

CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE  
of  
BALLARAT



# OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

News around the Diocese

No. 60 March 2020



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### OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY (ODC)

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Education Office of Ballarat.



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### EDITORIAL BOARD

Sr Geraldine Mugavin, Mrs Julie Boyd, Ms Kate Lawry, Ms Fiona Tonkin, Dr Susan Crowe, Mrs Bernadette Lynch, Fr Adrian McInerney  
Mrs Jane Collins.

The next ODC will be in July 2020.

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# Plenary Council

From October 4 till October 11 this year, people from all around the country will gather in Adelaide for the Fifth Plenary Council of the Catholic Church in Australia. This will be the first of two assemblies of the Council. The second will be in Sydney from June 28 till July 3 next year. These assemblies will draw together the fruits of many gatherings of church communities over the past two years.



In 2018 we considered the general question, "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" From our diocese of Ballarat, 93 groups and 227 individuals sent in responses to this question. The responses from all around Australia were gathered by a team from the National Centre for Pastoral Research led by Dr Trudy Dantis and presented in a 298 page report entitled "Listen to what the Spirit is saying".

In May 2019, the Pastoral Research team met with the group of bishops, priests and laity who are coordinating the Plenary Council process. They prayed over and discussed the responses to the first general question and from these responses they framed more specific questions involving six themes for further consideration. How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is missionary and evangelising; inclusive, participatory and synodal; prayerful and Eucharistic; humble, healing and merciful? How are we called to be a joyful, hope-filled, servant community, one that is open to conversion, renewal and reform?

Over the past few months, groups of people around our diocese have been meeting to reflect together and pray about these themes. At the same time, six national discernment and writing groups have been preparing papers on each of the themes. I am a member of the group working on the "prayerful and Eucharistic" theme.

It is a fairly large working group, with thirteen members. There are seven lay people, two religious sisters, two priests and two bishops, drawn from Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia. We have been meeting mainly by video conference. Meeting by "Zoom" is a new experience for me but it is proving to be an effective as well as economical way of working together with people from across the country. There have been two face-to-face meetings.

Our task is to prepare a paper on the question of how God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church in Australia that is prayerful and Eucharistic. Appropriately, the group is itself prayerful in each meeting. For the face-to-face meetings we have also celebrated the Eucharist as part of our time together. In February, we completed a draft of our paper. In March and April there will be further work on the papers on all six themes. Then a comprehensive paper will be prepared, to be considered at the meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference in May. From that meeting, a proposed agenda for the Plenary Council will be sent to Rome for approval.

I thank all those people in our diocese who have been involved in the Plenary Council process so far and I encourage you to continue to contribute in prayer and in reflecting together in the months ahead.

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR

# INGLENOOK DAIRY



Dairy farming has been in Rachael Peterken's blood long before she was born. In the 1920's, her grandparents, James and Margaret Britt, were given six cows from Margaret's parents that her brother had walked from Beac to Dunnstown and this began the story of Inglenook Dairy. Rachael's parents, Basil and Sheila Britt expanded the dairy

farm when Basil took over in the mid 1950's. For many, many years, the farm made ends meet and prospered, then with years of drought and falling milk prices, life was proving tough. At the same time, some fellow farmers in the community were either folding their farm or diversifying their business into other forms of agriculture. With all this happening, the family started to think 'outside the box' and decided to take things into their own hands and manufacture milk themselves. It was an opportunity to offer the market the top quality product that was lacking and sustainability for their farm and for the industry that they had been a part of for three generations.

Inglenook Dairy (the company) was established in December 2011 when the family built their own milk processing facility. It took two and half long years to get the processing facility up and running. Not really knowing the process for manufacturing a consumable product proved a challenge in itself, without adding to the complexity of designing and building a plant that could facilitate the industry requirements. Many hours of research led to Troy, Rachael's husband, designing the factory and managing the whole project with the help of Rachael and other family members. Troy was working a second job to raise the funds whilst Rachael was also raising three children during this time. They had to do most of the work themselves on weekends, with the help of family members, however it helped gain the invaluable intimate knowledge of the equipment and process required to create quality milk. Rachael's parents Basil and Sheila (who were integral contributors to the Ballarat

dairy industry for decades) were also an incredible source of industry and emotional support to them through this whole journey. Basil always said, "You can do anything if you are willing to get your hands dirty and work hard" Rachael recalls.

Inglenook Dairy now has a respected name in the dairy industry and has earned a reputation for the quality of their product, winning many industry awards such as Paddock to Plate Best Business, Champion Milk in Royal Melbourne Fine Food Award, Best in Class RASV, Gold in DIAA and selected in top three milks in Australia in the 2016 Australian Grand Dairy Awards, as well as Dairy Industry Association of Australia awards each year from 2014 to today.

The focus of their business has shifted, having now established a name for themselves, to growing it in order to provide sustainability for more dairy farmers in the community that continue to struggle with the climatic changes and the price their milk is purchased for. Inglenook Dairy is encouraging confidence and reassurance to the changing sector at a time when the industry is facing increasing uncertainty and farmers are moving away from the dairy industry.

Inglenook Dairy have just created a product, Milk Stream, aimed at changing the way cafes across Australia dispose of plastic milk bottles. Milk Stream replaces two-litre plastic milk bottles with 10-litre milk bladders, reducing the need for excess plastics and designed to improve efficiency, all to provide the industry with an environmentally sustainable way of dispensing milk. It is a much-needed solution to the consistent and enormous waste load impacting the environment coming from the café sector in the form of plastic milk bottles. The bladders are expected to reduce the dairy processors recycling waste by up to 75 per cent. Inglenook Dairy are the only milk processors to change the way it operates its waste through the use of plastic milk bottles.

Rachael and her family, as well as her children, all attended St Brendan's School, Dunnstown, with Rachael's children now moved on to secondary school at Loreto College and St Patrick's College. They have been a great support to the community, with Inglenook Dairy sponsoring the school and the local football club, in their different activities. More information and stockists can be found at <https://www.inglenookdairy.com.au>





## Resource Centre Opening

On January 31, 2020, Trinity College Colac officially opened and blessed the new St Joseph's Resource Centre. Fr Michael O'Toole blessed the building, students and staff, while former principal Tim O'Farrell had the honour of opening the building.

The centre is home to the library, IT, careers, media and study areas and sits on the site of the original St Joseph's Wing, which was the home of the Helen and Frank Paatsch

Library. It has been a hive of activity since the beginning of the school year and will be a hub of learning for all year levels to enjoy. The Resource Centre was funded by the school community with support from the State Government and was built by local firm Spence Construction.

Steven O'Dowd - Development and Communications Leader

## CELEBRATING ALL FAITHS

On November 24, 2019, St Patrick's Church in Nhill experienced a celebration of faith.

Moving from the 'Listening and Dialogue' phase of the Plenary Council into phase two, we met fortnightly to complete all six themes in the 'Listening and Discernment' phase. You may be wondering why we tackled all the themes within such a short time frame. We thought that, if we were to do justice to our response, we should not be distracted by harvest, Christmas, holidays or anything else and so we chose to keep the momentum going.

One common theme which kept presenting throughout this stage was, "How can we, and why don't we, share our faith journey with all in our community more often?" Instead of continuing to question this, with the approval of Fr Peter Hudson, we decided to act by inviting peoples from all churches and faith communities within Nhill to share in our Church Service, our Eucharistic Celebration, followed by a cuppa. As the numbers swelled for this celebration of faith, we thought we would have to perform the 'loaves and fishes' miracle as there were anxious moments whilst cups and scones and slices were counted. We were so pleasantly surprised by the response!

Following the success of this faith filled gathering, it was decided that further action would be taken in the new



year to formalise a group representing all faiths who wish to travel with us and assist in organising a couple of "faith sharing" occasions throughout the year. We are, after all, following the same God to the same destination, but we are simply using different freeways to reach that destination and that is great, as long as we stay on the road!

The above photo reflects the success of that day at St Patrick's - hopefully the first of many to come!

Margaret Millington - Parishioner



## Come all ye faithful any way you can

When St Andrew's of Simpson and St Joseph's of Timboon gather for Mass at Simpson, they come by all means of transport, including car, motorbikes and horse.

Katrina Currell

Our Diocesan Community - March 2020

## AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Olive Wellington is a parishioner in St Joseph's Parish, Hopetoun and she received an Order of Australia Medal in the 2020 Australia Day awards.

Olive was very chuffed to be awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the 2020 Australia Day awards. Olive has dedicated her time to many charities in our local community, including being the organiser of the St Joseph's Junior Red Cross for over thirty years, and being involved in the Red Cross in general for fifty years receiving her fifty years' service badge only last year. Olive has held an office bearer's position for almost as long as she has been involved in Red Cross.

Olive is also a very familiar face at Easter when she fundraises for the Royal Children's Hospital appeal and was pleased to have the opportunity to visit the new hospital upon its completion a few years ago. Olive has been supporting the Royal Children's Hospital appeal for even longer than she has been involved in Red Cross.

She has also been a fundraiser for the Southern Mallee Giants, a member of the Catholic Ladies Guild, a member of the Combined Probus Club, as well as volunteering for Meals on Wheels.

Cynthia Maiden presented a native flower arrangement to Olive on behalf of the Hopetoun parishioners. Olive will be presented with her medal in either April or May by the Governor General at a ceremony to be held at Government House. Our congratulations to Olive on this very special and deserved award.

Olive's response:

*I am deeply honoured to accept this award of the Medal of the Order of Australia – OAM (Second Division) and to my friends who nominated me, I am humbled by their gracious thoughts and gesture. Over the years in our town of Hopetoun many other people deserved*



*greater recognition, so on their behalf I accept this special honour as well from them and the town..... I love Hopetoun and am extremely proud to be part of the Community. I have seen over the years many, many changes especially with our shrinking population. So for our towns to prosper in the future we need to keep and nurture what we have, to support all local shopkeepers, businesses and tradespeople, to happily join committees, cheerfully volunteer our time where needed and place all the happenings in the Hopetoun Courier. This will make a happy town to be lived in and prosperous.*

*On accepting this award, I know my large family will be surprised, overjoyed and proud of me, as I am of them.*

*Thank you to everyone involved.*

Article courtesy of the Hopetoun Courier  
Lisa Magee - Editor/Manager



## COSY KOALA FUNDRAISER

You can do anything you set your mind to! In just over a month an idea was made reality, as this small team of young people discovered. YESS (Youth Every Second Sunday) and Young Vinnies pulled together to help those effected by the Australian bushfires. Inspired by some home spring cleaning, YESS Coordinator Felicity Liston thought it would be a worthy project to hold a BBQ and fete sale at St Patrick's Cathedral Hall on Sunday, February 2, in order to raise funds for the cause.

A call for donations of clothing, books, toys and other sellable goods was put forward to the community which gained a fantastic response

and made the day a great success. Geelong musician and solo artist, 'Gemini The Josh' came up to support the event and graced us with his guitar and vocals. While talented local artist Rochelle Liston kept children entertained and offered face painting. A grand total of \$1200.15 was raised and all proceeds from the event has been donated to the Vinnies Bushfire Appeal and Wildlife Fund. Any toys and books that remained after the event have been donated to local Ballarat St Vincent de Paul stores. We would like to thank all those who took part and made our event possible and send our blessings to members of the community for their generous donations and support.

*Felicity Liston – YESS Coordinator*

*Josh Dower, Rochelle, Felicity, Matthias and Rebecca Liston donated their time at St Patrick's Hall.*

# SUSTAINABILITY AT LORETO

*“Each one of us matters, has a role to play, and makes a difference. Each one of us must take responsibility for our own lives, and above all, show respect and love for living things around us, especially each other.” – Jane Goodall*

Sustainability is at the forefront of Loreto College Ballarat’s vision and outlook for the future. Priority for sustainability is demonstrated through our school programs, including our Environmental Action Committee, which at the end of 2019 joined forces with our Justice Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) group.



