

CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of
BALLARAT



OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

News around the Diocese

No. 68 October 2022



Spotlight on Liturgy

In July this year, around three hundred people from all across Australia gathered in Sydney for a week of prayer and reflection about our mission as the Church in this country. It was an Assembly of the Plenary Council of the Church in Australia, bringing together lay people, religious, deacons, priests and bishops.

In the course of the week, the Plenary Council members exchanged views on a wide range of questions. We looked at how we can share the gospel of Jesus by showing practical care for people in need. We spoke of how we can bring a gospel point of view to the issues debated in our society. We discussed how we can play a part in caring for God's creation, so that our world will be a good home for people today and for the generations to come. People spoke with deep feeling and strong conviction about these and other aspects of the Church's life. Many elements are important if we are to live our Christian lives to the full. However, in this reflection I would like to highlight one particular element that is central – our celebration of the liturgy. In the words of the Second Vatican Council, the liturgy is “the summit and source” of the Christian life – the highpoint of our life as a Christian community gathered to praise God and a source of inspiration in our care for one another.

A few days before that Assembly in Sydney, Pope Francis published a letter with reflections about the liturgy. Pope Francis is well known for his practical Christianity, promoting care for those who are suffering in any way, whether young or old, those homeless because of bushfires or floods, or refugees displaced by war. He is also well known as an advocate for care for the environment. So we might not have expected him to write a letter about the liturgy. Yet it should not have come as a great surprise. Pope Francis recognises that the liturgy is a vital element of a fully Christian life. Our prayer to God is meant to go hand in hand with our care for the poor and the earth. So it was not really surprising that he should write a document highlighting the importance of the liturgy. His letter begins, “My dearest brothers and sisters, with this letter I desire to reach you all and I write to share with you some reflections on the liturgy, a dimension fundamental for the life of the Church.”

In the opening section of the letter, Pope Francis quotes a line from St Luke's account of the Last Supper. At the start of the supper, Jesus says, “I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer.” (Luke 22:15) The Pope also put these words at the top of the first page and they give the letter its Latin title, “Desiderio desideravi”. Literally, this means “With desire I have desired”. The English translation expresses this as “I have earnestly desired”. Pope Francis is emphasising the point that Christ earnestly desires to celebrate the liturgy with us. Just as he longed to celebrate the Last Supper with his disciples before he died, so he longs to celebrate the Eucharist with us in our time. When we celebrate the liturgy, we are responding to the invitation of Jesus to celebrate with him.



The liturgy enables us to encounter Jesus in tangible ways. Pope Francis emphasises that the liturgy is not some abstract spiritual experience but rather an experience of spiritual realities that comes through elements that we can see and hear and touch. “The Liturgy is done with things that are the exact opposite of spiritual abstractions: bread, wine, oil, water, fragrances, fire, ashes, rock, fabrics, colours, body, words, sounds, silences, gestures, space, movement, action, order, time, light.” (par 42.) Through all these elements of creation, we come to encounter the Creator and we are drawn close to Jesus as our Saviour and we are enlivened by the Holy Spirit who brings us the very life of God.

Pope Francis offers a fascinating thought that, from the beginning of creation, God was thinking of us and of our celebration of the liturgy. “The prayer for the blessing of baptismal water reveals to us that God created water precisely with Baptism in mind. This means that when God created water, he was thinking of the Baptism of each one of us.” (par 13)

Drawing on the teaching of Pope Leo the Great, Pope Francis observes that what was visible in the Redeemer during his earthly life has now passed into the liturgy. “From the very beginning the Church had grasped, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, that that which was visible in Jesus, that which could be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands, his words and his gestures, the concreteness of the incarnate Word – everything of him had passed into the celebration of the sacraments”. (par 9)

The Pope speaks of a sense of wonder at how God has come close to us through the “paschal deed” of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We can also have a sense of wonder at how God continues to come close to us through the liturgy in which we celebrate Jesus' life, death and resurrection in our own time. “The astonishment or

wonder of which I speak is not some sort of being overcome in the face of an obscure reality or a mysterious rite. It is, on the contrary, marvelling at the fact that the salvific plan of God has been revealed in the paschal deed of Jesus (cf. Ephesians 1:3-14) and the power of this paschal deed continues to reach us in the celebration of the “mysteries”, of the sacraments.” (par 25)

