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# TOGETHER

In the Diocese of *Wagga Wagga*

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OCTOBER 2021

## World Mission Month

*Kick goals for  
kids in need this  
Mission Month*

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# Bishop's Voice

Bishop Mark Edwards OMI - Bishop of Wagga Wagga Diocese



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.

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## Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

### Remaining one in Christ

We are faced with two very unpalatable choices by NSW government public health orders – either to divide the Church, the body of Christ into those who are vaccinated and those who aren't or to close the Churches to public worship. From October 11th, only those who are fully vaccinated are allowed into Churches until Monday October 25th at which time all will be welcome to worship together.

After receiving advice, I decided that it is too onerous to ask parishes to monitor and implement compliance in respect to vaccination status. Also, the Church, the sacrament of communion, should not be separating people as they come to Mass. Further, excluding some Catholics from worship has the potential to cause long lasting upset and division. Thus, given the brief duration of this regulation, I took the grave and sad decision to direct that in the Diocese of Wagga Wagga there will be no public or 'private' Masses with a congregation taking place and that our churches will close between Monday 11 October and Sunday 24 October inclusive except for funerals and weddings.

Those who have had two 'jabs' and are waiting for their sisters and brothers who have not yet completed their vaccination are being noble and patient. Thank you. This is an act of solidarity and of love.

I ask that we be kind to each other at this time. Resentments and hurts gained now could last for a long time and damage the body of Christ significantly.

As a way of celebrating our unity in Christ, on Sunday 17 October and again on Sunday 24 October, in the diocese there will be one beautiful, prayerful live-streamed Mass from the Cathedral at 9am on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/vFxmX1ui16A> You can find this link on

the diocese's website. I invite you to join me for these Masses. This is an opportunity to celebrate our union as the pilgrim people who have their eyes fixed on the Lord. We will be explicitly the one body of Christ and remain united in this time of tension.

I encourage those who are hesitant about receiving a vaccine to see their family doctor to discuss receiving it. Your doctor will give advice that is appropriate for you.

### Review of Vianney College

In the first half of this year, Bishop Randazzo and Sr Naumann conducted a visitation or review of Vianney College. The seminary review was conducted to ensure that Vianney College is as good as it can be, provides continually better formation and is as beneficial for our students as possible. We want it to be outstanding, and our diocese deserves this ambition of us. Our priestly formation must be of the highest quality, particularly now as greater responsibility falls to fewer people. We strive for a Seminary that is excellent in every area and appropriate for the Diocese.

The report of this visitation is now publicly available on the diocesan website. Along with this is a page outlining my response to the recommendations in this review and the first steps forward in implementing them.

I think it is a very good report and it rings true with what I know of the seminary and am very encouraged by it. I am deeply grateful to Bishop Randazzo and Sr Naumann for their labour, insight and wisdom.

The report makes 20 recommendations. Three of the recommendations are highly recommended. The three recommendations relate to the development of the human formation plan (recommendation 4), the appointment of a Pastoral Director and the formation

of a Pastoral team (recommendation 8), and the use of CPE (recommendation 10). Other recommendations that seem very important to me concern governance (recommendations 2 and 16) and recommendations regarding appointments of Spiritual Director and Pastoral Director and the development of Position descriptions for the residential formators (recommendations 1, 6, and 8). After governance and policy, the next most important thing to get right is the key people and ensuring clarity for the key people. This together with good governance is foundational to making any organisation successful.

Also on the website is a response from me to each of the recommendations and the first steps that we are taking to implement them. I invite you to respond to the report or its recommendations and to make suggestions about how to implement the recommendations to me at [bishop@wagga.catholic.org.au](mailto:bishop@wagga.catholic.org.au)

Again, let us continue to be gentle and charitable with each other in this time of tension caused by COVID regulations.

### Yours in Jesus Christ and Mary Immaculate



## Prayer Intention for October - Pray with Pope Francis

### Missionary Disciples

We pray that every baptized person may be engaged in evangelization, available to the mission, by being witnesses of a life that has the flavour of the Gospel.

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

<https://thepopevideo.org/>



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Evangelization often gets a bad rap.

It's the song by our favorite musician that we always skip. It's the call we let go to voicemail. It's the kiosk in the store we have to walk by. We don't want to be rude, but we also are just so not interested.

By 'bad rap', I mean the caricature of what evangelization entails that makes almost all of us cringe:

- approaching strangers ...
- peppering them with questions ...
- positing rehearsed logical proofs ...
- pushing tracts into their hands ...
- inviting them to come with us ...

and making that hard sell to share the good news of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We imagine the awkward places where this conversation could occur (hockey game concession line, adjoining bathroom stall chat, DMV waiting room), and we think "Nope, that ain't for me."

I can't blame you. Some encouraging news: that's not evangelization. Our call as believers of the one true gospel of

Jesus Christ is about "proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God" everywhere, all the time, to everyone (Luke 8:1).

Being engaged with evangelization is about those with whom you interact, being able to observe that your life reflects your love of a just and holy God, and that you love your neighbors. Some of us share it loudly. Just as many do so more quietly. Some of us strike up conversations about it with strangers. Others, with longtime friends that we've lived life with, for years. Some of us never say much, but when we do, we mean it.

Pope Francis reminds us of this call this month and explains how we all have a "missionary mandate," "This missionary mandate touches us personally: I am a mission, always; you are a mission, always; every baptized man and woman is a mission. People in love never stand still: they are drawn out of themselves; they are attracted and attract others in turn; they give themselves to others and build relationships that are life-giving."

What describes your flavor of sharing the Gospel with others?

# Sister Barbara King has enjoyed 70 years of service as a nun

BY SEAN CUNNINGHAM  
(Originally published in The Daily Advertiser)

Sister Barbara King reached a milestone recently when she celebrated her platinum jubilee, marking 70 years of service with the Sisters of Compassion.



Sister Barbara King celebrated her platinum jubilee of 70 years as a member of the religious order, the Sisters of Compassion. She said she had enjoyed a lifetime of nursing in various places.  
Picture: Les Smith

**She said she had enjoyed a lifetime of nursing in many places during her time as a nun.**

Now retired, Sister Barbara is a resident of Wagga's Loreto Home of Compassion and is about to celebrate another landmark occasion soon.

"I'll be 90 in November, I was born on Melbourne Cup Day," she said.

"I came to Wagga in 2000 and was involved with a scripture group and at one time I was president of the Probus."

Growing up on a sheep station near Brewarrina, in northern New South Wales, becoming a nun had never entered Sister Barbara's mind in her teenage years.

However, she responded to her calling after hearing about inspirational French woman Suzanne Aubert who founded the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, better known as the Sisters of Compassion, in a Maori village in the late 1800s.

"I only ever wanted to go away and have a cattle station, but then I heard about Suzanne Aubert starting a congregation for the poor and I knew from that moment," Sister Barbara said.

"She went to Wellington and started a soup kitchen and discovered there were

many handicapped children that grew up there and founded the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion, better known as Sisters of Compassion.

"The sisters begged and lived on what came in to them.

"I can't really explain, but I knew right there and then I wanted to be a nun, it just happened and everything fell into place."

Sister Barbara took on many forms of nursing during her long career but she said one aspect of caring for the needy in particular gave her much joy during the time she spent in New Zealand.

"I've had a wonderful life, I've worked in home nursing, I used to be a geriatric nurse and worked in Broken Hill for about 20 years and in Brisbane," she said.

"When I was working in palliative care in Brisbane from 1990 to 1995 it was the most wonderful thing.

"But the nursing I loved most was being a house mother to 30 little boys in Wellington.

"I loved being a house mother with those little boys and did everything for them"

Living through World War II in her younger years and dedicating

seven decades of her life serving the congregation has left Sister Barbara with many fond memories.

Reflecting on her past, Sister Barbara said she wouldn't change a thing.

"The world has changed a lot, we were the children of a depression and then a war when everything was rationed and you didn't get news for a long while and travel just didn't really happen," Sister Barbara said.

"Not like nowadays when you can get instant news on an iPad.

"We had lots of migrants in Broken Hill working in four mines going full pelt with 42 different nationalities.

"Once they were fighting each other during the war and then they were all

friends, the whole place was alive."

One of Sister Barbara's highlights was when she spent some time at a place regarded as a holy city to Christians, Jews and Muslims.

"I spent nine months in Jerusalem during a scripture year in 1989, it was a dream come true," she said.

She said she was now "getting fairly tired" and welcomed retirement.

"I have no regrets, everyone has bad and good things happen in their life but you don't get more than you can bear," she said.

"Now, I'll just keep going from one thing to the next thing and go to mass once a week when we're not in lockdown."

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# Kick goals for kids in need this World Mission Month

Catholic Mission has launched its school program, *Socktober for World Mission Month*, this October.

**Socktober is a nationwide schools engagement program, using the game of soccer to educate and encourage support for critical mission projects around the world supporting vulnerable children in developing countries.**

Socktober aims to engage Catholic school students' heads, hearts, and hands in key issues of mission and social justice through powerful metaphors found in sport, especially the world game of soccer.

The learning in schools during Socktober is underpinned by the principles of Sport at the Service of Humanity an initiative of Pope Francis.

The principles are listed here:

**Compassion**

- Use the power of sport to help others.
- Share the benefits of sport to empower those who are poor and disadvantaged.

**Respect**

- Use sport to build trust and understanding.
- Respect your opponents.
- Through sport understand them and their culture more deeply.
- Condemn violence in Sport – on and off the field of play.

**Love**

- Sport is for all.
- Do all you can to help everyone take part in sport.
- Do all you can to enable everyone to compete on equal terms.

**Enlightenment**

- Sport has the power to transform lives and build character.
- Learn graciousness in victory and perspective in defeat.
- Apply the values you learn in sport to help you excel in life.

**Balance**

- Sport has the power to help us make the most of ourselves.
- So play it in the knowledge that it can revitalise you physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. At every stage of life, play for fun, for health, for friendship.

**Joy**

- Sport, above all, is about enjoyment.
- So enjoy it! And remember, there is more to sport than winning, but when you compete, be and do the best you can, always.

Socktober uses soccer to show students the similarities as well as the differences between them and their brothers and sisters overseas.

The focus of the learning and fundraising efforts that the students will carry out throughout the month of October in 2021, known as World Mission Month, is a Kindergarten in Bangkok run by the Good Shepherd Sisters that provides a safe learning environment for children and life-changing empowerment for their mothers.

As Bishop Mark Edwards says: "Socktober is a fantastic way to engage



your head, heart, and hands in the important work of mission, using the world game of soccer. Many children around the world play with a ball just like this sockball as they cannot afford the balls we are used to in Australia. I hope you'll get to make one and get a feel for their reality. So, I encourage you to register today and give it your all in 2021!"

**Primary and secondary schools are invited to register for Socktober by heading to [socktober.org.au](http://socktober.org.au) where they can find all the resources and activities to fully engage with World Mission Month in 2021.**

**Visit online at: [www.socktober.org.au](http://www.socktober.org.au)**



# Catholic Mission launch global awareness campaign ahead of Mission Month

An Australian-led global awareness campaign featuring the faces and voices of missionaries from over 50 countries was launched internationally on September 27.

**The digital campaign, connecting mission partners from around the world and to be translated in over 30 languages, including Arabic and Mandarin, will be launched globally by Catholic Mission to mark the beginning of World Mission Month.**

Catholic Mission, the Australian agency of the Pontifical Mission Societies, led the development of the campaign, working in close collaboration with partners across the globe for nearly 12 months to voice a stirring message that missionaries are still serving global communities.

