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SEPTEMBER 2021

Welcome Father
Connell Perry

Priestly Ordination

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Bishop's Voice

Bishop Mark Edwards OMI - Bishop of Wagga Wagga Diocese



Be a father of hope (homily for ordination of Connell Perry)

Connell, most of your brother priests can tell a story about, when as a freshly minted priest, someone called them 'Father' and they honestly turned around to see which priest was behind them.

Six days ago, we celebrated Father's day and many people kindly remembered us and showed their gratitude for the gift of our lives. At the end of Father's Day, I went to the chapel and thanked the Father for all the world, my father, my faith.

How can we be a father with no children?

The Church is pregnant with possibility. It is giving birth. The Holy Spirit still comes upon it and the power of the Most High continues to cover it with its shadow. We are fathers in hope and of hope.

These are difficult times. For instance, today is the 20th anniversary of September 11, COVID-19 is causing difficulty and heartbreak around the world and the, I believe unfounded, fears about the vaccination are causing division and some people anguish, laws to legislate for euthanasia are being introduced to parliament, and all the change in society over the last 50 years. And the risk is that, in the face of all this, we look back with nostalgia.

I call you as a soon to be priest, as a father, to look forward with hope. President Obama described hope: "Despite the evidence, there is something worth reaching for."

"We ask the Lord for the grace of hope and to always praise him, even in this moment of pandemic, because that he is the faithful friend who does not abandon us and who loves us without measure." (Pope Francis)

By the Father of all hope, you and I are called to be fathers of hope. In today's Gospel we hear that Jesus shares what his Father is like with us – "as the Father has loved me, so I have loved you". We know what it is like to be daughters and sons loved without limit and the joy that this brings. And we are to share that with others. "Love one another", Jesus commands us.

Christians have to be people who hope. Not because it is a rule that we have to follow but because it is a natural consequence of who we are and what we believe. Before Mass, Deacon Connell and I talked about favourite quotes from Pope Francis, Benedict XVI and JP2 quotes. Let me share with you a Pope John Paul I quote. JP1 explains that hope arises from trust in three truths: "God is omnipotent, God loves us immensely, God

is faithful to his promises." God is omnipotent, God loves us immensely, God is faithful to his promises.

To understand hope better, think briefly of the opposites: despair, the belief that there is nothing worth reaching for, and cynicism, the choice not to dare to hope. And hope, like faith and love, is a choice. We choose to believe. Faith is both a gift and a choice. Marriage Encounter taught us that love is both a choice and a gift. And we choose to hope. To make the decision to hope is an act of faith in God.

Join me and our brother priests in helping all people, those in our churches and those who are not there, to make the choice to look forward and to reach out for God and his kingdom. It involves us experiencing and being open to this loving God in our own lives, especially

in and through our committed prayer and letting him sow hope with us, in us and through us: in our engagements around the town, in the Confessional, in our preaching, in how we lead people to pray the Mass.

I finish with the words of Father Duclaux who was St Eugene de Mazenod's seminary rector for the whole of his time of training in Paris. Writing in Paris in 1815 during incredible social upheaval to the baby priest de Mazenod in Aix near Marseilles, he says:

I assure you that I do not cease to think about you and to thank the good God for the courage which he gives you. I hope that you will do much, because you sincerely love the good God and the Church. I embrace you with all my heart and am with all my heart entirely yours.



TOGETHER
IN THE DIOCESE OF WAGGA WAGGA

is published monthly, eleven times per year, and is available free at parish churches, schools, presbyteries and religious houses throughout the Wagga Wagga Diocese.

Publisher

The Diocese of Wagga Wagga
McAlroy House
205 Tarcutta Street
Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

Editor/Designer

Karene Eggleton

Printer

Newsprinters
1 McKoy St West Wodonga Vic 3690

Submissions

TOGETHER would not be possible without the voluntary labour and cooperation of many contributors from within the diocese and beyond. Submissions for publication are welcome but not always guaranteed to be printed.

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Copy deadline

15th of the month prior to publication

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Prayer Intention for September - Pray with Pope Francis

Environmentally Sustainable Lifestyle

We pray that we all will make courageous choices for a simple and environmentally sustainable lifestyle, rejoicing in our young people who are resolutely committed to this.

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What complicates your life? Every day we make choices about how we use our time, energy, and resources. Looking to Jesus' life as a simple carpenter, we know that complexity is not what God desires for us. In our hearts we know that God calls us to a simple, liberating relationship with created things, but living this requires a perspective shift.

Consider the rich young man (Lk 18:18-23), who yearns to follow God and asks Jesus how he might do so. When the young man learns that he must part with all of his possessions, he walks away sad. In contrast, St. Francis of Assisi, a rich young man himself, underwent a radical conversion and walked away from his wealth with immense joy and freedom. This conversion to a life of simplicity requires a new perspective. As G.K. Chesterton

remarks, "[Francis] looked at the world as differently from other men as if he had come out of that dark hole walking on his hands" (St. Francis of Assisi, 70).

I rejoice in today's young people who have invited me to see differently. Many question how we relate to Creation. They seek freedom from habits of consumption and make sacrifices that open them to the "cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (LS, 49). They exemplify Pope Francis' description of the Christian life "marked by moderation and the capacity to be happy with little. It is a return to that simplicity which allows us to stop and appreciate the small things, to be grateful for the opportunities which life affords us, to be spiritually detached from what we possess, and not to succumb to sadness for what we lack" (LS, #222). Let us ask for the grace to see differently!

1921

Sisters of Mercy arrival in Griffith

The Mercy Sisters' Griffith story began on Friday, September 1, 1921, when the Parish Priest, Fr. Robert O'Dea and a hundred or more parishioners gathered at the railway station to welcome five Sisters.

BY SR TRICIA JOHNSON

Sisters Dominic Mulquiney, Benedict Tanner and Dorothea Dunleavy who were to form the Griffith Community. Sisters Veronica Coll and Brigid Hilly had accompanied the Sisters to Griffith, later returned to Albury. Fr. O'Dea vacated his presbytery and it became home to the Sisters for 17 years before St Brigid's convent was completed in 1938.

On September 4, St Patrick's School was opened with eighty children. A small Catholic School had been established in Griffith to educate young children before this time but the school was in difficulty in continuing. This is the reason Fr. O'Dea requested the Sisters to come to Griffith so as to take up the responsibility for the school.

The size of the school soon required additional staff and before the end of the year, Sr. Claude McGrath joined the community but because of ill health it became necessary that she leave Griffith and Sr. Therese Edwards, aged 22, arrived. It was her first appointment and she called Griffith her first home. Overall 111 Sisters have ministered to and have been ministered by the Griffith People in these 100 years. There is a plaque in the Sacred Heart Church which lists the names of all those Sisters and the local women who have joined the Sisters of Mercy.

Sisters' ministering in Griffith has taken many forms as well as teaching at St. Patrick's and Griffith Catholic High now known as Marian College. At the founding of the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland, by Catherine McAuley in 1831, the Sisters were often referred to as the 'Walking Nuns.' As well as serving the Church, organising

First Communion and Confirmations, the Sisters often visited families in good times and in crises to lend support.

For years, our Sisters were the only music teachers in the town and beyond, and were open to teaching any child regardless of religious affiliation. Sr. Hilary Purcell organised basketball competitions (men's rules) with the assistance of a staff member from Griffith High School in 1960's. Woodside Hall was the Hub. Attached to the staff at Griffith Catholic High as it was known in the 1980's Sr. Patricia Weekes offered counselling to parents and students and people in the wider community. Sr. Colleen Livermore taught at GCH during the day and was a volunteer for night duty at the Youth Refuge. Sr. Helen Kennedy visited the frail and aged in their homes. Sisters Tricia Johnson, Mary Crowe and Margaret Schmetzer co-ordinated catechetics in all the State Primary and High Schools in Griffith and surrounding villages. Sr. Gwen Garland sang at weddings. This is to name only a few examples where Sisters contributed to the lives of the Griffith people. There are many other examples.

It was in sadness that in 2006, necessitated by declining numbers that the Sisters withdrew from Griffith. In 2015, however, the Sisters returned in the persons of Sr. Theresa Foley (a member of a pioneer family) and Sr. Tricia Johnson. Their mandate was to look for the gaps where they may work beside the people in Griffith, again.

Theresa had had a nursing career and so offered her services to the Griffith Base Hospital where she is the official Pastoral Carer. As well as serving in the Parish, she



Sr Tricia Johnson and Sr Theresa Foley.

is a spiritual director, facilitates Lenten and gospel groups and is part of separation and divorced gatherings as well as attends to NDIS clients in their home. As a Eucharistic minister she visits the sick and elderly.