Pope Francis encourages us all to develop “the art of celebrating” the liturgy. He writes that all the baptised are called to grow in this art. “This is an attitude that all the baptised are called to live. I think of all the gestures and words that belong to the assembly: gathering, careful walking in procession, being seated, standing, kneeling, singing, being in silence, acclamations, looking, listening. There are many ways in which the assembly, as one body, (Nehemiah 8:1) participates in the celebration. Everybody doing together the same gesture, everyone speaking together in one voice – this transmits to each individual the energy of the entire assembly.” (par 51)

While emphasising that the whole assembly is called to grow in the art of celebrating, the Pope highlights the role of ordained ministers. He observes that the one leading the celebration will have an effect – for good or ill. “In visiting Christian communities, I have noticed that their way of living the liturgical celebration is conditioned – for better or, unfortunately, for worse – by the way in which their pastor presides in the assembly.”

For all involved in liturgy – both those who lead and those who participate as members of the assembly – Pope Francis encourages ongoing formation in the art of celebrating. This can happen through “formation for the liturgy and formation by the liturgy”, through study that enriches our understanding of the liturgy and also through the actual experience of celebrating the liturgy. Regarding study, he writes, “From the beginning of the liturgical movement much has been done in this regard, with precious contributions from scholars and academic institutions. Nonetheless, it is important now to spread this knowledge beyond the academic environment, in an accessible way, so that each one of the faithful might grow in a knowledge of the theological sense of the liturgy.” (par 35) Regarding formation by the liturgy, the Pope refers to the growth that comes through an attentive and prayerful celebration week by week and year by year. “I think of the regular rhythm of our assemblies that come together to celebrate the Eucharist on the Lord’s Day, Sunday after Sunday, Easter after Easter, at particular moments in the life of each single person and of the communities, in all the different ages of life.” (par 36)

A few days after Pope Francis published his letter about the liturgy and liturgical formation, the Australian Plenary Council underlined the central role of liturgy in the life of the Church in Australia and encouraged liturgical formation for everyone. To promote people’s full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy, the Plenary Council urged renewal in liturgical catechesis and formation at national and diocesan levels. In our own diocese of Ballarat, there have been opportunities for liturgical formation over the years. I hope the message of Pope Francis and the provisions of the Plenary Council will encourage us to build on these efforts, so that each community in our diocese will grow in the art of celebrating the liturgy. This will deepen our communion with God and with one another and will enrich our whole life as a Christian community.



Bishop Paul Bird CSSR

IN THIS ISSUE

- From the Bishop
- Season of Creation
- Cathedral Windows
- Plenary Council 2022
- ACU News
- World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly
- Archives on the Move
- Little Feet Big Footprints
- Mosaic to celebrate Feast Day
- Parish News
- Life is exciting
- Faith in Action
- Mini Vinnies
- CatholicCare Victoria Housing appoints new CEO
- Centenary Celebrations
- “A pedagogy of interconnectedness”
- Thank you for giving... “Common Threads”
- Feast of St Mary MacKillop
- The Feast of St James in Yanaoca
- Wonderful KSC
- Stained Glass Remembrance
- Assisting in Parishes
- Gathering Again

OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY (ODC)

A joint publication of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat and Catholic Education Ballarat.



The Editorial Committee of ODC wishes to thank the many people who have contributed to this issue. We also acknowledge the support through sponsorship of the Ballarat Catholic Development Fund and Australian Catholic University - Aquinas Campus.

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 March 2023. All contributions to ODC may be forwarded to: OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY, PO Box 576, Ballarat 3353. Phone: (03) 5337 7179 Email: odc@ballarat.catholic.org.au Web: www.ballarat.catholic.org.au



SEASON OF CREATION

The Season of Creation began on September 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and ended on October 4, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology beloved by many Christian denominations. The Season is the annual Christian celebration to listen and respond together to the cry of Creation: the ecumenical family around the world unites to pray and protect our common home, the Oikos of God. The 2022 theme was “Listen to the Voice of Creation” and the symbol is the burning bush. We are urged to listen and hear the cry of the earth as never before.