Responding to a call from Pope Francis, inspired by Acts 4:20: "For we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard", the campaign sheds light on the dedication of missionaries to serving people in places where poverty and disadvantage compound the devastating

impact of COVID-19.

"This video is simply one of the tools now available to us in this technological era to build awareness of the significance of mission, particularly during the month of October," says Fr Brian Lucas, National Director of Catholic Mission.

"The 1st of October is the feast of Saint Therese of Lisieux, the patron of missions and the second last Sunday is World Mission Sunday. This is an opportunity to pay special attention to the importance of sharing faith in mission."

In a major example of international cooperation, Catholic Mission and its partners sourced video messages of support from religious and lay missionaries representing every corner of the globe.

The campaign video was launched globally with a special world premiere on Monday September 27, streamed on



Catholic Mission TV.

The awareness campaign builds on the global popularity of a similar production last year highlighting the "people with a thousand faces", Pope Francis' term for missionaries around the world.

The #WeAreStillHere global video was viewed over a million times on social media around the world, translated into dozens of different languages and featured

on national television programs in Ireland and Malta.

"The international videos showcase the images that tell the story of what we have seen and heard and what we long to share with everyone," says Fr Brian.

**To access Catholic Mission TV and view the world premiere visit the link: <https://www.catholicmission.org.au/wearestillhere>**

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# Year of Saint Joseph



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

## REFLECTION - OCTOBER 2021

### St Joseph – A Hidden Life

St Teresa of Avila dedicated 10 of the 15 monasteries which she founded to the care of St Joseph. Her devotion to him helped establish the place which the Church accords him today. In spite of the honour given him, very little is known about this man.

Like Prince Philip, the late husband of Queen Elizabeth, St Joseph took a lesser role compared to Jesus and Mary. He stood behind them, giving his support and love.

Even though he was not Jesus' father, Joseph does give Jesus a name and ancestry. Jesus, the carpenter's son, thought to be the son of Joseph, is of the house of Joseph and through this a descendant of David. While we may conjecture the role that

Joseph played in the Holy Family, we cannot build an historical picture of the man. However, we may surmise the inner man by asking appropriate questions.

When we meet Joseph in Matthew's Gospel, he is about to informally divorce Mary because she is with child. He has a dream and as a consequence his life changes.

Why did he believe the dream? Few of us believe our dreams.

Psychologists tell us that dreams are about the one who dreams, not the people who populate the dream. What does Joseph's dream and his response tell us about the saint?

"Do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." Joseph could not have understood this. There are no other instances of women conceiving of the Holy Spirit, and it is doubtful that he would have known who or what the Holy Spirit was. Why did he follow the dream?

As is often the case, a dream taps into the depths of the inner person. In Joseph's case, I think that he believed the dream because he wanted to. He loved Mary and did not want to divorce her. He believed because he loved. Here love and faith work together.

The darkest moment of Joseph's life is the instant that he realises that Mary is pregnant and he is not the father. The dream speaks into this darkness and uncovers the depth of his love for Mary. Perhaps he didn't know how much he loved her; nevertheless, the life which he will now live is proof of that love.

The dream, faith and love do not guarantee freedom from doubt. St Augustine tells us that to doubt is human. I wonder what Joseph expected. Perhaps he thought the child would be miraculous, a leader.

Tradition tells us that Joseph died before Jesus began his ministry and therefore Joseph was not privy to the miraculous signs worked by Jesus. For almost 30 years Joseph lived with and cared for a regular person. I'm not sure that Joseph ever saw anything spectacular. Did he ever doubt his dream? Did he ever wonder whether Jesus really was conceived miraculously?

This would have happened in the secrecy of Joseph's heart. Since we all have questions and moments of doubt and uncertainty, we have access to the hidden recesses of St Joseph. We have wondered whether we are loved, we have laboured under uncertainty and we have made mistakes because of our doubt. How did Joseph cope and go on to live an integrated holy life?

He was a man of dreams. In the Carmelite tradition, this means St Joseph is a man with a profound interior life; he is a man of

prayer. In the spiritual life, doubt, uncertainty and darkness furnish the inner sanctum of the soul. We search for God in this context.

Joseph is a master of this. In his struggles, he cries out "where are you hidden?" He does not wallow in his difficulties. He looks for God; this is a fruit of profound inner love. We all understand this because in similar circumstances, even though it does not feel like love, we find an inner strength which enables us to go on living and loving. We discover a love deep within ourselves which impels us; we share this with St Joseph.

Prayer is friendship with God. St Teresa of Avila took Jesus as her closest friend. As she grew in relationship with him, she grew in self-knowledge, and through self-knowledge she grew in knowledge of Jesus.

Part of St Joseph's prayer was his relationship with Jesus and Mary. His love for them supported him in his trials. He experienced their love and he loved them. It was an intimate and real love. We can say that he was a master of prayer.

We might not have the biography of St Joseph, yet as we ponder him, we see that he had a profound hidden inner life which is relevant to us because we experience similar difficulties. His hidden life is also my life. He shows me how to navigate the ups and downs of life in such a way that I might draw closer to Jesus. In darkness we may find light, and in faith learn to love.

**Bishop Gregory Homeming was named the Bishop of Lismore in 2016. At the time of his appointment, he had been serving as Regional Vicar (Major Superior) of the Discalced Carmelites in Australia.**



# Pope sends his blessing to historic church event

Pope Francis has sent greetings and blessings from Rome as the program for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, the first such event in this country in 84 years, began on October 4.

**A message read out during the opening plenary session this morning said the Plenary Council “represents a singular ‘journeying together’ of God’s people in Australia along the paths of history towards a renewed encounter with the Risen Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit”.**

The message, read by Msgr John Baptist Itaruma from the Apostolic Nunciature in Australia, said Pope Francis “prays that the Council may be a graced occasion for mutual listening and spiritual discernment, marked by profound Communion with the Successor of Peter”, a term used to describe the Pope.

“In this conciliar process, the Church in Australia is challenged to listen to the voice of the Spirit and to bear witness to the perennial truth of the Gospel and to develop new and creative expressions of evangelical charity,” said the message, signed by Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge, the president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, in a message to Pope Francis said the Council’s 278 members are “deeply conscious that the Plenary Council takes its place within the universal Church”.

Archbishop Coleridge continued: “Our ardent hope is that the Plenary Council will be a gift not just for the Church in Australia but for the Church

around the world.

“Pope St John Paul II described the Second Vatican Council as ‘the great grace given to the Church in the twentieth century’ (*Novo Millennio Ineunte*). For us, the Plenary Council is the great grace given to the Church in Australia at the dawn of the twenty-first century.”

The exchange of messages between the Holy See and the Church in Australia followed an opening address from Plenary Council president Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB.

Archbishop Costelloe, who yesterday inaugurated the Council by celebrating the opening Mass, welcomed the members, as well as a number of Catholic leaders from Pacific and Asian countries, as well as the president of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

Drawing from St Paul and the writings of Pope Francis, Archbishop Costelloe laid out the important task the Council’s members are undertaking.

“As today as we take this bold and crucial step forward in our own response to the call for the Church’s transformation we can be inspired and encouraged by the energy, persistence, creativity and fidelity of Saint Paul and by the dream of Pope Francis whose words have helped inspire and shape the agenda which will guide us through the days ahead,” he said.

Archbishop Costelloe acknowledged



Plenary Council president Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB signs the official list of attendance for Plenary Council watched by scrutineers, from left, Damian Walsh, Gemma Thomson and Fr George Kolodziej SDS (ACBC)

that members would likely be coming with “high hopes”, “great expectations”, but also “conscious of the heavy responsibility we bear”.

“In the mysterious ways of God’s providence, it is we who have been called together to undertake this historic and grace-filled task on behalf of the whole Catholic community of our nation,” he said.

“In an important sense, therefore, we come as representatives of the People of God in Australia. We carry with us, as a privilege and as a responsibility, the precious and sometimes fragile faith of God’s people: we carry their hopes and dreams, their pain and suffering, their joy and their optimism, their fears and their hesitations.”

Archbishop Costelloe said the Church in Australia – and therefore the members of the Council – will carry the weight of the child sexual abuse crisis through the Plenary Council’s celebration across the next nine months.

“So many lives have been diminished and even destroyed because of this

dreadful failure,” he said.

“We carry the weight of the shame with us into this assembly, and equally we also carry an unshakable conviction that our care for those who have suffered so much, and our responsibility to make our Church settings places of safety and security for our children, our young people and vulnerable adults, must remain two fundamental aspects of our life and ministry as the Church in Australia.

“This reality is surely one of the ‘signs of the times’ which we are called to discern in the light of the Gospel.”

Archbishop Costelloe closed his opening address by urging all Council members to keep their eyes fixed on Christ during the first general assembly.

“He is, after all, the Way, and the Truth and the Life. May we all show ourselves, this week, to be in every way his true disciples,” he said.

**Find out more and access the livestreams at [www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au)**

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# First Assembly of Plenary Council: Reform, Listening and Inclusion

From 3 -10 October 2021, the Catholic Church in Australia will gather for the first Assembly of the Plenary Council to be held since the Second Vatican Council.

**The 278 members have been drawn from dioceses, eparchies, ordinariates, personal prelature, leaders of religious congregations and representatives of church ministries.**

The Catholic Social Services Australia (CSSA) representative at the Plenary Council is the Chair of the CSSA Board, Francis Sullivan AO. Mr Sullivan will provide a daily report on his experience of this momentous event for the Australian Catholic Church.

## ASSEMBLY OF THE PLENARY COUNCIL NEEDS TO DELIVER REFORM

I am a delegate for the Plenary Council which starts with the first Assembly from 3rd to 10th October. Because I am locked down in Canberra, like the majority of delegates, I will be attending all sessions online. Not my preference but it is what it is!

I intend to send out a blog at the end of each day. It will be my reflections on the discussions held and the evolution of the agenda. Speaking of agenda there has already been a fair bit of disquiet over what actually will be discussed at the Assembly. When the Plenary Council got underway over four years ago the organisers encouraged Catholics to get involved. We were asked to “discern” what God was asking of the Church in Australia. A tall order indeed! That said, the organisers received 17,500 submissions covering the views of well over 200,000 Catholics. Impressive in anyone’s language.

Since then the submissions were distilled into 6 thematic papers for discussion within the Church. Ultimately the Assembly is presented with 16 broadly based questions. They are somewhat anodyne and difficult to see where the specific issues raised in the submissions will be brought to the table. But brought to the table they must. There has been too much consultation for issues to be swept aside or placed in the ‘too hard basket’.

I like other delegates will enter the Assembly open-minded, with a disposition to respectfully listen and then discuss issues without prejudice. At the same time, this is a time for our Church to face facts. We are in crisis. On any indicator, be it participation rates, financial health or public influence, the Church is in decline. The sex abuse scandal has eroded the public’s trust in the Church. Ordinary

Catholics likewise have been confronted by the shameful cover-ups, secrecy and deceit that characterised the scandal. The moral failure of the Church leadership was castigated by the Royal Commissioners.

Unless we confront, head-on, the culture that enabled the scandal to go on for so long, I fear that we will continue to see the decline and irrelevancy of the Church in my lifetime.

