run serious risks themselves, because they courageously point out the faults in a leader's or a society's practices. To speak the truth about God and human dignity in a dictatorship, an authoritarian regime, or even a democracy without a solid moral foundation often means having the wheels of political, social, or even military power turned against you.

Some of these situations seem "far from home"; yet, there are also denials of fundamental rights present in our lives. Any such denial touches us all because of our common humanity. As we pray for those who take risks to help others secure their fundamental rights, let us too be willing to add our energy and voice to assure respect for God's image in each of our brothers and sisters.

**Fr. Andrij Hlabse SJ**

*Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network*

Vale

His Eminence Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy

The Catholic Church – in Australia and globally – is mourning the death of Cardinal Edward Cassidy, who died 12 April in Newcastle at the age of 96.

**After being ordained to the priesthood, Cardinal Cassidy served in parish ministry in Wagga Wagga Diocese before heading to Rome for ongoing study.**

Once he completed his additional training, he spent nearly 30 years serving as a Vatican diplomat in Asia, Europe, Latin America and Africa.

He was later appointed to the Secretariat of State, where he served for almost two years in a role equivalent to the Pope’s chief of staff.

He was named president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity in 1989 and elevated to the rank of cardinal in 1991. He retired from the Pontifical Council in 2001 at the age of 76.

Cardinal Cassidy was appointed a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in 1990 in “recognition of service to religion and to international affairs”.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge said Cardinal Cassidy’s friendly and down-to-earth style were among his hallmarks while serving at the Vatican.

While Cardinal Cassidy was highly regarded for several reasons, it was at the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity that he “shone”, Archbishop Coleridge said.

“Cardinal Cassidy showed not only diplomatic skill and political astuteness, but also human authenticity and common

sense,” he said.

“There was a simplicity in it all – the simplicity of a man called to high office in the Church but with his eyes firmly on Jesus Christ.”

Sydney Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP paid tribute to Cardinal Cassidy online, saying the late cardinal “left a remarkable legacy on our Church, especially in the field of ecumenism”.

“Few other Australians have had such a profound impact on the Catholic Church on the international stage and I’m sure he will continue to inspire Church leaders for many years to come,” Archbishop Fisher said, adding that Cardinal Cassidy was a great support to him as a young bishop.

Melbourne Archbishop Peter A. Comensoli called Cardinal Cassidy “a wonderful man of God and servant of the Church, and a terrific Australian”.

Wagga Wagga Bishop Mark Edwards said while Cardinal Cassidy’s ministry within the diocese was relatively brief, the cardinal “gladly came to serve in the bush and is remembered with great affection by all in this area” – particularly by some lifelong friends he met in a parish youth group.

Bishop Edwards echoed others’ comments in highlighting Cardinal Cassidy’s humility, naming his willingness to return to Wagga Wagga to lead a priests’ retreat, despite his high rank, as one example.



Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy in 2017. Image: Jordan Grantham/Diocese of Parramatta



Cardinal Cassidy greeting Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Photo: Supplied.



A young Edward Idris Cassidy.  
Photo: Jordan Grantham / Diocese of Parramatta



+Edward Idris Cassidy in 1984, while Apostolic Pro-Nuncio to the Netherlands.  
Photo: Wikimedia Commons / Dutch National Archive

# Chrism Mass 2021

Bishop Mark Edwards and priests from across the diocese gathered on Tuesday 30 March 2021 at St Michael's Cathedral in Wagga Wagga to celebrate the Chrism Mass and bless the three oils to be used throughout the diocese for the year.

## Mass of Chrism - a brief history:

On a day during Holy Week, the Bishop and the Priests of a diocese gather at the Cathedral (or on alternate years, other large parish churches) to celebrate the Chrism Mass. This Mass manifests the unity of the Priests with their Bishop.

Here the Bishop blesses three oils:

- the Oil of Catechumens (oleum catechumenorum or oleum sanctorum), used in the Sacrament of Baptism,
- the Oil of the Infirm (oleum infirmorum), used for sick and dying;
- Holy Chrism (sacrum chrisma), used in the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

These oils will be used in the administration of the sacraments throughout the diocese for the year. This tradition is rooted in the early Church and was later absorbed into the Holy Thursday Evening Mass; Pope Pius XII issued a new Ordinal for Holy Week, which reinstituted a special Mass of the Chrism distinct from the Holy Thursday Evening Mass.

**Homily - Chrism Mass 2021**  
**Most Rev Mark Edwards OMI**  
**Bishop of Wagga Wagga Diocese**  
**Tuesday 30 March 2021**  
**St Michael's Cathedral,**  
**Wagga Wagga**

In the religion in which our Lord, Jesus Christ, was brought up, worship in the temple was a central and perhaps even the supreme act of prayer. Jesus partook in virtually all forms of Jewish prayer and religious practices. We know that Jesus went to the temple to pray and to teach and yet there is no record that he ever offered sacrifice in the temple in Jerusalem, even on the great feast days like the Passover. Have you ever wondered why?

He came to introduce a new form of prayer, a new form of worship, which as he told the Samaritan woman was worship in spirit and in truth.

In the Gospel of tomorrow's Mass, we will read of Christ's preparation for the Last Supper where he instituted this new worship which is at the heart and centre of his own personal life. He sent his disciples to prepare the room and procure the food. One of them, let us imagine it is Peter, buys the paschal lamb and takes it to the temple where it

is killed and offered in sacrifice by one of the temple priests. Once offered in this way, God would come down and take possession of the lamb. What had been Peter's lamb was now God's lamb, the Lamb of God. This lamb became the main dish at the Passover Jesus celebrated and by sharing in it, those eating believed that they shared a mystical communion with God and, in Him, with each other too.

After the old rite, Jesus celebrated the new rite. There was no need to go back to the temple because Jesus was the new Lamb of God, as John the Baptist had pointed out. He was the new temple. The new High Priest was sitting next to them and would offer the sacrifice that would surpass all previous offerings because it was the offering of himself. In and through the bread and wine, he became present as a person offering himself to God, God's lamb, offering his whole body, his whole mind and his whole strength. Jesus became present to them and in them on this holiest of nights.

With Joseph and Mary, Jesus would have prayed the Shema where, with them, he continually recommitted himself to loving God with his whole mind, his whole heart, his entire soul and all his strength. When he left home to form a new family with his disciples, he prayed this prayer with them. From the moment he was born in a wooden crib to the moment he died on a wooden cross, he was practicing the greatest and first of all the commandments.

After his resurrection, his disciples continued to do what they had learned to do from him. They continued to offer themselves completely to the Father. A Christian version of the Shema came into existence – the morning offering. It reminds us and helps us to make our forthcoming day into a prayer. Not any prayer but the supreme prayer as Christ did before them. It joins us with and leads us to the Mass.

The Spirit of the Lord, the same Spirit that is in Christ, has been given to us. The power of the Spirit is in us because we have been anointed. We are made sharers in his consecration to bear witness to his Redemption in the world.

## To the priests:

While largely I have been speaking of the priesthood of all believers, also tied up with and supporting this is the



*Blessing of the oils.*



*Recessional.*



*Dicese of Wagga Wagga clergy.*

ministerial priesthood shared by you, my brother priests and me. Just as, for example, married people or teachers, live out their priesthood through their particular vocation so, also, we live out our common priesthood through our ministerial priesthood. We give ourselves to God with our whole heart,

our whole soul, our whole strength and our whole mind in and through our life as Catholic priests in service of the people to whom God sends us.

And so I invite you to come forward before all present to renew your priestly promises and your personal to commitment to God.

# Year of Saint Joseph

*"Show yourself a father, and guide us in the path of life"*

## REFLECTION - APRIL 2021

### St Joseph – Man of Dreams Mt 1:20, Mt 2:13, 19, 22

**Luke's Gospel speaks of a single visit of the angel Gabriel to Mary, setting her path for the rest of her life.**

In Matthew's Gospel, we hear of an angel visiting Joseph some four times, guiding him step by step through troubled times. Interestingly, these visitations come to the sleeping Joseph in his dreams.

As a carpenter, Joseph would have been no stranger to silence. We can imagine him spending time alone, honing his patience and concentration as he worked the wood. Perhaps there is a link between this silent way of Joseph and the silent way of dreams in which the angel communicates with him? We could be fooled in thinking that, as a man of dreams, Joseph lived in a fantasy world. Nothing could be farther from the truth. As a man of dreams, Joseph has much to teach us about the power of trust, the power of prayer and the power of discerning God's presence in our lives.

Joseph's dreams come to him at difficult times, when he is afraid and needs to make important decisions. The first dream comes after he finds out about Mary's pregnancy and has decided to dismiss her. The dream allows Joseph, the righteous man who knew the law, to interpret the law with love. He might have been angry and disappointed, yet he acts as if he is saying what his stepson would say to a woman about to be stoned almost thirty years later, "He who has never sinned, let him cast the first stone" (John 8:7).

Joseph's dreams are brief, or at least the snippets we hear are brief. In the second dream, the angel tells Joseph to get up, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt and stay there until further instructions. If we listen to the Scriptures and the saints, it would seem that brevity is a strong characteristic of spiritual experiences. St Teresa of Avila writes

very clearly that the duration of a rapture is short, and any prolonged raptures are more often due to the sister not being in control of herself, than to God! [i]

Joseph's dreams give clear instructions. In the third dream, again Joseph is told to get up, take the child and his mother and go to Israel, for those seeking the child's life are dead. They also give reason and encourage. In the first dream, Joseph is told to name the child Jesus because he will save his people from their sins. In the fourth dream, he is warned that Herod's son has replaced him and so to go to Galilee. Somehow Joseph knows to trust these messages. There is no fussing, no questioning or consulting other's opinions; he simply acts. Think how steadfast his trust in God must have been to know that what came to him in a dream was not to be questioned.

Do you trust your dreams? Dreaming is an interesting phenomenon and research continues into its function in our lives. Dreams help our brains work through the myriad experiences of our day – a kind of mental processing and decluttering.[ii] Scripture also attests to dreams as a powerful sign of the presence of God. God is believed to actively speak through dreams as we hear in the Book of Joel, "...your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions" (Joel 2:28).

Joseph's dreams offer us a lesson in discernment. When we are plagued by troubles, it can be very difficult to get to sleep, let alone rest enough to be aware of a dream. To do so, we must trust, surrendering all our cares to God. We might even say we surrender our cares in exchange for our dreams!

Joseph reminds us that rest is essential if we are to hear God's voice and understand what is being asked of us. He shows us what happens when we wait patiently even in fearful circumstances, trusting and remaining open to how Love might work in our lives. Just as Paul

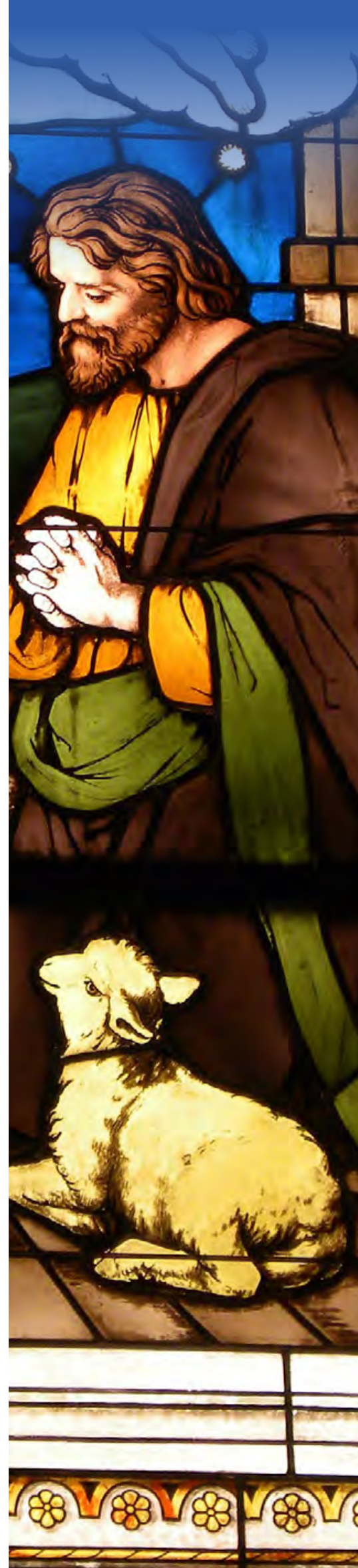
reminded the Romans to be transformed by the renewing of the mind so as to discern the will of God – what is good and acceptable and perfect (Rom 12:2) – Joseph reminds us to allow our minds to be renewed through our dreams.

The fact that we hear about four of Joseph's dreams reminds us too that discernment works in all aspects of our lives. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit and it is honed with experience. The Desert Fathers and Mothers prayed for the gift of discernment in all things. They knew that discernment in every aspect of life requires flexibility, constant self-examination and spiritual awareness.[iii] Just as Joseph's actions were constantly guided by the angel's instructions, we too need to adapt our spiritual practices to work, family and community demands, always alert to the need for change.

Finally, you are probably aware that Pope Francis has a special devotion to St Joseph. "I have great love for Saint Joseph, because he is a man of silence and strength. On my table I have a statue of Saint Joseph sleeping. Even when he is asleep, he is taking care of the Church! So when I have a problem, a difficulty, I write a little note and I put it underneath Saint Joseph, so that he can dream about it! In other words I tell him: pray for this problem! ..."[iv]

Joseph, the man of dreams, reminds us that prayer and discernment are not about what we do, so much as how we keep our hearts open to the gifts of God. We must wait for what comes, inwardly attentive, always ready to live the messages of Love. So, happy dreaming tonight. Remember the Psalmist's advice (Ps 127) that your earlier rising and going later to rest are in vain, for gifts will be poured on you the beloved as you sleep, just like Joseph!

**Michelle Vass is director of the St Mary's Towers Retreat Centre, Douglas Park, a work of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.**



## YEAR of SAINT JOSEPH

*"Show yourself a father, and guide us in the path of life"*

DECEMBER 8, 2020 - DECEMBER 8, 2021

# Bishop Mark announces new Rector and Vice Rector for Vianney College

On 16th March Bishop Mark visited the seminary community and announced that Father Rick Micallef will take over the position of Rector from 1st January 2022. The following day he announced that Father Bradley Rafter will become Vice Rector.

## About the Rector-Elect, Fr. Rick Micallef

Born and raised in Warrawong, my parents migrated from Malta as young children. I have two younger brothers who are married with children. I came to Wagga Wagga to join the seminary which was highly recommended at the time and was flourishing with vocations. I entered in February 1996 at 27 years of age after having worked for just under ten years for an insurance company.

After settling in, and through the grace of God and guidance of my Spiritual Director and formators, I was called by Bishop Gerard Hanna to ordination in May of 2003. My first placement was for five years as an assistant priest at Holy Spirit Parish in Lavington under Fr. Patrick O'Connell. He was an inspiration to me not just as a dedicated, hardworking priest, but more so as a father figure who encouraged me and willed the good of my priesthood.