The symbol of the burning bush evokes the words of the God of Israel in Exodus 3, “I have heard their cry...I know their sufferings...Come, now! I will send you...I will be with you” (Ex 3: 1-12). This symbol/logo reminds us that, “The prevalence of unnatural fires are a sign of the devastating effects that climate change has on the most vulnerable of our planet. Creation cries out as forests crackle, animals flee and people are forced to migrate due to the fires of injustice. On the contrary, the fire that called to Moses as he tended the flock on Mt Horeb did not consume or destroy the bush. This flame of the Spirit revealed God’s presence. This holy fire affirmed that God heard the cries of all who suffered and promised to be with us as we followed in faith to our deliverance from injustice. In this Season of Creation, this symbol of God’s Spirit calls us to listen to the voice of creation.”



Listen to the
Voice of Creation
SEASON OF CREATION 2022

At the launch of this year’s Season of Creation, Fr Jostram, Coordinator of the Sector on Ecology and Creation at the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, reminded us that “to listen to the voice of creation, we must recapture the ability to contemplate the beauty of God’s creation.” Rachel Mash, Provincial Canon for the Environment in the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, invited us on the same occasion to move “from a theology of plunder to a theology of wonder.” We care for what we love.

In the face of climate change, the task before us can seem so overwhelming that we can be tempted to leave it to others to address the fragility of the earth community. The earth itself cries out for us to play our part and Pope Francis is urging us to listen. “The sweet song of creation invites us to practise an “ecological spirituality” (LS 216), attentive to God’s presence in the natural world”.

Looking after our common home is not just limited to a specific time. There are excellent resources on the Season of Creation website and the Laudato Si’ Movement website to enable us to embrace a “theology of wonder” for the sake of our endangered earth. We might pray the Prayer for the Season of Creation or the prayer for our Earth from Laudato Si’. We might listen to the wisdom of the scientists and of First Nations peoples who have cared for the land for so long. We might familiarise ourselves with the history of the Season of Creation and invite others to join us in this. We can engage with the Laudato Si’ Action Campaign, a program and public commitment to make communities, institutions and organisations around the world, journey to total sustainability in the spirit of Laudato Si. Resources are available from the diocesan website.

Fr Kevin Maloney - Vicar General

Image: Sun and smoke at Lake Wendouree (Jan 2020) blachswan, CC BY 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons

cathedral windows

When St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat was finally consecrated in 1891 by Cardinal Moran of Sydney, it was the first Catholic Cathedral consecrated in the Australian Colonies, making it today Australia's oldest consecrated Cathedral. St Patrick's Church commenced in 1858 when the foundation stone was laid. However, nowadays no one is sure where this foundation stone is located.

The stained glass windows were introduced in 1883, the first being that in the Sanctuary. Following this were the Lady Chapel window and Blessed Sacrament Chapel window. These three windows were made in Germany and a slight variation in colour to the other windows can be noticed. They were installed in May 1890. The remaining windows were gradually added to, until the final one in 1910. Of these, the first was presented by the Loreto Sisters representing St Brigid, Abbess of Kildare (note her Crozier, the traditional mark of a Bishop) given in memory of Bishop O'Connor. On the opposite side of the narthex is St Patrick's window, donated by the third Bishop, Bishop Higgins (note the crozier piercing Aengus through the foot). Both these windows have the Holy Spirit uppermost.

The windows on the south side depict the parables; the Workers on the Vineyard, the Good Samaritan, the Ten Maidens, the Prodigal Son, the Weeds and the Wheat. The windows in the south transept are of the burial of Jesus and the Resurrection.



'Hardman' cut into the glass at the bottom of the window. This firm appears to have supplied most of the windows, apart from the sanctuary, throughout the 19th century and early 20th century.