These days a common catch cry is that there is no synodality without spirituality. Pope Francis wants the spirit of synodality to echo the humble, listening Church he has often spoken about. He calls for a poor Church of the poor. This must be our starting point. We need to shed the vestiges of the medieval authority structure, the entitlements of clericalism and the male dominated decision making and policy formulation processes. We need a Church that better reflects the diversity and composition of the communities it seeks to serve. A Church that has an institutional instinct to be missionary, not propositional. A Church that doesn’t insist on people fitting into a predetermined mould, but rather is a place where unity across differences is its hallmark. A Church where compassion, not convention, is the term of engagement with society. Well, the dialogue begins this Sunday and I am keen to be involved. After my years working for the Truth Justice and Healing Council, I feel privileged to have this opportunity to once again contribute to my Church which has been so integral to my life and how I go about life. Please feel free to respond to my blogs and let’s pray that the Spirit gets a say too!

## OPENING EUCHARIST

In today’s opening Eucharist Archbishop Tim Costello stressed that we are a Pilgrim People. For me, this means being a community humble enough to keep seeking the truth. To keep striving for authentic ways to relate to each other; to those who are not in the community and to those who feel at odds with the community.

As I participated in the mass online, I couldn’t help but be reminded of the diversity of ways Catholics identify these days. Some practice in conventional ways. Others find their religious expression through good works and community services. Others still have found nurture and sustenance in specific movements and spiritualities, including being involved with social justice groups, refugee support

and meditation communities.

We know that nearly 90 per cent don’t attend regular weekend worship. But it doesn’t mean that they still don’t value a spiritual search and are not embarked on a life of meaning and service. Often they find real congruency between their religious values and the life choices, daily decisions that mark their place in the world and their disposition to others.

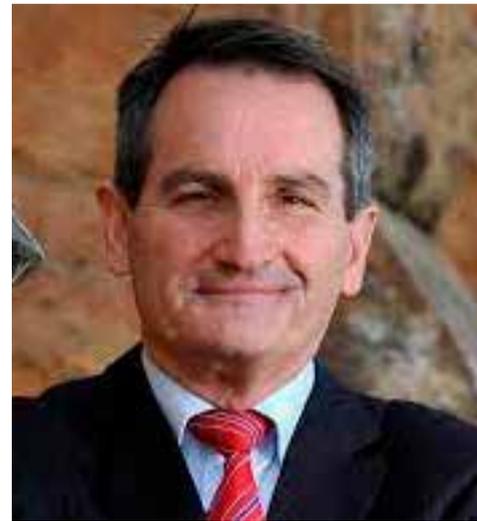
The variety of Catholic identities is a healthy sign of a Church on the move. It shows that to be Catholic is to be adaptable to the times. It shows a willingness to embrace the social context and work with the cultural parameters that often define how ordinary people find ways to navigate the questions of life. It is what Pope Francis means when he calls for a Church that ‘goes to the streets’, relates ‘at the margins’, has ‘the smell of the sheep’.

As we assemble to discern what God is asking of the Church in Australia, I want to be ever mindful of the diversity of Catholicism in Australia. I want to resist being caught up in an image of Catholicism that is ‘too white bread’, too conventional. Rather I hope the Assembly can recognise the varieties of ‘being Catholic’ and affirm people on that journey.

And related to that are the various voices from the diverse corners of our Catholic community. Throughout the consultation period leading to this Assembly many voices called for particular issues to be addressed by the Plenary Council. Such as the central concern of the full participation of women in governance and ministry. Groups like Catholic Social Services Victoria have suggested that an additional agenda item, Justice and Equity, should be included. Whether it will or not is unclear. Surely the organisers should address this upfront.

We have been told that those voices have been heard. We have also been told that the issues will be addressed in the course of the Plenary Council. Yet the current agenda is less specific. We are told not to stress, that it all be accommodated.

Well, tomorrow morning in the first plenary session, broadcast live, the formal agenda will be approved. Members can ask for clarifications or make specific interventions of concern. To do so, members flag any intervention with the Steering Group the night before. I have asked the group to consider informing all the Plenary Council members how



Francis Sullivan.

specific issues raised in the consultations will actually be able to be discussed and voted on. Hopefully, the answer will be there for all to see!

## LISTENING

Today’s sessions have stressed the importance of listening as the key to the discernment process. Not as simple as it sounds. I certainly have entered this process having read plenty and talked to many. We were asked to take this seriously and I assume most members have likewise done some homework and sought the views of others. The degree to which members have been involved in support groups, discussion nights or even formal renewal organisations will vary. What probably doesn’t differ is the sincerity of their involvement and desire to help bring about change.

That is why I am perplexed by those who express concern that the Plenary Council could simply be a political play and a tussle akin to factional politics. To reduce Church dynamics to that of mere politics is too simplistic. Of course, there will be strongly held views. These often come from very educated people, theologically trained and pastorally experienced. Others are widely read or have lived through tough times and struggled to remain engaged with the Church, and so express themselves accordingly. There will be people who have grown frustrated by what they have encountered as the rigidity of the Church, its judgmental tone and absolutist postures. They, too, can express disenchantment, even despair that their sense of belonging is being undermined. There are others too who feel unsettled by challenges to their understanding of Church and religious practice. They likewise express trepidations over the future of the Church through the lens of what has worked for them and the communities they belong to. These are not political statements, nor

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

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are they weaponised chants to either bring down or fortify the institution, as if they are part of some political crusade. Nor are they shots over the bows of episcopal authority.

For me, they are genuine voices that cry out to be heard. They are the groans of a people wanting to cultivate a place of nurture and spiritual and moral direction. A place that is inclusive and respectful of differences. A place that actually makes real our belief that God is love, and we are here to explore how love works.

Some bishops, for years now, have been concerned that the Plenary Council will be used to weaken the notion of an episcopal led Church. Frankly, we don't have the time to entertain that reactionary approach. We do need bishops and lay people to stand shoulder and shoulder together, looking in the same direction, implementing a strategy of mission that builds unity across differences.

To that end, the Assembly will need to get down to specifics. As I indicated in my blog yesterday, I raised the issue of women's participation in governance and ordained ministries in the Open Assembly today. I will respect the privacy of those discussions but be reassured that many members have contacted me expressing support for this issue and indicated their desire to advance it in the course of the Assembly's dialogues.

We also began the small group process

this afternoon. I have been allocated to a group that is exploring two questions:

1. How might we better accompany one another on the journey of personal and communal conversion, which mission in Australia requires?

2. How might the Church in Australia respond to the call to 'ecological conversion'? How can we express and promote a commitment to an 'integral ecology of life' in all its dimensions, with particular attention to the more vulnerable people and environments in our country and region?

### INCLUSION

Today's sessions enable more participants to have a say. Passionate, heartfelt interventions on a range of issues so typical of a 'Catholic free for all'! It was heartening to hear members raise concerns over the participation of women, the outreach to new Australians and the missionary agenda for the Church. However, what struck me most starkly were the voices that have been effectively silenced in the Plenary's Agenda. This was even more clear to me after our small group session of Scripture reflection.

As it stands, we are not being directed to seriously contemplate the plight of the LGBTIQA+ people in the Church. This raises distinctive issues that need attention. The experiences of 'rainbow' people in our Church have been fraught and still are overshadowed by discrimination, even

exclusion. The residue of the same-sex marriage debate still lingers, as do the unresolved pastoral matters of access to the sacraments, including the Eucharist. For some Catholics, this is a bridge too far and they resist any practical measures that would seem to 'change Church teachings'.

But, is this the heart of the Gospel? Is our Church practice consistent with the Gospel?

From my perspective, we have a lot to learn from wider society. The stigma and barriers surrounding LGBTIQA+ people have been rapidly dismantling in recent years as enlightened understandings are assimilated. The respect for diversity in personal development and human relationships has led to more harmonious and healthy attitudes. The insistence on the non-discriminatory treatment of people based on sex, gender and religion has contributed to more inclusive authentic communities.

Yet, the Church runs the risk of leaving LGBTIQA+ people at the margins. Rather than meeting them there and bringing them into the fold with the promise

of full participation, they remain 'off the agenda', left in the 'too hard basket'.

Like many practising Catholics, this issue is close to my heart through the experiences of my own family. Whether they realise it or not, the tone and impact of the language of Church spokespersons and others declaring what they call 'Church teachings', is judgemental, demeaning and hurtful. It is simply not enough to say that everyone is loved by God and then draw a line in the sand over the full participation in the faith community of our 'rainbow' sisters and brothers, daughters and sons, grandchildren and friends.

To read all of Francis' blogs visit: <https://cssa.org.au/plenary-council/>



# Catholics in Australia urged to 'become true disciples'

As Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB opened the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, he said Catholics "must become, even more than we are already, a community of true disciples".

**The Plenary Council, the first such gathering in Australia since 1937, is being celebrated across nine months, bookended by assemblies from October 3-10 and in July 2022.**

Archbishop Costelloe, the president of the Plenary Council, celebrated the opening Mass at Perth's St Mary's Cathedral on Sunday morning. It comes after three-and-a-half years of preparation, including a significant period of national consultation.

That consultation focused on the question: "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?"

That question was one that Archbishop Costelloe explored in his homily, before offering a possible answer.

"Perhaps the most important thing God is asking of us at this time is to return the Church to Christ and return Christ to the Church," he said.

"What has always been true in theory and in principle urgently needs to become true in the day-to-day experience of everyone who encounters us. We must become, even more than we are already, a community of true disciples.

"We must become a living icon of Christ who humbled himself, taking the form of a servant. We must learn from the One who is meek and humble of heart. We are being sent by Him as He was sent by his Father.

"If we remain in Him, as branches remain part of the vine, we will bear much fruit."

The 278 members of the Plenary Council, made up of bishops, priests, members of religious orders and lay people, will meet online over six days, starting tomorrow.

They are called to "develop concrete proposals to create a more missionary, Christ-centred Church in Australia". They will contemplate an agenda that contains 16



Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, Archbishop of Perth and President of the Plenary Council, celebrates the Opening Mass of the First Assembly of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia at St Mary's Cathedral, Perth. Image: Supplied

questions across six themes: Conversion; Prayer; Formation; Structures; Governance; and Institutions.

The Council's members will engage with the agenda's questions through listening and dialogue, using the spiritual conversations process widely used in Catholic settings.

Archbishop Costelloe said in today's homily: "The Lord is inviting us to reflect deeply and courageously on how we can better, as individuals and as communities of faith, be this living image of the life-giving

God who, in Christ, is always seeking to be present and active in our world."

All Masses and some of the sessions during this week's first general assembly will be livestreamed on the Plenary Council website and through the Plenary Council's Facebook page.

Find out more at [www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au](http://www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au)

**The second assembly is scheduled to take place in Sydney from July 4-9, 2022.**

# The First General Assembly of the Plenary Council: *The Journey so Far*

As we conclude the First General Assembly of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, the process of discernment continues.

**From the opening Mass to the closing of the Assembly, our prayer has been 'Come, Holy Spirit.'**

The call to hear afresh the Good News of Jesus Christ through a spiritual posture of 'deep listening' has been a central element of the preparation of the Plenary process and a distinctive feature of this week. We adopted a regular pattern of prayer and spiritual conversation throughout each day. This slow process of deep listening allowed space for still nascent dreams and visions to come to greater maturity.

The opening session each day began with a Welcome to Country, spoken from various regions of Australia. Indigenous voices, both young and old, paid respects to Elders past, present and emerging, welcomed the Members of the Plenary Council to the day's gathering, and invited all of us to a time of quiet and prayer. As Members offered their reflections day by day, they regularly acknowledged the Indigenous peoples of the land from which they were speaking.