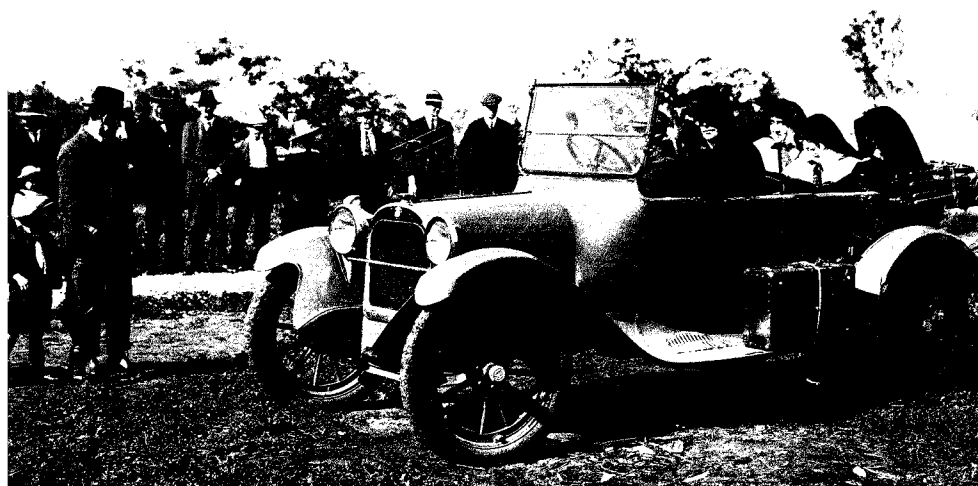
Tricia had trained as a teacher and a social worker. Before coming to Griffith has been involved with people who were refugees. She took up teaching English through TAFE, to students in their homes. Contact with Women's Refuge, Sprinkles Multicultural Play Group, Intereach, Centacare, Western Riverina Community College and St

Vincent de Paul gave her opportunities to make contact and to befriend multicultural migrant and refugee women. Teaching sewing skills has been a great platform for this engagement. Association with the staff at Western Riverina Community College has been a vehicle by which she can use her teaching skills.

Together the Sisters do food 'drops offs' to needy families. **It has been a happy return for the Sisters to have the privilege to be part of the Griffith community again.**



Sisters welcome Apostolic Nuncio during his visit to Griffith in 1961.



The arrival and welcome of Sisters of Mercy 1921.



Rev Connell Francis Perry's Ordination to the Priesthood

Such a life event as a graduation, significant birthday, or a marriage, is one that is usually marked with pomp, ceremony, and celebration. It is an achievement that deserves to be recognised due to the hard work, dedication, and perseverance of the person in question. An ordination to the priesthood is no different.

BY DOMINIC FRANSSEN - Vianney Bulletin

After spending at least six years of intense study, prayer, and human and spiritual development, the man being ordained has been tried and tested and found worthy by Holy Mother Church to be ordained. This is why when he is called to ordination, it is not the bishop who calls the ordinand, but Christ Himself.

In many ways, the Priestly Ordination of Fr. Connell Perry was one of mixed emotions. Certainly, this was a day of great rejoicing – a man has been called to Holy Orders and received the ontological change through the laying on of hands and has been conformed to Christ. This Ordination Mass, which was expected to be rather muted due to a now non-existent local lockdown restrictions, was able to be celebrated with much pomp and ceremony.

The priests of the diocese gather to concelebrate the Mass of Ordination with the bishop, to pray with and for the ordinand, and lay hands on him. This demonstration of priestly fraternity demonstrates not only the union of the priests with their bishop and the ordinand, but also the union of the priests and bishop with Christ, who is the One who ordains. It was great to be able to see so many priests able to participate in the ceremony and to lay hands on and pray for Fr. Perry. The presence of many priests of the diocese gave rise to a greater ceremonial solemnity and allowed for a greater focus on the mystery of ordination and the conforming of the man to Christ.

In these times of uncertainty, the homily of Bishop Edwards was one of hope. He emphasised the role that hope plays in the priesthood. Being ordained, the priest is called to be a father of hope. This hope, the bishop continued quoting Pope John Paul I, is founded in God who is omnipotent, a God who loves us immensely and a God who is faithful to

His promises. The Bishop continued, stating that God sows hope in and through the priest in his various ministries. The homily was one of great consolation, surely not just for the priests of the diocese, but also for those aspiring to the priesthood.

An ordination is not just a moment of pride for the newly ordained, but also for

the family – in particularly the mother, who has formed the man in his childhood to allow him to discern a priestly vocation. It was a joy for Fr. Perry's whole family to be able to attend and take part in the ceremony: to read, to present the gifts and to be united to their son and brother in the joy of ordination. Connell Perry is now not just the man Connell Perry, but, having been configured to Christ through ordination,

Father Connell Perry, the priest. He now acts in *persona Christi*, and will offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass not just for the forgiveness of sins, but also for the living and for the dead.

This Sacrifice took place the next day.

"I ask that you keep praying for me so that I can be true to my vocation in the blessed times and in the challenging ones."

Deacon Connell Perry

What a joy it was to witness him as he prepared for it back in his home parish of Holy Spirit in Lavington!

Once again, he was able to have his family in attendance, and although singing was restricted to a small choir, the ceremony was certainly made special by their power and the unity of Fr. Perry with his family and members of the parish and seminary communities.

This consecration of hands is not for any banal reason – not just to make the ceremony of ordination go longer or to make the newly ordained feel good about himself. In his homily, Fr. Murphy spoke about the significance of the consecrated hands of the priest. This consecration of hands, he said, takes place for the purpose of sanctifying. The priest uses his hands to bring God to man and man to God, in offering the Sacrifice of the Mass, in distributing Jesus Himself in Holy Communion, in the anointing of the sick

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Fr Connell Perry thanks everyone. Photo: Tom Denahy



Laying on of Hands by Bishop Mark Edwards. Photo: Tom Denahy



Fr Connell Perry with his family. Photo: Tom Denahy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

and dying, and absolving sinners through the great sacrament of mercy – Confession. Mass concluded with the beautiful Marian Hymn, Hail Holy Queen Enthroned Above. Following this, accompanied by his family, Fr. Perry knelt before Our Lady and consecrated his priesthood to her Immaculate Heart.

This weekend of Ordination and First Mass brought home the importance of the priesthood. Described as a sign of hope, the priest gives hope through his administering of the Sacraments in which souls are saved. **May Our Lady, the Queen of the Clergy, guide Fr. Perry as he acts in the person of Christ, ministering to God's people and guiding them to Heaven.**

Rev Connell Francis Perry's Appreciation

My dear family and friends, today is the happiest and most wonderful day of my life. The awesome blessing and incredible love that God has bestowed on me through ordination to the priesthood leaves me feeling overwhelmed and overjoyed. Thank you dear Lord Jesus for calling me to this sacrament of service where I have been configured as another Christ to live out the love of your most Sacred Heart. Thank you also to our dear Blessed Mother Mary who has cared for me throughout so many moments during my discernment and

shown me the way to follow Jesus as a disciple. And thank you to all my patron saints and guardian angel. We would be here all day if I was to list all my 'most favourite' saints!

Bishop Mark, I am grateful for the leadership and fatherly care you have shown not only to me, but also to our Diocese. I look forward to being a co-worker with you in the missionary work ahead. Thank you to the Rector and seminary staff for the formation you have given me, not only during the past seven years, but also from my 'minor seminary' days as a young altar boy at Vianney College. Having grown up mostly in the Wagga Diocese I am also very thankful to the priests that serve our local area, along with all priests that I have known personally over the years and to those who I did pastoral placements with. To the seminarians, you are in my prayers as you continue your journey of discernment.

Thank you to everyone who was involved in some way in making this day possible, both recently and from the very beginning. I appreciate all that you have done. For all those who have joined us via livestream, thank you for taking the time and I am sorry that you could not be here in person to celebrate this occasion with us today. We are very much connected in prayer and in spirit.

Finally my dear and beautiful family, thank you from the bottom of my heart. Dad and Mum, where would I be without



Thanksgiving Mass in Lavington. Photo: Perry Family

you? The sacrifices you have made and the love and support you have given me are something I will never truly be able to thank God enough for. If I could be a little like each of you, I would be a very happy man. My dear brothers and sisters, as your older brother I am so grateful for your presence in my life and for the love you have given me. To all my extended family, including my grandparents, nephew, sister-in-law, aunts, uncles, cousins and other family,

may God bless you all.

Today is the beginning of a new chapter in my life as I endeavour to be faithful to the Work of God as a priest. I ask that you keep praying for me so that I can be true to my vocation in the blessed times and in the challenging ones. You are all in my prayers. Let's all keep becoming the saints God has called each one of us to be.

Pax. In aeternum.

Father Connell Perry



Litany of the Saints. Photo: Tom Denahy



Fr Connell Perry blesses the Missionaries of Charity. Photo: Tom Denahy



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Year of Saint Joseph



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

REFLECTION - SEPTEMBER 2021

Model for Fathers

Earlier this year on the Feast of St Joseph, who as we know was Jesus' earthly father, Pope Francis urged all dads in the world to stick by their children's side, teaching them, guiding them and loving them.

He said: "I ask that you have the grace to be very close to your children, letting them grow, but being by their side. They need you, your presence, to be there, your love."

St Joseph's "great mission is to be a guardian", the pope said.

The saint is a model for all educators, whether they are teachers, catechists, parents, religious or priests.

Like an educator, St Joseph guided and accompanied Jesus so he could grow in "wisdom and age and grace", Pope Francis said. This is the same thing all parents must do, and "it would be a serious mistake to think that a father and a mother can't do anything to teach their children to grow in God's grace," he said.