In the early 1950's the 'elegant stone tracery' in sandstone was found to have deteriorated badly. The windows were removed and dispatched to Melbourne for re-leading of the stained glass. All the supporting stonework was renewed in Hawkesbury River stone, the best in Australia, by Lodge Bros of Melbourne, whose workmen from Malta undertook the stone-carving work. The project was completed at a cost of 20, 000 pounds.



The windows on the north side depict miracles; the Son of widow of Nain restored to life, cure of the man born blind, cure of the woman with a haemorrhage, the ten lepers, the miracle of the loaves and fish, the Gerasene demoniac, the epileptic demoniac, the daughter of the Canaanite woman healed. In the north transept the windows depict the Annunciation and the visit of the Magi (Epiphany). The final window on the north side near the front entrance to the Cathedral is of St Patrick, Missionary & Bishop, patron of the Cathedral Parish and the Diocese of Ballarat. His feast day is celebrated on March 17.

These windows are documented as having been supplied by John Hardman & Co. of Birmingham, England, as obviously is the Prodigal window, which has the name

AMAZING GIVING

It was absolutely amazing to see the number of donations that were brought in for the Vinnies Winter Appeal at St Mary's Primary School, Swan Hill. This culminated in a whole school tally of over 1500 items.

The Student Representative Council worked very hard to collect these items from classrooms and put them into bags ready to transport down to our Vinnies store.

A very big thank you to all families who sent in different items to be donated to help families in need during winter. This was all part of reaching out and helping others just as Jesus teaches us to do.

Belinda Davies – Religious Education Leader



PLENARY COUNCIL 2022 - REFLECTIONS

My experience of the Plenary Council is one of many highs and lows, of confusion and challenges: physical, mental and spiritual and of successes and friendships. I am still struggling with putting everything into context and getting my head around being involved in something of such profound historical significance for us, the people of God in Australia. To have had even a tiny part in the shaping of such powerful and far reaching decrees is both humbling and horrifying. It is something I find that I have nothing to compare with and so for now at least, it sits out on its own and remains a unique experience.

Of the many highlights were the daily Masses, the morning prayer and beautiful spirituality of the 'Welcome to Country'. I was touched by the music and the passion and courage of many speakers in their interventions; and I was in awe of the small band of committed organisers who seamlessly wove everything together. I struggled with the physical elements of: cold, wind and rain that seemed to penetrate everywhere, as well as the suspicion, agendas and politics that also surfaced from time to time. I recall that in the First Assembly I really struggled on the Wednesday, wondering if I would be able to get through the rest of the week, and the Second Assembly also had its own dramas played out at the halfway mark.

Wednesday as it turned out, was a pivotal turning point in the Assembly. It had the potential to derail the whole four years and end in disaster. But it didn't, thanks to the graciousness, respect, sensitivity and level-headedness on the part of many. What could have been 'collapse' turned into a deep commitment to go forward together recognising our differences and our common desire. In the end, it became a graced time where the love and unpredictability of the Holy Spirit was palpable, making new beginnings and new ways forward.

I came out on a high, as I think many did, happy that we had made a good start but that there was still much to do, as there is in any living organism. I think about what differences there might have been had we been able to meet in person last October; but we will never know. There seems so many areas that could be developed further but always, the way forward begins with a single step. I am reminded of the Gospel of Martha and Mary - the Church could very easily be like Martha, because there is so much that needs to be done but unless we remain at the feet of Jesus, focused on him, listening to Him, in vain do we labour. We must stay close to Jesus and listen with humility to what the Spirit is saying. As Archbishop Timothy said in the closing Mass, "He must increase and I decrease."

Marie Shaddock



My position as a member of the Plenary Council was bestowed on me in one of the rare occasions that perhaps my age and gender have for once come in handy for me, not only in the Catholic Church but also in society. From one of the first meetings that I facilitated in the second discernment phase, I was told that, "I should go to the Plenary Council and what's more I should speak up for women." I am proudly formed by the education of the Brigidines, the Faithful Companions of Jesus Sisters, Mercy Sisters and Loreto Sisters and if there is one consistent value that has been instilled in me from these strong capable women, it is that my voice should be heard and what's more it should be loud, articulate and should always be speaking for people that need it most in our world. It was a privilege to be involved in the Plenary Council knowing that I walked with and for all women in our Church.