Over three hundred participants gathered for six days, meeting virtually across five different time zones, with many more people following the opening session of each day online. The gift of listening to one another has planted promising seeds and raised important questions for us. Many described the small group conversations and reports as the heartbeat of this First Assembly. Our process of discernment requires time and space for mature reflections to emerge, and further spiritual conversations will be necessary in our considerations of what God is asking of us in Australia at this time.

As the many personal interventions demonstrated, there is no shortage of passion and charisms among the community of believers. These interventions covered a wide range of the complex realities of the Church and Australian society in this particular moment of our history. They expressed personal wisdom and aspirations that have been a gift to this Assembly's deliberations. Many elements of the Council's Agenda were carefully considered. Discussion of other issues,

including some not formally on the Agenda, was initiated, and will require more time.

As participants in this Assembly, we have experienced and expressed the range of emotions that come with facing profound issues together, holding in tension diverse interpretations and expectations. Through prayer and reflection, we have been called to be patient with the process, with each other, with the Church and, most importantly, with the Holy Spirit.

We listened to the confronting and important voices of victims and survivors of abuse in the Church. They reminded us of the great wounds and failures of the Church and the continuing need to discern pathways of true healing and renewal.

The plain speaking of First Nations people has brought into even sharper focus the need for reconciliation with Indigenous communities, as well as the need for justice and for the healing of this land itself through an 'integral ecology'.

In responding to the Agenda questions, we considered ways of living as Church today. Many affirmed what they value about their Catholic faith: spirituality, community, prayer, liturgy and sacramental life, and service through the vocation of all the baptised. Members spoke of the ministries of pastoral care and education, health and aged care, and the many social services and advocacy the Church provides in the Australian community. These are great gifts to a world that is seeking meaning and more authentic living.

Other interventions expressed hopes for renewal, offering perspectives on what might be possible for a Church facing crucial questions, tensions and uncertainties. Many called our attention to the importance of enhancing the role of women in the Church. We heard the call to conversion and fidelity, as well as to imagination and renewal. We were reminded of the needs of rural dioceses and parishes, as well as those of large cities. We celebrated the gifts that the Eastern Churches bring to the Catholic community in Australia.

Often expressed through the lens of



Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge preaches in St Stephen's Chapel. Photo: Mark Bowling

personal experience, the discernment of this Assembly has threaded together conversations about what the Church can offer today's world on the one hand, and how the world can inform the ways and structures of the Church on the other. We reflected on questions of leadership and governance in light of Pope Francis' call for us to be more synodal.

The missionary vision of Pope Francis has both inspired and infused all the deliberations of this First Assembly. Missionary discipleship has been a key theme, as has the call to go out to the margins. Another recurring theme, expressed in different ways, is the need for ongoing processes of ecclesial listening which can form and inform how the Church lives its mission today.

The Assembly also considered how all people might feel at home in our communities, regardless of their particular circumstances. Various voices drew our attention to young people, women, single people, parents and families, people with disabilities, people with diverse experience of sexuality and gender, and others who feel, for a variety of reasons, that there is no place for them. We asked how a missionary Church might connect with those who feel distant from the community of faith.

Each of these voices has been a

powerful reminder that the Church, as a sign of the kingdom of God, has the vocation of being an image of Christ and an icon of grace to the whole human family.

With the closing of this First Assembly, the Plenary Council process now enters a time of prayer, reflection, maturation and development. This will involve continuing reflection by the Members of the Council, and consultation with the wider Church community, as we develop propositions for presentation to the Second Assembly of the Council next July. This will be coordinated with Australian preparations for the 2023 Synod, *For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission*.

**In faith, hope and charity, we entrust all these tasks to the guidance and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Our prayer remains, as always: 'Come, Holy Spirit. Come Holy Spirit of the great South Land.'**



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

# Mater Dei student announced state winner in leadership competition

*Country to Canberra* is a not for profit organisation that empowers young rural women to reach their leadership potential.

**Founded in 2014 Country to Canberra runs nationwide programs that provide education, leadership and mentorship opportunities to regional, rural and remote teenage girls.**

*Country to Canberra* recently announced that Elora Guirguis, a Year 10 student at Mater Dei Catholic College has been named as a State winner in the *Country to Canberra Leadership Competition*.

The fifteen winners from rural Australia responded to the question:

**COURAGE TO CHALLENGE:** what is the role of rural women in driving change in their communities?

Elora's brilliant winning entry and biography can be viewed at: <http://countrytocanberra.com.au/bio-elora-guirguis-nsw-winner-2021>

It cleverly compares the lifegiving contribution of women in rural areas to the tireless work of bees who build and bind their colony.

Elora describes her motivation for entering the competition as her passion for gender equality and female empowerment. She believed that entering this competition would give her a great experience, enabling Elora to use her voice and build her confidence and public speaking skills, as well as being an opportunity to meet like minded people.

With the trip to Canberra to meet and work with nationally recognised leaders not possible this year due to COVID restrictions, Elora's winning entry will allow her to participate in an online program. The C2C On Screen (C2COS) is a multi-day virtual program for the 2021 winners that will bring together all the winners to meet each other, discuss and learn about challenging issues, participate in skill building workshops, meet and listen to inspirational figures, and have some fun!

**Congratulations Elora on your amazing achievement!**



*Elora Guirguis, State Winner.*

# Inspired new members

Sacred Heart Parish North Albury Pastoral Council recently welcomed seven new members.

**We now have a team of eighteen parishioners.**

"It is very pleasing to see such interest in serving the parish this way" said Ed Brown, Chairperson, "particularly since this involvement is consistent with the direction and hopes of the Plenary Council. Catherine Cutler, representative of Spirit Weavers on the Council indicated that she was hopeful that there would be many projects initiated because of this renewed interest. Susan McLaurin reported that personally, her values align to the goals of the council and through this her own faith is enriched and renewed. "I hope to serve our diverse parish community with commitment, to be actively involved in connecting people, especially those feeling isolated or displaced," she said. Adrian Mitchellhill is one of the new members. He said he wanted to contribute more to the parish and be involved in the community. Another new member, Carey Menz-Dowling said "I think it is time to give back. I am standing on the shoulders of people who have been very supportive of me, and I also want to contribute". This next year looks like it is going to be very busy at Sacred Heart Parish.



*Some members of the 2021/22 Sacred Heart Pastoral Council  
Top Row L – R Adrian Mitchellhill; Brian Waters; Michael Regan  
Front Row L – R Lyn Hamilton; Karen Purtle; Catherine Cutler; Fr Martin*

# 800th anniversary of the Secular Order of St Francis

The San Damiano Blessing Cross will be revered in the Yenda, Yoogali, Hanwood (St Francis) Parish to mark the anniversary.

BY FR STOJANOVIC

## WHAT IS AN ICON?

Icon means 'image' – not photographic, in a way transfigured. These have been found in paintings on walls of early churches, in mosaics. Some early 5th century examples in Egypt are similar from articles dating from Christ's time. This story is mainly about eastern Church icons.

A real icon is holy as they are an image of people who are really alive in God as seen by the original icon maker (writer). A true icon cannot be made up from nothing or imagination. They must remain true to the original image and made of natural materials only. They are especially blessed to bring us closer to God. Some orthodox regard veneration as a kind of sacrament when true icons are reverently venerated and prayed before to the person represented.

Icons have no shadows or background images. They are spiritual image not of this world – the icon shows the person's holiness. Models are never used and iconographers don't sign their work as they believe there is of God through them and the time for prayer that they take during their work.

Icons of Mary are normally presented with Christ. God the Father is only shown as a hand, St. Peter with keys, St. Paul with a book, and bishops wearing vestments.

Icons are not worshipped – only venerated. They are good images like the serpent in the desert. However some misunderstandings and serious disputes have arisen (some of these will be briefly mentioned in section two).

## DISPUTES ABOUT ICONS

Over the centuries prior to Pope Gregory III (731-741), the destruction of icons (iconoclasm) was widely practiced in Western Christendom. Gregory III banned the destruction of icons under pain of ex-communication.

Pope Paschal I (817-824) condemned icons throughout Christendom. Pope Eugene III (824-827) allowed icons as long as they weren't venerated.

Pope Gregory IV in 843 built churches which were extensively decorated, some with icons.

St. Methodius from Sicily, later of Constantinople, opposed any form of iconoclasm, and was imprisoned twice for this attitude before becoming patriarch of Constantinople, where he died.

Pope Adrian II (867-872) condemned icons again at the 8th Ecumenical Council at Istanbul (869-870).

Pope Honourius III allowed icons and condemned those who opposed them.

Arguments less strongly held about icons, continued but now they are widely used in eastern churches both catholic and orthodox.

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour typifies an icon from early centuries and is accepted in the eastern and western Christian church. No record is mentioned of St. Francis favouring either the western or eastern church styles of religious art.

## SERIOUS SPLIT IN CHRISTENDOM

In 1052 Pope St. Leo IX wanted to restrain the Normans in southern Italy regarding territorial issues and was hoping for the support of the Byzantine forces which unfortunately didn't arrive. On 16th of June, 1053, the papal army was heavily beaten by the Normans and Pope Leo was taken prisoner. To try and start some sort of alliance Archbishop Humbert went to Constantinople to meet the eastern patriarch, Michael Caerularius, who was unsympathetic especially to Humbert, who in an administrative matter had claimed Sicily for the western church



Pope Innocent III & St Francis.

which the Byzantines had already claimed. On 16th of July, 1054 in the Hagia Sophia church Humbert was annoyed by a rejection of an alliance and excommunicated Caerularius, who within two weeks excommunicated the entire western delegation. Meanwhile the pope had died after being released from captivity. Separation and excommunication of the eastern and western churches soon followed.

The original San Damiano Cross was made about 1100. The Italian artist came from the Umbrian region of Perugia, Italy. Assisi is in the Umbria region. The cross was originally made in Serbia by an unknown Italian artist, where icons were commonly used in churches but not forbidden at that time in the western church.

The original cross returned to a small chapel in Italy in time for St. Francis (1182-1226) to pray in front of when Jesus asked Francis to rebuild my church.

Around 1250 this small chapel in Assisi Italy was replaced and the original cross was taken later in 1257 to the convent of the Poor Clare nuns in Assisi.

Exact copies of the original can be found in Franciscan churches in Assisi and San Francisco California. The original remains in the Basilica of St. Clare, in Assisi. This small cloisonne cross is copied from the true copies

and replacement of some of the images that have been venerated away from the original.

## THE MAKER'S STORY

The San Damiano Cross, which is a memorial of Lynette Mary and her son, Anthony James Greenaway, could only have been made as it was with the prayers of many people, Catholic, Orthodox, and others, all around the Pacific ocean in America, Australia especially, and Japan, Greece, etc.

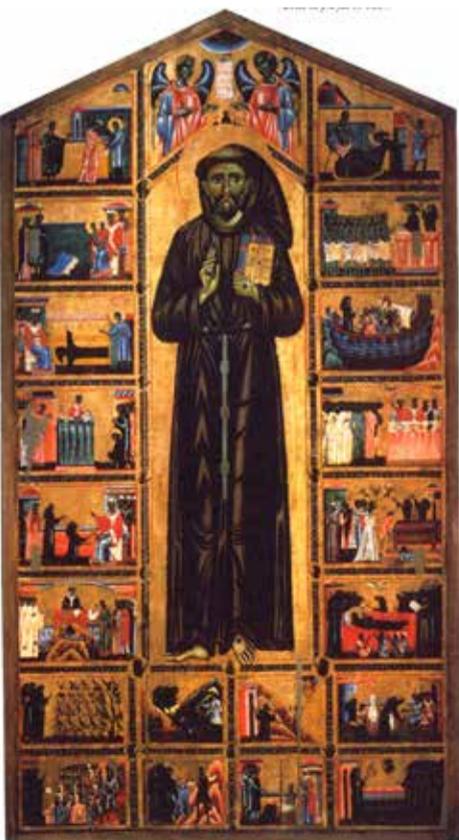
Preliminary work began in December of 2003, and the cross itself was finished on June 23, 2004 at 4pm, having undergone 15 firings in a furnace over the course of the previous months.