The combined force of both JPIC and the EAC will, among other things, be responsible for promoting sustainable alternatives and raising awareness of the impact of Climate Change. As well as sustainable school programs, Loreto College have made sustainability a priority through the recent building developments around the College.

Late last year, Loreto College sought the purchase and installation of a 72 kilowatt solar system onto the roof of our gymnasium and art rooms. Importantly, the solar panels will provide an effective renewable energy source for the school in two of its main areas. The system compliments the existing 27 kilowatt system installed above our science rooms in 2013.

*Shona Hendley - Loreto College Ballarat Communications & Digital Marketing Officer*



## VOLUNTEERING

*Bishop Paul Bird celebrated Mass on Tuesday, January 21 at St Mary’s Colac, during which he blessed a Mission Cross and presented it to Philip Drew. Philip is undertaking a two-year volunteer placement at Immaculate Heart Secondary Boarding College in Kiribati as part of the PALMS Missionary Outreach. Bishop Paul also extended a blessing to both Philip and Anne, Philip’s wife, as well as to the people of Kiribati.*

*Mass was well attended, supported by the choir, the hospitality team, the Marriage Support Team and Parish Family Groups. After the liturgy, all sat down to a light tea. It was a lovely evening. A special thanks to Fr Michael O’Toole for his support.*

*Philip, in his blog, said “Palms Australia are very thorough and do as much as possible to prepare volunteers for their upcoming placement. This includes specific information from the host community describing most aspects of the placement, including a detailed job description, living arrangements and local information.” Philip will be teaching mathematics and science as well as helping to mentor thirty trainee teachers at the school. He attended an eight-day live-in Palms Orientation course in Bowral, NSW. A number of articles on living and working in another culture were sent as prescribed preparation.*

*To follow Philips blog: <http://retire2go.com/> More information on PALMS can be found at <https://palms.org.au/>*

*Fr Michael O’Toole and Philip Drew*

## AN HISTORIC RESTORATION

Damascus College Ballarat was thrilled to welcome students, staff, alumni and very special guests to the reopening of the Mud Brick House on the afternoon of Friday, November 22. The celebration took place at the Historic Mud Brick House which is nestled in the beautiful natural bushland of Damascus College. The Mud Brick House was constructed by students of St Martin’s in the Pines between 1982 and 1985 under the leadership of the Sisters of Mercy. However, time and the elements have not been kind to the structure and it was in need of some attention. From 2017 to 2019, the house was refurbished by Damascus College students and staff as part of the Christian Personal Development Award (CPDA) and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) programs. The reopening of the Mud Brick House is a testament to the College’s concern for the earth which lies at the heart of social justice and mercy.



## CENTACARE'S NEW OFFICE



Centacare's Bridge Mall office was officially opened in November 2019 and local dignitaries, Board Directors and staff were there to celebrate the occasion.

The opening began with a Welcome to Country by Deanne Gilson, followed by a blessing from Bishop Paul Bird CSsR and an overview of the services being delivered from the new location from the Chair of Centacare, Maureen Waddington.

Based in the Bridge Mall office is Centacare's Family Services program which comprises;

**Family Services**, assisting families with the necessary supports to strengthen relationships, build parenting skills and connect families with their community.

**Cradle to Kinder**, providing an intensive ante and post-natal support service for young parents and their families, commencing in pregnancy and continuing until the child reaches four years of age.

**A Therapeutic Engagement and Family Worker**, supporting the services already provided to families, focusing on child safety, development and wellbeing and working with the most vulnerable and high-risk families within the programs.

**A Family Decision Making Convener**, who can provide a child-centred and family-focused intervention, facilitate the strengthening of the family networks and develop resources which assist the family's capacity to respond appropriately to the needs, safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

The continuing need for the support Family Services provides to the community has enabled this additional office for Centacare, ensuring clients continue to receive a specialised, well-resourced and responsive service.

*Jenny Phillips - Marketing & Communications Office*

## MOVING AWAY

Long-term parishioners in the community of St Mary's Sea Lake, Maria and Ralph Dorigo, are moving on to retirement and to Swan Hill. A Mass and farewell was held in their honour and Sam Brady, parish spokesperson, spoke on Maria and Ralph. An extract of Sam's words can be read below:

*To Maria and Ralph, one and all, thank you for the privilege of being able to say a few words on behalf of our parish which is now known as the Holy Family Parish, North East Mallee which was previously St Mary's Parish, Sea Lake. Maria and Ralph have both been well entrenched in our parish for many a year. Their kind contribution into the running of our parish in many ways have included volunteering many countless hours.*



*Maria's involvement in the Catholic Women's League, catering for weddings and funerals, cleaning of St Mary's Church, making sure all was in readiness for Mass and Lay Led services every week, preparing the music, involvement in organising Women's World Day of Prayer, ecumenical services in Sea Lake are just a few that came to mind of Maria's participation in the community. If ever anything needed doing around the parish and church the first bloke there was Ralph, cleaning gutters, moving the roof, cutting back trees, even building a ramp into our Nandaly church with rails for the oldies and yes, it was made of cement. Together Maria and Ralph raised three beautiful children who went to St Mary's School. This led them to further involvement in the community, on the school board, parents committees, fundraising for the school and all that goes with being part of a school community.*

*Lucky for the parishioners of Sea Lake now that the parish has combined with Swan Hill, we actually don't lose Ralph and Maria because they will be in arm's reach. Maria and Ralph, we will miss your presence in our parish area at Sea Lake but know that the doors are open any time for a visit and catch up. So, it is with a touch of sadness we say farewell from Sea Lake but with happiness we wish you both good health and joy in your next window of life in Swan Hill and in retirement. Thank you and God Bless you, Maria and Ralph.*

Sam Brady on behalf of St Mary's Sea Lake, Berriwillock, Culgoa and Nandaly.



## SHROVE TUESDAY STUDENT LEADERSHIP

The student leaders of the Catholic Secondary Colleges in Ballarat - Damascus College, St Patrick's College and Loreto College - gathered at St Patrick's Cathedral on February 25, the day before the beginning of Lent, to acknowledge their role in their colleges. This is a tradition that has been an annual feature of the colleges since Bishop Connors came to Ballarat with Fr Justin Driscoll, this year, presiding on behalf of Bishop Paul Bird.

Fr Justin challenged the school leaders to follow Jesus, and to reach out to those most in need this year. He especially recommended that young leaders consider the 10th Anniversary of the Charter of Compassion as an inspiration for action this Lent.

The Charter stresses that the principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

The ceremony was a simple celebration of the Mass, moving from the font, where we recalled our baptismal commitment in a Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling, to the lectern and the proclamation of God's Word and finally around the altar for Eucharist. The dismissal included a blessing of the Ashes that would be used by the colleges in Ash Wednesday ceremonies the following day. The launch of Project Compassion was conducted after communion and before the final blessing with the assistance of local Caritas director, Sue Searls. Fr Justin joined the students in the garden of the cathedral for the traditional Shrove Tuesday pancakes.

*Tony Haintz - Damascus College Ballarat*

## ADVENT RETREAT

*Twenty-one people gathered at St Alipius Hall Ballarat East on Sunday, December 15 and shared three hours of retreat time for Advent. Together we explored the beautiful advent images of Sieger Köder, priest and painter, and the words of Magdalen Lawler, a Sister of Notre Dame. Participants came from Christian churches around Ballarat, it was good to be together. The retreat was led by Loreto Sisters, Rachel McLoughlin and Natalie Houlihan, with the support of Christian Life Community leader and local parishioner, Doreen Roache.*

*It was a time to become still and to ponder the Gospel passage of the Annunciation. 'Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you' (Luke 1:30). There was time for silence, listening to music, thinking about the images, and personal reflection, as well as a time for moving into smaller groups and sharing our insights through guided spiritual conversation. As a faith community, we wanted our relationship with Mary, Joseph and ultimately Jesus to deepen, and we wanted to open our hearts, desires and actions to the Spirit in preparation for the special celebration of the Christmas season.*

*The latter part of this year has been an exciting time in offering Ignatian Spirituality to our wider Christian Community in Ballarat. During the months of September and October, Rachel McLoughlin and Doreen Roache co-*

*led the Exercises of St Ignatius - Retreat in Daily Life, "Inner Peace in Friendship with Jesus". The retreat held in daily life allows participants to continue their normal working day and put aside some time each day for quiet reflection, listening and prayer. The seventeen who participated gathered together once a week in two groups for two hours to pray, listen, discern and share the experiences of their spiritual lives in a reflective, safe and welcoming environment.*



*We then met a sixth time on a Saturday afternoon to reflect on the experience as a whole and explore the life of St Ignatius of Loyola at more depth. Many in the group expressed the desire for more of the formation experiences the Spiritual Exercises provide. A real sense of being in community developed in the group, and recently some of this group and other locals gathered for a home Mass and a shared meal.*

*Rachel McLoughlin ibvm and Doreen Roache*

*Our Diocesan Community - March 2020*



# RITE OF ELECTION

RCIA stands for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and it is the process of initiating new adult members into the Church. RCIC stands for Rite of Christian Initiation of Children. RCIA and RCIC are both processes of individuals growing into and becoming part of the Catholic Church. The process is marked by a series of rites, the second of which is the Rite of Election.

On Saturday, February 29, 2020, parishioners from Ballarat Cathedral, Ballarat East, Ballarat North, Beaufort, Colac, Horsham, Redan, Warrnambool and Wendouree gathered in St Patrick's Cathedral for the Rite of Election. An apology was received from Sacred Heart Parish, Mildura.

This Rite marks the conclusion of the period of the Catechumenate and is a doorway to the period of Purification and Enlightenment. Basic to understanding the Rite is the belief that no-one comes to faith, to the Church, to the Sacraments, or even to God without being called by God.

The Liturgy was celebrated by Bishop Paul Bird CSsR assisted by the Administrator of the Cathedral Parish, Fr Justin Driscoll. The celebration began with the Liturgy of the Word followed by the presentation of the Catechumens from Ballarat Cathedral, Beaufort, Horsham, Redan and Warrnambool, together with Catechumens in absentia from Mildura. After being called forward by Fr Justin, Bishop Paul, speaking in the name of the Church, questioned the preparation, understanding and readiness of the catechumens. Assured of adequate formation Bishop Paul was presented with each Parish Book of names to sign, before being introduced individually to the Catechumens and Godparents. In response to the enrolment of names, Bishop Paul called the Catechumens to the Easter Sacraments and declared them members of the Elect.

The next group to be presented to Bishop Paul were children enrolled in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children. Children from the Ballarat Cathedral,

Ballarat East, Ballarat North, Horsham, Redan, Warrnambool and Wendouree were named and after personally being greeted by Bishop Paul, were proclaimed members of the Elect.

The final group to be named and presented to Bishop Paul were the baptised Candidates from Ballarat Cathedral, Ballarat North, Beaufort, Colac, Horsham and Redan, along with the Candidates in absentia from Mildura, who seek full communion within the Catholic Church. The Candidates proclaimed their intention to spend the weeks of Lent in prayerful preparation for the coming celebration of Easter.

Following the blessing and dismissal, all present joined the Bishop for refreshments in St Patrick's Hall. Throughout the entire celebration there was a great air of anticipation and excitement which engendered a sense of enjoyment for all and provided witness to the work of the Holy Spirit truly alive in our Diocese.