Inevitably, the second assembly will be remembered for the third day when the motions that involved the empowerment of women failed to pass. Standing in solidarity with the women in our Church is something I will always remember. I felt the importance of being there and though we were silent in our protest as we stood at the back of the room, we were loud in our actions. The women that had approached me in the lead up to the assembly were with me at this time and it was an honour to stand with other women and men as we made it known that we were not going to accept this decision. When you read such reports that this was a political stunt that was highly orchestrated and it was done to intimidate is laughable. The women that stood up on this day were hurt and what's more they were not going to accept for themselves and for all other women in our Church being treated in such a way.

This action has stayed with me. What has also stayed with me, and it has become a motivator for me moving forward with my role within the Church, was the thought that I voiced when I sat again at our table "What am I going to tell my daughter?" This has been front and centre when discussing the Plenary Council with my colleagues, family, other like minded Catholics whom I have met because of the Plenary Council or with friends who ask "why do you stay?" My daughter and generations of females to come deserve equity and equality within our Church. Like men, women have much to offer and they should not be pigeon holed into the nurturing and mothering role that particular women at the Plenary Council wanted and were vocal and organised about in achieving. We should have choice, roles should be there so that we can hear their voices, so that we can see them participating actively in roles that show all capabilities.

These are not new and ingenious ideas. The Plenary Council showed the Catholic Church is capable of listening and acting, they showed this very clearly on day three. They looked around, they read the room, they adjusted the program and they set a new agenda. This gives me hope. We too, as strong, capable and faith filled women showed what we were capable of on day three. We need to continue to be vocal, organised and loud in our approach in order to continue to set this new agenda. To quietly walk away is not an option.

Felicity Knobel



From Bishop Paul's homily at Mass on July 17: *Three hundred people from all around Australia gathered in Sydney in early July for a week of prayer and reflection about our mission as the Church in this country. It was an assembly of the Plenary Council of the Church in Australia, bringing together lay people, religious, deacons, priests and bishops. The celebration began with Mass at the shrine of St Mary MacKillop in North Sydney. In the following week, there was Mass each day at St Mary's Cathedral. The meetings were held in the college next to the cathedral.*

In the course of the week, the Plenary Council members shared their views on a wide range of questions. For example, there was discussion of the contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholics can make to the Church. There was a renewed commitment to responding with justice and compassion to those who have suffered abuse in the Church and to doing all we can to make the Church a safe place for everyone. We looked

at how we can share the gospel of Jesus by our actions as well as by our words, by showing practical care for people in need as well as by bringing a gospel point of view to the issues debated in our society. There was discussion about how we can be witness to the equal dignity of women and men, and particularly how we might enhance the role of women in the Church. We reflected on the central place of prayer in the Church's life and the importance of education in the faith, not only for children and young people, but for people of all ages. We looked at how lay people might share with priests and bishops in governance in the Church. We discussed how we can play a part in caring for God's creation, so that our world will be a good home for people today and for the generations to come. You can read the details on these various topics on the Plenary Council website.

I would simply like to highlight the importance the Plenary Council gave to listening to the views of each member. For much of the week we were sitting at tables in groups of nine people. As each topic was considered, each person was invited to share their view for up to two minutes, with the others at the table simply listening. Then we were invited to say what we were hearing. Only then were we invited to have a general discussion on the topic. There was appreciation of the value of listening so that we might all learn from one another. This is in line with the observations of Pope Francis about the benefits of listening. Pope Francis has spoken about "a Church that listens and realises that listening is more than simply hearing. It is a mutual listening in which everyone has something to learn. The faithful people, the College of Bishops, the Bishop of Rome: all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth."

I was pleased to see that there was such appreciation of the value of listening during the Plenary Council. I hope we can foster that same spirit of listening in our diocese as we consider how we can put the decisions of the Plenary Council into practice. In that way we will be a Church that listens, a Church in which everyone has something to learn, the faithful people, the priests, the bishop, all listening to each other, and all listening to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth.