The cross (image) is made of enamel, that is finely ground coloured glass fused at a temperature of 1450 degrees Fahrenheit – all parts of the icon cross are natural materials, including the colouring in the glass.

The cross was blessed at St. Nicholas Orthodox church in San Anselmo California, by Father Stefan Meholick where he is priest.

It was blessed only hours after its completion, at vespers before the eve of the feast of the Nativity of St. John the Baptist. It was used at the end of that service as a "blessing cross" held by Father Stefan and kissed and venerated by everyone present.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13



St Francis icon.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

Less than 24 hours later it flew to Australia (by an aeroplane).

The figures at the bottom of the original San Damiano Cross have been venerated into non-existence, except for the right hand figures of Sts. Peter and Paul. Possible saints previously included were Sts. Damian, Rufino, Michael (but which one?).

Because I was doubtful about the physical characteristics of Sts. Rufinus and Michael's specific identity, I've found a few likely replacements common to both Catholic and Orthodox.

Accordingly, the saints on the bottom are modelled on images from the Stavronikita Monastery on Mount Athos (I'll double check this).

The saints now, from left to right, are St. Damian, St. Anthony the Great, St. John the Baptist, St. Basil the Great, Sts. Peter and Paul.

#### EXPLANATION OF FIGURES AND OTHER DETAILS ON THE ICON CROSS

Starting from the top down:

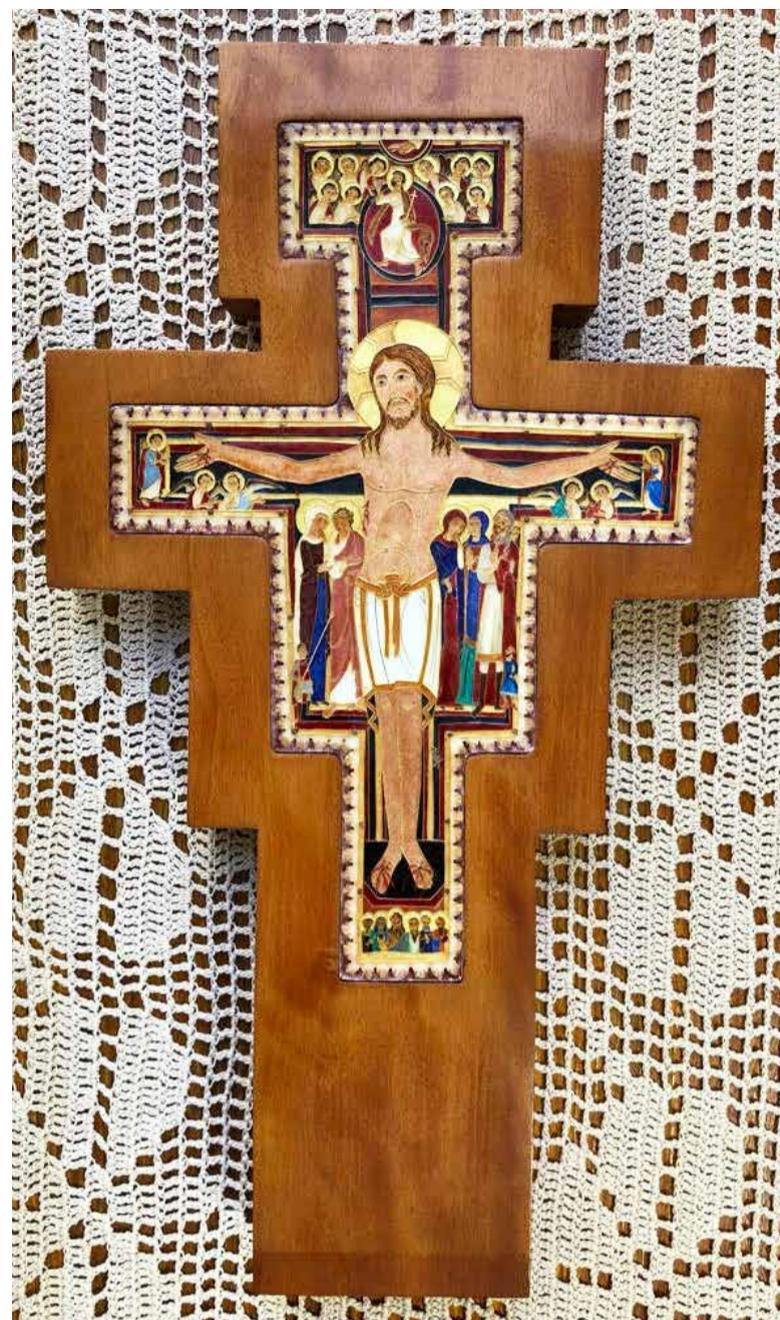
- The hand represents God the Father.
- The ten angels – five with raised hands to welcome Jesus as He rises from the dead.
- Jesus, regally clothed, climbing out of the tomb.
- Script, of inscription on the crucifixion cross.
- Jesus crucified, seen as wounded yet strong and of full stature.
- Six angels, three on either end of the cross-bar, reminding us to marvel at the Resurrection.

- Two figures beneath Jesus' left arm: Mary, mother of Jesus and John the Beloved.
- Three figures below the right of Jesus arm: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and without any halo is the centurion who said 'Truly this is the Son of God'.
- On the lower left side below the two larger figures is Longinus who pierced Jesus' side with the lance.
- Stephalon is pictured on the lower right of the three figures above. He passed with a staff a sponge of vinegar to Jesus.
- Note, that both Longinus and Stephalon held their spear and staff vertically towards Jesus.
- The saints at the foot of the cross (according to a tradition of circa 1100 – may have been the patrons of Umbria [the region of Assisi]. They were St. John, St. Michael, St. Rufinus, St. John the Baptist, and Sts. Peter and Paul. Except for Sts. Peter and Paul, all the others have been venerated away on the original San Damiano cross. Other people think that the missing saints may have been St. Thomas, St. Rufinus and one of the St. Michaels.

In any event, there are no guaranteed true icons to be found to complete the cross of these saints.

Guaranteed true icons were available of St. Damian, St. Anthony the Great, St. John the Baptist, and St. Basil the Great. These were commonly revered by both Catholic and Orthodox churches so were used for this cross.

Note: True icons for replacement for lost ones can't be made up as they must be made following images of existing ones. Models are never used.



San Damiano Blessing Cross.



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# Reflections on the Eucharist

I wish to share some reflections on the Eucharist. It has been studied and expounded by many Popes, theologians and saints and in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

BY MARK MORIARTY

## It is this:

**In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really and substantially contained." (CCC 1374)**

Simple? Is it too much to take in? Yes, it is and many Catholics find it hard to understand but there it is as plain as it can be explained. The reality of the Eucharistic presence of Christ is there regardless of what you think. In the humility of faith we say, 'yes we believe.'

You do not have to feel the presence of Christ, though some saints have, we as ordinary Catholics just need to believe with faith. You may struggle with this belief throughout your life, wondering what Jesus is doing within you but have hope, He is not going to do you any harm.

Throughout the history of the Church there were times when people did not receive Holy Communion very often, particularly during the Middle Ages. A reason for this was a preoccupation with our unworthiness, our sinfulness. How could a sinful person receive the holiest of holies? Simple, because Jesus wants us to. Pope Pius X made great strides in encouraging reception of Communion on a regular basis.

Are you unworthy to receive Holy Communion? Of course you are! Receiving Holy Communion is not about how worthy you are but how humble you are.

Pope Francis has spoken and written much on the Eucharist. He said this recently:

He (Jesus) knows that we need it, because the Eucharist is not the reward of saints, no, it is *the Bread of sinners*. This is why he exhorts us: "Do not be afraid! *Take and eat*". (Pope Francis, Angelus, 6 June 2021)

At another time Pope Francis wrote: "The Eucharist ... is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak." (Evangelli Gaudium, 47)

The Church has given us some rules though:

Anyone conscious of a grave sin must receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before coming to communion (CCC1385)

St Faustina Kowalska (1905-1938), lived in Poland as a Sister of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy. She was canonised by Pope John Paul II on 30 April, 2000. She had a tremendous devotion and understanding of the Eucharist and while we may not reach her heights, her writings in her *Diary of Divine Mercy in My Soul*, recount her experiences with Jesus in Holy Communion which are very inspiring.

Jesus once told her:

I desire to unite Myself with human souls; My great delight is to unite Myself with souls. Know, My daughter, that when I come to a human heart in Holy Communion, My hands are full of all kinds of graces which I want to give to the soul. (Paragraph 1385)



I think that should encourage us to forget about our unworthiness and rejoice that Jesus loves us so much He wants to come into our body. Unfortunately, when this was written in the 1930s, some people did not receive Jesus very well, Our Lord went on to say:

But souls do not even pay any attention to Me; they leave Me to Myself and busy themselves with other things. Oh, how sad I am that souls do not recognize Love! They treat Me as a dead object. (Paragraph 1385)

Before receiving Holy Communion, the faithful are invited to bow - perhaps while the person in front is receiving - as a sign of reverence for the Body of Christ. The communicant is then invited to respect the Church's tradition of receiving the consecrated host, in the hand or on the tongue... When receiving Holy Communion in the hand, the communicant might be guided by the words of St Cyril of Jerusalem (313-386AD): "When you approach,... place your left hand as a throne beneath your right, as befits one who is about to receive the King. Then receive him, taking care that nothing is lost." (Bishops Commission for Liturgy, Guidelines for Reverent Reception of Holy Communion, July 2018).

For those who receive Holy Communion in the hand I offer another selection from the Diary of St Faustina as on one occasion, through an accident by the priest giving out Communion, a consecrated Host fell into her hands:

... while I was holding the Host in my hand, I felt such a power of love that for the

rest of the day I could neither eat nor come to my senses. I heard these words from the Host: I desired to rest in your hands, not only in your heart. And at that moment I saw the little Jesus. (Paragraph 160)

You may not (yet) have the great devotion to the Eucharist that St Faustina had but surely this account may inspire you to be mindful when receiving Holy Communion.

In conclusion, being mindful of the whole Christ, truly, really and substantially contained when receiving Holy Communion. I would like to offer one final selection from St Faustina, her adoration prayer:

O Blessed Host, in golden chalice enclosed for me,

That through the vast wilderness of exile I may pass

— pure, immaculate, undefiled;

Oh, grant that through the power of Your love this might come to be.

O Blessed Host, take up Your dwelling within my soul,

O Thou my heart's purest love!

With Your brilliance the darkness dispel.

Refuse not Your grace to a humble heart.