## OPENING MASS

At St Patrick's Primary School in Nhill, we celebrated our Opening Mass on Sunday, February 16, 2020. Fr Peter Hudson celebrated the Mass with staff, students, their parents, and parishioners at St Patrick's Church, Nhill. Students participated in the Mass by proclaiming the readings and the Prayers of the Faithful. Fr Peter blessed the badges for the Grade 6 students who are charged with being the leaders of the student group for 2020. Candles were presented to all new students as they begin their educational journey at St Patrick's School.

Fr Peter commissioned Kingsley Dalglish as the new Principal, together with his staff, as they committed to serve through the ministry of teaching. After Mass, the school community and parishioners enjoyed morning tea in St Patrick's Community Hall.

Kingsley Dalglish - Principal

# WHAT IS MERCY CONNECT?

*Mercy Connect is an arm of the broader Mercy Works, a ministry of the Sisters of Mercy. Mercy Connect engages trained volunteers, usually with an education background, to provide additional support and mentoring to asylum seekers and humanitarian visa students at a critical time in their settlement in Australia. These students are supported through improving their capacity to negotiate the challenges of mainstream schooling and integrate into the wider Australian Community. Many of the students we support in Ballarat are also second generation.*

*The role of the volunteer:*

*The key responsibilities of the volunteer are to assist these targeted students in their learning by providing support that nurtures student well-being and self-esteem. Volunteers provide literacy and numeracy support and assist students in understanding classroom instructions, assessment tasks and organising their school work. But we can hear from the volunteers themselves.*



*Natalie (pictured left): This is my fifth year of being a Mercy Connect volunteer and I have been enriched by my involvement with the program. The children with whom I have worked are so special to me. As an ex-teacher I have been happy to help them to improve their literacy skills and to gain confidence in their own abilities as learners. It is such an honour to be able to feel that you can make a difference, however small, in a young person's life. I am really looking forward to seeing my young student again as he begins his new school year.*

*Matthew: My name is Matthew and after retiring from school teaching in 2016 in Adelaide, I relocated to Ballarat. I have been working with Mercy Connect for two years. Last year I tutored an African Year 12 student, who needed help with maths. I had only taught maths to Year 10, so I had some learning to do as well! This student was clear about his goal - Engineering - and I was pleased to learn that he passed maths and has been accepted into a diploma course this year. I expect to continue this year helping a Year 9 student. This work is personally rewarding and is helping international students to assimilate and flourish.*

*For more information on Mercy Connect, see the Mercy Works website [www.mercyworks.org.au](http://www.mercyworks.org.au) and if you are interested in Volunteering in Ballarat, email: [mercyconnectb@gmail.com](mailto:mercyconnectb@gmail.com)*

*If you are a school that would like support from our volunteers please contact us as well.*

*Supported in Ballarat by the Catholic Education Office Ballarat and The Ballarat Foundation.*

## TRADITION

On February 14, as part of our tradition, the Damascus College Ballarat community celebrated the beginning of the 2020 school year with an Opening Mass and Assembly. It was a wonderful occasion. The College welcomed Bishop Paul Bird who celebrated the Mass and reminded us of the need to be merciful, compassionate and kind in all that we do. The very talented College choir beautifully led the singing of the hymns throughout the Mass.

College Principal Matthew Byrne explored the College theme for this year 'Do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God' and encouraged all students to be their best and experience the many co-curricular opportunities that are available at the College.

The Year 7 badges were blessed and the Student Representative Council student leaders were acknowledged for 2020. It was also an occasion to congratulate the many students who were part of the 2019 Yearbook Committee for their hard work and dedication, and to congratulate the many award recipients from the 2019 Australian Mathematics Competition.

*Sarah Boswell - Leader of School Development*



Catholic Education Office Ballarat officially welcomed a number of new staff members to its growing team at a staff liturgy at the start of the 2020 school year.

- Kim Butler joins our Ballarat office in an interim capacity as an Education Consultant, from her role as Principal at St Columba's School, Ballarat North.
- Lauren Gould joins our Ballarat office as Education Officer: Languages, from her previous role as a Languages Curriculum Specialist with the Department of Education and Training.
- Liz McIntyre joins our Horsham office as Senior Education Officer, Wellbeing, on secondment for 2020 from her role as Principal at St Patrick's School, Stawell.
- Tim O'Farrell joins our Ballarat office as Manager Safeguarding and Standards, from his previous role as Principal at Trinity College, Colac.
- Sue Paulka joins our Warrnambool office as Leader, Learning and Teaching, from her previous role as Principal at St Patrick's School, Port Fairy.
- Miranda Pearse joins our Ballarat office as a Speech Pathologist, from her previous role as Speech Pathologist at Emmaus Catholic Primary School.



## CEOB WELCOMES NEW STAFF FOR 2020

- Michael Trainor joins our Ballarat office as Manager People and Culture, from his previous role as Director of Mission Integration at St John of God Hospital, Geelong.

We wish our new staff a warm welcome and look forward to working with them.

*Emma Newman, Marketing and Communications Officer,  
Catholic Education Office Ballarat*

## CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA

*Students from St Alipius Parish School Ballarat East swept up all rubbish in their path on a whistle-stop outing to Ballarat Community Garden on Friday, February 28. Classes from the primary school went to the Ballarat East site as part of the nationwide Clean Up Australia Day.*

*The children also cleared the gutters and the footpath on their way to the garden of any debris, filling rubbish bags as they went. Other classes went to different areas around the school to carry out the same work, including at McKenzie Reserve on the other side of Victoria Street.*

*"We do a lot about sustainability and looking after the environment," said Allana Kane, a teacher at the school who led the children on the tidying-up excursion to the garden. "It's great connecting what we learn in the classroom with real life."*

*"This generation seems to be more conscious of sustainability - I am noticing a big change, which is awesome," observed Michael Marshall, a year 3/4 teacher at the school.*



*Events for Clean Up Australia Day took place across the country, mostly on Sunday, March 1. There are a number of events that took place in the Ballarat area, including clean-ups on the Yarrowee Creek and the Woookarung Regional Park. For more details go to [www.cleanup.org.au](http://www.cleanup.org.au)*

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Jolyon Attwooll and picture by Adam Trafford.  
Photo: Billie, Harper, Mia, Winnie, Fletcher, Harper and Jack make the Ballarat Community Garden tidy

# LOOKING AT CHRISTMAS DIFFERENTLY

Christmas celebrations took an unusual turn at St Joseph's Parish in Warrnambool. By learning the different ways in which Christmas is celebrated around the world, we acknowledged the people of many cultures who are part of our community. Our welcome sign and table had Christmas wishes in seven languages. The Vietnamese way of representing the Nativity scene was one tradition we explored. First, we needed a cave, a large cave. After some thought and planning, we surrounded a sun shade with paper rocks and the building began. On Saturday, December 21, in preparation for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, the team arrived - fifty willing hands (photo below), each with a special skill as determined by Vietnamese tradition. Soon the silver lining filled the sacred space and out came the spray to add the look of solid rock. The children helped to arrange the figures ready to settle in their cave home.



Quite suddenly all work stopped. We moved outside to see a tree being unloaded. It was unlike any we knew. The sparse branches were covered with 'snow', cotton wool snow. Well, of course, it was winter season for Christmas in Vietnam but I don't know that it snows. Regardless, this tree was fixed into place and decorated with tinsel and shining balls. At this stage, everything looked on course until the next step. What about Santa and clothing? I held my breath and shared this with 'those that matter' AND it got the nod to proceed.



This was a great sharing moment with our Vietnamese parishioners, a joy for all in our community and a treasure of memories for all the children. Add to this we feasted together - a beautiful communion - at the 10.30am Mass the following day, with a sumptuous spread of Vietnamese food afterwards.

It was my great pleasure to work with all these people including Hank and Daisy, their children Doris and Nancy and Hank's mum, Merran Koren who knew we could do it and Fr John Fitzgerald and so many others. Thank you.

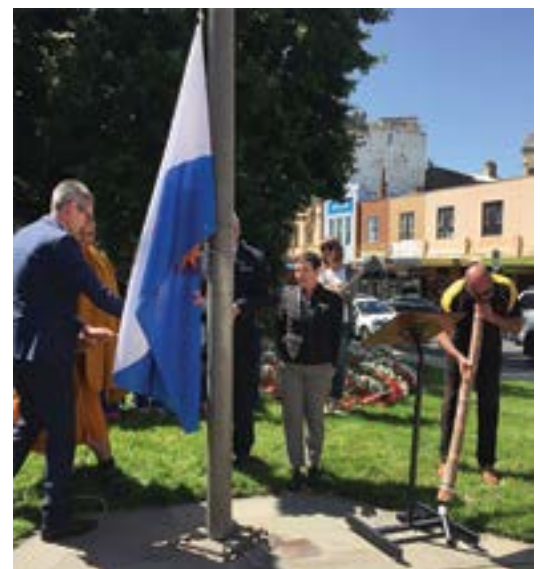
Marie Morgan

## WORLD INTERFAITH HARMONY WEEK

It was to the sound of children singing, the music of the didgeridoo and the wisdom of Buddhism that the World Interfaith Harmony Week opened in Ballarat. After a welcome to Wathaurung country, Mayor Ben Taylor raised the civic flag while Deputy Mayor Belinda Coates spoke movingly about the opportunities offered in a globalised world, where the treasures of religious and cultural insights can be shared more broadly.

A 'Walk and Talk' in the wetlands of Lake Wendouree followed later in the week, where artist Deanne Gilson, a proud Wathaurung woman, spoke of her work as the artistic creator of the Indigenous Sculpture Park in Wendouree Parade. With an audience composed of various faiths and cultures, Deanne explained how her connection to country, her deep spirituality, her indigenous history and her relationship with the local flora and fauna are all reflected in her art. Hedley Thomson then led the gathering on a meander through the beautiful wetlands, as he shared his design vision for eco spirituality. Food for the soul! We thank them both for a wonderful morning together and the chance to learn more from each other.

Jo-anne van der Voort - Ballarat Interfaith Network



# 100 YEARS OF BRIGIDINES IN HORSHAM

Catholic education in Horsham, under the tutelage of lay teachers, dates back to the 1880s. However, in 1918, the Very Rev D Howell (Parish Priest 1917-1929) asked the Mother Provincial of the Brigidine Congregation of Sisters, Mother Paul Barron, to send Sisters to Horsham to establish a boarding and day school.

On April 10, 1920, following the building of the Brigidine Convent, Mother Paul arrived in Horsham accompanied by the Sisters who were to pioneer the Brigidine Community. The five Sisters were Mother Stanislaus Tobin (Superior), Mother Columba Clancy, Mother Antonia White, Sr Agnes O'Farrell and Sr Imelda O'Collins.

Three days after arriving, Sr Imelda took charge of sixty-five pupils at St Michael and St John's Primary School. With the Brigidine reputation secure throughout the region, eleven students enrolled in St Brigid's Convent School within a month. Mother Stanislaus Tobin received a certificate from the Council of Public Education, registering St Brigid's School No 1122 on July 27, 1920.

The Centenary of the Brigidine Sisters' involvement in education in Horsham will be celebrated over the June long weekend in 2020. Celebrations will include:

- An Expo in the Parish Centre from Friday June 5 to Monday June 8;
- A visit to Brigidine gravesites on Saturday, June 6;
- A centenary function on the Saturday evening at Coughlin Park Community Centre;
- Celebratory Masses at Murtoa and Horsham on Sunday, June 7;
- Open Days at, and tours of, Our Lady Help of Christians PS, Ss Michael & John's PS, and St Brigid's College on Sunday, June 7;
- A centenary wall-hanging;
- Memorabilia available for purchase, including a Centenary Book and dvd;
- Opportunities for groups from various eras to get together and reminisce.