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR

ACU Ballarat optimistic in 2022



The Aquinas Campus of ACU in Ballarat welcomed students and staff back to campus this year after two years of lockdowns and online classes along with carefully managed, masked and distanced practical classes. It has been a joy to see so many happy faces back on site and to be able to gather together in person once again.

Enrolments this year are strong and a number of campus improvements have either taken place or are scheduled to take place. We are renovating several classrooms to transform them into active learning spaces which enable students to engage with technology and collaborate with each other in new ways. In the School of Education, we are investigating the use of Virtual Reality to find new ways of learning and teaching that make use of these amazing immersive digital technologies. This year we are also working with Catholic Schools in Swan Hill on the pilot for the Teach Together Hub, which is about not just student teacher placements, but a long-term relationship between ACU and the schools. One of the goals for this program is to expose metro students to regional living in

the hope that they will decide to make the 'tree change' and take up permanent positions in regional schools after graduation. We also hope we can extend this to other regional areas within the Diocese in the future. The National School of Education are also excitedly preparing for the launch of the fully online Bachelor of Education (P-10) for 2023. This offering will support rural and regional students to become fully qualified teachers without having to move away from home.

Our Nursing, Paramedicine and Physiotherapy students continue to shine in their classes and their placements. Despite the disruptions of COVID, we were able to graduate student cohorts on time with their full quota of practical placement hours. Our Health Sciences faculties are also preparing to increase our enrolments by 15% in 2023 to address some of the shortfall in nursing regionally, nationally and globally. There is still a lot of work being done to manage COVID and ensure that our students, patient populations in care, and the broader community are being kept safe. This has challenged our staff to implement individual and tailored responses rather than the blanket approach adopted in the state in 2021, but it is a challenge they have met well. Many of our final year nursing students are working as RUSONs and this is helping their transition to practice in 2022

Overall, there is a sense of positivity on campus. There's something about the ethos here at ACU that means students don't just learn valuable professional skills, but also gain an understanding and knowledge of the importance of community engagement and the urge to make their world a better place by their presence in it.

*Professor Bridget Aitchison
Campus Dean (Ballarat) and Deputy Head, National School of
Education (Ballarat & Regional Victoria)*

Our Diocesan Community - October 2022



World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly 2022

Pope Francis proclaimed the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly to be celebrated on the fourth Sunday in July each year – July 24 in 2022. The Day is marked near the Feast of Sts Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. Parishes, schools, aged care facilities and other ministries were encouraged to find creative ways to celebrate the contribution of older people to their families and communities.

Reflections from around the diocese can be read below:

Geraldine Mugavin rsm:

Being invited to write to acknowledge World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly was a bit of a shock. I do not qualify as a Grandparent (having chosen another way in life) and at times certainly feel I qualify 'as elderly' being a 'beginning of the second world war baby'!

Dad married 'the girl next door' (in Killarney) and moved to a dairy farm in Woodford (just outside Warrnambool). I am the eldest of seven children – four girls and three boys, with seventeen nieces and nephews and twenty-one great nieces and nephews. I like to avail myself of every opportunity to meet up with the two generations following me. I still have two aunts by marriage and one by birth.

I'd go so far as to say that during life's travels I have met maybe thousands of people! When in Mum's company on the Warrnambool beach over Christmas she used say 'you never go anywhere without meeting someone you know'! And that was fairly true.

I believe I have had a rather blest life – travel, places of ministry from the Murray to the sea and even Darwin, good health and being well provided for.

As the years have slipped by I have had the ability and resources to reach out and contribute in ways suitable to my ability ... in the parish and in support of groups in the wider community assisting young people with a need.



Monica Sheehan:

It can be said that grandparents and the elderly have a significant impact on the values that people cherish and live their lives by. Personally, I was lucky enough to grow up with beautiful grandparents. Fortunately, the wisdom and positive values of not only my grandparents, but other older family members as well, have created and shaped the values that I treasure and live my life.