I was appointed as the Administrator of Howlong for two and a half years before I returned to Vianney College, this time as the First Year Formator. I clearly remember telling Bishop Hanna at the time: 'surely there are more suited priests than I that can do the job. Are you sure you want me?' and his reply was: 'yes, I think you will be a good role model for the students'.

My time at Vianney College was, I believe, to be a fruitful part of my vocation. I saw, particularly in the students, and as I had experienced myself, the need for ongoing formation. I also saw the need to be supported in the future ministry of the priesthood which comes from the fraternity of brotherly love.

After three and a half years in Vianney, I was appointed as the Administrator of the Cathedral. A challenging role in such a busy place, there is a great opportunity to minister to the pastoral needs of a great many groups of people.

Some years later, I applied for a parish and was appointed to my current parish of Mulwala. Residing here, I also minister to the town of Barooga and the parish of Berrigan. One of my predecessors has referred to this parish as 'the resort parish'. I admit that it is attractive due to its scenic view of the lake, natural wildlife and nature walks, not to forget its 45 hole scenic golf course! As we labour in God's harvest, there is always work to be done, people to see and places to go and it will be sad to leave as I have come to know many wonderful families who are so supportive of the priesthood and love the Church.

It was recently announced by Bishop Mark Edwards that I have been called upon to be the rector of Vianney College for 2022. Initially, my reaction to this invitation was the same response that I gave to Bishop Hanna, however, this time I was grateful to have been given

more time in prayer to 'surrender' my will to the will of the Holy Spirit. He has helped me to reach a decision to which

I comfortably and peaceably responded by saying yes. I hope and pray that as I now embark on this new challenge as Rector and Formator, that with the help of my brother priests, and others praying for me, my journey will prove to be another fruitful chapter in my life and my vocation, that is, for the good of the Church in her people.

– Fr. Rick Micallef

## About the Vice Rector-Elect, Fr. Bradley Rafter

I was born on the Central Coast in January 1977 and lived in the Newcastle district with my family before moving to the Riverina in 1992. In 1999, I commenced an apprenticeship in Green Keeping in Sydney, specialising in bowling greens and golf courses.

In 2006, I entered Vianney College, the Wagga Wagga Catholic Diocesan Seminary. After obtaining a Bachelor of Sacred Theology in November 2012 from the Urbania University in Rome, I was ordained in St. Michael's Cathedral, Wagga Wagga, by Bishop Gerard Hanna on the 5th of April 2013.

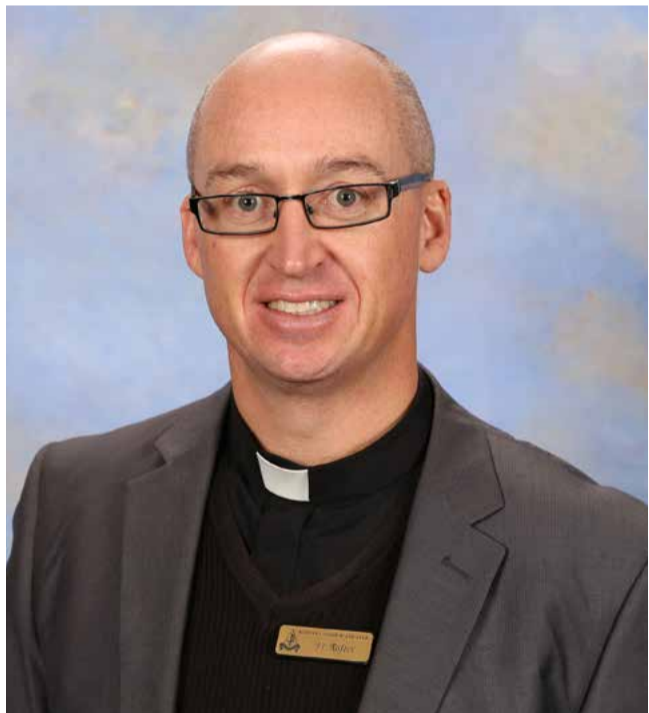
After spending 2013 assigned to St. Michael's Cathedral, I was posted to Sacred Heart, Griffith, where I was Assistant Priest in 2014 and 2015.

In February 2016 I was appointed to St. Mel's, Nerrandera as the Parish Administrator and have been an Army Chaplain since June 2017 where I work one to two days a week at Kapooka Training Battalion, Wagga (1-RTB).

– Fr. Bradley Rafter



Rector-Elect, Fr. Rick Micallef



Vice Rector-Elect, Fr. Bradley Rafter

# Bishop Mark meets Wagga Serrans

Bishop Mark came to the seminary on March 9th to meet the Wagga Serrans and join them in their monthly meeting.

He then celebrated Mass for the Serrans and seminary community and instituted three men into the ministry of Lector: Brother Michael Pham, Brother Xavier Nguyen CCS and Mark Matthew Vettikombil. Following the Mass, all gathered in the seminary dining room for a light supper.



Br. Xavier Nguyen, Bishop Mark, Mark Matthew Vettikombil and Br. Michael Pham

# Vale Norman Corbett

Vianney College lost a long time friend and supporter with the death of Norman Corbett on March 17.

Norm and his wife, Margaret, supported Bishop Brennan from the start in his project of a diocesan seminary, which eventually became Vianney College. They knew each seminarian personally, and in the early days, filled the role of “substitute parents” for many of them. Their home was always open to the Vianney seminarians.

We remember the barbeques held in the Corbett home to welcome and farewell the seminarians each year. We remember the birthday cakes for each individual seminarian. We remember the valuable support that Wagga Serra, led by Norm for 20 years, gave to the seminary on Open Days, on the occasions when the seminary hosted the Inter Seminary Soccer, and on countless other occasions.

Our prayers, and sympathy to Margaret



Norman Corbett with his beloved wife Margaret.

and the family. We will treasure all those memories.

**Fr. Peter Thompson, C.M.**  
*Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.  
And may perpetual light shine upon him.  
May he rest in peace.  
Amen.*

# Vianney welcomes new seminarians

On the 9th of February Vianney College welcomed three new seminarians, all from the Wagga Wagga Diocese.

**New seminarians: Denis Hickey (Berrigan), Gerard Letchford (Wagga Wagga), and Christopher Gillespie (Jindera).** The returning seminarians joined them a few days later and there followed a week of orientation activities, human formation sessions, and a visit to St. Mary Mackillop College in Jindera where the seminarians spoke to the various classes and joined them for a BBQ provided by the Wagga Serrans.



Christopher Gillespie, Gerard Letchford, Denis Hickey

# Vianney College visits Saint Mary Mackillop College

We were very blessed to have the opportunity to engage with the school students and staff of Saint Mary Mackillop College (SMMC), Jindera. We were invited by the school to visit various classrooms from kindergarten to year 12, in order to give talks on vocations, especially on the vocation to the priesthood. Later we were able to mingle with the students through various sporting activities and a communal BBQ. During the talks on vocations the students showed a real interest. It was edifying to see them engage



with the topics as they responded with openness and an understanding of the Catholic faith. This will hold them in good stead when they go out into the world and seek to follow God’s call in whatever vocation that Jesus is inviting them to follow. In *Pastores dabo vobis*, (a document written by Saint John Paul II on the formation of priests) it speaks of the family being the first seminary, where the seeds of a vocation are first sown.

A school helps to contribute to this formation by providing students, with the grace of God, the means of helping them to grow in their love of God and neighbour and a deepening of their understanding of Gods call of love for each one of them. Whatever the students decide to do in the future, we hope that they will all grow in that universal call of God, which is holiness and sanctity. We thank SMMC for their invitation and the very fruitful and joyous day and we look forward to having the opportunity of visiting again.

**Michael Perry**  
Sixth Year  
Wagga Wagga Diocese



# Inaugural meeting of the Catholic Education Council

The first meeting of the newly formed Catholic Education Council for the Diocese of Wagga Wagga was held recently across two days, March 1 and 2. The group gathered in Wagga Wagga for an Induction Day followed by the first meeting of the Council.

**The role of the CEC is to steward the mission of Catholic education with authority to make decisions and in stipulated areas, provide advice and recommendations to the Bishop of Wagga Wagga to ensure confidence and transparency in providing the best possible Catholic education for students.**

Members of the Council are called to honour this privilege of governance through the core principles of *stewardship* in a ministry of service, through *dialogue* and building relationships, through *subsidiarity* ensuring that local communities are respected and included and ultimately, through working together in a spirit of *co-responsibility*.

Informed by the work of the Establishment Group during 2020 whose membership comprised Bishop Mark Edwards (President), Philomena Billington (Chair), Elizabeth O'Carrigan (Director of Catholic Education CEDWW & CEC Executive Officer), Dennis Purcell (Diocesan Business Manager) and Jenny Allen (Member), the CEC had the opportunity of listening to and reflecting on Bishop Mark's welcoming

address during the initial session of their Induction Day.

Following the opportunity to be introduced to each other, the Council was given an orientation to the diocesan system of schools. A significant session of the day was devoted to deepening the Council's understanding of governance in the Catholic Church and in Catholic education. The final session of the Induction day was designed to ensure Council members' familiarity with the newly developed CEC Handbook protocols and procedures.

Bishop Mark commissioned members of the CEC during mass in the Cathedral that evening following which the Council enjoyed a meal together.

The CEC meeting day on March 2 began with prayer led by students of St Joseph's Primary School Wagga Wagga.

The following key items formed the agenda for the meeting:

- Report from the 2020 CEC Establishment Group - Terms of Reference for the CEC Committees
- CEDWW Towards 2022 Annual Plan
- 2020 HSC Report



Bishop Mark commissions members of the CEC during Mass at St Michael's Cathedral.

- Report from the Director of Catholic Education
- CEDWW Demographic Forecast 2021 to 2041 - Student Census Report February 2021
- CEDWW draft policies in the areas of Financial Stewardship and WHS
- The draft CEDWW Enrolment Policy. This policy will be the focus of wide consultation across the diocese in the coming months.

The Chair concluded the meeting by inviting each member to engage in a reflective evaluation of the meeting before the closing prayer with its focus on the 200 year anniversary of Catholic education in Australia.

**The CEC will meet each school term in a different location across the diocese. The next meeting will be held on the 8th of June 2021 at St Francis De Sales College, Leeton.**



Students from St Joseph's Wagga Wagga began the meeting on day 2 by leading prayer.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dear Members of the Catholic Education Council,**

Our Catholic schools are a privilege, a responsibility and an opportunity and the CEC is to provide the good governance that drives, leads, enables and supports CEDWW through its Director to respond with energy, insight, vision and commitment.

Parents and caregivers entrust our schools with their precious children to keep them safe, assist parents in rearing them, to provide faith opportunities, education and care. They value Catholic education and being connected in this way with the Church and we have the privilege of educating their daughters and sons.

Our response to this parental trust, as a Council and as individuals, is to be excellent at all we do. This is no less

than a call, a mission, from God. The academic education, faith formation, and pastoral care are to be outstanding. Achieving this will require first-class teacher development, facilities and community, all supported by CEDWW being an efficient, effective and prudent financial organisation. In achieving this excellence, I want us to be data-informed and faith-driven.

Our schools are an opportunity for the Church as for many of our children, the first time they hear about God in a substantial way - or experience prayer and liturgy - is through attendance at their Catholic school. Our teachers are, in many ways, actively on mission in our schools, reaching out to all and encouraging students and parents alike toward participation and witness.

Accompaniment of families in the

journey of life and faith is a vital work of evangelisation which opens an opportunity for the cooperation of school communities and their parishes in this shared mission. This is a way to address the divide between many of our schools and their worshipping community. Gentle and faithful accompaniment, modelled on the example and teaching of Jesus, is vitally important.

We will honour this privilege of governance through the core principles of *stewardship* in a ministry of service, through *dialogue* and building relationships, through *subsidiarity* ensuring that local communities are respected and included and ultimately, through working together in a spirit of *co-responsibility*.

God is inviting us to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry and we on this Council are key participants in re-imagining and implementing

effective faith formation and achieving outstanding academic growth.

I thank you for your commitment to the CEC and I encourage you all in this role and the Director and Staff of CEDWW who will support the CEC.

**Most Reverend Mark Edwards OMI  
Bishop of Wagga Wagga and  
President of the CEC**



# FROM THE CHAIR

**As the Chair of the newly formed Catholic Education Council, I feel both privileged and excited about supporting the work of all of those involved in the ministry of education in the diocese of Wagga Wagga.** It was evident in the first meeting of the CEC, the details of which are included

in this newsletter, that all of the members of the Council share these feelings. In this year, when we are celebrating 200 years of Catholic education in Australia, it is certainly a hope and joy filled time to be commencing this next stage in the wonderful story of Catholic education in the diocese.

My home diocese is Bathurst and it is also the city in which I live with my family. Between 2012 and 2019 I was the Executive Director of Schools in the diocese. With a similar number of schools and students, our two dioceses share many of the same strengths and challenges in our common mission of providing quality Catholic education. I am delighted to be able to draw upon

this recent system leadership experience in support of the ongoing remarkable journey of quality Catholic education in the diocese of Wagga Wagga.

With the aim of ensuring ongoing communication of the deliberations of the Catholic Education Council, this Newsletter will be issued across the diocese following each meeting each term. On behalf of Bishop Mark and the members

of the Council, I look forward to sharing this information with you.

**Jenny Allen**



# Meet the Catholic Education Council



CEC Members: Back left to right: Dr Matthew Tan, Fr Reece Beltrame, Fr Martin Cruickshank, Melanie Dusterhoft Mavrick, Dennis Purcell (Diocesan Business Manager), Dr Michelle Fernon, Patricia Burgess, Julianne Carroll, Alan Le Broque. Front left to right: Elizabeth O'Carrigan (Director of Catholic Education & Executive Officer), Jenny Allen (Chair), Bishop Mark Edwards OMI (President)

## JENNY ALLEN - CHAIRPERSON

Jenny Allen was appointed to the role of Executive Director of Schools in the Diocese of Bathurst in 2012 and retired January 2020. Jenny continues to be deeply engaged in the life of the Church. She is Bathurst diocese's local coordinator for the Plenary Council and has recently been appointed as one of the national Assembly Facilitators of Communal Discernment for the Plenary Council.

## FR MARTIN CRUICKSHANK

Fr Cruickshank was born and raised in Albury. Father Martin studied for the priesthood at Corpus Christi College Clayton 1987-1993 and completed pastoral placement at St Mel's Narrandera in 1991. After ordination in September 1993 he became assistant priest at Leeton 1994-1999.

He was parish priest of Finley/Tocumwal for eighteen years, and is currently the Administrator for Sacred Heart Parish North Albury.

## FR REECE BELTRAME

Father Reece Beltrame was born in Warragul, Victoria and for ten years prior to entering the seminary, Father Reece worked as an electrician. In April, 2016, Father Reece Beltrame was ordained by Bishop Gerard Hanna at St Michaels Cathedral, where he took up, and continues to hold the appointment of Assistant Priest. He is a member of the Diocesan Consultors and the Council of Priests.