Register your interest now by emailing [100@stbc.vic.edu.au](mailto:100@stbc.vic.edu.au)

As the celebrations draw nearer, more details, including how to book tickets and pre-purchase memorabilia through Eventbrite, will be shared via the Ss Michael & John's Parish Bulletin, St Brigid's College Facebook Alumni page, and social media sites associated with the three schools.



## OFFICIAL BLESSING AND OPENING

*On Friday, November 22, St Paul's Primary School Mildura hosted an official Ceremony to bless and open the refurbishments undertaken during 2019. Bishop Paul Bird, Dr Anne Webster MP and other official guests gathered with school families and staff in the school hall. The project was completed through support from Catholic Capital Grants and the Catholic Education Office Ballarat.*

*It was lovely to see so many school families join in to celebrate this event. After the ceremony, guests were treated to a tour of the school to witness the benefits the refurbishment has brought to the school community.*

Vince Muscatello – Principal



## SR NOREEN TORNEY RIP

Sister of Mercy Noreen Torney (previously known as Sister Mary Stephen RSM) died in St John of God Hospital on September 18, 2019. A member of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea and the former Ballarat East Sisters of Mercy, Noreen died one day short of being 12 months in residence in Mercy Place Ballarat.



Noreen spent sixty-six years of her life as a professed Sister of Mercy, sharing her gifts of teaching and music from primary to tertiary level. Noreen's work with music included conducting the choirs at Villa (now St Francis Xavier Primary School), teaching music at Australian Catholic University (Aquinas Campus) and fanning into flame the gifts of many others.

Geraldine Mugavin RSM

# PARISHIONERS FAREWELL LEARMONTH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

It was a bittersweet Sunday Mass at Learmonth's St Joseph's Catholic Church, with the church closing its doors after almost 150 years. Dozens of former parishioners and their families attended to say their own farewells.

Fon Ryan, who has been going to the church since he was a baby and was one of the final regular parishioners, said people had come from near and far. "A lot of people reflected it was a sad day, but I think it was also understood that it was the reality," he said. "It was a reunion in a lot of ways, of people who knew each other, who grew up here and who had moved away through all sorts of circumstances." Mass was celebrated by Bishop Paul Bird, with parish priest Fr Marcello Colasante.

Mr Ryan said people enjoyed discussing their memories of the church community and not just the baptisms, weddings, and funerals. "The practice that particularly happens in country towns is the long talking outside after Mass. It was a feature that people stayed around and talked, often for quite a long time," he said.

*Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Alex Ford*



## MONIVAE COLLEGE

Monivae College Hamilton was pleased to welcome Fr Chris McPhee, Provincial Superior of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC), to celebrate the Opening School Mass on Wednesday, February 12, 2020. He was joined by Frs Patrick Mugavin, Western Border Parish Priest, Ted McCormack MSC and Phil Malone MSC to help the Monivae community mark the beginning of the year.

Special guests included Fr Paul Castley MSC, Brother Kenji Konda, Dr Andrew Watson (Catholic Education Office Ballarat), Mrs Terrielynn Groves (Principal of St Mary's Primary School, Hamilton), and the Monivae College Board and Foundation Board members.

Following the Opening Mass, Fr Chris commenced the Commissioning Ceremony for the new Principal, Mr Jonathan Rowe. Mr Rowe was presented with a Commissioning Candle symbolising the light of Jesus, a letter of welcome from 2020 College Captains conveying their prayers and support, an extract from the Constitutions and Statutes of the MSC as well as the Principal's contract.

*Mrs Rachael Rowe was also presented with flowers from the Monivae community.*

*New staff were also formally welcomed and presented with a Monivae College candle. New Deputy Principal, Mrs Fiona Mulhall, responded on behalf of all new staff with a Commitment of Staff reading. Year 12 Leaders had formal roles within the mass, fulfilling their roles admirably.*

Jill Whiting - Monivae College Community Liaison Co-ordinator



## SOLAR AND LED



*St Patrick's College Ballarat is embarking on a move towards becoming a more sustainable school with the planned installation of solar panels and an increased focus on the use of LED lighting at the College. The College is installing approximately three hundred and ninety solar panels in an effort to enhance the energy efficiency of the school.*

*The solar panels will be installed on the roofs of the Boarding precinct and the Senior School's Wilding Wing starting from the April school holidays. The LED lights will be installed in the Wilding Wing in April.*

*Once installed, the use of LED lighting in the College will represent 40 per cent of all light fittings used, with a number of key areas around the College already utilising 100 per cent LED lighting which includes the Boarding Precinct, Whelan Food Centre, Year 12 Study Centre, the Waterford Wing, Chapel and O'Malley Gym.*

*St Patrick's College Business Manager, Mr Andrew Ballesty, said the College, with support from Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), recently conducted an Energy Efficiency Review identifying how the College could reduce its environmental footprint by implementing some simple energy efficient measures.*

*"The College is committed to sustainable design and efficiency. The installation of solar panels and expanded use of LED lighting will not only reduce the College energy costs, but more importantly contribute positively to the environment by reducing energy use and carbon emissions," Mr Ballesty said.*

*St Patrick's College plans to continue rolling out environmentally friendly initiatives with a commitment to sustainable design in future projects, consistent with the EREA Touchstone of Justice and Solidarity.*

Paul Nolan - Director of Community Development

## Jim Griffin

The Catholic Development Fund (CDF) was saddened to learn of the passing of Jim Griffin, aged 84, late last year. Jim served on the Board of the Diocesan Provident Fund/Catholic Development Fund from 1978 until his retirement in 2010. In a remarkable thirty-three year stint, Jim saw the Fund grow from humble beginnings to have well over \$100 million at the time he retired. His contribution to the Fund and the life of the Diocese will not be forgotten. Rest in peace, Jim.

An article by Mark Bromley and Jim Watson appeared in the November 2010 edition of Our Diocesan Community on Jim's retirement from the CDF. It read:

*"While he was working at the Ballarat Brewing Company Ltd in 1977, Jim was recognised as one who could be a valuable member of the CDF Board. The following is an extract from the CDF Minutes of October 24, 1977: 'It was agreed to recommend to the Bishop that .... Mr Jim Griffin and Mr Michael Bourke be invited to membership of the Board.' And so began thirty-three years of generous and valuable service to the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat."*

*Jim's first meeting was on March 6, 1978. Jim remembered well the early days of the Fund. "There was no money and we agonised over applications for hours." Jim's first board meeting confirms this: "An application from the Parish of*

*Ararat for a loan of \$120,000 to finance the completion of the church was refused". It was recommended "that it be reconsidered IF the liquidity of the fund improves".*

*You will be interested to learn that Ararat was granted a \$50,000 loan at the August meeting, so liquidity obviously picked up. As an aside, this meeting also approved the purchase of a micro computer for \$5300! How some things have changed! The enormous success the CDF has achieved since it was established is to a very large extent the result of the sound and well-thought out contributions Jim made at Board meetings.*

*Jim is a wonderful example of the many quiet achievers who give so generously of their time and talents to the work of the Church in our Diocese.*





# RETREAT

On Monday, February 17, Bishop Paul hosted the annual clergy dinner at beautiful Halls Gap. Following this, Bishop Paul and twenty-four of our clergy were able to stay on for our

annual Retreat, February 17 - 21, this year led by Fr Tony McSweeney SSS, a Blessed Sacrament priest from St Francis' Church, Melbourne. Tony has had a lifetime of experience studying, teaching and leading retreats and we greatly benefited from his deep spirituality and wisdom throughout our days together. Lovely weather enabled us to wander and reflect in peaceful surroundings where the magnificence of creation was in full bloom. Already we are looking forward to next year.

*Fr John Monaghan*

## REV FR PATRICK KING: 1929 – 1987 FAITHFULLY FULFILLED HIS MINISTRY TO YOUR NAME

*Thirty-two years after his death on October 15, 1987, Fr Paddy King continues to be lovingly remembered throughout the Ballarat Diocese and his story continues to be told. In stifling heat on December 20, 2019, with temperatures in the 40's throughout the state, his nephew Niahll Doogue, along with Niahll's wife Rachel and children Luke and Valerie, flew into Melbourne on a visit from Ireland. They were accompanied to Colac by Sr Kathleen Spokes SGS and Jill McCorquodale and then eased into their busy schedule by sharing lunch in Colac with a welcoming group of Fr Paddy's former parishioners. They also visited St Joseph's Church Pirron Yallock, St Brendan's Church Coragulac, St Joseph's Church Cressy and, in the searing heat, paid their respects at the lovingly maintained place of burial for Fr Paddy at the Cressy cemetery.*



*Fr Paddy's sisters, Bernadette and Veronica, have often told the story of Fr Paddy's arrival in Australia from Ireland in December 1952. The woollen suits the family had made for him were of little use in his first Australian summer, as he served the Ballarat Diocese in the parish of Swan Hill! Fr Paddy's priestly ministry in the Diocese of Ballarat extended from 1952-1987, when he entered eternal life after suffering cancer of the liver.*

*On the evening of the Doogue family's brief visit, the parishioners of the Cororooke Parish were delighted to share a meal with them and many stories and fond memories were exchanged. With deep gratitude, we recalled Fr Paddy's life of service to others, his way with words as he drew powerful lessons on Christian living from the everyday events of life and how he found God's presence and peace during his illness.*



*In 1989 Fr Brendan Smith compiled a booklet of some of the Communion reflections written and read by Fr Paddy for his Coragulac parishioners entitled, "A Way of Praying". Fr Paddy encouraged us to find at least "Three Minutes a Day" to pray. His words still resonate today.*

*We recall the banner hanging from the St Brendan's choir gallery displaying the words "We're with you, Paddy", which could be seen when he sat down to enable himself to continue to celebrate the Eucharist, despite the progression of his illness. He chose to be with his people, blessing them, encouraging them and modelling how to live through the difficult times in their own lives.*

*Fr Michael O'Toole and Sr Marg Carmody SGS shared breakfast with the Doogue family the following morning, before they continued their travels towards Timboon. They carried with them the gratitude of our Diocese to the King family and St Patrick's College Carlow for sharing Fr Paddy with us, the sense of how deeply he continues to be loved and how faithfully he fulfilled his ministry in Christ's name. In the words of St Paul, "I thank my God each time I think of you, and when I pray for you, I pray with joy".*

Marita O'Shea - Parishioner of the Cororooke Parish

Photos:

Top: Sr Kathleen Spokes SGS, Jill McCorquodale, Marita O'Shea and Fr Paddy's nephew, Niahll Doogue. Photo was taken in St Brendan's church with the banner made by parishioners for Fr Paddy King's funeral.

Bottom: Cororooke Parishioners at the evening gathering.



# Myanmar 2020



During January 2020, a small team of educators from our Diocese spent two weeks in Myanmar (Burma) in partnership with Catholic Mission Australia. This was the fourth trip undertaken, continuing a project that began in 2014 to partner with teachers in schools in Myanmar to develop teacher practice. This year, Myanmar leaders requested that the project also include education leaders to help develop governance and leadership skills.

St John's School in Hakka proudly opened its doors to show us its classrooms and its delightful students immersed in learning and eager to demonstrate their conversational English skills. From humble beginnings, St John's, supported by Catholic Mission Australia and without government funding, now has two completed buildings. They currently have two hundred students from Kinder to Grade 5 and are almost ready to house Year 6-8 students.

The group of eighteen educators who committed themselves to the four-day workshops comprised fifteen staff from St John's, two from St Patrick's in Kalay and one from Caritas. The sessions focused on learning through a variety of teaching strategies, the use of games and small group/partner work and relationship building. The teachers were eager to show us that they have remembered their previous learning, together with what they have learned from each other, and their plans to embed the strategies into practice. They invited us to come back and see them apply their learning in their schools.