O Blessed Host, enchantment of all heaven,

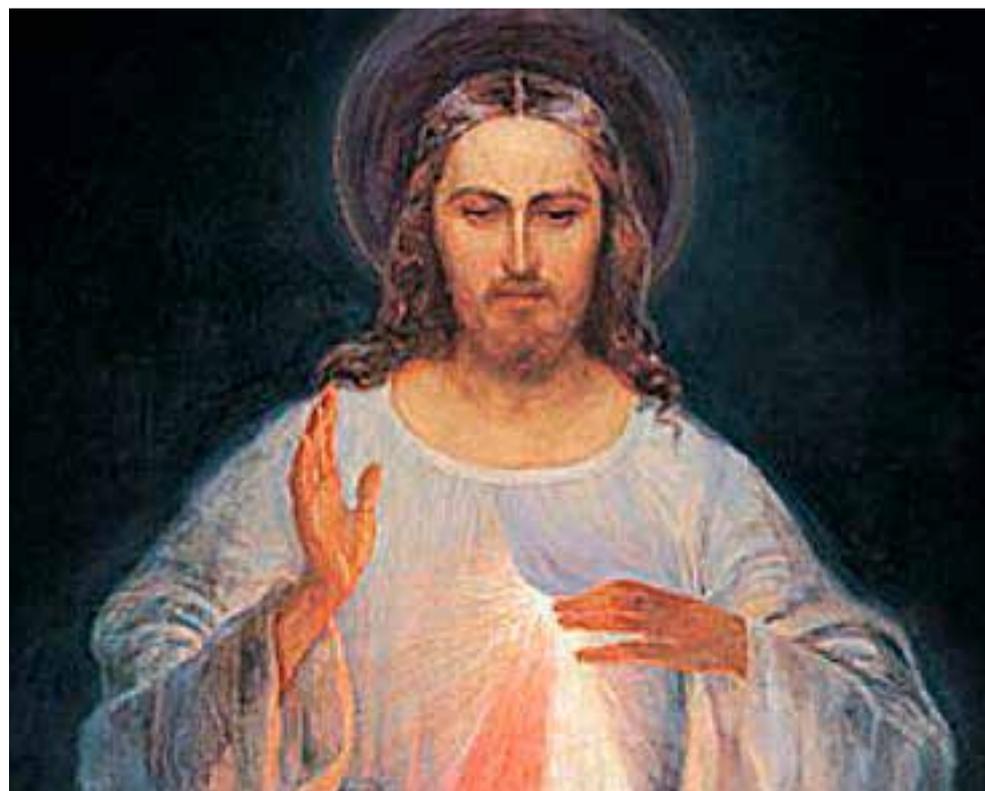
Though Your beauty be veiled

And captured in a crumb of bread,

Strong faith tears away that veil.

(Paragraph 159)

Selections from the *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska: Divine Mercy in My Soul*. Copyright © 1987 Congregation of Marians, used within the fair use and criticism provision.



# The Legion of Mary Centenary 2021



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

**In keeping with the Legion of Mary confidential 'way' the testimonies will be published anonymously. Here is the latest one:**

*The Legion of Mary, to me, is a place where I realise how unique and unifying our faith is. Having people who were previously strangers, pray together with me, encourage me to do good works, and become my close friends, helped me to understand how special our Catholic faith is. It is where I recognised that we truly*

*are brothers and sisters in Christ and where I experienced God's love in my life.*

#### Centenary Update

There will be a Mass held at St Michael's Cathedral on Wednesday, 24 November 2021 at 6pm with Bishop Mark Edwards presiding to celebrate the Centenary of the establishment of the Legion of Mary. Supper will be provided afterwards in the Parish Centre. Please mark your diaries and join us for this wonderful occasion!

**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	TBA
Mystical Rose	Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Thurgoona	Mon, 9.30am	TBA
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 Anthony Oboshi
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
Our Lady Queen of Angels	Sacred Heart, Griffith	Thu, 3.30pm	Fr Joma Calma

## 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 24th November 2021**

**6 pm**

**St Michael's Cathedral  
Wagga Wagga**

*Please join us for supper afterwards at the Parish Centre*

*Transport available*

*Contact: Caronne 0413 801 616 or caronnep@hotmail.com*

\* 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."

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to be included on the mailing list and be advised of events.

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Fr Sean Byrnes on 69231222 or [frseanbyrnes@gmail.com](mailto:frseanbyrnes@gmail.com)  
Please note: Participants must be 18 years or older.

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# The four dimensions of formation

Throughout a young man's time in the seminary, particularly in the first year, the four dimensions of priestly formation will be constantly reiterated and emphasised.

BY FR CONNELL PERRY (Originally published in Vianney Bulletin)

**To be a truly missionary priest in today's contemporary culture, developing a strong foundation built upon these four pillars of formation is vitally important.**

This means that in order to be a disciple of Jesus who can be configured to Christ before beginning an active apostolate and pastoral ministry, a man must be open to human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formation. Working with the seminarian himself and the Holy Spirit, who is the chief formator, seminary staff and other men and women play a key role in ensuring that this can take place through careful encouragement and gentle guidance in the different stages of vocational discernment. This also continues beyond the seminary with ongoing formation that supports growth in each of the four components.

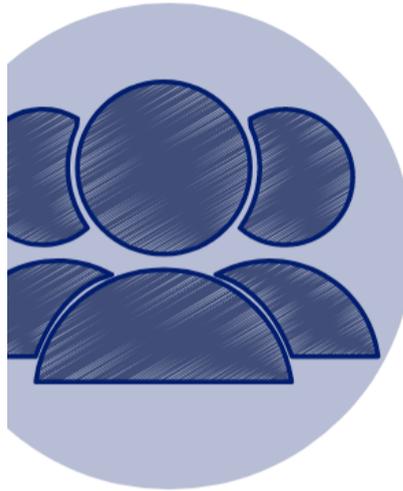
Human formation is the basis of all priestly formation and is the fundamental grounding upon which all development as a priest begins. This calls for the cultivation of human qualities and an ever growing maturity as a human person in the daily pursuit of virtue. Especially important is living out life with authenticity. As St John Paul II clearly explains in Pastores Dabo Vobis the human personality needs to become a bridge and not an obstacle to others having an encounter with Jesus.

Intellectual formation includes the study of philosophy, theology and a range of subjects so that the future priest has the tools to be able to transmit the fullness of the Catholic Faith. It also provides new reasons to love God and is something to be shared with others. When it comes to intellectual formation though, it is good to remember that even though it is extremely important and necessary to study all one can about Jesus, the Church, the Faith and

theology, this can never be at the expense of spiritual, pastoral and human formation. A man does not enter the seminary to become an academic. He enters the seminary to become a priest. This calls for a supernatural outlook when it comes to intellectual formation and as St Josemaria Escriva said it is always good to remember that an hour of study for a modern apostle is an hour of prayer.

This leads us to spiritual formation, and the importance of this area is obvious. To be another Christ in the world today, the priest needs to be holy and striving for sanctity. This means that a seminarian is called to be a man of prayer with a strong plan of life that incorporates acts of piety and mortification with the prudent help of a spiritual director. It is crucial that spiritual activities are not simply something done out of mere habit but rather that they be lived out as acts of love in a growing relationship with Jesus. Pope Francis recently mentioned that prayer "should not be simply ritualistic, but an opportunity for personal encounter with God, for dialogue and trust in Him."

Pastoral formation is an area that has developed extensively since Vatican II and helps a seminarian to really begin to live out their vocation. Enthusiastically meeting people and being at the service of the People of God are sure signs the initial yes to God at the beginning of formation is total and true. This means learning to be available for others and giving of oneself with sacrificial love. Regular placements in a parish with experienced pastors are a great way for a seminarian to be able to learn from the practical wisdom of those who have gone before them and to meet parishioners that they will hopefully be able to minister to in the future.



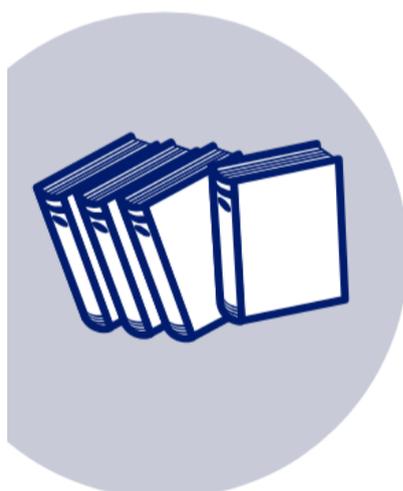
## DIMENSION 1: HUMAN FORMATION

This helps seminarians to grow into mature, well-balanced men who are capable of relating to all different kinds of people and displaying good personal qualities such as sensitivity, patience, responsibility and organisational skills.

## DIMENSION 2: SPIRITUAL FORMATION

This guides the seminarian in cultivating a deep personal relationship with the Blessed Trinity and our mother, Mary, through a committed life of prayer, and in interpreting the movements of the Holy Spirit which should guide his decisions.

Each seminarian has a spiritual director to help him grow spiritually.



## DIMENSION 3: ACADEMIC FORMATION

This intellectual component involves studying philosophy, theology, scripture and other humanities, which equips seminarians to preach the Gospel, communicate Church teaching, pass on the truth of our faith and evangelise.

## DIMENSION 4: PASTORAL FORMATION

This helps seminarians learn how to be shepherds with the heart of Jesus, with compassion for all people, especially for the most vulnerable, broken and needy. Seminarians gain experience in pastoral work and ministry in different environments such as parishes, hospitals and schools.



Each of these dimensions of formation are necessary and important. No one pillar should be overemphasised to the detriment of the other areas, rather all four form a cohesive whole that must each receive due attention.

**All of us are invited to pray for our**

**seminarians and priests, that they grow humanly, intellectually, spiritually and pastorally as they carry out the work of God always and everywhere as ordained missionary disciples configured to Christ.**

# Pope opens Synod on Synodality saying it can't be an 'elitist' exercise

Formally opening his much-ballyhooed Synod of Bishops on Synodality Saturday, Pope Francis expressed his desire that it be an experience in which everyone in the church participates rather than an "elitist" exercise.

BY INES SAN MARTIN - CRUX



Cardinal Christoph Schonborn of Vienna, center, and bishops from around the world walk in procession from St. Peter's Basilica at the start of the Synod of Bishops for the Amazon at the Vatican in this Oct. 7, 2019, file photo. Pope Francis has chosen the theme of "synodality" for the next synod in 2022. (Credit: Paul Haring/CNS.)

The pontiff also prayed for the Holy Spirit to guide the discussions, thus preventing the Catholic Church "from becoming a 'museum', beautiful but mute, with much past and little future." Visibly deviating from his prepared remarks, the pope noted that the Synod is neither a parliament nor an opinion poll.

"The Synod is an Ecclesial moment, and the protagonist is the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit, there will not be a Synod," he said, calling for unity, above all among the bishops.

Francis also invited those present to acknowledge the frustration and impatience felt by many pastoral workers, "members of diocesan and parish consultative bodies and women, who frequently remain on the fringes," and urged dialogue between priests and laity, saying that he underlined this because sometimes, priests become "elitists" and become "the patrons of the barracks."

The pope's words came Oct. 9, as he was opening the Synod of Bishops: "For a Synodal Church: communion, participation and mission."

In a speech in which he mentioned both the opportunities and risks this process may entail, Francis listed three of each.

He began by saying this is an opportunity to move structurally towards a synodal church, "An open square where all can feel at home and participate."

The Synod, the pontiff said, offers an opportunity for the church to become "a listening" one, that sets routine aside and offers a break from routine pastoral concerns: "To listen to the Spirit in adoration and prayer, to listen to our brothers and sisters speak of their hopes and of the crises of faith present in different parts of the world, of the need for a renewed pastoral life and of the signals we are receiving from those on the ground."