Even though God was Jesus' father, St Joseph lovingly took on the paternal role and taught the young Jesus various skills, the value of work, reverence for the Lord and fidelity and obedience to God's will. He also had to keep his family safe during the difficult period of their exile to Egypt.

So, girls, spend a moment thinking about how special your father is to you. Fathers, take a moment to reflect on your daughter and how she has grown from being the one who called you daddy, to the young lady she is to you today calling you dad and hopefully still laughing at your dad jokes.

In our sometimes dysfunctional world, the special relationship between father and daughter can be perceived as being not so common.

Our dads are sometimes the people who have paid for our special surprises, worked long hours sacrificing family time to earn a living and the one who was climbed all over when you were little, took you to the park and bottle-fed you through the night when you were at that stage and sat through numerous dance concerts and plays, despite his favourite sport team being on TV live.

Your dad has challenged you, disciplined you, taught you values that you thought you may not have needed and, all of this, whilst loving you unconditionally. So, on his special day this

Sunday, use it as a reminder that Father's Day should be no more special than any other day.

Girls, dad still wants that Bunnings gift voucher on Sunday, but let's use Sunday to remind us that we should show our appreciation of dad every day as that's what you also want him to do for you.

On Sunday, let dad wear what he wants to wear without you commenting on if the clothes match or not, let him have some "Man Time" and, most of all, commit to spending some quality time with each other.

Pope Francis urged people to remember God the Father in heaven, but also their own fathers and every father, whether alive or deceased.

As Bethany students living by the motto of "Together We Grow", my prayer for all dads and their daughters is that growth is measured and valued in the ongoing depth of your wonderful relationship with each other.

Happy Father's Day and I thank you for the fatherly support that you give to the College on a daily basis. It certainly makes our jobs easier and more of a delight.

This month's reflection is taken from a message from Robyn Rodwell, the principal of Bethany College Hurstville (NSW), a school for year 7-12 girls.



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From Thurgooona to Brazil

Brigid Horsfall's life direction changed entirely when she received a pamphlet about an Evangelisation School in Brazil. This is her testimony of her time there.

BY BRIGID HORSFALL

"You have made me for yourself, O Lord, and my heart is restless until it rests in you" Saint Augustine.

It all started with a pamphlet.

Days before receiving the university offers which could have directed my entire life, I received a paper pamphlet about an Evangelisation school in Brazil (on the other side of the world; they speak Portuguese). Just on opening the leaflet my heart began to soar and I started grinning like a madman. It was THIS that I had unconsciously been searching for.

After attending WYD in Krakow in mid 2016 my heart was unquiet, I felt that God was calling me to something greater but I had no idea what. Just to give an answer, I said that I would study engineering, but my heart wasn't in it. I had the sensation of running down a hill unable to stop or slow down. I was being thrown into study and work and I didn't feel free.

While waiting for my highschool results, in the end of 2017, I travelled to the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney. There, while being pushed along by the crowd, a hand came out of nowhere (I didn't even see their face) and pressed the pamphlet into my hand. On opening it, days later, I was struck by the immense freedom and joy contained, crying 'I want that freedom!'

I remember in those first few days, sitting down to pray and my bible opened directly on the story of Martha and Mary (Lk 10, 38 - 42) in which Martha was 'distracted with all the serving' while Mary 'sat down at the Lord's feet and listened to him speaking'. Jesus spoke very directly to me his own words to Martha 'you worry and fret about so many things, and yet so few are needed, indeed only one. It is Mary who has chosen the better part, and it is not to be taken from her.' I knew then that I had to go to Brazil and sit at Jesus' feet for a year, resting in him, listening to him, letting him heal me and bring me into who I was made to be. I knew that this was His will and outside of his will, my life would be meaningless and sterile. I began turning down accomodation offers and degree offers and university scholarships. I had found my pearl of great price!

Within the next few weeks I travelled down to Tasmania to meet the members of the community there and begin the selection process to attend the school. In my immaturity, I promptly began planning my whole life (bad idea). I planned to arrive in March or April of 2018. Summed up ... God had other plans! My process

delayed a few months and then I had problems with the visa, which delayed about five months extra. I arrived in January of 2019, almost one year later.

So I arrived in Brazil, a long way from home and understanding very little portuguese. I thought that I would be really homesick, but from the very beginning I was welcomed and made to feel really loved and treasured. Every mass and meal time and time of fraternal life; somebody was always there translating, explaining and taking care of me. Within the first month I already began to speak portuguese and to branch out on my own. Brazilians are really welcoming and everyone was super ready to help me to improve!

One really strong experience for me was going on mission. I had the opportunity three times over 2019. The community sends missionaries, both consecrated members and students of the evangelisation school (so that they can learn) on mission in parishes in diverse cities throughout Brazil. While everything revolves around the parish church, where Jesus remains exposed in adoration, we go out in the streets visiting people and bringing Jesus into their houses, reading the bible, praying, listening to them; really meeting them where they are at.

For me, this was really special. We entered into houses of the poor and suffering. I met people who lived in houses with dirt floors and no glass in the windows. I met former alcoholics and prostitutes, abuse victims and victims of violence. I met people who were dying bedridden; abandoned and alone. I met teenagers considering suicide. In one city, we spoke at a school where it is normal for adolescents of 14 to become pregnant. In all this Jesus was letting me know that it was Him who I was ministering to. He was hidden in their suffering. But also that it was He, himself who was ministering to them; these his children for whom He has such a thirst.

I remember one particular visit. We were welcomed into the house of an evangelical woman who lived together with a homeless woman who she had found on the street, welcomed into her home and cared for. The former homeless woman was old, she had lost all her teeth, she suffered from mental disability and didn't know how to speak. Her carer began to cry because she wanted to reach out and help more people but she herself was very poor and the people who could help weren't interested. Our world is starving for love! Let us go out



Brigid at the statue of Christ the Redeemer in Brazil.

and bring people back to Jesus, who is the source of infinite love!

I didn't preach in these peoples' houses because I have something special to say, nor because I am special in going out and 'giving of myself'. It was Jesus himself who bound their wounds and wiped their tears, and He gave me the grace to witness His own mercy at work as he went out after his 'sheep which were lost'.

When we are not on mission, we spend our time in Curvelo at the Palavra Viva Evangelisation School where we receive formation in the Catholic faith and live a life of prayer. Every single day we participate in holy mass, the rosary and adoration of the blessed sacrament. We really come to know

Jesus and let Him heal us and make us new through all aspects of life here; mission, the sacraments, formation and fraternal/community life. The fellowship among the students and consecrated members is amazing! We play games and sport, sing, dance and most importantly pray. It is amazing having friends from so many different parts of Brazil and the world who live together; who aren't afraid to be themselves or to love and who strive for holiness together.

The classes cover a range of topics. From theology and apologetics, in which we learn to evangelise, to personal healing and forgiveness, church history, music and languages; everything that you need to be a full person who is not afraid to love and bear witness to the truth. The aim of the school is to form young mature christian leaders for the church. In fact, I loved the experience so much that I returned this year to spend more time with the community in the evangelisation school.

God is always calling us to 'put out into the deep'. He is always calling us to step out further in trust and love. He calls us every single day to deeper and deeper surrender; to fuller and fuller freedom. He truly came so that we may 'have life and have it to the full' (Jn 10,10). For me, that call drew me to Brazil. I don't know about you, but if you feel called to 'walk upon the water' like Saint Peter and give a year to God in Brazil, He will repay one hundred times over.

If you want to know more about the school or are interested in helping out financially you can send me an email at brigid02march@gmail.com

or directly to the Palavra Viva mission house in Tasmania

<https://australia.palavraviva.com/>

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In Curvelo at the Palavra Viva Evangelisation School.



How Australia made the journey to a plenary council

There have been times when I wondered if we would ever make it. But after all the delays and changes of plan, we have come at last to the first assembly of the Plenary Council, which has quite a pre-history.

The bishops took the decision to move to a Plenary Council in 2016, but the roots of that decision reach way back to the early 2000s.

It was then that the late Archbishop Philip Wilson proposed that the time was right for the Church in Australia to prepare for some kind of national ecclesial event.

This was in the wake of Pope John Paul II's letter at the end of the Year 2000, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, in which he urged that all the Church's organs of communion be galvanised to prepare for mission in the new millennium. These were also the years when the full force of the sexual abuse crisis was beginning to be felt.

At first, the bishops couldn't agree on whether this was a good idea or this the right time or, if it was, what kind of ecclesial event would be best. So we entered upon a process of discernment which included the Year of Grace in 2012.

This was a kind of retreat for the whole Church in Australia during which, taking our cue from *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, we sought to contemplate the face of Christ in the hope that this would equip us better to make a decision about a national ecclesial event.

The Year of Grace worked better than we expected, but still at its end there was no clear agreement among the bishops about how to move forward.

In 2013, however, two things happened that were game-changers.

The first was the Federal Government's decision to have a Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; the second was the election of Pope Francis. These two events converged to make the need for some kind of national ecclesial event to chart a course into a future in a time of dramatic change seem more necessary.