## PATRICIA BURGESS

Patricia has worked in education for forty years. In 2002 Patricia accepted the position

of Foundation Principal of what was then called the Town School and later was given the name Kildare Catholic College. Kildare opened its doors in 2004 to 915 students and 106 staff with students from Years 7-12.

Patricia retired in 2012 and embarked on a Law Degree, something she had always wanted to achieve.

## DR MICHELLE FERNON

Having finished training and being accredited as a General Practitioner, Dr Michelle Fernon spent most of her professional life in hospital administration and as a GP seditionist.

Co-founder of Women for the World, in partnership with Caritas Australia, to assist the poorest of the poor.

Michelle is a grateful recipient of a Catholic education which began in Young. She is a mother of four children all of whom were educated at Sacred Heart Koorringal and Kildare College. Michelle has been an active member of the Wagga Diocese since moving to Wagga in 1993.

## MELANIE DUSTERHOFT MAVRICK

Melanie came to the diocese from Western Australia and completed her studies at the University of Notre Dame in Fremantle. She is currently studying for a Master of Education-Leadership and Management.

Her focus is on raising student achievement in rural and regional Australia. It is this passion that brought her to the East Coast of Australia where she now proudly works in the diocese of Wagga Wagga as Principal of St Patrick's School in Holbrook.

## DR MATTHEW TAN

Dr. Tan is Dean of Studies at Vianney College, the seminary of the Wagga Diocese. He is also an adjunct Senior Lecturer in Theology at the University of Notre Dame Australia.

He has been involved in curricular steering committees and has in his capacity as lecturer in theology assisted in the professional development of teachers.

He has academic and popular written pieces published in Australia and internationally. He is a blogger and blogs at [www.awkwardasiantheologian.com](http://www.awkwardasiantheologian.com)

## JULIANNE CARROLL

Julianne was admitted to practice as a Solicitor in October 2003 and became a Director of Commins Hendriks in 2012.

Julianne was raised on a property outside Wagga Wagga and is an active member of many professional and voluntary committees. In addition to her contributions to many organisations and committees, within the Wagga Wagga Community, Julianne is a mother of two children, both of whom are at Wagga Wagga Diocese Schools.

## ALAN LE BROCQUE

Alan is the Principal at Marian Catholic College, Griffith and commenced working for the Catholic Education, Diocese of Wagga Wagga in 1982.

Twenty-five of these years have been in senior leadership as Assistant Principal of two Catholic high schools in Wagga, Mount Erin High School and Kildare Catholic College. Currently, he is in his fourteenth year as Principal of Marian Catholic College, Griffith.

## BISHOP MARK EDWARDS OMI

- ex-officio

Appointed by Pope Francis on 26 May 2020 as Sixth Bishop of Wagga, Bishop Mark Edwards OMI was received at a Liturgical Reception and Solemn Mass at St Michael's Cathedral on 22 July 2020.

Bishop Edwards, was born in Indonesia and grew up in Adelaide, Darwin and Melbourne's southeast, attending St Leonard's Primary School and Mazenod College. Mazenod was founded by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the order he would eventually join.

Bishop Mark serves on the Bishops Commission for Education and the Bishops Commission for the Plenary Council, as well as serving as a Commissioner on the National Catholic Education Council.

## DENNIS PURCELL

- Diocesan Business Manager, ex-officio

Dennis spent 22 years managing car and truck dealerships with a time also involved in residential and commercial real estate before joining the Diocese of Wagga Wagga 16 years ago.

He has a multi-disciplinary Bachelor of Business studied at Riverina College of Advanced Education and Riverina Murray Institute of Higher Education which evolved into Charles Sturt University.

Dennis' role as Diocesan Business Manager encompasses management oversight of the compliance, risk, assets and property portfolios of the Diocese and parishes where applicable.

He is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and formerly an Associate Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management.

He is currently on the Board of Centacare South West NSW Ltd and a Director of PSRF Pty Ltd and a former Director of CEnet Ltd and the Diocese of Wagga Wagga Superannuation Fund."

## ELIZABETH O'CARRIGAN OAM

- Director of Catholic Education,

Executive Officer, ex-officio

Elizabeth has served for more than twenty-years on non-for-profit school boards, including as the first female chair of St Patrick's College, Strathfield. She formed part of the inaugural Council for the establishment of Redfern Jarjum College, a school for Aboriginal students, who were not able to participate in mainstream learning. Elizabeth was appointed as Director of Catholic Education in Wagga Wagga in June 2020.

Most recently, in the 2021 Australia Day honours, Elizabeth received a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for service to education in New South Wales.

# When I Go To Mass

## The book catholic parents have been waiting for

A new book by Sarah Hlavacek, uses detailed illustrations to convey the deep mysteries taking place in every Catholic Mass.

**Author, 31 year old Mother of 7, Sarah Hlavacek has released a Catholic picture book for 3-6 year old children.** Using beautiful illustrations and easy to understand language, When I go to Mass instructs children in the practice of their Catholic faith and invites them to contemplate the profound mystery of the Eucharist.

“It creates the opportunity to go deeper into the mass with your child. It’s a book you can use to prepare your child for mass, and bring along to be used as a picture missal. It is instructional, informative and contemplative. With the level of detail that won’t overwhelm a 3 year old!” says the Author.

Using her artist license, Sarah brings to life the moment of Epiclesis. Highlighting this pivotal moment in the mass.

Drawing inspiration from famous religious art

throughout history, she brings to the eyes of children the profound miracle of the Eucharist.

She also includes fundamental faith formation elements, like making the sign of the cross, genuflection, prayer before mass and after communion, naming the Sacred Vessels and Articles of the Mass and concluding with the commission to ‘love thy neighbour’.

“A simple and heartfelt book, connecting all that we do at mass to loving God by those actions” ~ Quoted from book review, by Laura Range, CatholicMom.com

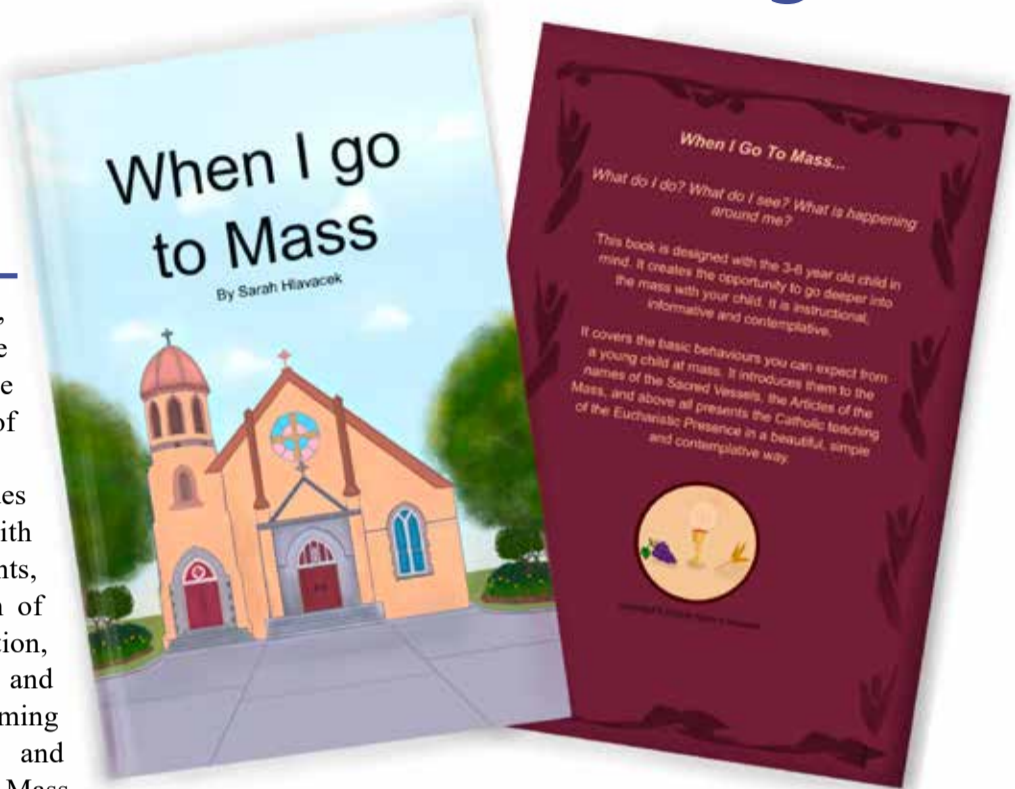
“It’s so rare to find a book that presents the Catholic Eucharistic teaching to young children, in such a beautiful and understandable way!” ~ Mother of 6 children

“The illustrations are stunning! So much detail and emotion captured! I can’t wait to read it to my children..” ~ Mother of 3 children

“They will make great Baptism gifts!” ~ Mother of 7 children

Sarah was born in Albury, NSW and lives in Melbourne with her husband, Dominik and seven children. She is a trained Catechist and cofounder of AustralianCatholicMums.com she hopes to continue writing books to help enrich the faith life of families.

This 6 x 9” 42 page, full colour book is available to purchase in both hard and soft covers. It is available at all major online bookstores and is still finding its way into many Catholic online and piety stores, please contact the author to stock or bulk purchase at a discount.



“The Holy Spirit comes. He blesses the gifts and makes them Holy”



“This is my body given up for you”

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



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

**Date:** Tentatively - Monday 17th to Saturday 22 May 2021 (6 days)

**Location:** St Michael’s Parish Centre, Wagga Wagga

**Cost:** \$350

### Course Description and Aims:

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

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

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

For more information or to express interest please contact Fr. Darlow 02 6927 6438 or 0407 734 747

# Bishop Mark spreads the message via community radio

On 12th March Bishop Mark Edwards OMI was a special, in studio, guest on local community radio 2MIA FM in Griffith.

BY FR PETER STOJANOVIC

With an eloquent 'radio voice' his interview with host, Fr. Peter Stojanovic from Yoogali, was well received via the air waves reaching local listeners in Griffith and surrounds within an 100km radius, and also through the internet, via live stream (TUNE-IN) as far as Wagga Wagga and beyond.

This weekly Catholic radio program, "Life is Worth Living" on 2MIA, 95.1fm, has been spreading the Good News with uplifting Christian Hits: upbeat contemporary popular and rock music, full of messages of faith, hope and love, and a mix of other news items such as local Catholic news/events, periodic podcasts from *Catholic Answers*, (from catholic.com) and the Conventual Sisters of St. Dominic (Ganmain), and stories of the saints (from holyheroes.com), feasts and devotions generally following the liturgical calendar.

For over fifteen years the Catholic faith has been shared in this way on 2MIA fm, by particularly Catholic-faithfilled volunteers

with a mission from *Sacred Heart* and *Yenda, Yoogali, Hanwood* Parishes following the call of the New Evangelisation. The program attracts a wide audience of young and old, and young at heart.

The programs' founder was a local Catholic woman, Maria Cocilova, who sadly passed away in 2009.

In the early days her program started as a five minute segment which over the course of time due to her determination as well as popularity grew to the two hour segment it now has on a Friday night 6-8pm.

She named the programme Life is Worth Living for two reasons firstly, she drew inspiration from Blessed Fulton Sheen's sharing of the faith through his TV program with the same name and her strong support of the pro-life message of the Church.

Maria, as a devoted wife and mother of three children, started to crave more knowledge and understanding of her faith as she saw those around her being faced with challenging decisions regarding life



Bishop Mark Edwards with Fr Peter Stojanovic.

and family issues that were contrary to the Church's teachings. She made it her mission to help anyone who needed to hear and see God's love: the lost, the lonely, the confused, young, old, married, single (even teenage mothers, regarding the preciousness of life, regardless the circumstance). One of her final requests was for her radio program to continue, and especially to reach out to the Catholic youth lapsed from the practice of the faith.

The radio now casts a net far and wide via the internet. Login online at 2miafm.org.au and connect via the live link. Please pray for the ongoing success and fruitfulness of this modern mission of the Spirit to touch people's hearts in an appealing way through music and a message of life and truth.

**If anyone is interested in volunteering or learning more about how to get involved please contact Fr. Peter Stojanovic at [yyhparish@gmail.com](mailto:yyhparish@gmail.com)**

# Claim the Date: Spirituality Day for Women 2021

Women are being asked to claim the date for the next *Spirituality Day for Women* to be held on Saturday 28 August 2021 in Narrandera.

BY KATHERINE KLAPDOR

**The Day will reflect on Pope Francis's encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, summarised as:** fraternity - sisters and brothers all, and social friendship are the ways the Pontiff indicates to build a better, more just and peaceful world, with the contribution of all: people and institutions.

The keynote speaker will be Dr Michele Connolly rsj. Marilyn Bellett, from Catholic Mission and Australian Young Christian Workers, will coordinate the opening and closing sessions for the Day, and Andrea Dean, Chair of WATAC and previous Director, Office for the Participation of Women and Director, Lay Pastoral Ministry, will be the facilitator for the day.

The event will be coordinated by *Spirit Weavers, Contemplative Active Christian Women*. This is the new name for the previous Council for Australian Catholic Women (CACW), Diocese of Wagga.

*Spirit Weavers* is a Christ-centred group, promoting women's spirituality, unity, journeying and connection, including inter-faith and cross-cultural exchanges. Our aims include spiritual growth, learning together, friendship, connecting, community building, challenging ourselves and others, guiding our journey, praying and celebrating

*Spirit Weavers* was officially established in February 2021. It will continue the

work begun by CACW in the Diocese in 2003 following the recommendations of the *Woman and Man: One in Christ Jesus* research project to ensure the dignity of women is honoured and their gifts are given space to flourish for the sake of the Church's life and mission. (ACBC 2017)

Registration will open on 1 June 2021 and further details will be provided in later editions of *Together*.

**Enquiries can be sent to the Secretary, Anne Brown:**  
[cacw.waggawagga@gmail.com](mailto:cacw.waggawagga@gmail.com)

**Event:**  
Diocesan Spirituality Day for Women  
**Date:** Sat 28 August 2021  
**Time:** 9.30am-3.30pm  
**Venue:** Narranderra High School  
**Sponsor:** Diocese of Wagga Wagga  
**Theme:**  
*Who is My Neighbour* (Luke 10:29)  
*Let us Dream, Let us Weave a new path*



Some of the participants from the Spirituality Day for Women in 2019.



# Continuing the Journey

In October 2021, the Catholic Church in Australia will gather for the first Assembly of the Plenary Council to be held since the second Vatican Council.

**In 2018, when the decision to hold a Plenary Council was announced, the entire People of God in Australia began preparing for this historic moment by listening to God and by listening to one another's stories of faith.** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the first Assembly will be a mix of in-person and online delivery. See the up-to-date PLENARY COUNCIL JOURNEY 2020-2022.

Responses to the discernment journey which began with the Listening and Dialogue Phase, followed by the Listening and Discernment Phase can still be accessed for your consideration and reflection. The six Thematic Discernment papers and Reflection Guide, prepared by several writing groups are also still available, by clicking here.

As we make the journey in these months towards the first Assembly, we are all invited to be mindful that the members (formerly called delegates) will be commissioned and participate in formation sessions in preparation to fulfil their role as members. At the same time, we are all called to continue our own journey of prayer and discernment as we look forward in hope to the renewal of the Catholic Church in Australia.