Leaders of parishes, boarding houses and education settings formed the second group. They combined what they have learned about vision, governance and school improvement in their plan for a Diocesan Conference. The concept was presented to and approved by the Bishop of the Hakka Diocese, Bishop Lucias. Together, both groups valued activities that built relational trust and this enabled all the participants to engage in rich dialogue, sharing the issues, challenges and consistent practices involved in ensuring child safety.

The graciousness and generosity of the people of Myanmar was evident everywhere we went. People of all ages were eager to practice their English and expressed their heart-felt concern for Australians affected by the bushfires. This was evident when we visited St Patrick's school in Kalay and were given a tour of the new school. The Parish Priest, Principal and teachers each asked after our families and the schools in the Diocese.

Our last session was with young adults training at Pinyin Sanyae Institute of Education (PSIE) in Yangon. We were incredibly humbled by the enormity of the task ahead of them, as they head out to bring education to the most vulnerable in remote boarding houses, orphanages and communities. A truly dedicated mission.

That this opportunity to travel to Myanmar is a privilege is not lost on any of us. We've seen new buildings emerge which offer students a life-giving relationship to learning. We've seen emerging teachers renew commitments to make a difference to educational practice that will bring lifelong changes. We've learned about a rich culture and a people emerging from the past (with access to Wi-Fi that would make some of us in Australia most envious!). Pope Francis's image of "one foot firmly in the past and the other tentatively moving forward into the future" was evident. We saw, most truly, the Mission of Education in the Church alive and active. We came home filled with great humility in the face of such dedication and immense hope for the future.

*Alison Kenna (St Patrick's PS Camperdown and St Thomas' PS Terang),  
Samantha Meerbach, Sandra Harvey and Susan Crowe (CEOB) and Kevin Meese (Catholic Mission, Australia)*

## GOLDEN GATE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS 2019

*Fr So'n anointed and prayed with some residents of Golden Gate Lodge Ararat (supported accommodation) at a Christmas celebration in the Catholic Parish Centre on Barkly Street.*

*Those who minister to these residents prepared a beautiful Christmas dinner. Father Christmas made a guest appearance and thrilled them all with gifts.*

Joyce Cleary – Ararat Parish



# CELEBRATING 2019

An End of Year Mass for Sacred Heart School Casterton was celebrated on Sunday, December 15. The Mass included reflections on and celebrations of the 2019 school year and the announcement of the School Captains for 2020. The student leaders for 2020 are Nicole Cornish and Sandasi Ekanayake. These two students are role models as they always do their best, are kind, considerate and display initiative. They will be presented with their school captains' badges on February 15, 2020, at the Opening of the Year School Mass.

During the Mass, the families who had their youngest student graduate were blessed and presented with a gift from the school community.

Following the Mass, the Year 6 Graduation Ceremony was held. The Year 6 students were celebrated and farewelled. They have proven that they are ready for the next chapter of their lives, both socially and academically. We wish them all the best for the future.

Following the graduation, the End of Year Class Awards were presented which were for Academic Achievement, Most Improved and Religious Education. After the official proceedings, the parish and school communities gathered in the school grounds for a BBQ picnic to celebrate the end of the year.

As a school community, we look forward to what 2020 brings.

*Evan Wrobel - Principal*



## FLOWERS OF WAR

*St Malachy's Edenhope Primary School student, Holly, was listed as a finalist for the 2019 Shrine of Remembrance Poster Competition. Annually, Victorian Primary School students and classes are invited to enter the Remembrance Day Poster Competition. The competition looks for original entries that are eye-catching, colourful and imaginative and demonstrate a good understanding of the theme. The theme for the year was 'Flowers of War'. Students were asked to consider the many ways that people reflect and the use of floral emblems as symbols of remembrance. The Shrine's exhibition 'Flowers of War' is a great source of inspiration. Cornflowers, mountain daisies and violets are all represented in the large-scale commemorative wreath on display in the East Gallery. An interactive screen in the gallery offers information about each flower or plant.*

*Holly was invited to attend the Remembrance Day Service at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne as a VIP. After the service, the competition winners were announced by the Victorian Premier, The Hon. Daniel Andrews. There were a record number of entries for the competition this year, some two hundred and thirty posters, with a very high standard of artistic ability. Holly was among eight finalists. Holly entered a picture of a cross adorned with flowers on a black background. Her artistic statement was: A flower can bloom again, but it will never be the same. Poppies grow after the war, but it was never the same after the war.*

*Although Holly didn't win the competition, she said the experience was worth it. Holly and her family had front row seats to the Remembrance Day service at the Shrine.*

*Angela Kealy - Principal*

# ANNUAL GATHERING OF BDPSG



Who would credit that this little group started meeting annually 30 YEARS ago when the group was finding its way into pastoral ministry in some sort of official sense? Some of our founding members have gone to their eternal home and we miss them dearly. The rest of us continue to carry on, trying to remain faithful to our humble beginnings while at the same time welcoming new faces to our group and thriving on the new dimensions they bring to our gathering.

Once again a very peace-filled assembly (twenty in number) of our Ballarat Diocesan Pastoral Support Group members took place at Halls Gap from Sunday, October 20 until Wednesday, October 23. Our guest speakers, Margaret Hill and Fr Barry Ryan, made it a time of great learning for many of us as we re-claimed our faith, hope and love, wonder and awe.

This year the group welcomed a new face, Maureen McInerney from Horsham. Members enjoyed the comfort and tranquillity of the Pinnacle Holiday Lodge with our hosts Barry and Mimie. What an ideal place to reflect on our Cosmic Walk!

On Sunday evening after being well nourished by the food, drink and company, we gathered in the Conference area for our introductory session led by Sr Maree Holt csb. Members had a chance to re-introduce themselves and share their journey of the past year. We concluded the evening with a power point presentation reflecting on Creation put together from around Warrnambool by Mary Lancaster.

On Monday we were privileged to have Margaret Hill spend the day with us. Margaret led us on our "Cosmic Walk" using a series of paintings she has produced (two and a half years in the making!!!). Margaret had been commissioned by Earthsong back in 2014 to paint an Australian interpretation of the 'Story of the Universe – a cosmic walk'. These beautiful paintings provided the focus for our day of reflection on what it means to be an integral part of the great unfolding story. A prayerful ritual of the Cosmic Walk helped us to understand where we are in the 13 billion-year story. Margaret introduced us to the writings of Thomas Berry and in the afternoon we reflected on the Cosmic Christ. The Cosmic Christ refers to the view that all creation is sacred and manifests the Divine. ".....there is a divine manifestation in the blaze of the sun and the fall of night" (Pope Francis – *Laudato Si*).

On Tuesday morning we were again privileged to have in our midst Fr Barry Ryan who, in his own easy style, opened our eyes to new ways of living and understanding our faith. Barry presented us with a paper entitled "Ecological Sustainability and the future of the Church". The concluding sentence reads, "Attention to ecological sustainability means attention to all the inhabitants of the earth and their habitats. This is at the heart of the Church's future."

We concluded with a Prayer by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin sj, prepared by Sr Patsy Bourke. We thank our Bishop, Paul Bird and the CDF for supporting us in this venture. Thanks also to Pauline Books and Media for their continued support. And we thank God.

Clare Arundell

## ASSISTANCE IN ADVENT

*The Mini Vinnies group at St Patrick's Primary School Port Fairy ran two campaigns during Advent to help their school community focus on doing something for people in need in the lead up to Christmas.*

*For the Food Share Christmas Appeal, families were invited to donate food to Christmas Hampers. The school filled four laundry baskets with food items (45kg) which we then delivered to Warrnambool and District Foodshare for distribution to those in need.*

*On Monday, December 9, the Mini Vinnies held a fundraising day to raise money to support the SchoolAid 2019 Bushfire Relief Appeal. Students were invited to come to school dressed to fit in with the theme of Summer Fun. The Mini*

*Vinnies asked for a gold coin donation for the privilege of dressing up and they held a cake stall on the day as well. The school raised \$416.*



*The Mini Vinnies would like to thank all who have supported their Christmas campaigns. A fantastic achievement for all.*

Peter Sanderson - St Patrick's Port Fairy.  
Photo: Kate, Maddison, Charlotte and Grace with Dedy from Warrnambool and District Foodshare.



## ROSARY IN THE PARK



*Twenty-eight people from the Holy Family Parish in Swan Hill gathered on a beautiful Saturday morning on October 12, 2019 under a tree in Riverside Park, to participate in a world-wide chain to pray the Rosary. The Public Rosary is held out in the open in local communities every October to give public witness to our faith. It also endeavours to be a sign of hope in our troubled times and to invite and encourage others to likewise lift up their hearts and minds to God.*

*In October four years ago, Lake Boga resident Marilyn Foley responded to a call to host the first local meeting of this annual event here in Swan Hill. This initial public rosary attracted thirty-six people. Not content to wait another whole year to gather again, Nola O'Bree asked if they could meet every month.*

*A group commitment was made and Rosary in the Park was born. Ever since then, the parishioners*

## FAMILY MURALS



The Sacred Heart School Community Mildura was invited to participate in the 2019 Student Leadership Team's first major initiative for the year, in the form of a School Families Mural.

The mural is situated in the breezeway between the building at the front of the school and the building that houses the current Year 5 and Years 1 & 2 classes.

Each school family received a ziplock bag with a piece of fabric that had a vine leaf traced onto it. Families were asked to decorate the leaf in whatever way they saw fit, making it unique to their family. Some chose to have their family name embroidered on the leaf (either done professionally or handcrafted by a family member) while others decorated the leaf with fabric pens or paint. Again, some families included the names of all their children - those who are currently attending Sacred Heart, those who are past pupils and children who will be students in the future.

Local artist Steve Hedricks, the grandfather of one of our Year 2 students, designed and produced the background of the mural. It is a large vine, to which is attached each family's vine leaf. The mural is protected with glass sliding doors for longevity. When a family leaves Sacred Heart, or their last child graduates, they will receive their leaf during the End of Year/ Graduation Mass as a memento.

*Sacred Heart Primary School, Mildura*

*have continued to meet at 10am on the second Saturday of every month, come rain, hail or shine. In the cooler months they usually gather under the sun, in the sound shell. Twice, when there was really inclement weather, the group moved into the church and at Easter and Christmas, the tradition has emerged to gather at Teresa and Joe Taverna's home and enjoy their wonderful hospitality. The make-up of the group is never the same from one month to the next and new people are often joining in. Everyone is most welcome so feel free to come along anytime.*

Mary Kennedy

# Warrnambool 130

St Joseph's Parish Warrnambool celebrated 130 years since the completion of the Parish Church with a Mass on Friday, September 13, 2019. When the celebration was first suggested, it was commented that it is rare for 130 years to be acknowledged! In fact, our Leadership Team had been thinking for some time that in the present climate it would be good for the parish to have a time to celebrate - and 130 years of our beautiful Church fitted the bill perfectly.



It was a joyous occasion that we shared with a number of visitors, including religious sisters and priests with a connection to the parish over the years. Sr Aileen Coghlan and Sr Patricia

Vagg represented the Sisters of Mercy. Fr Bill Melican, Fr Bill van de Camp, Fr Eugene McKinnon, Fr Des FitzGerald CSsR, Fr Barry Ryan and Fr John Corrigan concelebrated the Mass with our Parish Priest, Fr John Fitzgerald.

Over the past seven years, our Archive Centre has been developed by our two Archivists, Dorothy Earl and Russell Anderson, and it was felt this would be an ideal time for much of the material they have collated to be shared with the parish. It was also a 'thank you' to the many who have had a hand in establishing our parish over the years.