Pope Francis then announced two Synods of Bishops, a year apart, both focusing on marriage and the family. The first of these Synods in 2014 included only the presidents of bishops

conferences. It was followed by a time of fermentation which prepared for the second Synod in 2015.

I was one of the two Australian bishops elected to attend that Synod. It was, for me, an extraordinary experience, in some ways an awakening.

For the first time – certainly at a Roman Synod – I saw discernment in action. It was messy and unpredictable; at the halfway mark it looked very unlikely that we would achieve anything worth achieving. Yet at the end we did produce something which wasn't the last word, but which was a real contribution to the ongoing journey of the Church.

Part of why that Synod succeeded when failure threatened was the speech on synodality given by Pope Francis in those last days of the gathering – October 17 to be precise. It was an extraordinary speech at the end of a long and often tedious celebration of 50 years of bishops synods since the Second Vatican Council.

It was while listening to the Pope that I had a kind of light-bulb moment. I thought: "Yes, now finally is the time for the Church in Australia to move towards a plenary council." That's what came to me with great clarity and conviction, which seemed to me at the time and still seems to me the work of the Holy Spirit.

I returned to Australia and said as much at the next plenary meeting of the Bishops Conference in November 2015. The Conference decided to set up a committee to make recommendations to the next plenary meeting of the bishops in May 2016. The committee's recommendation was to decide for a plenary council, and that's what the bishops voted for – not unanimously, but by a large majority.

So we set out on a journey with three phases. The first phase was the preparation, which involved a great deal of consultation – Listening and Dialogue, as we called it. We were trying to listen to as many voices as possible responding to the basic



Bishops Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge signs the decree of convocation. (Archdiocese of Brisbane photo)

question, "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" This was in the belief that only in listening to each other would we hear the voice of the Holy Spirit.

The second phase, which is upon us now, is the phrase of celebration, by which is meant the first assembly in October this year, the time of fermentation after that leading to the second assembly in the middle of next year.

Then we will gather up the results of the assemblies and send them to Rome for papal approval, which is to ensure that what has come from the Council is in harmony with the doctrine and discipline of the universal Church. This will lead to the promulgation of the decisions and decrees of the Council.

A third phase of the journey will be the implementation of those decisions and decrees; and that could take a very long time indeed, as it has with the Second Vatican Council.

It may also involve local synods to embed the decisions of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia in the local Churches.

In *Novo Millennio Ineunte* Pope John Paul II described Vatican II as "the great grace given to the Church in the twentieth century". As I look back on the journey that has brought us to this point and forward to all that lies ahead, I would say that the Plenary Council is the great grace given to the Church in Australia at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

It was always the work of the Holy Spirit – and it will be no less as we move, like Abraham, into the future which God is preparing.



Plenary Council
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

Volunteer Profile: Sister Kaye

It is now twenty-three years since Sister Carmel and I, both in our mid-fifties at the time and with the blessing of our Congregation of Presentation Sisters, left our work in Sydney and Canberra respectively and moved to Wagga Wagga to begin what is now named ErinEarth.

BY SISTER KAYE

The original name for the site was Ecological Justice Resource Centre and perhaps it contained too many words, but it does explain what we, together with our Congregation of Presentation Sisters, were on about.

We wished for our justice orientation to the human world to include a holistic ecological awareness, namely the relationships and interdependence of the whole of creation.

You might ask, why am I still here, volunteering at ErinEarth? Basically, I love it and I believe in it.

I love being with and relating with so many others who believe in its purpose and meaning; the staff, garden volunteers, board and committee members, the visitors and many others who contribute and who delight in the gardens, together.

I love being joined with my Presentation Sisters in our common desire, expressed in the following way discerned at our General Chapter in 2019:

“We own our responsibility as Presentation Women to live sustainably in the face of the global

climate crisis. Individually and as a Congregation we are called to take action for change where human decisions, in particular political and corporate, are threatening our planet’s capacity to support life. One of our actions flowing from this call is the continued support of ErinEarth”.

I love being in this beautiful and always developing garden which I’ve helped to grow and in doing so have experienced kinship and interconnectedness with the plants, animals, birds and insects.

I love how my involvement with ErinEarth has enabled me to grow in understanding, respect for and appreciation of the First Nations Peoples of this land and their culture and beliefs.

I love living in this city of Wagga Wagga and its regions and being able through ErinEarth to join with so many people in local government, education, media, volunteer organisations and home situations in our care for each another, for nature and for the future of this planet.



The ErinEarth garden is a place to relax and unwind. Set in the heart of Wagga with on street parking and wheelchair accessibility, our predominantly native garden is a great place to take some quiet time out. Our large urban garden is open to the public Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9am - 3pm, at 1 Kildare St Turvey Park.



Charles Taylor on the twin challenges of Christians in a secular age

What if God loves us as we are? And God calls us to something higher?

BY BILL MCCORMICK SJ

These might seem like odd questions to address to a great philosopher and social theorist, but I propose they are good ones to bring to Charles Taylor. Taylor is a scholar whose work not only attracts widespread attention from academics beyond his academic speciality, but also remains remarkably rooted in the lived experiences of his time.

It's this second part that compels me to raise spiritual questions to an academic philosopher. Because I believe Charles Taylor has something to say about them.

Taylor has renewed his fame for his 2007 book *A Secular Age*, and it's a book worth reading. In it, Taylor offers a rich account of religion and its place in the modern world. Perhaps most importantly, he offers a view of secularism as a condition where all modes of belief—including unbelief—are equally questionable and fragile. We no longer live in an age of unquestioning faith, if that ever existed, but we also no longer live at a time when atheism can claim the high ground, as at moments during the Enlightenment.

It's how Taylor describes the Christian life that is of particular note for me. According to Taylor, Christianity animates us in two ways: it calls us to accept high goals, but also to sanctify the ordinary. Taylor speaks of an equilibrium “between the demands of the total transformation to which the faith calls to, and the requirements of ordinary ongoing human life,” (44). In other words, Christianity calls humans both to self-fulfillment and self-transcendence.

Tensions and equilibria are tricky things, and their twists and turns play a leading role in Taylor's book. For how does one define and live out high spiritual aspirations while also offering a path to transformation that does not crush its adherents? How does a religion that calls us to be perfect like its founder (Mt 5:48) not grind its adherents into the dust? How, for that matter, does a religion that calls all people children of God not lead to complacent mediocrity?

As James KA Smith notes in his wonderful commentary on *A Secular Age*, meeting that challenge requires a great deal of imagination, lest the choice seem to be between crushing orthodoxy or banal freedom.

Indeed, as Taylor has it, too much of the history of Christianity seems to be a

history of this lack of imagination. Many Christian groups have tried to eliminate the gap between quotidian sanctity and heroic virtue. Some do so by denying the goodness of creation, some by advocating for an empty moralism that asks nothing of humans and gives them even less.

But Christianity does not release us from this dilemma between everyday holiness and salvation: it promises a final transformation that is not yet. And so we live in hope toward that transformation. That hope challenges us to stretch ourselves beyond the present even as it consoles us in present difficulties.

Because God loves us as we are. And God also calls us to something more.

How can we live out this tension? As a Jesuit, one of my preferred heuristics for the issue is Taylor's image of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. For Taylor, Ignatius always lived out the perennial tensions between immanent and transcendent, between everyday and holy, between the renunciation and affirmation of everyday life.

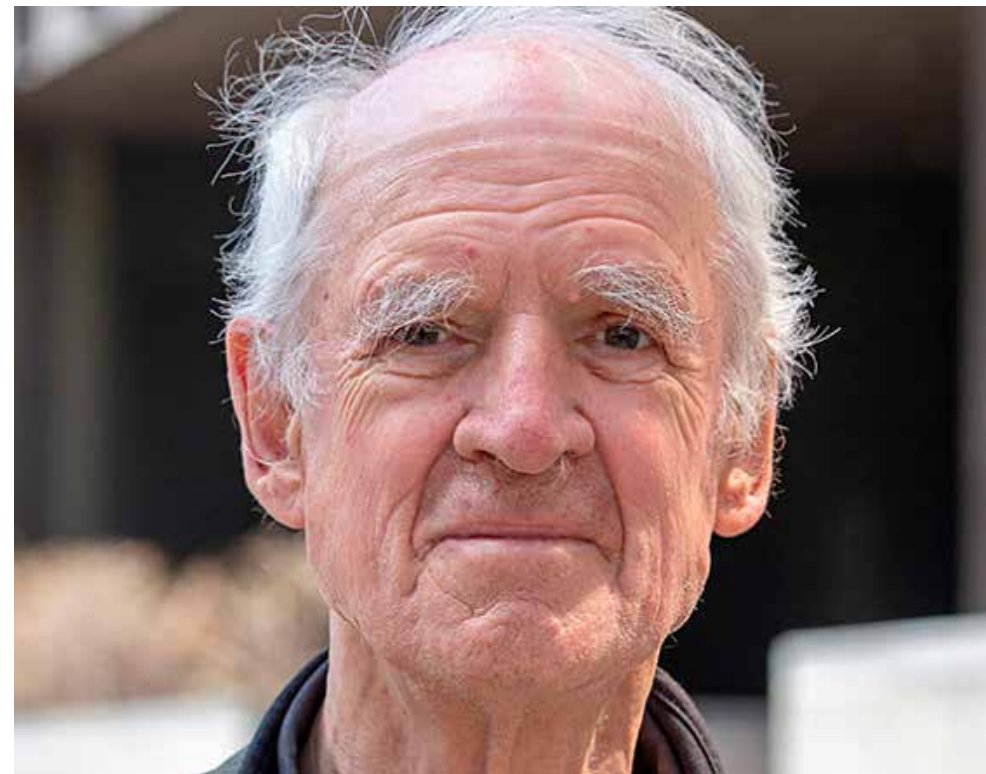
Ignatius did so by living not only in the everyday, but through it: with a sense for what transcends it, to affirm the eternal basis of the temporal. Whatever we do, we “do it all for the glory of God.”