## Phase I: Listening and Dialogue

More than 222,000 people participated in Phase I: Listening and Dialogue, contributing 17,457 submissions. The voices of the faithful helped all of us to understand something of the historical experience and the current reality of the

Catholic Church in Australia. This gathered data also reveals some deeper hopes and questions, and the diverse yearnings, that we continue to be challenged to consider together.

## Phase II: Listening and Discernment

The voices in the Listening and Dialogue submissions inspired The National Themes for Discernment, which have served as guides as we went through Phase II: Listening and Discernment. Catholics all over Australia participated in Writing and Discernment sessions, discerning on the submissions with prayerful hearts and minds. These responses made their way to our Writing and Discernment Groups via our website portal, who drafted thematic papers towards making the agenda for Assembly 1.

Discernment will go on indefinitely. We invite you to continue getting together with your community for sessions and sending us your responses via the website.

## Towards Assembly 1

With the calling of the members, we commenced work towards Assembly 1 of the Plenary Council in earnest. While Discernment continues across the country, members will undergo formation and be sent documents in advance. These documents included the THEMATIC DISCERNMENT PAPERS written by the Writing and Discernment Groups.

In 2020, we announced more than 280 members (formerly called delegates) for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, including members nominated by dioceses, eparchies, ordinariates, leaders



"Recognising that fewer people today participate in the sacramental life of the Church than in previous times, the question of how best to provide formation on the sacraments arises. Such formation will need to focus on both deepening people's faith and increasing their knowledge. A dimension of this formation must be the ethical and missionary implications of the Eucharist ... for 'we cannot properly receive the Bread of Life without sharing bread for life with those in want'."

LOOKING WITHIN - Prayer and the Eucharist are Fundamental to Renewal (P.45)  
**CONTINUING THE JOURNEY: WORKING DOCUMENT** (*Instrumentum Laboris*)  
[plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/instrumentum-laboris](http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/instrumentum-laboris)



of religious congregations, some church ministries and a personal prelature. The members will represent those local churches at the celebration of the Council over two assemblies – originally planned for Adelaide in October 2020 and in Sydney in mid-2021.

On April 6, 2020, Assembly 1 was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic preventing the desired process of discernment and formation for the members. As of June 2020, Assembly 1 will be held in a multi-modal form online on October 2-10, 2021 and Assembly 2 will be held in Sydney on July 4-9, 2022.

On February 2021, Continuing the Journey: Working Document (*Instrumentum Laboris*) was released. Find the details at: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/instrumentum-laboris/>



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TOGETHER - APRIL 2021

# The Catholic Church in Australia is having a 'plenary council.' What's that?

The Catholic bishops in Australia released this week a working document, or *instrumentum laboris* for the country's upcoming plenary council. A plenary council is a rare occasion in the Church, and worth understanding.

BY THE PILLAR

## So what is a plenary council?

A plenary council is a regional meeting — one for all the territory of a bishops' conference — that, according to the Church's canon law, meets to discuss "the increase of the faith, the organization of common pastoral action, and the regulation of morals and of the common ecclesiastical discipline which is to be observed, promoted, and protected."

A plenary council is not the same as a synod, which has the same general purpose.

A synod is a kind of broad consultative meeting, while a council has the power to make binding laws for the entire territory in attendance. A bishops' conference also has that power, but only in very limited ways allowed by the Vatican.

When bishops meet together in a plenary council, their votes can set binding canonical norms for the whole region on anything that doesn't contradict the universal of the Church, or the divine and natural law given to us by God.

What does "plenary" mean?

Plenary means "full" or "complete." The term is used for a national council like this because it includes all the territory within an episcopal conference, and all the bishops connected to that territory.

## How does it work?

A plenary council can be convoked by a conference of bishops, with the permission of the Vatican — permission that usually comes through the Congregation for Bishops.

First, some bishops in the conference propose to have one — usually to address changing social circumstances or circumstances in the Church. If the idea gets enough votes in the bishops' conference, the proposal is sent to Rome for approval.

If Rome approves, a committee is formed to appoint a president (A bishop, who must be approved by the Vatican), to set a schedule, and to set an agenda, and the questions to be discussed.

Then invitations are sent out, meetings

are conducted, usually involving committees and working groups, and full sessions of the entire council, and eventually proposals are voted upon.

The norms, policies, and other decrees of the council must be reviewed by the Vatican before they can take effect.

## Who participates?

Because a council can set binding canonical norms for the territory, all diocesan bishops, auxiliary bishops, and coadjutor bishops must be invited to it, and have the right of a deliberative vote on all proposals. Retired bishops can be called with a deliberative vote as well, but don't have to be.

Other people must be invited as well: Certain diocesan officials, superiors of religious institutes, certain university administrators, and some seminary rectors. Priests, religious, and laity can also be invited as delegates of the council. The delegates in this group have a consultative vote: Before a binding vote is taken, they can be asked to vote on a measure to give a sense of their view on it — but that vote is not enough, by itself, to approve or turn down a proposal.

The Australian bishops have made great effort to frame their council as a "journey together," in which lay people play a primary role in "dialogue and common discernment." The bishops have conducted listening and consultation sessions, and made feedback requests at local levels, in advance of the plenary assemblies.

From a formal perspective, however, the council consists of the meetings of the bishops themselves, who possess governing authority of the Church.

## Can a plenary council change Church teaching?

No. It can discuss general and specific applications of Church teaching to a local situation, and develop some policies based upon them.

## What is the Australia council going to address?

There are more than 5 million Catholics



A consultation session ahead of the Australian 2021 Plenary Council.  
Credit: Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference.

in Australia, about 23% of the country's population.

In 2011, Sunday Mass attendance was estimated at 12% of the country's Catholics. Both Catholic population and Catholic Mass attendance are on a decline in the country.

In 2018, there were 2,900 priests in the country. While priestly vocations have been on the rise in recent decades, the country has seen a dramatic decline in the number of religious sisters. There were 5,700 religious sisters in Australia in 2007. By 2018, there were 4,161.

The council will aim to address those things.

The council is, in part, a response to a major investigation into clerical sexual abuse in the country, called the Royal Commission. 2014, 2015, and 2017 reports from that commission were highly critical of Catholic practices with regard to abuse and child protection. The bishops pushed back on some parts of the reports, but apologized for the Church's neglect and abuse in Australia's history. The council says it will aim to respond to the Royal Commission, while at the same time, to discern how best to address institutional, catechetical, and evangelical issues for the Church in largely secular Australia.

The working document for the council is mostly a summary of the consultation done by the conciliar planning commission. It discusses lay and clerical collaboration, formation, parish life, evangelization, social ministry, and the Church's engagement of public life.

It does not identify specific proposals for reform or renewal of the Church in Australia. Those will come later. Instead, it says that "in identifying and considering these various topics the skeleton of an agenda for the first formal assembly of the Plenary Council begins to emerge. Ongoing discernment of these topics, and others which have arisen in the course of the Plenary Council journey so far, will sharpen our awareness of the complexity of the current situation of the Church in Australia. This will enable us to recognise more clearly, and specify in a formal agenda, the particular areas which need to be explored in the first Assembly in October 2021."

## When does it start?

October 2021.

## How is this different from the synod in Germany?

That's a good and interesting question. Generally speaking, a synod is a non-binding meeting gathered to discuss issues, whereas a council is a gathering with the power to make binding norms.

But there's an irony to the synods and councils taking place on the global stage right now: While the "synod" taking place in Germany proposes to call for binding changes to Church discipline and doctrine, the council being prepared in Australia has not yet offered specific change proposal to Church practices or discipline. The Vatican is presently investigating the proposals of the German synodal process, which Pope Francis has criticized repeatedly.

# St Joseph's Catholic Men's Group

Members of the St Joseph’s Catholic Men’s group met at the Astor Hotel in March to hear Bishop Mark Edwards OMI speak on St Joseph.

BY NICK MORGAN

**It was particularly fitting that Bishop Edwards spoke on St Joseph as he is the group’s patron, his feast day was approaching and Pope Francis has declared this year the year of St Joseph.**

Bishop Edwards highlighted St Joseph’s attunement to the will of God through his dreams, presenting him as a model for following the inspirations and promptings that God puts in our hearts. At the same time he is a model for us of accepting the situation we are in.

He reminded attendees that St Joseph is

the patron of a happy death, and that this comes from the tradition that St Joseph died with Jesus and Mary at his side. Who could ask for better companions at one’s deathbed?

Bishop Edwards spoke movingly of the tenderness of St Joseph’s relationship with Jesus, which is often beautifully captured in artwork. He noted how St Joseph is a powerful intercessor for people who have had difficult relationships with their own fathers, and how he is a model of God’s fatherly love for us.

The St Joseph’s group was formed



Ezekiel Raju thanks Bishop Mark after his talk.

around five years ago by local men following a diocesan men’s gathering. The group meets monthly at a local pub in Wagga for a meal at 6:30pm and a talk from a speaker at 7:30pm.

All men are welcome to come along to

hear high-quality talks and enjoy a drink and fellowship.

**Please email:**

**stjosephscatholicmensgroup@gmail.com to be included on the mailing list and advised of events.**



Members of St Joseph's Catholic Men's Group share a meal with Bishop Mark.

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Come along to hear high-quality talks and enjoy fellowship.

**All men welcome.**

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# Service and sacrifice on Anzac Day

Service and sacrifice have long been held as noble virtues, drawing respect from both individuals and communities.

BY ANTHONY CLEARY

**They point to the fundamental goodness of humanity, as well as call us to higher or better things.** They remind us that heroism exists in the routine of everyday life, as well as in the darkest of times.

No day perhaps encapsulates their value and importance like Anzac Day.

Anzac Day, a solemn day of remembrance, has a long and rich history – full of tradition. In its early years, we honoured those who fought at Gallipoli, especially those who had died. Over the years, however, we have come to recognise the service and sacrifice of countless men and women in different wars and peacekeeping missions as well as remembering the families and friends they leave waiting at home.

Anzac Day has helped forge our national identity, and its traditions reflect our national psyche – who we are as a people, the values we hold, and what we stand for. The day has also revealed a seemingly innate human characteristic – the desire to show gratitude to others for their personal sacrifice for the common good.

In recent times, Australians have experienced drought, flood, and widespread bushfires. And, with seemingly little or no respite, we have been beset by the challenges of COVID19. Every facet of our society has been impacted upon by the pandemic: workplaces, public transport, schools, places of worship, our social engagements and



even family homes. But as with other times of crisis in our nation’s history, men and women have stepped forward to respond to these challenges. At a time when we honour the bravery of those who defended our nation and the freedom of others around the world, we recognise that we also have contemporary heroes in our midst. Invariably, we have always overcome our difficulties when we have bonded together as a community.

*“They shall grow not old,  
as we that are left grow old;  
Age shall not weary them,  
nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun  
and in the morning  
We will remember them.”*

**With ANZAC Day falling on a Sunday this year, it will be acknowledged in the scheduled Parish Masses. The separate ANZAC Day Mass in the Cathedral involving the Defence Forces will not be held this year.**



St Michael's Cathedral Anzac Day Mass 2018

# The Legion of Mary Centenary 2021



The Legion of Mary is celebrating its Centenary in September this year and we would like to share a series of ‘What the Legion of Mary means to me’ testimonies from different members over the next few months as well as our plans for ways in which we will mark this significant milestone. **BY CARONNE VELLA**

**In keeping with the Legion of Mary confidential ‘way’ the testimonies will be published anonymously.**

**Here is the latest one:**

*I started out in the Legion of Mary as a Junior Legionary, with my active work being visitation at the Home of Compassion. I was sad when I turned 18, because I had to leave the Junior Legion. I didn’t want to join the Senior Legion as I was scared of making home visitations. Many years later my Parish Priest helped me to make my Consecration to Mary through Louis Marie de Monforte’s True Devotion. After this I was inspired to join*

*the Senior Legion of Mary. Home visitation and other active works were a joy. I now regret every year that I wasn’t a Senior Member of the Legion of Mary.*

**In other news:**

Sue Hyde, President of Senatus (Legion of Mary, Melbourne) kindly brought a very special pilgrim statue of Our Lady of Fatima to Wagga Wagga for about 10 days in April.

The statue is from Fatima, Portugal and is designed to be transported around (it fits neatly on the back seat of a car). It comes in a special wheeled box and also has a bier with handles for procession purposes.

**Perhaps we will organise another visit and a procession later in the year. Watch this space!**

**Below is a list of Praesidia (Legion of Mary groups) for your information. If you would like to join Our Lady’s ‘SAS’\* please contact your Parish.**

Name	Location	Meeting time	Spiritual Director
Our Lady Ark of the Covenant	St Mary’s, The Rock	Mon, 7pm	Fr Gabriel Murray
Our Lady Gate of Heaven	St Joseph’s, Leeton	Tue, 5pm	Fr Anthony Dunne
Our Lady Help of Christians	St Brendan’s, Ganmain	Wed, 2pm	Fr Justin Darlow
Our Lady Star of the Sea (Juniors)	St Michael’s Cathedral, Wagga Wagga	Wed, 3:45pm	Fr Reece Beltrame
Our Lady of Fatima	Holy Trinity, West Wagga Wagga	Wed, 7pm	TBA
Our Lady Queen of Angels	Sacred Heart, Griffith	Thu, 3:30pm	Fr Jomer Calma
Our Lady Seat of Wisdom	Vianney Seminary, Wagga Wagga	Thu, 3:40pm	Fr Steven Ledinich
Our Lady Queen of Heaven	St Michael’s Cathedral, Wagga Wagga	Thu, 5.45pm	Fr Damien Jellett
Our Lady of Cana	St Mel’s, Narrandera	Thu, 6pm	Fr Bradley Rafter
Our Lady Spouse of the Holy Spirit	Our Lady of Fatima, South Wagga	Fri, 1:30pm	TBA

*\* The British Special Air Service, known as the SAS, is the infantry counterpart to the Special Boat Service. Their insignia bears the phrase “Who dares wins.” Asked about the importance of the SAS’s role in the fighting that followed the Iraq War, US Gen. Stanley McChrystal said: “Essential. Could not have done it without them.”*



# Pro Patria Centre becoming a reality as Carmelite Monastery transformed

Almost five years ago, two mates had an idea about creating a hub where veterans, first responders and their families could access the services they need.

BY ANNIE LEWIS - The Daily Advertiser

**That dream is finally shaping into a reality.**

The Carmelite Monastery in Ashmont closed in 2019 after 53 years, but after months of discussions, it is being transformed into the Pro Patria Centre Wagga.

Jason Frost, president of the Wagga Defence Shed and one of the co-founders, said it was fantastic to get the support and backing needed to make the one-stop-shop a reality.

The Wagga RSL Club and Wagga RSL Sub-Branch have announced they are providing funding to the project.

Donations from the Wagga RSL Club have helped begin the efforts to refurbish the site, and the RSL Sub-Branch's contribution will go toward purchasing the property later this year from the Carmelite community.