The main part of the Church (without the organ gallery and the spire) was completed and blessed by Bishop Goold of Melbourne in 1872. Work on the final portion, including the organ gallery and the spire, commenced in 1886. The

grand opening of the completed Church was in September 1889. We didn't want to wait another twenty years until 2039 for the 150th anniversary, as many of us may not be around then!

During the three weeks prior to our celebration a number of parishioners shared their stories at each of our Sunday Masses. This was very well received and we heard wonderful stories of faith ... and appreciation of our parish community.

Following the Mass we adjourned to our Gathering Space for a celebration supper and to catch up with one another and the many friends who had travelled to celebrate with us.

The next morning, there was a ceremonial tree planting in the presbytery garden, followed by a walk through the Warrnambool cemetery where the priests, religious brothers and sisters



who served in our parish now rest. Dorothy Earl and Sr Marie Mansbridge RSM were our guides.

The preparation for and celebration of this occasion made us all think of the dedication and faith of former parishioners as they built a wonderful Church that gives joy to many and a very welcoming parish that we all appreciate.

Mary Lancaster and Leanne McElgunn

## HOPE FOR THE PLENARY COUNCIL

St Mary's Parish Robinvale has embraced the Plenary Council process. When Fr Jim McKay was away, the parish was lucky to have Fr Bill Goldman supply for some of the time and Fr Bill was well versed in the process of the Plenary Council. Fr Bill held an information session with about twenty-two people attending. During the evening, we watched Lana Turvey-Collins' overview of the Plenary Council via YouTube and then discussed in groups what we thought the Council should look at.

It was decided as a group that much has to happen on the ground here, so we scheduled another meeting to be held looking at the theme 'A Joyful, Hope-filled and Servant Community'. During this next meeting the group decided to do two things - to have a cuppa after each Mass at least once a month and to have an Advent discussion meeting once a week, then break and re-visit one of the other themes in the new year. The group met again before the Feast of Christ the King and had a small but excellent meditation and discussion.

A smaller number of people came to the most recent meeting but still very encouraging. Several people stayed for the cuppa after Mass so the process has started. Hopefully, these meetings will help lead us to a more fruitful parish, which can then lead to a more inclusive and welcoming Church.

Clare Jury - Parishioner

# CELEBRATING ART

Term 4, 2019 saw the grade 3/4 children at St Patrick's School in Camperdown creating artwork to integrate into their classroom inquiry unit. The children were learning about environmentally sustainable settings and the resource needs of animals who live in these environments. The children produced dioramas using recycled materials and shoe boxes for their sustainable environments. Some children created desert scenes for camels, alpine environments for moose, sub-Saharan scenes for lions and Australian native environments for kangaroos and koalas.



The children really enjoyed investigating and creating these surroundings for their animals.

Students were also invited to produce artwork for Dan Tehan as part of Christmas in Wannan. The students depicted their



own Christmas in Wannan by drawing, colouring and painting what Christmas means to them. Children drew family scenes, holiday and beach scenes, farm scenes, camping scenes and much more to represent their special Christmas day with their loved ones. The artwork was sent to Dan Tehan and was displayed in his office window in Warrnambool. There were many conversations and sharing of stories amongst the children as they looked forward to the excitement of Christmas and the holiday period.

*Tracy Hickey – St Patrick's School, Camperdown*

*Left: Christmas in Wannan - Shelby Mahony, Harvey Roberts, Piper Stephens & Matea McKenzie*

*Top: Dioramas: Paddy Hassett, Harrison Glennen, Victoria Buckle, Addi Simmonds, Dermot Conheady, Ned Trainor and Meg Lafferty*

# ALL SAINTS PORTLAND CELEBRATES



*A wonderful celebration, commemorating 175 years since the consecration of the first Catholic Eucharist in Portland, was held on November 3, 2019 at All Saints Church.*

*Many people attended the event, including the Mayor of the Glenelg Shire, Cr Anita Rank, and visitors from local and surrounding district churches. Bishop Paul Bird concelebrated the Mass with Fr Gregory Tait, Parish Priest.*

*Fr Gregory said the event, which included a Mass followed by a luncheon at Bayview College next door, was a wonderful community celebration. "We are very fortunate in Portland to have a rich history to be celebrated. The marking of the first Mass to be celebrated in a local Portland store by Archbishop John Bede Polding OSB, who travelled from Sydney in 1844, was an opportunity to reflect on the importance of occasions such as these."*

*In his homily, Bishop Paul gave a brief history of the occasion saying how much Bishop Polding's effort to travel to Portland would have been appreciated. "It cannot be underestimated what a highlight this would have been to the estimated two hundred and fifty Catholics who had made the new settlement their home, but had been without a priest in the community since their arrival," Bishop Paul said.*

*During the Mass, Bishop Paul rededicated the Sanctuary and its new furnishings, recently acquired from St Joseph's Church in Hawskdale, in particular consecrating the Altar before the celebration of the Eucharist as the centrepiece of the occasion.*

*Fr Gregory remarked at the end of Mass that it was wonderful to have the presence of the Good Samaritan Sisters whose congregation was founded by Archbishop Polding in 1857. Fr Gregory also reminded those present that the next occasion for celebrations at All Saints Parish will be in three years time when the parish marks 175 years since its founding in 1847.*



*Fr Gregory Tait, Parish Priest*

*Our Diocesan Community - March 2020*

# "IT TAKES A VILLAGE..."

## Diocesan Conference for RCIA

The Ballarat Diocesan RCIA Conference took place in Ballarat on Friday, November 16, 2019. Audrey Brown, Director of Catholic Education for the Diocese, steered an informative, interesting and engaging session. Bishop Paul Bird welcomed all those attending and led a discussion on three converts of the early church: an Ethiopian baptised by Philip, St Paul himself and Lydia whose heart was opened when listening to Paul.

We followed with shared reflections on conversions in our own lives. A panel of four speakers shared their stories of involvement in the RCIA process. On the panel were Judith O'Sullivan, Pastoral Associate Ballarat North, Sr Manuela Cabigas ccssjb, RCIA and Sacramental Programs Coordinator for the Diocese (who spoke of her experience in the Philippines), Dr Susan Crowe, a member of St Patrick's Cathedral Parish RCIA team and member of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and Fr Andrew Hayes, Parish Priest in Ararat where he is also Prison Chaplain. The speakers had varied backgrounds and experiences and gave us much food for thought. The evening finished with the launch of the "Diocesan Parish Handbook for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults" followed by perusal and discussion on its contents.



Julie Kelly from Pauline Books displayed books appropriate for RCIA. The display encouraged participants to recommend books to one another. Thanks to the organisers for an evening of inspiration and practical sharing. Not only did each participant take home a bag of goodies, each had an experience of community and a strengthened appreciation that "It takes a village".

Sr Kathleen Moran RSM

## State Conference for RCIA



People from the four Victorian Dioceses gathered in Ballarat on November 16 for the RCIA State Conference. The theme for the conference, "It takes a village...", was chosen by the planning committee as they wanted to highlight the importance of the parish community in welcoming the catechumens into the life of the Church.

The day began with prayer, which set the overall feel of the day – one of community, enthusiasm and sharing. Bishop Paul welcomed all to the conference and gave a brief overview of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. The facilitator for the day, Ms Audrey Brown (Director of Catholic Education, Ballarat), then introduced our first Key Note Speaker, Fr Kevin Lenehan, who

spoke to those gathered about the importance of community: "Created for Community: Receiving the Grace of the Other". We cannot live as Christians by ourselves – we all need others, as we have been created in and through relationship. Our nature was "breathed into being", from which arose our relationship of love and friendship with God.

Kevin emphasised the points that:

Each human person stands in relationship to everything else, to the whole of reality, and to God. This includes:

- to the natural world;
- to their culture;
- to their historical context;
- to other persons;
- to themselves, through interior self-awareness;
- to their own bodies and to the bodies of others.

*Every human person is unique, yet fundamentally equal in dignity.* (Lenehan, 16.11.2019) Kevin further reminded us that we are responsible for not only maintaining these relationships, but for recreating them when they are broken. Those who wish to join our community of faith through RCIA also need to recognise and to build relationships. "If you wish to become his disciples and members of his Church...you must learn to make the mind of Christ Jesus your own. You must strive to pattern your life on the teachings of the Gospel and so to love the Lord your God and your neighbour. Are you ready to accept the teachings of the Gospel?" (Rite of Acceptance of Catechumens)

Following this keynote address, we were fortunate to have a number of breakout sessions facilitated by those involved in RCIA from the different Dioceses. Ms Mandy Robinson explored the importance of "RCIA for children in your village" beginning with the question "What is the difference between a baptism program and the Rite of Christian Initiation (of Adults) adapted for children?" From the sounds coming from this group, quite a lively and engaging discussion

followed. Ms Mary Anne Payne explored the “Who, what, when, where and how of Dismissals” in her breakout session “Don’t dismiss the Dismissals.” She explained to her group that Dismissals afford the worshipping community the privilege of witnessing Catechumens being nourished by God’s Word in a special way, as they are given the opportunity to relate the Gospel to their faith journeys. Mr Anthony Kilmartin, Pastoral Associate from Shepparton, led his breakout group in investigating the question “How do we learn or come to faith?” Group members were given the opportunity to reflect upon their own faith journeys and were then reminded that we need to share these journeys with those with whom we work in RCIA.

Our second keynote address was presented by Ms Sharon Brewer who works for the National Centre for Evangelisation. Sharon spoke to the conference attendees on the challenges and opportunities of making our Church a joyful one in her address “Will they find Joy?” She used the themes put forward by the Plenary Council as a framework for her presentation. She asked us to think about why there are people wanting to join our Church at this time – a question we all often ponder during the RCIA journey. The response that we often receive is “They want what we’ve got”. They want the deep joy that can be found in our Liturgies, in our times of gathering together, in our times of prayer – they want an answer to the question: ‘Why do these people care for me?’

Our final breakout sessions were guided by Dr Julie Mitchell who took participants through an approach to spirituality, “Heart Wisdom”, which seeks to be attentive and responsive to a person’s interior experience of opening mind, body and spirit to the enabling grace of God. Ms Jacqui Giuliano from the Archdiocese of Melbourne presented a very practical workshop “Come and See: Exploring the practicalities and possibilities of the RCIA for your context.” Jacqui presented an overview of the rites, the roles and responsibilities of team members and particularly the role of the community during the RCIA journey. The conference concluded with acknowledgements by Bishop Paul and a final prayer to send us forth to continue our work with RCIA, with the hope of the community understanding that “It takes a Village...”