Living this tension is hard work, and in no small part because the challenge of living out tensions is supremely practical. How do we do it? This eschatological tension requires that we learn again how to live together in uncertain, fragile times and no amount of books is going to teach us that. We need practice, and we need friends and teachers to help us along the way.

Thus the importance of moderation for our time. Moderation means finding a mean in all we say and do. We need to eat, but we don't want to eat too much or too little. We want to be generous, but we don't want to give away everything. We want to share the truth, but we don't want to crowd out other truths.

Moderation is not a flashy virtue. But it guides us in so many parts of our life. Moderation is about avoiding extremes that pull us away from our deepest commitments.

In this sense, moderation is among the most concrete virtues. It does not allow us to drift into abstractions, to separate ideals from realities. Those principles are ultimately grounded in a care for



A 2019 image of Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor. Image: Lêa-Kim Châteauneuf/Wikimedia Commons

persons. It cares about institutions, practices and habits that protect people, particularly the most vulnerable. It therefore neither seeks to raze them to the ground because they are not perfect, nor does it preserve them for the sake of nostalgia.

Christianity does not call us to defend any “-ism”, but rather to proclaim the Reign of God here and now. We might ardently believe that some system of thought or belief helps to advance that Kingdom, but make no mistake: it is a shadow of it, at best.

Moderation does not mean a moderation only about earthly living or transcendent yearning. That would be to

try to separate what we know with every fiber of our being to be combined: our present life and the beyond toward which it always points. **Moderation cannot mean giving up on the greatest gift of humanity: the final promise that we will all be one, both interiorly and with our fellow humans in God.**

Bill McCormick SJ, a Texan, FJV and Jesuit, is a regent at Saint Louis University, where undergraduates teach him political science and philosophy. He entered the Society in 2013, having studied politics at Chicago and Texas.

This article was originally published by The Jesuit Post (TJP).

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Serra International update

Last month Serra was busy with celebrating ordinations and their 40th anniversary.

BY ANDREW KENNEDY



Bishop Mark Edwards attended our monthly meeting and thanked Serra from the Diocese. He learnt about the Serra club through the first ordination of Father Cyprian and deacon Connell Perry. The catering by Serran's allowed all the priest and visitors to enjoy the ordination. He said that the lifeblood of the diocese was to have men training in the seminary. He was grateful for the Serrans interest in the seminary and for their prayers.

Being the year of St Joseph, Fr Thompson recommended that we pray to St. Joseph when praying for vocations. St Therese said that St Joseph never let anyone down.

An invitation was received from Deacon Connell inviting all Serra members to attend his Ordination on 11th September. Father also advised the future ordinations of:

Deaconal ordination of Peterpaul Chikezie on 12 July, 2021 in Armidale
Priestly ordination of Michael Boudaheer on 21st August, 2021
Ordination of Rogelio on 18th October, 2021.

Fr. Thompson advised that the Vocation Weekend held at Vianney College went well. There were two interested attendees. Father is hopeful of another weekend later in the year.

40th year Serra Anniversary Dinner Night

With all the lockdowns and Covid madness we are still planning on having our 40th year celebrations with Bishop Mark being our special guest speaker

talking to us on his personal vocational journey. October 16th which is a Saturday night at the Wagga Boat Club.

Scanzpac which stands for Serra Council Australia New Zealand South Pacific Asia Council will also be hosted by Wagga Serrans at Vianney college for our quarterly board meeting.

Our monthly Meeting, Mass and a light meal at Vianney

Seminary at 6.15 on the second Tuesday of each month with a break over December and January. Mass at 7.00pm celebrated by the Rector, Father Thompson.

Serra International Objectives and Purposes

- To pray for, to foster and to promote vocations to the Ministerial Priesthood and Permanent Diaconate of the Catholic Church as a particular vocation of service and to support priests and deacons in their ministries;
- To encourage and affirm vocations to the consecrated life in the Catholic Church;
- To assist its members to recognise and respond, in their own lives, to God's call to holiness in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.

Serra is recognised by the Vatican as the Global Lay Apostolate for Vocations within the Catholic Church

Serra International is aggregated to the Pontifical Work for Vocations to the Priesthood within the Congregation for the Clergy.

The Legion of Mary Centenary 2021

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
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Thurgoona	Tues, 9.00am	Fr John Fowles
Mystical Rose	Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Thurgoona	Mon, 9.30am	Fr John Fowles
Rosa Mystica	Holy Spirit Parish, Lavington	Tues, 1.00pm	Fr Peter Murphy
Mother of Christ	Holy Spirit Parish, Lavington	Wed, 3.30pm	Fr Brendan Lee
Immaculate Heart of Mary	St Patrick's Parish, Albury	Sun, 4.00pm	Fr Marco Killingsworth
Mary Help of Christians	Mary McKillop College, Jindera	Tues, 3.30pm	Fr Brendan Lee
Queen of Confessors	Mary McKillop College, Jindera	Tues, 3.30pm	Fr Chris Heffernan
Our Lady Help of Christians	St Brendan's, Ganmain	Wed, 2.00pm	Fr Justin Darlow
Our Lady Spouse of the Holy Spirit	Our Lady of Fatima, South Wagga	Fri, 1.30pm	TBA
Our Lady Star of the Sea (Juniors)	St Michael's Cathedral, Wagga Wagga	Wed, 3.45pm	Fr Reece Beltrame
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 Gate of Heaven	St Joseph's, Leeton	Tue, 5.00pm	Fr Anthony Dunne
Our Lady of Cana	St Mel's, Narrandera	Thu, 6.00pm	Fr Bradley Rafter
Our Lady Ark of the Covenant	St Mary's, The Rock	Mon, 7.00pm	Fr Gabriel Murray

* 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."

Please note that the Centenary Celebration to be held on 1 September has been postponed. We will advise you when a new date is chosen.

LEGION OF MARY CENTENARY 2021 CELEBRATION

You are warmly invited to a Mass offered by Bishop Mark Edwards to celebrate the Centenary of the Legion of Mary

Wednesday 1st September

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Vinnies National President to participate in Catholic Church's historic Plenary Council meeting

Speaking just weeks before the first assembly of the historic 5th Plenary Council in Australia, National Council President and Plenary Council Member, Claire Victory, said she hoped the Plenary Council would lead to greater inclusion and an urgent recasting of church leadership and governance at every level of the Church in Australia.

'The Plenary Council process is one opportunity for urgently needed cultural and systemic change identified not just by the recent child sex abuse royal commission, but by faithful lay Catholics for decades.

'As the largest lay-led Catholic organisation in Australia the St Vincent de Paul Society has a crucial role to play in the restoration of our church's credibility', Ms Victory said.

'Our mission as church is not to fill buildings, but to reach people where they are, not where the church wants them to be. This is what Vincentians do when we offer care and support to people who are disadvantaged, voiceless and in need of a hand up.

'This calls for a paradigm shift – from

an authoritarian, hierarchical, patriarchal model to a communion of communities engaged in dialogue, discernment and decision making around both ecclesial and social concerns.

'To transform itself, the Church must strive to be more representative of the entire community it seeks to serve. We want our Church to be known for its commitment to the poor, not as passive recipients of our benevolence but as people central to the Church's life and mission.

'The Society strongly advocates for a Church that condemns clericalism and promotes a more transparent and accountable model where hierarchical structures give way to shared leadership, where wisdom is sought through a process



Claire Victory, National President of St Vincent de Paul Society.

of genuine dialogue and inclusive vision.

'We don't know how successful the Plenary Council process will be in enabling the voice of lay people to be heard or what will come out of this historic opportunity, but we choose to remain optimistic about the potential for the genuine engagement of lay Catholics.

'Do we want the smooth path to completion or are willing to engage in the radical and confronting work of transformation to make room for the new?

'As Vincentians, we hope that this Plenary Council (and the significant hard work that follows it) will lead to a Church that has a more deliberate, inclusive and intentional focus on its fundamental mission of following Christ by serving the poor,' Ms Victory said.

A copy of the National Council's submission to the Plenary Council is available at https://www.vinnies.org.au/icms_docs/327143_Submission_to_the_Plenary_Council.pdf



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Caritas Australia launches Women for the World campaign

Caritas Australia has launched its annual Women for the World campaign - which brings Australians together to help empower vulnerable women with the skills and resources they need to take control of their lives and forge their path out of poverty.