"We are looking at a range of new and existing innovative services and a range

of evidence-based treatments," Mr Frost said.

"This year, we are looking at a lot of other services that people have requested during community engagement.

"The main responses that we are getting so far is calls for medical GP support, social support, counselling."

Mr Frost said although it is still only early days, the Pro Patria Centre has already hosted several programs and workshops with Open Arms Veterans and Families Counselling and Mental Health First Aid.

In the coming weeks, they will be giving some of the areas a fresh coat of paint before transforming them into treatment rooms.

Co-founder of the idea veteran Brad Fewson said it's "ground-breaking" that a hub like Pro Patria is being developed in Wagga.

He said, for him, one of the main



Jason Frost and Bradley Fewson say it's fantastic Wagga will be home to a treatment hub. Picture: Emma Hillier

priorities is making sure that there is support for the loved ones of veterans and first responders.

"I wouldn't be alive without my wife and my children," Mr Fewson said.

"If we can provide support to the families, then that helps keep the foundation stable.

"We really want this to be an inclusive and wholistic centre."

Mr Frost said for information, follow the Wagga Defence Shed on social media, and any veterans, first responders or their families are encouraged to reach out as their input is "invaluable".



## Retreat for Men

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# Resurgence of Ebola in Democratic Republic of Congo

Health providers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are struggling to contain fresh cases of Ebola virus, less than a year after the country's tenth outbreak of the deadly virus was declared over.

**So far, 11 cases and four deaths have been confirmed by the Ministry of Health around the city of Butembo in North Kivu province.**

Reports of the outbreak have been met with distrust and resistance from some community members, reflecting the past suspicions and even hostilities towards medical and aid workers, witnessed during previous Ebola outbreaks. This risks increasing the vulnerability of the most marginalised members of the community to spread of the disease.

"This Ebola outbreak has had the greatest impact on women and children," says Lulu Mitshabu, Caritas Australia Program Coordinator for Africa. "When children lose their parents, their future becomes uncertain. As they are often primary caregivers, women are often at risk of being infected or stigmatised."

This Ebola outbreak also comes as the country struggles with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 with 26,626 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 712 deaths reported to World Health Organisation since the outbreak of the pandemic.

There are fears that the economic impacts of COVID-19 could exacerbate the already high levels of food insecurity in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, as some communities have become increasingly vulnerable due to lockdowns.

"Many households missed the planting season and were unable to travel to markets sell their products, forcing families to start eating food stored for the dry season," says Ms Mitshabu.

In response to the combined threat of Ebola and COVID-19, Caritas Australia

and its partners in the Democratic Republic of Congo are working through local church networks to raise awareness about the outbreaks.

Caritas Australia's partners have implemented training sessions on community knowledge and understanding preventive measures on COVID-19 in three provinces. They also distributed hygiene kits including masks, buckets, hand sanitizer, soap and posters.

"I am always inspired by the courage and strength that communities display," says Ms Mitshabu. "Despite all odds, they come together to find their own solutions to challenges around peace, protection and livelihood opportunities to improve their own and their family's future."

Ms Mitshabu has been working for Caritas Australia for 20 years, after fleeing the Democratic Republic of Congo while working for a women's rights organization, at a time when women who spoke up for their rights were considered enemies of the state.

In the decades since, she has worked on Caritas Australia programs in the Democratic Republic of Congo which focus on gender-based violence, HIV/AIDS and the re-integration and protection of ex-combatants, helping them to transition from military to civilian life.

Caritas Australia is a member of Caritas Internationalis, one of the world's largest humanitarian networks in the world with 162 agencies operating in 200 countries and territories.



Photo by WHO



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An Ebola health worker is shown at a treatment center in Beni, Eastern Congo on April 16, 2019.  
(AP Photo/Al-hadji Kudra Maliro)

# Vatican rules out Church blessings for same sex unions

ROME – Responding to efforts in some parts of the Catholic world to devise “blessings” of same-sex unions by the Church, the Vatican’s doctrinal watchdog released a statement Monday saying that such blessings are “not legitimate,” as homosexual unions are “not ordered to the Creator’s plan.”

BY INÉS SAN MARTÍN

**“In some ecclesial contexts, plans and proposals for blessings of unions of persons of the same sex are being advanced,” says the document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.** “Such projects are not infrequently motivated by a sincere desire to welcome and accompany homosexual persons, to whom are proposed paths of growth in faith, ‘so that those who manifest a homosexual orientation can receive the assistance they need to understand and fully carry out God’s will in their lives’.”

The document, signed by Spanish Jesuit Cardinal Luis Ladaria and approved by Pope Francis, was released Monday, together with an explanatory note that clarifies that the statement comes as a response to a question, also known as a dubium, submitted by pastors and faithful requesting clarification and guidance concerning an issue that might pose controversy.

The note adds that the purpose of the CDF’s answer is to “is to help the universal Church to respond better to the demands of the Gospel, to settle disputes, and to foster healthy communion among the holy people of God.”

The statement doesn’t specify who posed the dubium, though in recent years there’s been pressure for some sort of same-sex blessing ceremony in some corners. German bishops, for example, have urged a debate on the blessing of

gay couples.

The response argues that blessings are “sacramentals,” whereby the Church “calls us to praise God, encourages us to implore his protection, and exhorts us to seek his mercy by our holiness of life.”

When a blessing is invoked on human relationships, it says, in addition to the “right intention” of those who participate, it’s necessary that what is blessed can be “objectively and positively ordered to receive and express grace, according to the designs of God inscribed in creation, and fully revealed by Christ the Lord.”

Hence it’s not “licit” to bless relationships and partnerships that, though they might be stable, involve sexual activity outside of marriage, meaning, “the indissoluble union of a man and a woman open in itself to the transmission of life, as is the case of the unions between persons of the same sex.”

Even when there might be positive elements present in these relationships, “which are in themselves to be valued and appreciated,” they do not justify these relationships and nor render them legitimate objects of an ecclesial blessing.

If such blessings do occur, the CDF document argues, they cannot be considered “licit,” because, as Pope Francis wrote in his 2015 post-synodal exhortation on the family, *Amoris Laetitia*, there are “absolutely no



Pope Francis on March 14, 2021 at the Vatican.

grounds for considering homosexual unions to be in any way similar or even remotely analogous to God’s plan for marriage and family.”

The response also notes that the Catechism of the Catholic Church states: “According to the teaching of the Church, men and women with homosexual tendencies ‘must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided’.”

The note also says that the fact that these blessings are considered unlawful by the Church does not intended to be a form of unjust discrimination, but a reminder of the very nature of the sacramentals.

Christians are called to welcome “with respect and sensitivity” people with homosexual inclinations, while being consistent with Church teaching and proclaiming the Gospel in its fullness. At the same time, the Church is called to pray for them, to accompany them and to share their journey of Christian life.

The fact that gay unions cannot be blessed, according to the CDF, does not mean that gay individuals who express the will to live in fidelity to the revealed plans of God cannot be blessed. The document also says that even though

God never ceases to “bless each of his pilgrim children,” he does not bless sin: “he blesses sinful man, so that he may recognize that he is part of his plan of love and allow himself to be changed by him.”

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In a file photo, an LGBT choir sings outside the Pastoral Congress at the World Meeting of Families in Dublin Aug. 23. (Credit: Clodagh Kilcoyne/Reuters via CNS.)

# Catholic sector says Disability Standards recommendations place students and families at the centre of education

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) said the recommendations from the Review of Disability Standards for Education 2005 are a positive step forward and place the needs of students and their families at the centre of education.

**“The report’s focus on empowering families, strengthening standards and service quality, and increasing accountability will help support an ever-increasing number of students with disability in school communities,” said National Catholic education executive director Jacinta Collins.**

“Over the past three years the number of students with disability in Catholic schools has risen significantly from 35,803 in 2017 to 137,270 in 2019,” she said. “Students with disability now represent approximately 18 per cent of all students in Catholic schools.

“The review identified the need for greater education, training and support for parents and carers,

as well as educators and service providers, to ensure that the needs of students are at the heart of learning and teaching programs and specialist services.”

“A welcomed area of focus in the review is building the capability in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector,” said Ms Collins.

“Quality early education and intervention is critical for the success of student’s learning outcomes when they commence school.

“Ensuring early learning centres and care providers have access to resources and understand the standards, will be key to supporting the best start for students in their early years.

“The recommendations to ensure the cultural needs and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Photo by Annie Spratt

Islander students are considered in the development and implementation of the standards, will also help to address the challenges of closing the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with disability,” she said.

# Education Minister’s focus on school improvement is on target says Catholic sector

The National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) said the Minister for Education and Youth Alan Tudge’s MP speech to the Menzies Research Centre, which outlines his focus on improving Australia’s educational performance, is on target.

**NCEC executive director Jacinta Collins said the Catholic sector has developed its own set of national priorities to support the continual improvement of educational outcomes for all students in its 1,751 schools.**

In Australia, Catholic schools educate one in five (768,000) students.

“We are heavily focused on working with government and other educational bodies, like ACARA, to identify evidence-based practice to support quality learning and teaching across our schools,” Jacinta said.

“Our strategic priorities, which outline a plan for the next three years, are also focused on responding to the needs of our families by ensuring school choice and greater accessibility to Catholic schools in areas of need.”

“In our bicentenary year, it’s important that Catholic education looks forward with a continuous focus on delivering excellence in education,” Ms Collins said.

“Our theme, ‘faith in the future’

speaks, not only to our mission of forming young people of faith, but ensuring we enable our students to have access to the best educational opportunities for their future.”

The National Catholic Education Commission’s strategic priorities (2021-2023) are available via [www.ncec.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ncec.catholic.edu.au).

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# The ultimate Catholic coronavirus vaccine morality explainer

Since Covid-19 vaccines began to be discussed, Catholics have raised concerns about the moral and ethical aspects of taking them. While the Vatican and the USCCB have weighed in on the subject, a lot of Catholics still have questions.

BY PILLAR CATHOLIC

**The Pillar asked bioethicist Michael Deem to help us make sense of the vaccines and the Church's moral teaching. He came back with a lot — answers to questions you have, and some you hadn't thought of yet.**

Read below for a basic snapshot, and then keep going for thorough answers to your questions about the morality of the vaccine:

In December 2020, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) independently issued statements on the morality of accepting COVID-19 vaccines that were developed or tested utilizing cell strains derived from the tissues of fetuses aborted decades ago.

The CDF's *Note on the Morality of Using Some Anti-COVID-19 Vaccines* and the USCCB's *Moral Considerations Regarding the New COVID-19 Vaccines* align in the guidance they provide to Catholics.

In sum:

- Acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccines developed, researched, or tested utilizing fetal cell lines is morally permissible when no alternative COVID-19 vaccine is available or accessible.
- Acceptance of these COVID-19 vaccine involves *very remote material cooperation* in the twofold evils of the abortions of the fetuses from whom tissue was posthumously taken to derive cell strains for medical research.
- An action that involves remote cooperation in evil is permissible, or even encouraged, when there are grave moral reasons that are proportional to or outweigh moral badness of this cooperation.
- The proportional moral reasons for

acceptance of the vaccine are the promotion of community health and prevention of serious risk of harm, which are grounded in the fundamental moral and social principle of the common good.

- It is permissible to refuse the COVID-19 vaccine, but those who refuse should perform additional actions that promote community health and prevention of serious harm.
- While accepting the vaccine is a morally responsible action, recipients nonetheless have an obligation to protest the use of fetal cell lines in vaccine development.

The Church's guidance has generated considerable commentary, some of it reliable, some less so.

As Bishop Ronald Gainer stated in a pastoral letter to his flock: "Some are asserting that if a vaccine is connected in any way with tainted cell lines, then it is immoral to be vaccinated with them. This is an inaccurate portrayal of Catholic moral teaching."

Some of the confusion and resistance to the CDF and USCCB statements seems to stem from misunderstanding the nuanced and complicated moral tradition of the Church, from which the CDF and USCCB draw. This primer aims to be a reliable guide to both the CDF and USCCB guidance, and the Catholic moral tradition that informs these positions, as well as a resource for bishops, pastors, and lay ministry leaders who wish to provide guidance about the morality and science of the COVID-19 vaccines.

The focus of this primer is solely on the moral question of receiving the COVID-19 vaccines - it does not address questions



Archbishop Thomas Wenski of Miami receives the COVID-19 vaccine.  
Credit: Tom Tracy/Florida Catholic/Archdiocese of Miami

related to those who produce the vaccine.

Here are the questions you might have:

**What principles do the CDF and USCCB cite when they say it is ok to receive COVID-19 vaccines that are linked to past abortions?**

The principle of the common good is the key to understanding the CDF and USCCB guidance on receiving COVID-19 vaccines that were developed utilizing fetal cell lines:

The CDF explains that: "From the ethical point of view, *the morality of vaccination depends not only on the duty to protect one's own health, but also on the duty to pursue the common good.*"

The USCCB's guidance adds: "In this way, being vaccinated safely against COVID-19 should be considered an act of love of our neighbor and part of our moral responsibility for the common good."

Perhaps the clearest definition of the common good was given by the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et spes*: "The sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and easily."

But it was Pope Pius XI who began to speak of the "norms of the common good," that is, duties of "social justice" that fall on individuals. Those duties are grounded in the

value of the common good; their content and specificity arises from the particularly social and political orders in which individuals find themselves. Hence, the CDF and USCCB expressly tie the COVID-19 pandemic and communal health to the threats to the common good.

The Church teaches that the principle of the common good is a *fundamental* moral and social principle. Much of the confusion over this guidance that I've seen on Catholic social media and news sites fails to note this very foundation of the CDF's and USCCB's positions.

While the COVID-19 vaccines no doubt can protect the health of recipients, the CDF and USCCB focus on how reception of the vaccine promotes the common good through protecting the health of the *community* and reducing the risks of harm associated with contraction of COVID-19 for *especially vulnerable persons*.

One year into the pandemic, we now have substantial scientific and medical evidence that COVID-19 disproportionately increases risks of morbidity and mortality for pregnant women, unborn children, the elderly, and individuals with chronic diseases.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

We should be cautious against any temptation to intellectual laziness or moral viciousness, which could dispose us to dismiss these risks of harm for others or minimize the severity of the pandemic.

The Church teaches that promoting the common good “requires constant ability and effort to seek the good of others as though it were one’s own good.”

**I understand that the principle of the common good applies to our moral lives during the pandemic. But that’s pretty abstract. What specific ‘norms of the common good’ does the Church have in mind with the vaccine?**

The CDF and the USCCB make clear that every individual has a particular moral responsibility – grounded in the common good – to protect others from risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.

The CDF and the USCCB derive more specific and particular moral norms about the pandemic from the general principle of the common good, in light of facts about the particular risks of harm the pandemic poses to individuals.