The church has an opportunity to become one of "closeness," not only in words but presence in society and the world, immersed in modern-day problems, "bandaging wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God."

On the opposite end, Francis said the Synod also has a series of risks: formalism, intellectualism and complacency.

The pope defined the first as the risk of this

becoming an event that looks to be extraordinary but doesn't lead to better discernment or cooperation with the work of God in history.

"If we want to speak of a synodal church, we cannot remain satisfied with appearances alone; we need content, means and structures that can facilitate dialogue and interaction within the People of God, especially between priests and laity," he said.

For this to happen, he said, there's a need to change the "overly vertical, distorted and partial visions of the church, the priestly ministry, the role of the laity, ecclesial responsibilities, roles of governance and so forth."

Francis also said the Synod could become a "study group" offering abstract approaches to the problems of the Church and the evils in the world, with people saying the usual things but with no actual insight, reducing the entire process to the usual "unfruitful ideological and partisan divides, far removed from the reality of the holy People of God."

Finally, the Synod risks becoming complacent, relying on the way things have always been done, which he defined as a poisonous attitude, applying old solutions to new problems, when the Synod is called to become a process that involves the local Churches in different phases and from the bottom up.

The pope's remarks came as he inaugurated the Synod of Bishops 2021-2023 in the Synod Hall, with some 300 people from all over the world taking part, including cardinals and bishops, religious men and women, and laity.

Synodality has been a buzz word during Francis's pontificate, but the concept is still relatively unknown for the average Catholic. This is why a large part of the preparatory document released last

month focuses on explaining the process and its theological roots.

The process opens only days after the release of an independent report into France's history of clerical abuse revealed more than 330,000 people abused by Church officials. Before the pontiff's opening remarks, it was a woman, Christina Inogés-Sanz, from Spain, who offered a reflection on the process, and she did not mince words: "We have done much harm to many people, and we have done it to ourselves. For centuries we have relied more on our egos than on your Word. We have long forgotten that, whenever we do not let you walk beside us, we are unable to stay the right course."

"It is healthy to correct mistakes, to ask forgiveness for the crimes committed, and to learn to be humble," she said. "Surely we will experience moments of pain, but pain is part of love. And we are hurt by the church because we love her."

Fidelity, she said, can demand change, and being faithful to Christ's call might even entail "a revolution."

The Synod of Bishops will meet again in October 2023, but in the meantime, there will be meetings at diocesan levels, at national levels and also continental level, before the Bishop Hall welcomes the process again.

The Synod, said Cardinal Jean-Claude Hollerich, general relator of the gathering, "is a huge puzzle, where everyone can participate, especially the poorest, the voiceless, those on the periphery."

During his remarks, Hollerich confessed that he has no idea of what he will be writing in the synod's final document: "The pages are blank, it is up to you to fill them," he said. "The only thing I can say is that I will not do it alone."

# Project of the Month: October

Aid to the Church in Need's focus for the month of October is assisting future priests in Cuba.



**When Pope Saint John Paul II visited Cuba in January 1998, he appealed to the young people, telling them,** "Christ is walking through your life and saying to you, follow me. Don't close yourselves to his love. Don't simply walk by on the other side. Take him at his word. Everyone has received a call from him, and he knows each one of you by your name."

there is still a great deal to be done. "We need priests to minister to a people that are wounded in its soul," says Father Martín Chevarría Vaca, the rector of the Santiago seminary. "The goal of our seminary is the evangelization of the Cuban people via the formation of native Cuban priests. The fact that even more young men have come forward than in the previous year is a source of great joy for our Church, which never ceases to pray for vocations."

The seventeen young men who are currently training at the seminary of the archdiocese of Santiago de Cuba were no more than little children at the time. Yet that was exactly their own experience: Jesus called them by their name and they followed his call. They have continued to follow his call despite the fact that the Catholic faith in Cuba still suffers oppression. Most Cubans are baptised Catholics but only around 2% regularly attend Holy Mass. There is widespread popular piety among the people, and Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, the Cuban national shrine, is beloved by many Cubans, yet in the field of evangelization,

Nevertheless, it costs money to train future priests. Food, water, electricity, teaching materials, medical care, clothing and the salaries of the academic staff – all these things need to be paid for. Prices are climbing ever higher in a country that has been stuck for years now in a profound economic crisis. And on top of this, during the time of the pandemic, there have been additional costs for safety measures and protective equipment.

The Church in Cuba is poor. So we are supporting the training of these 17 future

priests with a contribution of \$13,500 AUD. For no vocation must be lost, merely for lack of money.

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# ACU commits to Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'*-inspired seven-year plan

Australian Catholic University has committed to be part of a global implementation plan led by Pope Francis and inspired by *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*.



"bring the whole human family together... for we know that things can change" (*Laudato Si'* 13)  
*Laudato Si'* calls us toward sustainability in the spirit of integral ecology. With profound care for each other, our Creator, and all creation, we are building a better future together.

**The Laudato Si' Action Platform opens on Monday 4 October on the Feast of St Francis of Assisi with a period for prayer and pledges until 14 of November, World Day of the Poor.**

ACU Vice-Chancellor and President Professor Zlatko Skrbis said: "Our commitment as a university is to create a seven-year Laudato Si' plan that will be integrated through research, learning and teaching, and forms of engagement with respect to the seven Laudato Si' Goals."

Pope Francis announced the seven goals during the Laudato Si' Special Anniversary Year of 2020 as a guide to actions in respect to all that is connected within our ecology.

The Laudato Si' Goals are: Response to the cry of the earth; Response to the cry of the poor; Ecological economics; Adoption of sustainable lifestyles; Ecological education; Ecological spirituality; Community engagement and participatory action.

Pope Francis, with the Vatican Dicastery for Integral Human Development, is inviting seven key sectors of the Catholic Church to take part in this historic ground-up approach, beginning with listening to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. Anyone interested can register their commitment: families, parishes and diocese, schools and universities, health care facilities, businesses and farmers, religious men and women,

agencies and movements of the church.

"This signals our intention to grow in our earthly mission as a Catholic university together with the diverse cultures and unique bioregions in Oceania, with the universal Church and all people of goodwill to face the complex crisis that is both social, ecological and 'set out on the long path of renewal', (*Laudato Si'*, 66)" Professor Skrbis said.

ACU is celebrating Sustainability Week from 4-8 October. The university is already making real progress toward the *Laudato Si'* Goals, such as waste reduction, sustainable buildings and ecological theology education.



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# Synod on Synodality

*“Enabling everyone to participate is an essential ecclesial duty!” Pope Francis.*

BY TREVOR DAL BROI

**Faithful from around the world – including laywomen and men, priests, seminarians, women and men religious, cardinals and bishops – took part in the Official Opening of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (the Synod) in the Vatican, Saturday October 9th 2021, which marked the beginning of a two-year synodal process.**

In his homily, Pope Francis took the day’s Gospel reading, recounting Jesus’ encounter with a rich young man, as the starting point for a reflection on synodality: “Celebrating a Synod,” he said, “means walking on the same road, together.”

In a speech in which he mentioned both the opportunities and risks this process may entail, Francis listed three of each.

He began by saying this is an opportunity to move structurally towards a synodal church, “An open square where all can feel at home and participate.”

The Synod, the pontiff said, offers an opportunity for the church to become “a listening” one, that sets routine aside and offers a break from routine pastoral concerns: “To listen to the Spirit in adoration and prayer, to listen to our brothers and sisters speak of their hopes and of the crises of faith present in different parts of the world, of the need for a renewed pastoral life and of the signals we are receiving from those on the ground.”

The church has an opportunity to

become one of “closeness,” not only in words but presence in society and the world, immersed in modern-day problems, “bandaging wounds and healing broken hearts with the balm of God.”

On the opposite end, Francis said the Synod also has a series of risks: formalism, intellectualism and complacency.

“Let us have a good journey together,” Pope Francis said in conclusion. He expressed the hope that we might be “pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Spirit.” And he urged us not to miss out “on the grace-filled opportunities born of encounter, listening, and discernment.”

Bishop Mark added “The Synod of Bishops process will occur in conjunction with the ongoing Plenary Council process and, like it, aims at better discernment or cooperation with the work of God in our Church. Being a synodal church demands structures that can facilitate dialogue and interaction within the People of God, especially between priests and laity, something that has been called for by our people in preparation for the Plenary Council.”

“For this to happen,” Bishop Mark said, “there’s a need for a more integrated and holistic vision of the priestly ministry, the role of the laity, ecclesial responsibilities and the role of governance. The Synodal journey and the Plenary Council both demand that we find new answers for our

## Prayer for the Synod

**As we embrace this Synodal Process, this prayer invites the Holy Spirit to be at work in us so that we may be a community and a people of grace.**

We stand before You, Holy Spirit,  
as we gather together in Your name.

With You alone to guide us,  
make Yourself at home in our hearts;  
Teach us the way we must go  
and how we are to pursue it.

We are weak and sinful;  
do not let us promote disorder.  
Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path  
nor partiality influence our actions.

Let us find in You our unity  
so that we may journey together to eternal life  
and not stray from the way of truth  
and what is right.

All this we ask of You,  
who are at work in every place and time,  
in the communion of the Father and the Son,  
forever and ever.

Amen.



This prayer can be used throughout the duration of the Synodal Process from October 2021-2023.

new problems and avoid falling into ideological divides.”

A suite of Listening and Discernment Adult Sessions will be distributed to our diocese before this date and will be made available on our website for use by individuals and groups wishing to participate in the consultation.

The Australian website for the Synod of Bishops is [www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch](http://www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch)

**The official Opening of the Synod in Wagga and other dioceses around the world will take place on Sunday 17 October 2021. Let us journey together.**

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Crematorium



Chapel



Refreshments Room



## Holy Spirit School, Lavington

Year 6 built 'earthquake proof buildings' as part of our Earth Science unit. They used a 'shaker table' to test out their designs. Students also researched how engineers design buildings in earthquake prone areas and adapted their models based off these findings.



## Holy Trinity Primary, West Wagga

Congratulations to Holy Trinity Primary First Holy Communion participants! The students led the parish mass beautifully. Thank you to the parents, teachers and families who contributed towards making this a special celebration for them.



## Sacred Heart Primary, Wagga

Thanks to all students who supported the Good Shepherd Kindergarten in Bangkok by participating in Socktober.



## St Joseph's School, Leeton

All St Joseph's students participated in the 2021 Book Week Parade with such enthusiasm. Great to see!



Catholic Education  
Diocese of Wagga Wagga

All schools enrolling now

## St Joseph's Primary School, Jerilderie



From left: Fun in the sun, award winners and Year 3 and 4 students participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



## Mater Dei Primary, Wagga



Mater Dei Primary students and staff had fun participating in Crazy Hair Day.



## St Joseph's Primary, Wagga



Above: Year 6 appreciated Father Connell visiting on 7 October and sharing his ordination with them. They were privileged to also receive a blessing off him. Congratulations Father Connell, we look forward to continuing working alongside you!

Below: Mrs Wotherspoon was delighted to present her reading graduates with their certificates! Congratulations Archie, Eligh, Alfie and Kayden on your amazing achievements!



## St Michael's Primary, Coolamon

Stage 3 have been very busy creating a variety of different foods to present their book buffet. On October 8 they had their book tasting.



## St Joseph's Primary, Finley



Spring has sprung and students from St Joseph's took the opportunity to read in the sunshine.