Women around the world are disproportionately affected by poverty, food insecurity and gender-based violence.

According to UN Women, globally, 193 million women currently live on less than \$1.90 a day, and the COVID-19 pandemic will likely push an additional 47 million women into poverty by the end of this year.

"I have learned over my career that supporting women and girls is one of the most cost-effective and sustainable ways to promote positive change in a community," said Kirsty Robertson, Caritas Australia's CEO.

"When girls are supported to receive an education, they are more able to earn an income. The children of educated women are healthier, are more likely to stay in

school, and have better diets. These are the kinds of impacts that last long after a program finishes,"

"One of the women we've featured in our campaign this year is Aloma, from the Philippines, who learned bookkeeping skills, how to manage disaster response, first aid training and environmental conservation – all key skills for the highly disaster-prone region she lives in. She's now passed on these skills to her friends and neighbours, and she's become a really valued leader in her community."

"What's really wonderful is Aloma is now a board member of the Small Farmers and Fisherfolk Association, and treasurer of her local area. She's even brought her community together to build a mangrove nursery, which helps protect the village from coastal erosion."

"It's not just that, through providing health and sanitation or financial literacy training, or a safe place to seek protection from family violence, women are able to become community leaders and effect incredible change in their communities" said Kirsty Robertson, Caritas Australia's CEO.

Supporters can participate in the Women for the World by donating to the campaign or hosting an event. People can share a meal with friends using recipes from around the world or hold a book club and select books written by women

writers – which can be done in-person or virtually depending on your state's restrictions.

**Go to
www.womenfortheworld.org.au
to donate or sign up
for an event.**



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Aloma with her paperwork after completing her training courses. Credit Caritas Australia

Haiti Emergency Aid 2021

Aid to the Church in Need is sending emergency aid to our brothers and sisters in Haiti following the devastating earthquake that hit the country on 14 August.

With almost 2000 people confirmed dead and thousands of others injured and homeless due to the earthquake, ACN is providing aid to those in need during this time.

We can confirm that 26 Churches suffered great damages and at least 11 chapels have completely collapsed and need to be rebuilt. One of them is the Cathedral of St. Louis and 11 Churches were already destroyed by hurricane Matthew and not yet rebuilt. At least 32 rectories have suffered serious damages. There are 46 presbyteries in the diocese, also 69.5% of them are destroyed. Also, the bishop's residence shows serious damages and needs to be restored. Furthermore, 25 parish schools and 11 parish health centres suffered great damages. The antenna of the diocesan radio has also fallen and the solar electrical system has been damaged.

"We have received some heartbreaking accounts. After all the political conflicts

the country has suffered since 2019 and barely a month after the assassination of the President of the Republic, Jovenel Moïse, in early July, in the midst of the wave of violence and abductions that are afflicting the country and on top of the news reaching us of droughts and lack of water that have already plunged the rural population in still deeper poverty – on top of all this, the earthquake on Saturday has now inflicted on thousands of families a situation worse than all the rest. It is an impossible situation, and the people are in total shock," commented the executive president of pontifical foundation ACN International, Dr Thomas Heine-Geldern.

The majority of the country is Catholic and ACN is in contact with the local Church in the most seriously affected dioceses, in order to assess where the greatest need lies in the immediate aftermath. "We are conscious of the great efforts made by the Church to offer signs



of hope to the people in their desperate situation, after so many natural disasters and in the midst of the violence and extreme poverty. So at this difficult time, we cannot abandon this Church, which is fighting to support its people. We plea to you to pray for the country, to pray for all those who have lost their loved ones, those who have been wounded and those who have lost everything. May Our Lady of Perpetual Succour,

Patroness and Protector of Haiti, bring them all support and consolation," the ACN executive president appealed in conclusion.

To read an update on the situation in Haiti or to donate please visit www.aidtochurch.org/haiti

ACN is asking that you remember our brothers and sisters in Faith in your prayers and to help financially ease their burdens during this very hard time.



Aid to the Church in Need has expressed its solidarity in prayer with Haiti, following the devastating 7.2 magnitude earthquake that struck the country on 14 August. *ACN International* immediately approved an emergency aid package of \$800,000 AUD for the Haitian people. So far, over 2000 people have lost their lives and thousands more have been injured.



The majority of the country is Catholic and ACN has project partners on the ground. ACN is in contact with the local Church in the most seriously affected dioceses, in order to assess where the greatest need lies in the immediate aftermath and how we can best help those in need.

"We are conscious of the great efforts made by the Church to offer signs of hope to the people in their desperate situation, after so many natural disasters and in the midst of the violence and extreme poverty. At this difficult time, we cannot abandon this Church, which is fighting to support its people. May Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Patroness and Protector of Haiti, bring them all support

and consolation," declared the ACN executive president, Dr Thomas Heine-Geldern.

ACN Australia has set up an emergency aid appeal to help the people of Haiti during this extremely hard time for their country and for their families.

Can you help ease the burdens of our brothers and sisters in Haiti?



Scan the QR code, visit www.aidtochurch.org/haiti, call 1800 101 201, or, return the coupon below to make your offering.



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Mission's online conference an overwhelmingly positive experience

The fifth edition of the *Mission: one heart many voices* conference, held for the first time online and presented to a worldwide audience, was an outstanding success with over 500 participants actively involved and engaged in exploring the challenges of living the gospel and leading mission in Australia and globally.

The conference was held over three days, with an extra session organised by young people also included in the program for the first time. Catholic Mission partnered with Catholic Religious Australia to present the conference.

“The Mission Conference has shown that the Holy Spirit continues to call us as a Church into renewal,” says Peter Carroll FMS, president Catholic Religious Australia and Provincial of Marist Brothers, Province of Australia. “Presenters and participants alike brought an energy and passion to be co-responsible in the service of a prophetic, Mission-centred church.”

For the first time, the conference was presented digitally, with great success.

“The organising committee are delighted by the success of the online platform and the participation of delegates and presenters” says conference director Danielle Achikian.

“The overall feedback has been extremely positive.”

Senior Australian of the Year, Aboriginal elder from Nauiyu, Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM, opened the conference, focusing on Dadirri, an inner deep listening and quiet still awareness.

Dr Miriam-Rose invited participants to contemplate what they see, feel, and hear around them.

Cardinal Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle, Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples, also presented at the conference, speaking about leadership in mission.

His words, urging participants to “get involved in a personal encounter”, resonated.

“The challenges for the church in the modern world will not be solved by the ecclesial bureaucracy or head office but by the personal encounter at the church door, the school gate, the shopping centre,” says Catholic Mission National Director, Fr Brian Lucas.

“We cannot but continue to speak about what we have seen and heard as



we take the gospel to the world as it is today.”

Other keynote speakers at the conference included prominent author Hugh Mackay, human rights activist, broadcaster and former Socceroo, Craig Foster, CEO, Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd, Ursula Stephens, NSW Aging and Disability commissioner Robert Fitzgerald, and Lyndall Brown RSJ with a discussion focusing on communal discernment.

For the first time the conference included an extra day-long session organised by young people around things they care deeply about, with special discussions focusing on Mission in the world and climate change, Women in Leadership, and Uluru Statement from the Heart and a voice to parliament. Ambassador

of Australia to the Holy See, Chiara Porro, was a keynote speaker on the final day of the conference.

The sixth edition of *Mission: one heart many voices* will be held in 2023



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Stina Constantine receives graduate visa, but fight to stay is not over

It's been an exhausting, two-year battle for a former Miss Wagga to stay in the country, the place she has called home for years.

BY ANNIE LEWIS - Daily Advertiser

It's been an exhausting, two-year battle for a former Miss Wagga to stay in the country, the place she has called home for years.

But, the news that Stina Constantine has been waiting so long for has finally arrived.

Ms Constantine, who has lived in Australia for the best part of 20 years, faced deportation after an administrative error saw her denied a visa.

Last month, reports circulated that Immigration Minister Alex Hawke had decided to use his powers to allow Ms Constantine to stay.

But, she still had not heard anything official, and while hopeful, Ms Constantine remained slightly sceptical.

But then finally, news came in an email, and there are "not enough words" to describe how she felt.

"It said he had used his personal powers and was giving me a two-year graduate visa," Ms Constantine said.

"It said if I wished to, I could use that time to apply for a subsequent visa, providing I fulfilled all the

requirements of that visa.

"When that email actually came through, it almost felt a bit much because finally, I had something concrete."

Ms Constantine said the past few days have been about taking the time to reflect and rejoice in the victory.

But it has also been a time to rest, as the battle that has taken up almost two years of her life was "exhausting".

"For the last two days, I have just been sleeping so much because I think I can properly rest," Ms Constantine said.

"The process has taken a lot from me."

While the news is no doubt a win, the fight is not over yet as Ms Constantine will need to turn her mind to what visa she can apply for next.

"The visa I would have gone for two years ago does not exist anymore," she said.

"I have had to put a few feelers out to see what the options are."

Ms Constantine said it has become clear to her through this process that there are some misconceptions around visas and how someone can gain citizenship.