So what are the specific norms? The CDF gives what we might call a moral branching logic. Holding fixed what we know epidemiologically and medically about the pandemic and COVID-19’s progression after infection, there are two ways to discharge one’s moral responsibility:

- Accept a vaccine to prevent or significantly slow the spread of COVID-19 infection: “In the absence of other means to stop or even prevent the epidemic, the common good may recommend vaccination, especially to protect the weakest and most exposed.”
- The USCCB concludes that accepting the vaccine “should be considered an act of love of our neighbor and part of our moral responsibility.” However, if one chooses to accept a vaccine linked

to fetal cell lines, then additional moral responsibilities are incurred.

- Decline the vaccine, but take specific preventative measures to avoid increasing risk of harm to others. If one declines the COVID-19 vaccine, one “must avoid any risk to the health of those who cannot be vaccinated for medical or other reasons, and who are the most vulnerable,” the CDF explains.
- The reason one has this moral responsibility after refusal is because one would still incur moral obligations on the basis of the principle of the common good. You’ll find more on those obligations below.

**Let’s start with taking the vaccine. Just to be clear, is the Church really saying it is morally permissible to accept a COVID-19 vaccine, even if it’s linked to past abortions?**

The short answer is, yes, but under certain conditions.

On two occasions, the CDF has weighed in authoritatively and directly on the question of whether accepting vaccines that are linked to cell lines derived from the tissue of aborted fetuses is morally permissible.

In 2008, the CDF issued an instruction on bioethical controversies, called *Dignitatis personae*.

The text addressed questions about the morality of utilizing embryonic stem cells and fetal tissue in medical research (among other new and emerging bioethics issues). It specifically addressed the matter of whether parents may licitly accept childhood vaccines that were manufactured utilizing fetal cell lines derived from the tissue of previously aborted fetuses.

The CDF said that “danger to the health of children could permit parents to use a vaccine which was developed using cell lines of illicit origin,” and that acceptance of such vaccines does not necessarily constitute an endorsement of the use of these cells in medical research.

The CDF’s 2020 guidance on the coronavirus cites and affirms the 2008 position, and extends it to COVID-19 vaccines currently approved for distribution by regulatory bodies (e.g. the Food and Drug Administration in the United States) and being distributed.

As of Feb. 22, only two COVID-19 vaccines are approved for distribution: the mRNA vaccines developed by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna.

Both of these manufacturers utilized fetal cell line HEK293 for some of the confirmatory testing after the vaccines were developed. The HEK293 line was derived from the kidney tissue taken from a fetus who was electively aborted in 1973 in the Netherlands.

It’s important to note that neither the 2008 instruction nor the 2020 note simply states that accepting these vaccines is permissible without qualification.

A number of other conditions – which the CDF calls “proportional reasons” – must be present in order for receiving the vaccines to be acceptable, including the lack of alternative vaccines that do not have links to past abortions, and solid scientific evidence that these vaccines produce the good effects of protecting individual and community.

**Are some vaccine manufacturers using fetal remains in the development and production of their vaccines?**

There is no reason to think that fetal remains are being used to develop coronavirus vaccines. The fetal cell lines used in development, testing, or production of childhood, adult, and COVID-19 vaccines (cell lines HEK293, MRC-5, PER. c6, and WI-38) are lines of replicating cells derived from fetal tissue decades ago.

Vaccine manufacturers are not utilizing the bodies of fetuses, tissues of fetuses, or any other remains of fetuses aborted in the past or presently.

The cell lines in question are not original cells from a fetus’s body, but rather generations of millions, perhaps billions, of

replication. They are no more part of a fetus’s remains than would be, say, the replications of my skin cells that an ambitious scientist swabbed off my coffee mug.

In other words, the replications are not *from* our bodies, but the original cells and tissues are.

We can, therefore, both morally accept the COVID-19 vaccines that are currently approved for administration, and affirm Bishop Joseph Strickland’s message to his local church “to reject any vaccine that uses the remains of aborted children in research, testing, development, or production.” This is because the remains of aborted fetuses were not utilized in the development of COVID-19 vaccines – or any childhood vaccine. However, were it to be the case that a vaccine were developed and tested on the actual remains of an aborted child, then Bishop Strickland’s message would prove prophetic.

**Do the COVID-19 vaccines contain fetal cells?**

Briefly, no. The Pfizer/BioNTech and Modern vaccines do not utilize fetal cell lines for production of the vaccine, so there would be no reason to believe they contain fetal cells. The AstraZeneca/Oxford and J&J vaccines utilize fetal cell lines for production, but production would involve extracting their adenoviruses from the cells prior to packaging. There is the theoretical possibility that these vaccines contain intracellular components as an unintended effect of this extraction.

**I read on social media that the COVID-19 vaccine can cause infertility in women – is that true?**

There is no evidence to support this fear. However, a study published in January 2021 suggests a possible link between *natural* COVID-19 infection and adverse effects on male fertility, though experts have raised questions about the study’s design and implications for a broader population.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



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St Patrick's Day Mass



St Patrick's Primary School, Griffith celebrating St Patrick's Day Mass.

APRIL 2021 - TOGETHER

# ACN is launching a major new project for Iraq



To mark the forthcoming papal visit to the country, the international Catholic pastoral charity and pontifical foundation Aid to the Church in Need (ACN International) announced this week a new and ambitious programme of 2.3 million AUD to support young Christian students in the country.

The programme will involve offering university scholarships to 150 students at the Catholic University of Erbil, the capital of the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan, for the next four years. The aim of the project will be to promote social cohesion among the different religions and provide young Christian students with better employment prospects in the future.

“Without a doubt, the Catholic University of Erbil (CUE) is a beacon of light and a symbol of hope, especially for the younger generation. Helping the CUE financially, by means of scholarships, will be an immense support. "This aid will not only benefit

a limited number of young people, who are hoping for a better future but at the same time gives a clear future through education for the Christians, all other minorities and for the disadvantaged,” explains Chaldean Archbishop Bashar Warda of Erbil, who is the founder of the university.

Most of the students at the CUE are refugees or internally displaced from various other parts of Iraq, including Baghdad, Basra, Diala, Duhok, Kirkuk, Nineveh/Mosul, Sinjar and Sulaimaniya. "We believe that this project will support the Pope’s message in favour of social cohesion and reconciliation. The University is centred around diversity



Archbishop Bashar Warda, Chaldean Archbishop of Erbil. Copyright: Aid to the Church in Need.

– with 72% Christians, 10% Muslims and 18% Yazidis. Here young people of different creeds can learn to live together in harmony”, explains Thomas Heine-Geldern, the executive president of ACN.

Within Iraqi Kurdistan, the Christian minority is able to live in a relative but by no means absolute degree of security. There is a persistent underlying

sensation of insecurity, owing above all to the tense economic situation. As a result, young people are faced with the dilemma of staying put or emigrating. The number of Christians in the country has decreased dramatically in the past 10 years. The CUE, which was founded five years ago, is seeking to offer a different solution by providing young people with better prospects for the future.

## Keeping the Faith alive



When you hear the word ‘charity’ what comes to mind? Perhaps it is feeding the hungry, caring for the sick and sheltering the homeless. These are vital **material needs** and the Catholic Church has carried them out since her inception.

**But is that it?** Is the Church only here to fill stomachs and tend to wounds? Actually, even if the Church could eradicate all poverty and disease for all time that would not be her greatest gift to the world. The Church’s greatest gift to the world is Jesus Christ. The Church exists to primarily sustain the **spiritual needs** of its people.

**faith where the faithful are oppressed and persecuted.**

We support the Church where the Church cannot support herself. We form priests, fund poor nuns, build churches, provide pastoral transport, train catechists and distribute Catholic books and media.



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**Each year we support more than 5000 projects in 140 countries.** We need people who will help us to carry the light of faith into those places where it is at risk of going out. Will you help us to keep the faith alive?



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Send the completed form to **Aid to the Church in Need** PO Box 335 PENRITH NSW 2751, call **1800 101 201**, or arrange your offering online at [www.aidtochurch.org/together](http://www.aidtochurch.org/together)

# COVID-19 Diocesan Protocols

Effective  
27th March 2021

## 1. If you are unwell, stay home.

## 2. Covid-Safe Business

All Parishes must comply with the NSW Government requirement to complete a Covid-Safe Plan and register as a Covid-Safe Business.

## 3. Maximum Attendance

- a. Attendance at Places of Worship is limited to one person per two square metres (excluding clergy and liturgical ministers).
- b. Physical distancing is to be practiced. People from different households are to remain 1.5m apart.

## 4. Hygiene practices

- a. Sanitisation of hands before entering the church, hall, prayer room, etc.
- b. Wiping down of pews and common areas at conclusion of Mass or gathering is encouraged.
- c. Priests and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to purify hands with sanitiser before and after offering Holy Communion.
- d. Limit the use of communal books. Ensure they are cleaned between use.

## 5. Register of people upon entering the church, hall, prayer room, etc.

- a. Name, phone number and entry time to be recorded and kept

- securely for at least 28 days.
- b. Any paper-based records must be entered into electronic format (spreadsheet/database) within 12 hours.

## 6. Eucharist

- a. Holy Communion may be received in the hand or on the tongue. Those wishing to receive Holy Communion on the tongue are to approach only after Holy Communion has been distributed to all those receiving on the hand.
- b. Sacred Host to be offered only, not the Precious Blood.
- c. No touching at the sign of peace.
- d. No offertory procession.
- e. No collection plates are to be passed around.

## 7. Communion to Sick and Elderly Persons

Normal pastoral practice continues including Communion to sick persons in hospitals, aged care homes and private homes.

## 8. Anointing of the Sick

- Normal Pastoral Practice continues.
- a. Anointing of the sick in hospitals, aged care and private homes if permitted to enter.
- b. If the person has COVID-19, please consult the Bishop's Office.

**Most Rev Mark Edwards OMI**  
Bishop of Wagga Wagga

# New baptism font



The West Wagga Wagga Parish have installed a new baptism font and baptistry. The shamrock design is a symbol of the Blessed Trinity.

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## CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21

**Wait, you said the Vatican was talking about this in 2008. But I've heard that the current view of the CDF is a novel rationalization, brought on by global panic over COVID-19. What's the deal?**

That's right. *Dignitatis personae* was issued by the CDF under Pope Benedict XVI's pontificate, and he approved the instruction on June 20, 2008. *Dignitatis personae* is one of the most important magisterial documents on bioethics.

But *Dignitatis personae* was not the first time the CDF weighed in on the morality of vaccines linked to fetal cell lines.

In 2003, under the pontificate of Pope St. John Paul II, the CDF received an inquiry about whether parents may permissibly accept a brand of Rubella vaccine for their children. The controversy? The initial development of the Rubella vaccine by Dr. Stanley Plotkin involved growing the rubella virus in a cell strain derived from the lung tissue of an aborted fetus.

The CDF, headed by then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, commissioned the Pontifical Academy for Life (PAL), to address the inquiry.

PAL issued its response in 2005. The response concluded that parents may licitly accept the rubella vaccine, or any other routine childhood vaccine manufactured with the use of fetal cell strains, on three grounds:

- First, acceptance of these vaccines constituted for parents only “very remote mediate material cooperation, and thus very mild, in the performance of the original act of abortion.”
- Second, the threat to children's or the public's health is sufficiently grave in cases such as rubella — which is exceptionally dangerous for unborn children — that acceptance of the vaccine directly promotes a great good.
- Third, parents may not have alternative vaccine choices, which do not have this connection to fetal cell strains. In the U.S., for example, there is no alternative for the MMR, Varicella, Hepatitis C vaccines, all of which were developed or produced using fetal cell lines.

Thus, the CDF's 2020 note on coronavirus stands in a nearly two-decades-long development of the Church's view on the morality of accepting vaccines developed utilizing fetal cell stains, crossing three pontificates. While much of Catholic social media has fixated on the Church's view on accepting the COVID-19 vaccine, the basis for that view was developed long before the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Two decades is not a very long stretch of time in the Church's life. Should we really think that a relatively new teaching on the morality of vaccines is authoritative?**

The CDF is an authoritative office within

the Roman Curia for instruction on faith and morals, and its *Dignitatis personae* is an instruction on morality (i.e., teaching) that bears the authority of Pope Benedict XVI.

The content of the Church's documents is authoritative insofar as it extends the Church's moral teaching on the common good and vaccines to the specific question about COVID-19 vaccine acceptance, and relies on accurate scientific information.

Many of the moral questions that *Dignitatis personae* takes up (not unlike some of the questions taken up in *Evangelium vitae*) were just emerging from scientific advancement and practice when the document was published. This does not mean that every word of the document must be believed as an article of faith — but it does mean the document can't be just set aside, because it is an affirmation from the Church of how she understands perennial moral principles to apply to new situations.

The recent CDF and USCCB guidance align with the teaching of *Dignitatis personae*, and extend the Church's longstanding moral teaching on the common good to the specific moral questions facing us today in the pandemic.

Further questions asked where:

- But isn't the Church contradicting itself when it condemns abortion as intrinsically evil but states that accepting these vaccines linked to

abortion can be morally justified?

- Hang on — there's that jargon again from the CDF statement: cooperation in evil. Can't we just say that *cooperation of evil* is always wrong, according to the natural law, and leave it at that?
- Is the formal/material distinction with cooperation of evil a part of the Church's moral tradition, or just a way of rationalizing sinful action?
- Why does the Church say that accepting a COVID-19 vaccine that was developed or tested utilizing fetal cell lines is remote material cooperation?
- But what good could be proportional to the evil of abortion?
- But I'm not obligated to accept the vaccine, right? The CDF says that I can refuse the vaccine, doesn't it?
- Even if I agree that accepting the COVID-19 vaccine is my moral responsibility, shouldn't I wait until an ethically irreproachable alternative is available?
- But won't accepting even the least morally compromised vaccines cause scandal?

**For the answers to these questions please visit:**

**[https://www.pillarcatholic.com/p/the-ultimate-catholic-coronavirus?utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=web&utm\\_source=email](https://www.pillarcatholic.com/p/the-ultimate-catholic-coronavirus?utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web&utm_source=email)**

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# Stina Constantine faces deportation back to Norway

A dedicated Christian who has lived in Australia for the best part of 20 years is facing deportation after an administrative error saw her denied a visa.

BY ANNIE LEWIS- The Daily Advertiser

**Stina Constantine, 30, is taking her fight to remain in Wagga to the Federal Circuit Court.** If she loses, she faces being sent back to Norway.

"I love this community. I love being a part of this city. It's my history and my present, and it's my home," she said.

"I don't want to leave."

Ms Constantine said all the issues started when her education institution made an error.

After finishing a Masters of Social Work on a student visa, she set about applying for a graduate visa.

Then, just after Ms Constantine was crowned Miss Wagga, the shocking news came that the visa had been denied.

"The requirement was that I had to make an application for a graduate visa within six months of completing the course. For me, that meant February 28, 2018," she said.

"I made my application at the right time, but the education institution had said 'you completed it on January 11'. That's the crux of the issue.

"I had evidence showing that I was on placement on January 11, which means it was impossible for me to have completed my course."

Ms Constantine then embarked on a gruelling appeal process that included a hearing and the painstaking effort to gather evidence to show the mistake.

A blunder that she was not responsible for.