# KIDS CORNER

## SAINTS FUN FACTS

by John Sheppard



St. Ignatius of Loyola was born in Spain. He was a soldier in the Spanish Army in wars against the French.

After the military he studied the saints and decided to be a soldier of the Catholic faith. He finished his degree at age 43. Along with St. Francis Xavier and seven other students, started The Society of Jesus, or Jesuits in 1534.

He died at the age of 65

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# Craft...

## Saints and Objects Matching Game



*This is a fun All Saints' Day game for all ages to enjoy! It is also so easy to assemble.*

### We used:

- black foam board
- string for hanging the objects
- "s" hooks
- colour pictures of the saints-we specifically chose images of the saints that did not show their objects, to make the game a little more challenging
- objects associated with each of the saints
- pictures of these objects

### How to make:

- We attached the pictures with narrow strips of cardstock folded in half, gluing one half to the picture and the other to the board, creating a "hinge." Be sure to glue your cardstock to the very top of the back of your pictures so that the pictures can be flipped up to reveal the image on the back of each saint picture. This image on the back will match the object for that saint.
- Below each picture, we poked small holes and slipped an s-hook in each hole for hanging objects.
- Use a little string or ribbon and hot glue to create loops on your objects for hanging.

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!*



## OCTOBER SAINTS & FEAST DAYS

# Word Search

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



- St. **Therese** of the Child Jesus
- Guardian **Angels**
- St. **Francis** of Assisi
- St. **Bruno**
- Our Lady of the **Rosary**
- St. **John** XXIII
- St. **Callistus** I
- St. **Teresa** of Avila
- St. **Ignatius** of Loyola
- St. **Luke**
- St. **Paul** of the Cross
- St. **John Paul** II
- St. John of **Capistrano**
- St. Anthony **Claret**
- St. **Simon**
- St. **Jude**

# Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga

As reported in last month's edition of Together on the 26 September the Catholic Church celebrated Migrant and Refugee Sunday to coincide with the event we would like to introduce our organisation.

**The Multicultural Council of Wagga Wagga was established in 1988 and has been providing settlement assistance and support for newly arrived and emerging Cultural and Linguistic Diverse communities who have settled in the Riverina.**

Our vision is to achieve an enriched multicultural society through cultural diversity, social cohesion and community harmony. We believe in a culturally diverse and fully inclusive society. We value the contribution of all people, celebrate diversity, and uphold the dignity of all. A value echoed by Pope Francis when he offered a message for the Word Day of Migrants and Refugees entitled 'Towards an Ever Wider "We".'

The Wagga Wagga Local Government Area is home to community members from 112 different countries of origin, who speak 107 languages and practice 62 faiths." This is further supported by data from

the 2016 Census "in Wagga Wagga City, 9.3% of people in Wagga Wagga City were born overseas and 6.6% of people spoke a language other than English at home in 2016".

As an organisation we advocate and actively support others to realise their aspirations and goals. We are inspired by the potential that positive change can bring to our community.

The two main core services we deliver as an organisation are:

#### **Case management through our client services program**

The objective of the Client Services is to equip families and community members who have settled within our region with the knowledge and skills to identify, understand and take action to address their identified settlement needs. Community members are provided with settlement-related information; advice, advocacy, and assistance to access mainstream and other



relevant services and are provided support in addressing issues arising during their settlement experience.

#### **Community Development support through our Community Capacity Building program**

The objective of the Community Capacity Building program is to empower new and emerging community groups and organisations to support their specific communities towards collectively

increasing the social participation, economic and personal wellbeing of community members, to ensure that positive settlement outcomes are sustained in the long term.

Support may include development of leadership and governance skills, linkages to the broader community, interaction with government and local stakeholders, and access to resources and facilities. **To find out more about the Multicultural Council visit our website [mcww.org.au](http://mcww.org.au)**

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## Help make Together the best newspaper it can be

### Let us know what is happening in your area.

Together relies upon your stories to make it relevant and meaningful. We want to know what is happening in your local area so that we can share that news with the rest of the diocese.

We are always looking for local contributors who can write 250 to 350 words about local church projects, initiatives or school events. Include a couple of high resolution photos and you are well on your way to being published in Together.

**For more information about making contributions to Together or to submit your article contact us at: [together@wagga.catholic.org.au](mailto:together@wagga.catholic.org.au)**



## Celebrating 80 Years

1941- 2021

*St Francis Xavier's School together with St Fiacre's Parish would like to invite you to celebrate SFXU's 80th and Final Year*

**Saturday 11th December 2021**

Please join us at St Francis Xavier's School between 1.30pm - 4.00pm to take a tour of the school, enjoy a light afternoon tea and view memorabilia. This will be followed by Mass in St Fiacre's Church at 4.00 pm

Our evening celebration will include a Canapè-style meal and entertainment at the Urana Aquatic Function Centre from 6.30 pm until late. **To ensure Covid safe practices, tickets must be purchased prior for BOTH events and will not be available 'at the door'**

**Day Celebrations Tickets - free**

**Evening Celebrations Tickets - \$50.00**

**Children 12 & under \$25.00**

**All proceeds will go to St Fiacre's Parish**

To purchase tickets, click on the link or scan the QR code

Ticket Sales will close on 22nd November 2021

<https://compasstix.com/e/aa1utd3kqp>



# 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.

## 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 27

**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.*

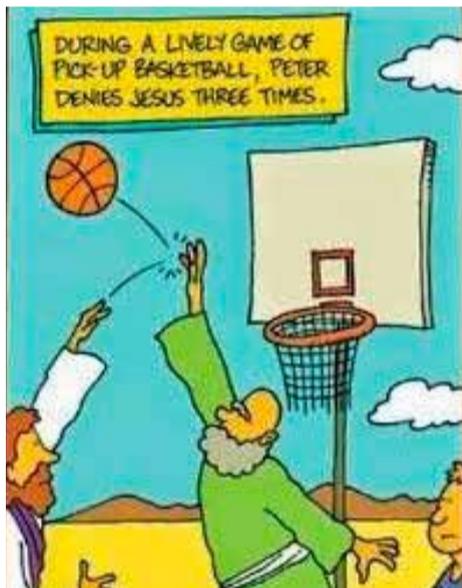


**Please pray for those priests whose anniversary of death occurs in October:**

- 1 October 1952** Mgr Thomas Ignatius Barry
- 3 October 1962** Fr J Bede McDonell
- 5 October 1905** Fr Joseph Michael Ryan
- 9 October 1892** Fr Michael O'Leary
- 11 October 1939** Bishop Joseph Wilfrid Dwyer
- 18 October 1982** Mgr John Harold Larkins
- 24 October 1924** Fr Francis William Hartigan
- 31 October 1896** Fr Patrick McCabe
- 31 October 1996** Fr Patrick Peter Ford

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

**Monthly laugh:**



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**Family reflections for:**

**October**

**10th October**

**Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B**

**Today's Gospel might make us uncomfortable about our possessions.** This discomfort offers us an opportunity to consider our possessions and our family's commitment to the poor. Material possessions are a necessity in our culture. Our use of these possessions and our attitude about their importance is our choice, however. It is a choice we can make with the awareness that our faith in Jesus commits us to show our care for the poor.

As you gather as a family, consider together these questions: Would it be possible to inventory our possessions? Are there things in our house that we no longer need or use? What might we do with these things? Read together today's Gospel, Mark 10:17-30. Talk about the warning about material possessions that Jesus gives in this Gospel. How does this make you feel? Choose an action that helps your family show its commitment to the poor. Conclude by praying together the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis.

*Wisdom 7:7-11 Psalm 90:12-13,14-15,16-17  
Hebrews 4:12-13 Mark 10:17-30*

bed with parents acting like the children. Or you may have them role play parents asking for cooperation from children to clean up the family room. When the role play is finished, ask if it was an accurate picture of how this situation usually plays out in your household. Does everyone cooperate when asked? What happens when someone doesn't cooperate? How are the conflicts that emerge resolved? Observe that conflicts based on power struggles in situations such as these seem unavoidable in family life. In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches how Christians are to show their authority over others. Read together today's Gospel, Mark 10:35-45. After reading the Gospel, talk with your family about Jesus' unique message to his disciples about how they are to exercise authority. Talk about ways in which you might apply Jesus' words in your family life. Conclude by praying we may receive honor in God's eyes by learning to serve others in love. Pray together the Peace Prayer of Saint Francis.

*Isaiah 53:10-11 Psalm 33:4-5,18-19,20,22  
Hebrews 4:14-16 Mark 10:35-45*

**24th October**

**Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B**

**In the daily routine of family life, power struggles seem unavoidable.** Whenever two or more people live together, there will be occasions of disagreement and attempts to exert influence over each other. Today's Gospel can be an invitation to consider how authority is exercised in your household. There is a temptation to exercise our authority in ways that show our power over others. Especially when conflicts emerge, many of us rely upon the power we believe our role gives to us. Jesus teaches us that there is a more persuasive form of leadership. In these daily challenges we have the opportunity to practice and teach the kind of service and leadership Jesus modeled for us in his ministry and in his passion and death.

As you gather as a family, invite family members to participate in a role play in which family roles are reversed. For example, you might assign children the role of parents putting their children to

**Today's Gospel offers us a powerful example of faith and persistence in prayer.** Those around him rebuked Bartimaeus for his efforts to attract Jesus' attention. When silenced by the crowd, however, Bartimaeus called out all the more. He is persistent and bold in his confidence that Jesus will show mercy on him and do what he asks. His persistence and great confidence that Jesus would help him reminds us of the confidence with which our children bring to us their needs. In their faith and trust we can find an example of the attitude with which we might approach God in prayer.

As a family, recall a request that has been made repeatedly by one family member to another. Talk about why the request continues to be made if the answer continues to be no. Then read together today's Gospel, Mark 10:46-52. After reading the Gospel, pose questions such as these to your family: Why must Bartimaeus be persistent in calling out to Jesus? (Some people in the crowd are

telling him to be quiet.) What does Bartimaeus do when some try to stop him? (He calls out to Jesus all the more.) When Jesus stops and calls for him, what does Jesus do and say? (He restores Bartimaeus's sight; Jesus tells Bartimaeus his faith has saved him.) When we pray, God wants us to be so confident he will help us that we don't permit anyone to keep us from bringing our needs to God in prayer. Invite family members to identify the things they need most from God. Pray these prayers of petition together as a family, confident that God will hear and answer your prayers. Respond to each petition, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on us." Conclude by praying the Glory Be to the Father.

*Jeremiah 31:7-9 Psalm 126:1-2,2-3,4-5,6  
Hebrews 5:1-6 Mark 10:46-52*

**31st October**

**Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B**

**As Christians, our moral behavior is guided by the two-part commandment taught by Jesus in today's Gospel: love God and love your neighbor as yourself.** Many of us learned to use this framework as an examination of conscience. By examining our lives through the lens of these commandments, we have learned that the challenge of these commandments is not in our desire to follow them but in our capacity to consistently honor these commandments in our daily lives.

For one week, identify and collect news reports of how Christians show their love for God by loving and serving their neighbor. Clip these news items and share what you have heard when you gather as a family. Read together today's Gospel, Mark 12:28b-34. Talk about ways in which your family might contribute to the examples of Christian service you found. Choose one of these actions to do together as a family. Conclude in prayer together asking God to help us show love to our family members and friends. Pray together the Act of Love.

*Deuteronomy 6:2-6 Psalm 18:2-3,3-4,47,51  
Hebrews 7:23-28 Mark 12:28b-34*

## 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...