She said there seems to be an idea that if a person has lived in Australia for a certain amount of time, they automatically qualify for citizenship or permanent residency.



Former Miss Wagga Stina Constantine is thrilled she has been granted the right to stay in Australia after an intervention by the Immigration Minister. Picture: Emma Hillier

"For me who doesn't have biological family already here, it is more difficult," Ms Constantine said.

"At this point, I am still looking at four or eight years until I can apply for residency."

Riverina MP Michael McCormack said he had been actively advocating to have the issue resolved.

"I am pleased the Immigration Minister signed off on his intervention to resolve Stina's situation and ensure she can continue her highly valued contribution to the local community," he said on Tuesday.

"Stina does such a power of good work for many people in the Wagga community, and I am delighted with this outcome."



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MCC: knitting for charity

Staff and students from Marian Catholic College took the opportunity to learn how to knit so that as a school community they could create warm blankets that would be distributed to those in need in our local and surrounding community.

The students, who are members of Marian’s Community Action Team took on the challenge.

Needles and yarn were provided and Mrs Sartor and Mrs Farrugia acted as mentors to assist students to learn this timeless skill. The group, who were made up of a cross section of year groups, would meet in the library at lunchtimes. This all began during 2020, when Covid 19 sent us into lockdown, followed by a return to school and limited movement. The group became a wonderful opportunity to meet new people, have a chat, and assist those less fortunate. During our lunchtime knitting sessions last year, a Year 12 student also joined the group. Thankyou to Kaitlyn Dames and her mother who together worked hard and knitted two beautiful blankets and donated them to this worthy cause.

This year staff from MCC continued with the challenge, knitting over 150 squares. Thanks to Belinda McKellar, Jenny Sartor, Gisella Barber, Betsy Farrugia for their efforts.

We approached a local charity: *Griffith Helping Hands*. Mrs Michelle Bordinon founded the group in 2017, which sees her source, collect and distribute tonnes of clothing, bedding and household goods for people in need around the region. She was awarded at Griffith’s Australia Day

Ceremony 2021 with the Local Hero Award, for her endless dedication to helping those in need in the community. Mrs Bordinon’s mantra is kindness is everything, you don’t judge, you just help. The Community Action team were happy to donate the gifts of several blankets to this charity, knowing that they would be helping the disadvantaged within our local community.

The students and staff involved found the satisfaction of making something to give to others less fortunate was very rewarding.



Marian’s Community Action Knitting Team: From left: Emma Higgins, Charlie Featherstone, Jen McClarty, Krishi Patel, Josephine Torrefranca, Hardi Patel and Jhaanavi Karunapalan



Gabriel Abdala Acting Director of Mission, Jenny Sartor MCC Library Assistant and Michelle Bordinon from Griffith Helping Hands



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St Joseph's Primary, Narrandera

St Joseph's recently had a virtual BookWeek for their primary classes.



St Peter's Primary, Coleambally

St Peter's Primary were so happy to have all the students back! They were very excited to see their friends and teachers.

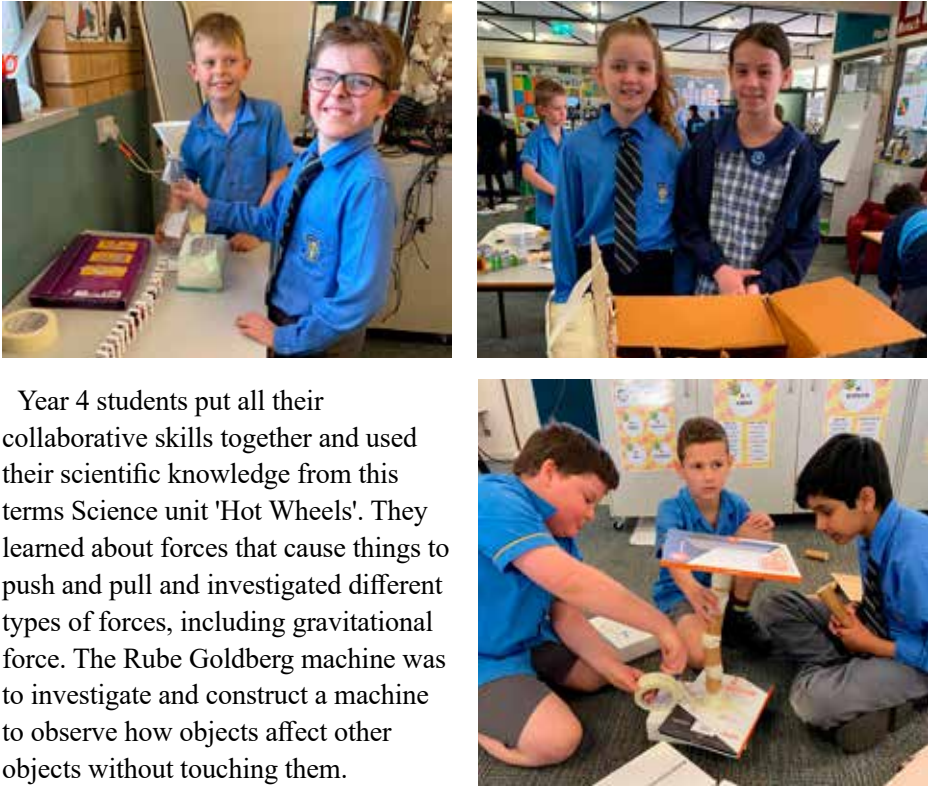


Kildare Catholic College, Wagga Wagga

Kildare got involved in R U OK Day and encouraged people to check in with their friends and family.



St Patrick's Primary, Griffith



Year 4 students put all their collaborative skills together and used their scientific knowledge from this terms Science unit 'Hot Wheels'. They learned about forces that cause things to push and pull and investigated different types of forces, including gravitational force. The Rube Goldberg machine was to investigate and construct a machine to observe how objects affect other objects without touching them.





St Francis De Sales Regional College, Leeton

Thanks Mr Sullivan and Year 7 for lifting our spirits with these really great photos. Congratulations to all involved. Despite the obstacles and the uncertainty, we should all remain grateful, empathetic and mindful. We live in a wonderful part of the world!!



St Patrick's Primary School, Holbrook

What a wonderful day we had as we welcomed our students back. Stage 2 students continued their work about Mary MacKillop, Stage 3 students had fun with binary numbers and the K/1/2 students made their way through fractions in the form of a pizza.



Marian Catholic College, Griffith

RU OK Day is acknowledged each year on September the 9th to remind us to stay connected and have conversations that can help others through difficult times in their lives.

R U OK day encourages people to invest more time in their personal relationships and build the capacity of informal support networks – friends, family and colleagues - to be alert to those around them, have a conversation if they identify signs of distress or difficulty and connect someone to appropriate support, long before they're in crisis.

During a time when our local community has suffered numerous tragic losses and we are more physically isolated than before, today serves as

a reminder to reach out to those around us and ask RU OK? But most importantly it reminds us that we should ask this question everyday, of ourselves and others to enhance feelings of belonging and support.

At Marian we acknowledge the importance of these conversations and encourage you to reach out and ask RU OK? It is important that we listen without judgement and remember that one of the most important messages to promote is that all of us should seek help from others when we feel down or vulnerable. Continuing to check in is also a very important part of the process.



St Anne's Primary, North Albury

What a beautiful welcome. St Anne's Primary were very excited to welcome back their students on such a glorious day!



Henschke Primary, Wagga Wagga

Henschke Primary students had fun sharing photos of their home learning.

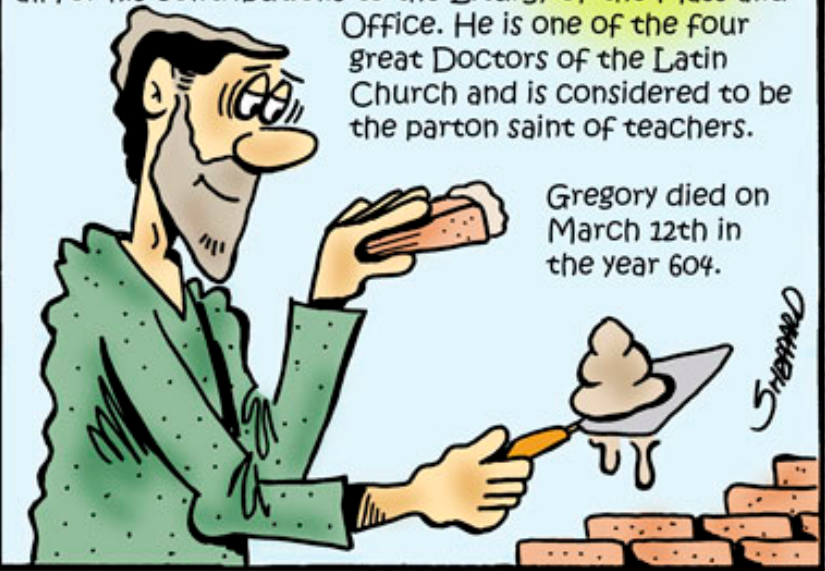


Kids corner

SAINTS FUN FACTS

by John Sheppard
St. Gregory was born in Rome around 540. At age 34 he was appointed Chief Magistrate of Rome. He built six moanasteries in Sicily and a seventh in his own home in Rome. He became a priest at 35.