*Dr Susan Crowe – CEOB Education Officer: Sustainability, Liturgy and Special Projects*

## Why the Camino de Santiago?

*When I first thought about making the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage, my most important objectives were to explore, understand and enact two aspects of leadership: authentic leadership and leadership as presence. Being an authentic leader who is truly present with colleagues will help create a collaborative environment where risk taking is supported and where we are encouraged to learn by reflecting effectively on our experiences. As John Dewey says: “We do not learn from experience...we learn from reflecting on experience.” To be authentic, I need to truly know the person (myself) who leads. This personal and professional inquiry led me to the purpose of my Camino experience.*

*I wanted to take a step back and focus more on learning to be truly present with myself and other people. There was a need to remove myself from the busyness of my tasks and focus on being in the moment. Travelling to Spain, the away from home experience and then walking the Camino de Santiago, gave me the opportunity to learn to walk in a relaxed manner and to take the time to be truly present with myself and other people. I kept a journal each day and focused on the relationships I developed along the way.*

*Before leaving Australia, I prepared myself mentally for what I was going to commit to each day. I had two major goals whilst on the Camino: firstly, that I was not going to complain about anything over the eight days and secondly, that I and my two companions would climb every mountain together, no matter what that mountain was – whether it was blisters, extreme weather or literally climbing a Spanish Mountain. Inside the cover of my journal, I wrote a prayer which I said each morning before taking my first step on the Camino track and each day, I was aware of*

*the reflection questions that I had set out in my journal that would support me with my personal and professional inquiry.*

*When I entered the Obradoiro Square and saw the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, I had very mixed emotions. I was proud, excited and satisfied that I had reached one of the most spiritual destinations I have ever journeyed to. I had walked in the footsteps of St James, one of Jesus’ apostles, who had completed this journey to spread Christianity throughout Spain. I was sad because my first Camino journey had finished, but excited because it was now time to reflect on the journey and bring my reflections into my daily life. It was a journey of transformation which had a clear message about what I needed to incorporate in my life: the need to simplify my life, to look around and enjoy what is in the space, to let go of those things that weigh me down physically and mentally and don’t positively contribute to my life.*

*My final reflection is around the importance of choosing my state of being. My internal state of being is always broadcasted around me no matter what time of the day it is. It is crucial that I am in tune with my frequency and what I am emitting. This is what attracts people, events and circumstances into my life. It all starts from within! I am so eager and ready for the next adventure/journey and the impact this will have on my life.*



*Cathy Grace – Murtoa*





## An Italian experience

There's nothing quite like going and living in a country, experiencing its culture, the people and the language in a natural environment. While Australia's location makes this slightly hard to achieve at times, I was lucky enough to live the Italian lifestyle for three weeks in December 2019 thanks to the generosity of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat.

Last year I received a scholarship to participate in a country study program in Florence, Italy. A city rich in beauty was the perfect place to immerse myself in Italian life. I attended a language school, Scuola Leonardo da Vinci, from 9.00am to 1.00pm each day, participating in a class of eight students from all over the globe. The lessons were conducted entirely in Italian and I cannot express the incredible benefits they had. The intense exposure to the language with a native Italian teacher in such dynamic and engaging lessons reinvigorated my love of learning. The lessons were flexible and adaptable and followed our natural conversations in class. We were learning a rich, authentic language that we would use in daily life. I never thought I would be so excited going to school each day or that I would dedicate so much effort to the daily homework tasks. I was addicted to learning and improving. I noticed improvements in my fluency every day and I began to think less about what I wanted to say and just let the sentences pour out naturally and spontaneously.

Beyond this, my Italian lessons also opened my eyes to other ways of teaching. I regularly had conversations with my teacher, Carla about different approaches to teaching languages. I came to realise that students don't need a full grasp of the language to start using it in fun and spontaneous ways. For example, playing games like 'Taboo' can be so worthwhile in combatting anxiety around speaking.

Despite the great worth of these daily lessons with a native Italian speaker, they were not the sole benefit of an in-country study experience. Spending three weeks in the one city meant I lived like a local. I could roam the streets at a leisurely pace, hunt out the best local restaurants (not the ones filled with tourists) which were usually tiny, able to seat only about twenty people and sold glasses of vino for just 1.50 euro. I frequented supermarkets, bookstores, bars (for a breakfast croissant, not a rowdy night out) and the Christmas markets – the highlight of a European December!

Three weeks in Italy truly went by way too fast and this was an opportunity that I will always treasure. I cannot express enough the value of this experience. It improved my fluency, but just as importantly it improved my confidence and my understanding of Italian people and the culture. To top it all off, I also learnt how to make pasta the proper Italian way. Could it get any better than that?

*Samantha Dakis - English, Languages (Italian), Media Studies Teacher  
St Joseph's College, Mildura*

**February** marked the feast day of **St Josephine Bakhita**, patron saint of anti-slavery and human trafficking. Many Catholic schools, primary and secondary, from the Murray to the sea marked this event by gathering to read information about the forced labour and human trafficking that is occurring right here in Australia. Staff at the Catholic Education Office Ballarat and members of the Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission also participated in the initiative. Moving forward schools will have opportunities to investigate the supply chains providing their food products, uniforms, stationery, cleaning products and technology. Our aim is to demonstrate participation and subsidiarity by slavery proofing our Catholic schools and workplaces. Contact Rachel Smith at the Diocesan Social Justice Commission for more details. E: [socialjustice@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:socialjustice@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

# GOD'S BLESSINGS

St Joseph's School community Hopetoun gathered with parishioners on Sunday February 16, 2020 to ask God's blessings on the new school year. During Mass, Fr Glynn Murphy spoke to the students about the importance of trying their best in their learning this year and, just as importantly, about treating others the way they would like to be treated themselves, thereby showing God's love for everyone. Foundation students were presented with a prayer book as a memento of beginning their school journey. Staff were also commissioned to their role during the 2020 school year. Following Mass, the school and parish community enjoyed morning tea together.



Cynthia Maiden - Principal



## 'LET'S LISTEN AND DISCERN'

For a Listening and Discernment encounter for the Plenary Council, parishioners from the Gordon Parish chose the theme: 'How God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is a joyful, hope-filled and servant community'.

On Sunday, November 17, 2019 we gathered in Gordon for a simple shared lunch after Mass, before we settled down to explore the

discernment process as outlined in the 'Let's Listen and Discern' publication from the Plenary Council Facilitation Team. We called on the Holy Spirit to be with us and our invitation was truly accepted. Participants appreciated the communal discernment and the silence and listening led to some wonderful sharing and many possible actions.

Earlier, in October, we ran a 'pilot group' with the theme: 'How God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is Missionary and Evangelising'. This resulted in a submission to the Plenary Council which included proposals about outreach to families, the disengaged and the community, along with Vision Statements on behalf of the school and the parish.

There was much sharing about caring for people in need, prayer and liturgy opportunities, social justice and community. Some issues were on a national level and others on a local level. Appreciation goes to the twenty-five parishioners who took part in such a meaningful way, to the leaders and organisers, to St Patrick's school for the use of their premises, to the Plenary Council facilitation team for the process and to the Holy Spirit who was with us.

*Sr Kathleen Moran rsm*

*Photo: Sr Kathleen and Lin Bowers (centre) attend the Plenary Council session with Lana Turvey-Collins*

## CELEBRATING FAITH

Loreto College Ballarat held the first open Mass in many years in the Loreto Chapel on Friday, February 28. This was the first of a new series of monthly Masses the Loreto community is invited to attend and celebrate our Catholic faith in the beautiful Chapel.

Special thanks was extended to Fr Barry Ryan and Director of Faith and Mission, Ms Mandy Carroll who organised the Mass. We warmly invite all members of the Loreto community to attend one or all of our upcoming dates, commencing at 8am: on Friday, May 1, June 5, August 7, September 4, October 9.

Judy-Ann Quilliam - Director of Marketing and Development



# MISSION IN HORSHAM

St Michael and St John's Parish Horsham welcomed back Fr Richard Leonard SJ for a three-day mission. Fr Richard's mission in the parish two years ago was very well received so we invited him back to speak again. The mission was just prior to the beginning of Advent last year so we were challenged to reflect on and be prepared for what was to come.



Fr Richard also facilitated a school closure day for teachers from St Patrick's Nhill, St Mary's Warracknabeal, OLHC Murtoa and St Michael and John's Horsham. Approximately fifty-five teachers attended the day. Fr Richard spoke on the topic 'Catholic Identity: Jesus, Choosing and Mission.' He stressed that the heart of the gospel is love: sharing God's love with all, loving God, loving ourselves and loving our neighbour. We must be connected to those around us. If we are to encourage people to come to church, we must be connected to them. Students need to have hope.

The Mission itself began each morning with Mass, with a repeat session in the evening. About one hundred and twenty people attended each day.

Over the three days of the Mission, Fr Richard spoke on the following themes:

- Living the Gospel of Joy
- A Sane Approach to Jesus: "Jesus Christ for us and with us right here, right now"
- "Why bother Praying?"
- "What are we doing on earth for Christ's Sake?"

We need to take God out to the world, to engage with and have dialogue with the world and to seek out common ground. We must practice what we preach: love and care for the poor. We are challenged to "do something for someone!" It was a great Mission. Over the three days we laughed, we cried and above all we were challenged.

*Lesley Price – Horsham Parish*

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS!



*It is official. St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill is one hundred years old! What a wonderful time was had by all at our Centenary Celebrations. The culmination of many months of careful planning and preparation, our Centenary Celebrations were a wonderful expression of community spirit. It was a weekend where past staff, students and families gathered, not only to reminisce, but also to usher in a new chapter of our school's story.*

*The celebrations included a Family Fun Night on Friday, November 8, followed by the Parish Mass and staff function on Saturday night. On Sunday, November 10, the Parish Centenary Mass was held with school tours and memorabilia displays in the gym and on Monday, November 11, a school Mass was celebrated, followed*

*by the blessing of a new sculpture. The children then participated in the Kaboom Sports. Such a wonderful and fun time for all.*

*The centenary celebrations were a team effort and Ginny, Jason and I are incredibly grateful to our small and extremely hard-working team. In particular I would like to acknowledge the efforts of a number of people: Susan Domaille who together with Burton put together our amazing centenary webpage and memorabilia display, Maree McLean and Ebony Free who were instrumental in organising everything from pavers and balloons to invitations, catering and our time capsule, Belinda Davies who organised both our Centenary Masses, Naomi Bowd, Kate Dunstan and our choir and strings group who led the music we enjoyed at both Masses, Michelle Haeusler for throwing open the doors of St Mary Mackillop College for tours, and of course Fr Matt who supported us and all our endeavours this year.*



*Kate Quin – Principal*



## KARUTA TAIKAI SUCCESS

The fourth annual Karuta Taikai (Tournament) brought another success for students of Japanese in our community. Since our first tournament in 2016, this competition has evolved and grown to be one of the highlights of the year for primary school students in Ballarat. Karuta is a Japanese card game which originated in the 16th century. It was introduced to Japan by the Portuguese. In Japanese classrooms, Karuta is a fun way to learn the hiragana characters and word recognition.

Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree hosted the tournament. Ninety-six Grade 5 and 6 students took part. There were students from Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School, St Patrick's Primary School Gordon, St Augustine's Primary School Creswick, St Alipius Primary School Ballarat East, St Columba's Primary School Ballarat North, St Francis Xavier Primary School Ballarat East, St Thomas More Primary School Alfredton and Emmaus Primary School Mt Clear.

The day commenced with a dynamic performance by the Wadaiko Drumming Team from St Alipius Primary School. Each school fielded three teams of four pupils

who competed passionately and concentrated hard to recognise the hiragana sound that matched the reciter's call. Taking part in this tournament was a way to celebrate the children's learning. Many students had been practising for months beforehand and were excited to be part of this tournament and proud to represent their schools.



Another highlight for this tournament was having the Year 10 Japanese students from St Patrick's College Ballarat and Loreto College Ballarat assisting on the day. Having the older students assist on the day provided inspiration for the younger students who could see the future for their study of Japanese.