Then in October 2020, Ms Constantine was told she had 30 days to leave the country - in the middle of a pandemic.

"So, what happens to me," she remembers thinking at the time.

"Do I become an illegal person here?

"Am I expected to get a knock on the door and thrown into a detention centre? What happens to me? There were no answers for me.

"The awful part about it is that not only do they say 'you have made a mistake - and I haven't - but because you did you will have a cancellation on your record which will make it near-impossible to get a visa'."

Ms Constantine's next option was to appeal the ruling via the Federal Court Circuit. A route that would add even more of a financial toll after the thousands she has already spent.

"I thought, 'one do I have it in me to keep pushing, and two can I financially afford it'," she said.

"That's where my friend Kelly came in and said, 'you know the community would help you?'.

"She then started up a GoFundMe ... [and] I decided to keep fighting."

Ms Constantine works at Country Hope four days a week, travelling between Wagga and Albury to support the families of children who are battling life-threatening diseases.

She also works with families who are experiencing domestic violence with Relationships Australia.

"As a Christian, I also run a ministry and run talks and workshops," Ms Constantine said.

Ms Constantine's parents decided to raise their children in Australia due to the private, Catholic education system.

Her mother and father lived in Norway but had been brought up in Sri Lanka, fleeing just before the civil war broke out.

"The plan was I would finish high



Stina Constantine is a beloved member of the Catholic community.

school and then resettle in Norway," Ms Constantine said.

"We did, but I felt pulled to come back. I got here and thought this is where I belong.

"For the last 10 years, I have been trying to make Australia my home."

Because Ms Constantine has made a submission to the Federal Circuit Court, she has received a bridging visa with permission to work.

Deputy Prime Minister and Riverina MP Michael McCormack said his staff and himself have been in consistent contact with Ms Constantine since her visa issue was raised with his office.

"She is supportive of what has been done and understanding of the process required," Mr McCormack said.

"Stina is a highly valued member of the Wagga community and does a power of work through several roles to enrich the lives of so many in the local community.

"I have both written to and met with the Immigration Minister to discuss Stina's issue and to advocate for her strong standing in the community, which is held in such high regard."

Mr McCormack added that it is important the process is allowed to run its course as it needs to.

A GoFundMe has been set up to help Ms Constantine cover the legal fees. She has also pledged that any surplus funds will be donated to Country Hope.


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## St Mary's School, Corowa



St Mary's School started the day with a faith filled reflection about Holy Week and Easter in the Church. All the students did a fantastic job when it was their turn to participate and a big thank you to Mrs Parkinson for all her organisation and to Year 5 for leading them. It was also great to have members of the wider St Mary's community join with them.

## Mater Dei Primary, Wagga Wagga

Thank you to all students and teachers for preparing a beautiful Easter Liturgy. We hope you have a restful Easter break and we look forward to seeing everyone back next term.



## All Saints Primary, Tumbarumba

All Saints' School travelled to Wagga on 30 March to see the theatre show, The Midnight Gang. After the show they went to the Wagga Beach for lunch.



## St Mary's Primary School, Yoogali

All students at St Mary's Primary in Yoogali participated in the Holy Week Story. Such an amazing performance by all involved.



## St Patrick's School, Albury

St Patrick's Parish School congratulates their girls relay team on an outstanding effort at the NSWPSA State Swimming Carnival held in Sydney. The girls finished 15th out of 39 teams from around the State and they all swam their personal bests. We are so proud of you.



## Mater Dei Catholic College, Wagga Wagga



Mater Dei Catholic College Year 9 students recently went on a fishing excursion to the NSW Department of Primary Industries Fishing Hatchery in Narrandera.



## St Joseph's Primary, Culcairn



St Joseph's remember Jesus' ultimate sacrifice. Here are some images from their very special Stations of the Cross experience. Thank you to all of those people that attended to share in this reflective experience created by their amazing staff and students.



## St Joseph's School, Junee



It was so lovely to welcome our families and friends into our school for our Easter Paralyturgy. Easter is a time of great joy and celebration. The staff and students of St Joseph's wish you and your family a very joyous and safe Easter season and we look forward to welcoming you back to school in Term 2.

## St Peter's Primary, Coleambally



Our Holy Week Liturgy. Thank you, students and teachers for making it so special. A beautiful and very reverent way to express our faith. Thank you to all the parents who joined us.




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LEST WE FORGET

## Recipe...



### Anzac Biscuits

Crunchy and delicious, Anzac biscuits made with oats are a lower GI alternative to many packet biscuits and are cheap to make. Containing coconut, golden syrup and butter, these biscuits do not use egg as a binding agent.

### Ingredients:

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups coconut
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 250g butter
- 4 tbsp golden syrup
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 2 tblsp boiling water

### Method:

- Turn oven to 160°C. Lightly grease oven trays.
- Place oats, flour, coconut, sugar in big mixing bowl.
- Melt butter and golden syrup in saucepan. Take off heat.
- Mix baking soda and boiling water in a cup. Add to melted butter mixture in the pan. Quickly add to big mixing bowl. Mix well.
- Roll tablespoonfuls of the mixture into balls. Place on trays 5cm apart. Press lightly with fork.
- Bake for 20 minutes.

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

Together Editor  
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**We'd love to hear from you!**



## Word Search

S	R	E	M	E	M	B	E	R	A
G	O	P	O	P	P	I	E	S	N
A	I	L	A	R	T	S	U	A	Z
O	T	E	D	E	V	A	R	B	A
L	T	X	I	I	S	L	E	A	C
E	H	T	G	N	E	R	T	S	A
B	U	N	C	O	U	R	A	G	E
D	N	A	L	A	E	Z	W	E	N

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Courage

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Australia  
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## Who is Centacare?

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### HAVE YOU RECENTLY SETTLED IN AUSTRALIA?

Our Settlement, Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) team can help you to feel better connected and supported in your community

### PARENTING ORDERS PROGRAM (POP)

Our Parenting Orders Program (POP) is child-focused and helps parents to manage disputes and increase cooperation and communication for separated families

### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

We can offer your workplace our Employment Assistance Program (EAP) which offers short term counselling support and debriefing for staff.  
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### LET US ASSIST YOU WITH YOUR NDIS PLAN

Your NDIS coordinator will work with you to provide supports and link you to other providers, build your capacity to self-manage, and give encouragement. Your NDIS core support worker can assist you to engage with your community, build your self-reliance and support with your daily living skills

### SUPPORT FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH?

Speak confidentially with one of our counsellors who can help you improve your wellbeing and discover your potential

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We offer a wide range of parenting and education groups that focus on building skills, strategies and knowledge so you can enjoy positive relationships. These programs can be run individually or in a group

### SCHOOL COUNSELLING

Our School Wellbeing Practitioners work within Pre-schools, Primary and High Schools with students, families and staff to help guide student academic, behavioral and social – emotional growth.  
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**Families** learn new ways of relating to each other, resolve conflicts, and open lines of communication between all family members

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# Mass Times across our Diocese

## Wagga Wagga - Cathedral

**St Michael’s Cathedral**  
Church Street, Wagga Wagga  
Monday - Friday 7:00am, 12:45pm  
**Weekend Masses**  
Saturday - 12:15pm  
Saturday Vigil - 5:00pm  
Sunday - 8:00am, 10:00am and 5:30pm  
**Confessions**  
Monday - Thursday 12:30pm - 12:40pm  
Friday 12:00-12:40pm & 6:30pm-6:45pm  
Saturday 11:00am-12:00noon & 4:30pm-5:30pm  
**Rosary times**  
Monday to Thursday 12:25pm and Saturday 11:55am (before Mass)  
**St Mary’s Chapel**  
Vianney College, 17 Durack Circuit  
Sunday - 9:00am  
**Mt Erin Chapel**  
Kildare Catholic College  
Edmondson Street, Wagga Wagga  
Sunday - 10:00am (Extraordinary Form)

## Wagga Wagga - Koorungal

**Sacred Heart**  
Lake Albert Road, Koorungal  
**Weekend Masses**  
Saturday Vigil - 5:30pm  
Sunday - 8:00am and 10:00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 5:45pm  
Tuesday and Thursday - 7:00am  
Saturday - 9:30am  
**Reconciliation**  
Saturday - 10:00am - 10:30am  
Changes to Mass times will be on Chapel door.

## Wagga Wagga - South Wagga

**Our Lady of Fatima**  
Bourke Street, Wagga Wagga  
**Weekend Masses**  
Saturday Vigil - 5:00pm  
Sunday - 8:30am, 10:30am & 5:30pm (Syro-Malabar Rite)  
**St Patrick’s Uranquinty**  
Sunday - 8:30am  
**Weekday Masses - Our Lady of Fatima**  
Wednesday - 10:00am  
Thursday - 11:00am (Ethel Forrest Centre)  
Friday - 5:45pm  
**Anointing Mass**  
Marian Foyer, Henschke Hall  
4th Tuesday of the month - 10:30am  
**Weekday Masses - Calvary Hospital**  
Monday-Friday - 8:00am (except public holidays)  
**Aged Care Facility Masses**  
**Forrest Centre**  
Every Thursday - 11:00am  
**Nan Roberts Nursing Home**  
- The Haven  
3rd Tuesday of the month - 10:30am  
**RSL Remembrance Village**  
2nd Tuesday of the month - 10:30am  
**Confessions**  
Saturday - 10:30-11:30am

## Wagga Wagga - West Wagga

**Holy Trinity Church**  
Bardia Street Ashmont  
Monday - Saturday - 7:00am  
Friday - 10:15am  
Sunday - 9:00am, 10:30am and 5:30pm  
**Our Lady of the Blessed Eucharist Church**  
Benedict Avenue San Isidore  
Monday, Wednesday & Thursday - 6:00pm  
Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm

## Albury

**St Patrick’s** 515 Smollett St, Albury  
**Weekend Mass Times**  
Saturday - 9:30am  
Vigil (Saturday) - 5:00pm  
Sunday - 8.00am, 10.00am, and 5:30pm  
Latin Mass - Sunday 12 noon  
**Weekday Mass Times**  
Monday to Friday - 7:00am  
Tuesday & Thursday - 9:30am  
Latin Mass Mondays - 7pm in the Adoration Chapel  
First Friday - 5:30pm  
**Rosary before Mass**  
Saturday - 9.10am and 4.30pm  
Sunday - 7.40am and 9.40am

## Albury - North Albury

**Sacred Heart** Mate Street, North Albury  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00 pm  
Sunday - 9.30 am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Tuesday to Friday 9.30am or as printed in weekly newsletter  
First Tuesday of month – Mercy Place 11.00am – Includes sacrament of anointing  
**Confessions**  
Saturday - 5.15 - 5.45 pm

## Albury - Lavington

**Holy Spirit**  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00pm  
Sunday - 8.00am, 10.00am  
St Mary’s Jindera - 9.00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday - Friday - 7.00am  
Saturday - 9.15am  
**Confessions**  
Saturday - 8.15am, 5.00pm  
St Mary’s Jindera - Sunday 8.30am

## Albury - Thurgoona

**Immaculate Heart of Mary**  
**Weekend Masses**  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00pm  
Sunday - 9.30am, 5.30pm  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday - 8.00am  
Tuesday - 10.00am  
Wednesday - 8.00am  
Thursday - 7.00pm (Mass Novena and Benediction)  
Friday - 10.00am  
**Confessions**  
Prior to Masses  
Saturday - 5.30pm-5.55pm  
Sunday - 9.00am-9:25am & 5.00pm-5.25pm  
Thursday - 7.00pm following Novena  
Mass of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

## Berrigan

**St Columba’s** 4 Corcoran Street, Berrigan  
1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday - 6:00pm  
Saturday Vigil  
2nd, 4th Sunday - 10:30am  
**Savernake**  
1st Sunday - 5:00pm  
**Weekday Masses** are announced in the Sunday bulletin  
**Confessions** before Saturday Vigil Masses

## Coolamon

**St Michael’s**  
Sunday - 7.30am and 9.00am  
**Confessions**  
Saturday - 4.45 - 5.15pm  
**Masses**  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday - 7.30am  
Thursday - 10.15am  
Saturday - 9.00am  
**Marrar**  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00pm  
**Confessions**  
1st Saturday - 5.30pm  
**Allawah Village**  
First Thursday of each month.  
Mass at 9.15am

## Corowa

**St Mary’s Star of the Sea**  
Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm  
Sunday - 9:00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Refer to Parish Bulletin available in the Church or on the parish website  
**Confessions/ Reconciliation**  
Saturday - 11:00am-12:00, 5:30-6:00pm  
**St Pius X, Coreen,**  
1st, 3rd Sunday - 10:45am Mass

## Culcairn

**St Patrick’s Culcairn**  
1st, 4th Sunday - 8:00am  
2nd, 3rd Sunday - 10:00am  
5th Sunday - Vigil Mass 6:30pm (Saturday)  
**Henty**  
2nd, 4th Saturday Vigil - 6:30pm  
1st Sunday - 10:00am  
3rd, 5th Sunday - 8:00am  
**Walla Walla**  
1st & 4th Sunday - 6:00pm (Sunday)  
**Weekday Masses**  
Vary according to needs and are announced in the Sunday bulletin  
**Confessions**  
Before each weekend Mass

## Darlington Point

**Oliver Plunkett** Hay Rd, Darlington Point  
1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday - 8.30am  
2nd, 4th Sunday - 6:00pm (Saturday Vigil)  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday - 8.30am - Darlington Point  
**St Peter’s** Cnr of Currawong Crescent and Kingfisher Avenue, Coleambally  
1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday - 10.30am  
2nd, 4th Sunday - 8.00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Thursday - 8.00am Coleambally  
Holy Hour - Friday 5.00pm - 6.00pm at Darlington Point  
**Confessions**  
15 minutes before 10.00 am Mass on Sunday or by request

## Finley

**St Mary’s** 1 Denison Street Finley  
Sunday - 10.15am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Are announced in the Sunday bulletin  
**Confessions**  
Saturday - 10.30 - 11.00am

## Ganmain

**St. Brendan’s Ganmain**  
**Sunday Mass**  
9:00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday to Friday:  
December-February 7:30am (Tues., Thurs.) & 5:30pm (Mon., Wed., Fri.)  
March-November 5:30pm  
Saturday: 8:00am (usually in the convent except 1st Sat. in the church).  
**Confessions**  
8.00-8.55am Sunday and 30 minutes before all Masses.  
**St. Patrick’s Matong**  
6:00pm Saturday  
**Confessions** 30 min before Mass

## Griffith

**Sacred Heart** Warrambool St, Griffith  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00pm  
Saturday - 8.00am  
Sunday - 7.30am, 9.00am, (Italian), 10.30am, 6.00pm  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday - Friday - 7.00am, 5.30pm  
**Confessions**  
Friday - 4.30pm to 5.30pm  
Saturday - 11.30am to 12.30pm  
**Marian Catholic College Chapel**  
185 Wakaden Street Griffith  
Sunday - 9.00am