He was unanimously elected Pope and is known above all for his contributions to the Liturgy of the Mass and Office. He is one of the four great Doctors of the Latin Church and is considered to be the parton saint of teachers.



Jokes...

Fun tongue twisters to try!

- Try and say 5 times quickly:**
- Irish Wrist Watches
 - I saw a saw that could out saw any other saw I ever saw.
 - Does your sport shop stock short socks with spots?
 - Crisp crusts crackle and crunch.
 - Growing gray goats graze great green grassy groves.
 - Six slippery snails, slid slowly seaward.
 - If two witches were watching two watches: which witch would watch which watch?
 - No need to light a night-light on a light night like tonight.



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

Together Editor
PO Box 473
Wagga Wagga NSW 2650

We'd love to hear from you!



SEPTEMBER SAINTS & FEAST DAYS

Word Search

Find all of the words or phrases in the puzzle that are in **BOLD** in the word bank below:

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

- St. **Gregory** the Great
- St. **Peter Claver**
- Most Holy Name of **Mary**
- Exaltation of the **Holy Cross**
- Our Lady of **Sorrows**
- St. **Cornelius**
- St. **Cyprian**
- St. Andrew Kim **Taegon**
- St. Paul Chong **Hasang**
- St. **Pio** of Pietrelcina
- St. **Cosmas**
- St. **Damian**
- St. **Vincent** de Paul
- St. **Michael**
- St. **Gabriel**
- St. **Raphael**
- St. **Jerome**

Creative Kids



The Murphy family from Henschke Primary created artworks with affirmations to share with their neighbours during lockdown.

Natural Fertility Awareness Week 2021

Natural Fertility Awareness Week was Monday 23 August through to Sunday 29 August, 2021. It is an annual campaign to educate individuals and couples about the gift natural family planning is to marriages and families.

During these times of uncertainty, with so many in isolation, more people are becoming very aware of their physical and mental health.

Perhaps it is a time to reflect also on our reproductive health and consider how this may also be impacted.

The theme for Natural Fertility Awareness Week is: *Tracking Fertility - Tracking Health.*

Stress can impact us in many ways even the reproductive cycle can be affected. This can be readily recognised when there is an understanding of how the body's natural signs inform us of what is happening in the reproductive system. The Billings Ovulation Method® can help women in any stage

of their reproductive life to recognise and chart these signs. It provides a woman with knowledge of fertility and infertility, indicating the optimum time for conception and alternatively the awareness of infertility can be used to space pregnancies. During this pandemic, it is also a great tool for monitoring reproductive health.

There are so many apps available to track a cycle. These may be helpful to keep track of the regularity of a period but there is on offer a very reliable teaching tool that can be accessed remotely/ on-line and which is interactive with a teacher.

Fertility Pinpoint™ was developed to be more than an app to track menstrual



cycles. It is a convenient, interactive teaching system that lets a woman have personal and confidential contact with an accredited teacher of the Billings Ovulation Method® to help her understand her hormone levels and identify infertility and fertility through her personal chart.

Already many women, some who live overseas, access this service as the tutor is only a click away. It is a wonderful

resource for those who live in remote areas but just as useful and accessible for busy city dwellers who are time-poor or in restrictive isolation.

More information can be accessed through the Billings LIFE web site:
www.billings.life and
www.fertilitypinpoint.com
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For more information about making contributions to Together or to submit your article contact us at:
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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 - 8:00am and 10:30am
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 - 5:30pm
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 - 11:00am
RSL Remembrance Village
2nd Tuesday of the month - 11:00am
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 to Saturday - 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
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 23

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:




"Maybe the whales would be okay staying in the water."

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

6 September 1930	Fr John Joseph Condon
9 September 1883	Fr Patrick Bermingham
11 September 1898	Fr Thomas Long
25 September 1911	Fr James P O'Reilly
28 September 1936	Mgr Timothy O'Connell

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:

Sept/Oct

12th September - Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

Peter had expectations about what it meant to call Jesus the Messiah, the Christ. Jesus was indeed the Messiah, but his life and death would show a different understanding of what it means to be the Messiah. We, too, have expectations of God and our own ideas about what we think God ought to be doing in our world. Like Peter, however, we may risk limiting our image of God by thinking only in human ways. God's plan is always more than what we can ever imagine.

As you gather as a family, talk about what we expect God to be doing in our world and in our family life. Then read today's Gospel, Mark 8:31-35. Why do you think Peter was so upset by what Jesus was saying? Notice how Jesus reprimands Peter. Do we sometimes forget to let God be God for us? That is, do we sometimes get discouraged because God doesn't act in our world in the ways that we expect? Pray together that we will remember that God is always working for the world's salvation in ways that are beyond our imagination. Conclude by praying together today's psalm, Psalm 116.

Isaiah 50:5-9a Psalm 116:1-2,3-4,5-6,8-9
James 2:14-18 Mark 8:27-35

19th September - Twenty-Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

Conversations such as the one described in today's Gospel are common in family life. Perhaps these examples are familiar: "I should get the first piece of cake because I am the youngest;" "I did the dishes yesterday; someone else should do them today." How might we respond if Jesus asked about our family arguments? What would Jesus say to us in reply? All of us need the reminder found in today's Gospel: To be great in God's Kingdom is to be the servant of all.

As you gather as a family, recall a recent family argument about

household chores or an example of bickering among family members. Talk about what was at issue in the argument. Together imagine that Jesus entered the room just as the argument ended. What would you tell Jesus your argument was about? What might Jesus say in reply? Read together today's Gospel, Mark 9:30-37. How was your family argument like the argument among Jesus' disciples? What might your family do to remember that those who are great in God's kingdom are those who willingly serve others? Pray together that your family life will reflect your commitment to serve one another with love. Pray Saint Ignatius of Loyola's Prayer for Generosity.

Wisdom 2:12,17-20 Psalm 54:3-4,5,6 & 8
James 3:16-4:3 Mark 9:30-37

26th September - Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

The second part of today's Gospel contains a strong message for those who share the responsibility of fostering faith. It is indeed an awesome responsibility. Today's Gospel reminds us that faith is a lifelong journey toward God. We don't always get it all or even get it right. But we pray for the grace to acknowledge and build upon even the smallest signs of faith, in ourselves and in others. There are plenty of obstacles that might prevent the growth of faith. Let us pray that we are not contributing to the obstacles that might hinder another person's faith in Jesus.

As you gather as a family, observe that there are things in our lives that nurture our faith and things that can hinder it. Talk about some of the things that nurture our faith—healthy family relationships, healthy friendships, good literature, and so on. Name some of the things that might be an obstacle to faith—unhealthy relationships, scandals, and so on. Observe that Jesus teaches us in today's Gospel that we are to do everything we can to help one another have faith in Jesus and do all that we can to avoid creating obstacles that might hinder another person's faith. Read together

today's Gospel, Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48. Conclude by praying together that we will be a family that helps each other grow in faith. Pray together today's psalm, Psalm 19, or the Lord's Prayer.

Numbers 11:25-29 Psalm 19:8,10,12-13,14
James 5:1-6 Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48

3rd October - Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

Jesus' teaching about divorce and remarriage can be a challenging one for many people. The Church continues to uphold the strong and positive teaching of Jesus that God intends for a man and woman to make a lifelong commitment to one another in the Sacrament of Marriage. Many of us, however, know people whose marriage has not been a lifelong commitment. The example of Jesus teaches us that we are called to act with compassion and love in our relationships with all, and especially when people are hurting because of difficulties in their relationships. Most importantly, we remember that when marriages thrive, it is a sign of God's grace at work.

As you gather as a family, talk about what it means to make a promise or a commitment to someone. Offer examples of promises that are fairly easy to keep. Read today's Gospel, Mark 10:2-16. Talk about examples of promises and commitments that might be more difficult to honor, like the marriage commitment that Jesus is asked about in this Gospel. Talk about how we need God to help us honor our commitment to love and care for each other. Jesus teaches that we should be like children before God, trusting God's promise to care for us and asking for his help to keep our commitments to love and care for others. Conclude by praying together that God will give his grace to us that we may honor our commitments to one another. Pray together Saint Ignatius of Loyola's prayer, the Suscipe.

Genesis 2:18-24 Psalm 128:1-2,3,4-5,6
Hebrews 2:9-11 Mark 10:2-16



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Who is Centacare?

At **Centacare** we are passionate about supporting all people in our community. We belong to the **Wagga Wagga Albury, Griffith, Mulwala and surrounding communities** We believe in the wellbeing for all.

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.

For tailored business packages contact our office

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

FAMILY AND PARENTING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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.

Call if you would like to discuss this further

COUNSELLING

We offer individual, couples, or family counselling to help support you to strengthen and improve your relationships.

Individual working one on one in a safe and confidential environment

Couples helps two people resolve conflict and improve relationship satisfaction

Families learn new ways of relating to each other, resolve conflicts, and open lines of communication between all family members

MEDIATION

We offer mediation services to assist in resolving disputes related to separation and divorce, children and parenting plans.

Call and find out how our mediator can assist you

And more...

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