*Yoshie Burrows - Loreto College, Languages Professional Learning Community Leader*

## ANNUAL DIOCESAN MASS FOR RELIGIOUS



*On Thursday, November 14, approximately thirty-five members of the Diocesan Religious Congregations, priests, sisters and brothers, gathered at Nazareth House for the Annual Memorial Mass. We are very grateful to the Nazareth Sisters who graciously host this Mass each year, prepare the Chapel, lead the singing and provide the luncheon that follows.*

*Traditionally at this Mass we remember especially members of our congregations who have ministered in this Diocese and who have died during the year. This year we prayed for four Brigidine Sisters, five Mercy sisters, three Loreto Sisters, a Christian Brother and a St John of God Sister. May they rest in peace. Bishop Paul led us in the celebration and is always very supportive and affirming.*

*We welcomed two new leaders to the gathering, Sr Christina Aitken, Leader of the Mercy Sisters and Sr Ana Robertson, the newly appointed Leader of the Nazareth Sisters. We also welcomed Fr Jorge De Chavez OSJ and the Redemptorist priests that were ministering in the Diocese, Frs Des FitzGerald, Duan Mark, So'n Vincent and Lo'vin. The addition of their voices gave great tone to our singing! Bishop Paul and the Nazareth Sisters were presented with gifts as a token of our*

*gratitude. The luncheon, which was most appreciated, was beautifully prepared by Nazareth staff and concluded a very joyful gathering.*

Sr Maree Holt csb

Our Diocesan Community - March 2020



# FAREWELL

Fr Jim McKay was recently farewelled from St Mary's Parish, Robinvale. Fr Jim arrived at Robinvale in the January of 2015 after serving at the Cathedral and neighbouring parishes for almost two years. In 2020, Fr Jim takes up his new appointment in Charlton and neighbouring parishes.

With a spirit of enthusiasm Fr Jim sets off to begin his new ministry! May God bless the parishioners of St Mary's Robinvale and St Patrick's Manangatang as they move forward under the leadership of Fr Anthony.

The parish held a combined farewell for Fr Jim with Eileen Engelfield, who spent sixty years as a parishioner in Robinvale. St Mary's Robinvale said goodbye to both on Sunday, January 12.

After sixty years as a valuable contributor to the parish community, Eileen has decided to join five of her children in Melbourne. Born and raised in the tiny hamlet of Wimlet, which is approximately twenty miles from Ouyen, Eileen moved to Mildura where she began training as a nurse at the Base Hospital. Eileen met her future husband Leo at one of the local dances. They first settled at Curlwaa (between Merbein and Wentworth in NSW on the Murray River) but after the devastating floods of 1956, took the opportunity in 1959 to raise their growing family in the more prosperous lands of Robinvale by way of growing grapes for the wine industry. Together they raised twelve children, eight boys and four girls. Four of their children moved to Melbourne, with another one moving there in a couple of months. And so, with a heavy heart at leaving Robinvale with so many friends and memories, Eileen is starting her new life at a retirement village in the suburb of Pascoe Vale.

At 93 years 'young', she leaves a wonderful legacy – not only as a respected local – but also as a valuable and treasured member of the Catholic Women's League (CWL) for the entire sixty years and in her other important charitable role as a volunteer in the canteen at the school for many years. She will be missed but her legacy around this community will live on. We all wish her the very best in the years ahead! May God Bless you!

Fr Jim McKay

## COMMENCEMENT MASS



The Commencement Mass for Mercy Regional College Camperdown on Thursday, February 13, 2020 was a great celebration and a positive way to bring College members together. Fr Neville Stanislaus and Fr Gerry Prunty concelebrated the Mass. We were blessed to have the lovely voices of a number of students in the choir and Mr Luke Bourchier (guitar and vocals) and Ms Jacqui Hester (vocals) leading the singing.

The theme of the 2020 year is "We are the light", which is a response to John 8:12: 'I am the light of the world'. As part of the Mercy College community we are called to be a light for others and to reflect the light of Christ in our world. Readings, songs and images were chosen to highlight this theme throughout the

Mass and we sincerely thank the staff and students of Tindley House for their energy and positive attitude in leading the Mass. They took on different ministries with confidence and generosity of spirit.



Fr Gerry blessed new students, new and returning staff and the Year 12 badges. Students new to the College from Years 8 – 11 were presented with a Bible as a sign of their commitment to a Catholic Secondary Education.

Overall, it was a very special liturgy followed by a very welcoming and positive speech by Principal Sharon Gillett. Dux for 2019, Sondi Guthrie, inspired the school cohort to work hard but enjoy their senior years at school and finally School Captains, Toby Fleming and Gemma Harry, ushered in the new year with hope and energy to bring us together as a school community.

Ms Jo Saunders - Head of Liturgy

# house of welcome

The House of Welcome Ballarat hosted its annual Garden Party in Newington on Sunday, November 24, 2019. A beautiful sunny day and a warm friendly crowd was a welcome blessing. We were entertained by Susan from Nepal with a beautiful dance routine and Nay Htoo and his wife sang traditional songs from Myanmar (Burma) and spoke of their childhood in a refugee camp.

The holiday competition for two nights in Lorne at the Grand Pacific Hotel was drawn, along with the second draw of an off-road junior bicycle and a third draw of a pair of hand-knitted scarecrow dolls. Cake, plant and produce stalls were available while guests mingled and enjoyed afternoon tea. All funds raised assist vulnerable people including asylum seekers and refugees and their families. We are currently planning an art exhibition and auction with a wine and cheese tasting night in 2020.



All inquiries for volunteering or donations can be directed to: [annekav1234@gmail.com](mailto:annekav1234@gmail.com) or 0401175045.

Carmel Kavanagh

## RESPECT CUP

On Friday, October 25, 2019 Year 9 students from Mercy Regional College Camperdown, Trinity College Colac and Emmanuel College Warrnambool came together at Leura Oval Camperdown to hold the first 'Respect Cup' among schools at this end of the Barwon South West region. The event was first developed in 2013 by Barwon Health and partner agencies with only two schools in Geelong participating. Over time, more schools joined and the content of the day responded to developments in curriculum and state-based initiatives such as the Respectful Relationships program. Now, there are ten schools that participate in the Barwon event each year.

The event supports the engagement of schools with the mandatory requirement to deliver healthy and respectful relationships education through the Respectful Relationships Education curriculum. The Respect Cup aims to develop positive bystander actions, which in turn support speaking out against gender-based violence and discrimination. It is a call to action and an opportunity for schools to take a leadership role in promoting healthy and respectful relationships. The event aims to engage young people in discussions about healthy relationships and respect and where to get help if they or their friends are experiencing controlling, threatening or violent behaviour.

The day involved a presentation from the 'Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence' project team from South West Healthcare, followed by four workshops which centred around Respectful Relationships. Representatives from Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West, South West CASA, Victoria Police and the Department of Education facilitated the group workshops.

After the workshop activities, students from the three schools played in a mixed netball round robin competition. The winner of the day, Emmanuel College Warrnambool, took home the 'Respect Cup', kindly donated by Sinclair Wilson. Other local supporters of the day include Wannon Water and Camperdown Football & Netball Club. As it has been so successful in the Barwon region, the schools involved hope that this event will continue to grow.

People experiencing domestic violence should call the national domestic family violence counselling service on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) and Triple-Zero in emergencies.

For more information, please call:  
Emma Mahony, CEO Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West (03) 5500 5490.



# OVERSEAS MISSION

Sacred Heart Primary School, Mildura, began fundraising for the work of the Columban Fathers in Lima, Peru, in 2003 and the school community has continued this fundraising until the present time. The projects supported came through discussions with Fr Leo Donnelly (Dec 2014) and as a consequence many communities benefited from the generosity of our school families.

The projects to date have been: The Shared Table, St Bernadette's School, Children's Home, Home for Abused Children, Bakery Project for the women in the Motupe-Montenegro Parish, Vegie Garden Project and the Craft and Guinea Pig Projects in Cayara, out of Ayacucho.

There have been smaller projects that have grown out of the initial ones and these have provided support for many families who struggle to make a living. Recently, support was also given to Fr Joe Rhys, an Australian priest working in Checca in the Peruvian Andes and living in an isolated mountain area with the Quechuen communities. Some of these people live in extreme poverty. The people of Peru are grateful for all that we have been able to do for them and they value the knowledge that their brothers and sisters in Australia care for their welfare and their human dignity. We thank God for our wonderful, generous families.

The staff at Sacred Heart School Mildura believe that it is vital for our children, who are the future, to have a strong understanding of the work done throughout the world by the Catholic Global Community. It is also important that the children realise the responsibility of wealthy countries to help our brothers and sisters across the world, who are living in poverty and struggle to provide for their families each day. **Christ has no hands but ours! Together we can 'Make a Difference.' We just need to answer the call and say YES!**



In 2019, a Mission Immersion Tour was undertaken by Sacred Heart School and St Paul's School Mildura, was led by Fr Michael McKinnon (Parish Priest) and Marion Guthrie (Sacred Heart School). The purpose of this tour was to visit the

projects we have supported, walk with the people, hear their stories, share a little of their life journey, experience firsthand the harsh living conditions of some families and to gain an understanding of the suffering and loss that many have endured in the past. This tour was an amazing and humbling time and we are all grateful that we were able to share such an enriching experience which has given us inspiration for the future.

*Marion Guthrie*



## emma's call

*On January 18, on a gentle day in Ballarat, Emma Llewellyn professed her first vows during the Eucharist celebrated by good friend and pastor of local sisters, Bishop Emeritus Peter Connors.*

*Emma's immediate family, a few friends and associates and a large number of Sisters from throughout the Institute attended. It was indeed a heart-warming occasion. Many Sisters contributed to the celebration by taking on various roles, from proclaiming the scriptures to being part of the Sisters' choir and musical accompaniment. Emma's parents, Stephen and Maureen Llewellyn, presented the gifts in the offertory procession.*

*As part of the Rite of Profession, the Director of Initial Formation, Madeline Duckett RSM, called Emma to declare her intent: "Emma, what do you ask of God and the Church?" Emma enthusiastically responded: "I ask for God's merciful love and to share fully in the life of this religious community of the Sisters of Mercy."*

*Following a period of examination, Institute Leader Eveline Crotty RSM received Emma's vows. Veronica Lawson RSM then delivered a reflection in which she said few people in these times choose the path that Emma has chosen. "We thank God that some do. And we thank God for Emma's decision to continue along the path of Mercy in her quest for the living God. Emma learned mercy in a loving family. She has learned a particular refraction of God's mercy in her Mercy schooling and in her Mercy communities. Her profession calls us all to hear the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor with the compassion and loving kindness that is mercy," Veronica said.*

*At the conclusion of the Eucharist, Emma thanked those gathered for the gift of their presence as she celebrated her vowed commitment as a Sister of Mercy.*

*Emma has now joined Community South A in Perth and has re-commenced her teaching ministry at Aranmore Catholic College.*

Article courtesy of Just Mercy, ISMPNG (adapted)



The Fifth Plenary Council for the Catholic Church in Australia is moving toward its first session in October. Many parishes have gathered for ‘Listening and Discernment’ encounters and have submitted their responses. The six Discernment and Writing Groups have been busy preparing their papers that will shape the Plenary Council agenda and these will be published after Easter. We continue to seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and ask you all to keep the chairs and members of those groups in your prayers.

Pope Francis calls the world’s Catholics to care for our common home in *Laudato Si’*, his encyclical letter on ecology and climate change. Pope Francis says that “Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue.” Step one of the Catholic Earthcare *Steps to Ecological Dialogue* is centred around the formation of the heart. With an understanding of your connectivity to your local ecology, deeply felt and sustained commitment to its protection is enhanced. This connection to the country gives both empowerment and urgency about its future. This step focusses on ecological literacy: understanding your connection to nature and the theological and moral imperative to care for our common home. More information can be found at <https://catholicearthcare.org.au/step-1-formation-of-the-heart/>

**Photos:**

Front cover: *Inglenook Dairy, Dunnstown.*

Back cover: 1. *Mercy Regional College Camperdown* 2. *Interfaith week walk* 3. *Students after Shrove Tuesday Student Leadership Mass* 4. *Karuta Taikai Japanese Card Tournament.*

We are the Catholic Church of the Ballarat Diocese. We gather in the name of Jesus from the Murray to the Sea in interwoven faith communities. Spirit-filled, we celebrate and share our journey; reaching out to nurture all God’s people.