## Holbrook

**Our Lady of Sorrows**  
125 Albury Street  
Holbrook  
1st & 3rd Sunday - Saturday Vigil 6.30pm  
2nd Sunday - 8.00 am  
4th & 5th Sunday - 10.00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Phone parish for details  
**Confessions**  
Before Mass on weekends  
**St Francis De Sales Church of the Pioneers**  
Hume Highway  
Bowna  
2nd Sunday - 11:30am

## Howlong

**St Brigid’s**  
Hovell St, Howlong  
**Church of the Good Shepherd**  
Queen Street, Walbundrie  
**Weekend Mass Times**  
**Howlong**  
Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm  
**Walbundrie**  
Sunday - 9:00am  
**Masses**  
**Howlong**  
Saturday 9.00 am - Howlong  
For other Masses during the week, see the parish website.  
**Reconciliation**  
**Howlong**  
Saturdays 9:30am (after 9:00am Mass)  
5:30pm - 5:55pm  
**Walbundrie**  
Sundays 8:30am - 8:55am

## Jerilderie

**St Joseph’s**  
Coreen Street, Jerilderie  
1st, 3rd, 5th Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm  
2nd, 4th Sunday - 10:30am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Are announced in the Sunday bulletin

## Junee

**St Joseph’s**  
21 Kitchener Street, Junee  
Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm  
Sunday - 9:30am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday - 9:00am  
Tuesday - 7:00am  
Wednesday - 9:00am  
Thursday - 7:00am  
Friday - 9:00am  
**Confessions**  
Saturday - 10:30-11:00am;  
6:00-6:15pm or by appointment  
**Illabo and Junee Reefs**  
Alternate Sundays - 8:00am

## Khancoban

**Church of St Joseph the Worker**  
Sunday - 9.00 am  
**Weekday Masses**  
9.00 am  
**Confessions**  
Prior to Sunday Mass

## Leeton

**St Joseph’s Leeton**  
Wade Avenue, Leeton  
Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm  
Sunday - 10:00am (First Sunday of the month is Italian)  
**St Patrick’s Yanco**  
Sunday - 8:00am  
Tuesday - 9:00am  
**Weekday Masses in Leeton**  
Monday - 9:00am  
Tuesday (Yanco) - 9:00am  
Wednesday - 9:00am  
Thursday - 9:30am (Assumption Villa)  
Friday - 9:15am and 5:30pm

**Sacrament of Penance**  
Friday - 4:45-5:15pm  
Saturday - 5:30-5:50pm  
**Eucharistic Adoration**  
St Joseph’s Church Leeton  
Friday - 4:30pm

## Lockhart

**St Mary’s Church**  
55 Ferrier St, Lockhart  
**Weekend Masses**  
1st, 3rd & 5th Saturday (Vigil) - 6:00pm  
2nd & 4th Sunday - 8:00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Tuesday - 9:00am & Friday - 10:00am  
**Confessions** Up to 5 mins before Mass.  
**Urangeline St Terence’s Church**  
Currently no Masses.

## Mulwala

**St Brigid’s** Havelock Street, Mulwala  
**Weekend Masses**  
1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday - 8:00am  
2nd, 4th Sunday - 6:00pm  
Saturday Vigil  
**Weekday Masses**  
Refer to parish notices  
**St Joseph’s**  
Barooga  
**Weekend Masses**  
1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday - 10:00am  
2nd, 4th Sunday - 8:30am  
**Weekday Masses** Refer to parish notices  
**Confessions** Before weekend Masses

## Narrandera

**Narrandera** St Mel’s Church, Audley St  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00pm  
Sunday - 9:30am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday - 7:30am  
Friday - 5:30pm  
(subject to changes announced in the Sunday bulletin)  
**Confessions**  
Friday - 4:30-5:20pm;  
Saturday - 9.30-10:00am  
and 5:00-5:45 pm  
**Grong Grong**  
1st, 3rd, 5th Sunday - 8.00am  
**Galore**  
St Kevin’s Church  
2nd & 4th Sunday - 8:00am

## Tarcutta

**St Francis Xavier** Sydney St, Tarcutta  
Sunday - 8:30am  
**Ladysmith**  
Saturday Vigil - 6:00pm  
**Confessions**  
Before all Masses

## The Rock

**St Mary’s**  
102 Urana Street The Rock  
**Weekend Masses**  
Sunday - 8:00am (Extraordinary Form)  
Sunday - 10:00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday - 7:00am  
Tuesday - 6:00pm  
Wednesday - 7:00am (Extraordinary Form)  
Thursday - 7:00am  
**Confessions**  
Up to 5 minutes before Mass.

## Tocumwal

**St Peter’s**  
Charlotte Street, Tocumwal  
Saturday Vigil - 5.30pm  
Sunday - 8.30am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Thursday - 9.30am  
**Confessions**  
Half an hour before weekend Masses

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31

Tumbarumba

**All Saints'**  
40 Murray Street, Tumbarumba  
Saturday 9.15am  
Saturday Vigil - 6.00pm  
Sunday - 9.00am  
**Weekday Masses**  
Monday - Friday - 5.30pm  
**Confessions**  
Friday 4.30pm - 5.15pm  
Saturday - 8.00am - 9.00am  
And 30 mins before weekend Holy Masses  
**Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Tooma**  
4th Sunday - 7.30am  
**Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament**  
Friday - 4.30pm & Saturday - 8.00am

Yenda - Yoogali - Hanwood

**Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii**  
17 Edon Street, Yoogali  
Sunday - 9:30am  
**St Anthony's - Hanwood**  
Saturday Vigil - 5.00pm  
Sunday - 8.00am  
**St Therese's - Yenda**  
Saturday Vigil - 6:30pm  
**Weekday Masses**  
Tuesday - 8.00am - Hanwood  
Wednesday - 8.00am - Hanwood  
Thursday - 5.00pm - Yenda  
Saturday - 9:30am - Yoogali (first Saturday of the month only)  
**Confessions**  
Yenda - Thursday, before Mass  
Yoogali - Sunday, before Mass  
Hanwood - Saturday - 4:30pm  
Or by arrangement with the priest.

Urana

**St Fiacre's Church** 5 End St, Urana  
**Weekend Masses**  
1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday - 8:00am  
2nd & 4th Saturday (Vigil) - 6:00pm  
**Weekday Masses**  
Thursday - 12:30pm  
**Confessions** Up to 5 mins before Mass.  
**Oaklands**  
1st, 3rd & 5th Sunday - 10:00am

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


Monthly laugh:



Not funny, Moses!

Please pray for those priests whose anniversary of death occurs in April:

8 April 1920	Fr Michael O'Dowd
11 April 1974	Mgr Augustus Ambrose Lacey
13 April 1995	Fr Phillip Mel Roach
25 April 1930	Fr Maurice Hoyne (On Loan)
25 April 1976	Mgr Jeremiah Galvin
25 April 1977	Fr Joseph Dudley Dyson-Smith
30 April 1941	Fr Jerome Hennessy



These faithful servants, Lord, put their wholehearted trust in you - Grant that they may live in your love.

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Family reflections for: April / May

**18th April - Third Sunday of Easter, Cycle B**  
**Family life is strengthened through storytelling and shared meal times.** In a similar way, Christian life is sustained by God's word in Scripture and by Christ's presence in the Eucharist. We are especially sustained in our faith through our weekly celebration of Mass. Today's Gospel reading reminds us that the Scripture and the Eucharist are given to us so that our acts of bearing witness to Christ might be strengthened.

As you gather as a family, ask each person to share their favorite story about your family. Talk about the importance of these memories about your family life and the importance of the meals you have shared together as a family. Recall that these stories and meals strengthen the love you share. In a similar way, our Christian life is strengthened by sharing God's Word and the Eucharist at Mass. Read together today's Gospel, Luke 24:35-48. Discuss the mission that Jesus gave to his disciples after their shared meal. The Eucharist also sends us to be Christ's witnesses in the world today. Conclude by praying together that we will be strengthened by God's word and by Jesus' presence in the Eucharist to be witnesses to Christ. Pray together Tantum Ergo or today's psalm, Psalm 4.

*Acts of the Apostles 3:13-15,17-19 Psalm 4:2,4,7-8,9 1 John 2:1-5a Luke 24:35-48*

**25th April - Fourth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B**  
**The Good Shepherd makes sacrifices for the sheep not because it is required, but because it is a choice.** That sounds a lot like parenting and the dynamics of a healthy family life. Parents choose to make sacrifices for their children out of love, not obligation. Christian parents model and invite their children to choose to make sacrifices for other family members and for other people, acting out of love rather than obligation.

When you gather as a family, invite each family member

to consider the attitude that permeates their participation in family life. Read a common examen, such as any of the following: *Do we do family chores cheerfully and without having to be asked multiple times? Do we gladly share with others? Do we willingly contribute to the family good when asked?* Read aloud today's Gospel, John 10:11-18. Discuss together how the example of the Good Shepherd might inspire your family life. Invite each family member to make a renewed commitment to one action/attitude to focus on in the upcoming week that show that we will choose to follow the example of the Good Shepherd. Pray together that we will be able to honor our commitment. Pray together Saint Ignatius of Loyola's Prayer for Generosity.

*Acts of the Apostles 4:8-12 Psalm 118:1,8-9,21-23,26,28,29 1 John 3:1-2 John 10:11-18*

**2nd May - Fifth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B**  
**The goal of our life of prayer is to increase our awareness that Jesus lives with us always.** Prayer is more than a dialogue with God; prayer is a lifting of our minds and hearts to God so that God might dwell and act within us and through us. The pinnacle of our life of prayer is our communion with Jesus in the Eucharist. Through this sacrament, we receive Jesus himself, and he remains with us. Our life of prayer and our union with Jesus will lead us to fruitful service to others.

Place a plant in your gathering space. Invite everyone to look at the plant, noting the connection between the plant and its leaves. Talk about the integral connection between all the parts of a healthy plant. Introduce today's Gospel by saying that Jesus talked about his relationship to his disciples using this metaphor. Read today's Gospel, John 15:1-8. Talk about the ways in which we are invited to relate to Jesus as his disciples today—prayer, Scripture, the Eucharist, and so on. When we do these things, Jesus promises to remain with us and to lead

us to serve others well. Pray together that we will continue to be attentive and open to Jesus as he works in our lives today. Pray together the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Love.

*Acts of the Apostles 9:26-31 Psalm 22:26-27,28,30,31-32 1 John 3:18-24 John 15:1-8*

**9th May - Sixth Sunday of Easter, Cycle B**  
**In family life, we have many opportunities to show love in action.** Each time we postpone a task to tend to the needs of another, we show ourselves to be on the path to following the example of love shown to us by Jesus. Sometimes the sacrifices we are called upon to make for others are small. But these small choices to love and to serve others prepare us for the larger choices and sacrifices that we may be called upon to make. If we are people who have practiced showing our love for others with generosity, we will also be people who are willing to lay down our lives for those we love.

As you gather as a family, talk about the meaning of the word generosity. Ask each family member to describe an action that shows generosity. To be generous is to give freely to others without counting the cost. Recall that generosity is one of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. Introduce today's Gospel reading by saying that Jesus taught us to be generous in showing our love for one another. Read together today's Gospel, John 15:9-17. What examples did Jesus give to us that show this kind of love? (washing his disciples' feet; accepting death on the cross) Jesus helps us to show this kind of love to others. In today's Gospel, Jesus promised that God will give us whatever we ask for. One of the things we can ask for from God is a generous spirit so that we can love others as Jesus did. Conclude in prayer together by praying Saint Ignatius of Loyola's Prayer for Generosity..

*Acts of the Apostles 10:25-26,34-35,44-48 Psalm 98:1,2-3,3-4 1 John 4:7-10 John 15:9-17*



# St Vincent de Paul Society *good works*

## A long, cold winter for people impacted by COVID-19

**When the COVID-19 outbreak came to Australia, it changed Ray's life in an instant. He went from being a happily employed personal trainer working across five different gyms, to being completely out of work as those gyms shut their doors.**

It wasn't just Ray's prospects that took a dive, but also those of his family. His wife, Catherine, had just finished studying and was due to start a new job after many years as a stay-at-home mum and carer for her sister, who lives with Down syndrome. COVID-19 put those plans on hold for the indefinite future.

"The difference a day makes is incredible. It was like a domino effect," Catherine said.

Suddenly she and Ray were in a situation they never imagined: worrying about how they would meet their rent payments, keep their lights on, and most importantly, take care of their five-year-old son, Ben.

"It's an emotional rollercoaster, day by day. I force

myself to get out of bed every morning, just to stop thinking dark thoughts," Catherine said. "I just need some hope."

As they came to terms with their new normal, the family were forced to live on Catherine's meagre carers' pension of \$360 a week. It proved impossible for a family of three.

"We've tried to put all of our outstanding bills on hold as much as possible, and that's helped a bit. But when this six-month period ends, a huge debt will have just accrued," explained Catherine.

The financial stress took its toll on the family's mental wellbeing, with Ray feeling an enormous burden as the family's sole breadwinner. He set right into the work of applying for jobs, but with one million Australians out of work due to COVID-19, it was a crowded field.

Like so many of the people coming to Vinnies in recent months, Catherine and Ray had never sought

help before from a charity or government. They struggled with asking for support, and when they finally called us, their one humble request was for some winter clothes for Ben.

"I came to Vinnies with so much shame about my situation, but [they] treated me with such dignity," Catherine said.

The Vinnies team were able to help the family to pay their electricity bill, access warm clothes, and purchase food to fill the pantry and fridge.

"I'm eternally grateful for the hope we now have, and the sense that we're going to be okay," Catherine said.

"Vinnies has made the difference between whether my family will eat or not."

Our members, volunteers and staff have done incredible work during the coronavirus crisis, tirelessly ensuring that all people continue to have shelter, food, clothes, and the comfort of knowing that someone cares. Even those members who have had to self-isolate to protect their own health have continued to contribute wherever they can, often calling the people we assist over the phone.

Thanks to you, the vast majority of Vinnies Conferences and services across NSW have remained up and running throughout this crisis, at a time when they are so sorely needed.

The COVID-19 Winter Appeal, raised funds to ensure we can continue to make a difference for people like Catherine, Ray and Ben.

As restrictions are gradually lifted, we know it will take time for life to return to normal for the millions of Australians impacted by COVID-19. **Vinnies can play a vital role in helping families back on their feet, ensuring the fallout from this pandemic is not felt so acutely.**

Please consider making a donation to the  
St Vincent de Paul Society

To donate visit:  
[www.vinnies.org.au/donate](http://www.vinnies.org.au/donate)  
or call **13 18 12**  
or visit any local Vinnies Shop

### HOW YOUR DONATION WILL HELP THIS YEAR:



1.3 MILLION  
PEOPLE ASSISTED



365,164  
BED NIGHTS



2 MILLION  
HOT MEALS

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## SUPPORT THOSE IMPACTED BY COVID-19

**\$48**

Can help feed a family for a day if they are unable to access adequate food due to the crisis

**\$116**

Can help keep the power on when a family cannot afford their bill because of job loss

**\$340**

Can support someone who has been adversely impacted by the current crisis

**\$857**

Can keep a roof over a family's head during times of crisis