When reflecting on my grandparents, the first thing that comes to mind is the impact of family values and priorities that emerge from growing up surrounded by loving and caring grandparents. When I was in high school, I asked my Nan what impact religion had on her life, to which she responded that 'the values of Christ, such as being loving, caring, non-judgemental, the belief in the importance and dignity of each person, the caring for the environment, recognising that the world is still evolving and that we are part of that world, and are all connected, all impact how I live and think.'

Looking back, these values are a common theme within my family. On both sides, these values stand out. I believe the impact of grandparents' beliefs and values transfers through generations by both actions and words. I have vivid memories of when I was young and my Gran would take us for walks near her house. Regularly, she would bring a plastic bag and pick up rubbish on the side of the road as

she went. She explained the importance of keeping the environment clean and not creating messes. This has made me appreciate our environment and created a core value for not just me but also my siblings and other people we have an impact on.

I have been fortunate enough to have been surrounded by loving, caring and non-judgemental grandparents and older people growing up and their positive values will continue to influence my perspective and character as I grow older and make decisions throughout my life. I hope one day that I will have the same positive influence on my family as my grandparents have had on our family.



Therese Winter:

On May 21, 2022 our suspense was finally over and our much anticipated new baby granddaughter arrived into the world. Amelia Louise Winter arrived weighing 8lb 2oz. We had no idea of the joy and love that a face-time call could bring and we are in awe of today's technology. We were able to witness our children showing us their newborn daughter/our first granddaughter, and the delight and happiness was palpable.

To our surprise it was a girl, after a family of many boys!!

The birth of Amelia has been the most wonderful news to share with our family and friends. Conversations with acquaintances revolve around her welfare and many photos are shown with pride. She is so lucky to have such loving great grandparents, grandparents, aunts and uncles and many cousins who share in the joy of meeting and showering her with their love. We feel so blessed she has entered into our lives.

Being a grandparent is so wonderful and refreshing for our family. We love seeing her regularly and marvel at how quickly she is growing every week. We look forward to our family events, knowing we will all gather and share the cuddles of our sweet beautiful newborn girl.

We await and anticipate a future with our precious granddaughter; looking forward to her visits and sleepovers, first milestones and sharing our family

stories with her. We look forward to celebrating many events including her first christmas, birthday and holidays. These events will become magical again as we will have a beautiful granddaughter to love and cherish and perhaps spoil a little!! We will delight in watching her enjoy these events and grow up in our family with unconditional love.

Mary Lancaster:

Since I was invited to write a few words about my 'take' on being an older person, mother of two and grandmother of two, I've been mulling over what that means to me. My grandmothering was very hands-on, but they were good times and I treasure the memories. We still have a good relationship and my now adult grandson often comes to spend the evening playing Scrabble!

I'm of a generation that wasn't regarded as being an adult until the age of 21 – so it was a very different world from today, when the age of adulthood seems to be going down rapidly. I have to admit, I naively thought wisdom would come to me when I reached 21, but I must confess I'm not sure whether my pot of wisdom is very full even now!

We've lived in Warrnambool since 1978, coming from London. Warrnambool was something of a shock to the system – a place where it seemed everybody was related in some way. However, we settled well into the community and are grateful for the life and friendships we have here, especially when we look at what's happening in the wider world.

The community at St Joseph's was especially welcoming and supportive, something I felt even more when my husband died two years ago. I'm grateful for the many opportunities I've been given to participate in parish life. I've been involved in bereavement support, RCIA and liturgy preparation – and now, even in IT! I'm really enjoying that challenge.

As regards wisdom - there is still much to learn and I just hope my brain holds out for a few more years...



Archives on the move!



Over the past two years, the Catholic Diocesan Historical Commission archives have gradually been prepared for relocation to a new centre in the diocesan offices. In an effort to establish archives, which follow national “best practice” in collection care, archive management and access, great care was taken to design the space for this collection. Established with an exhibition, conservation and research area, the archives will hold two large compactus for archive books, reference material, a library and rare books on Ballarat and its environs. On the first floor, rooms will store objects and material connected to the priests and Bishop's collection.

Various grants have been applied for and awarded to support the development of the archives. A grant from the National Library of Australia funded a Conservator

to assess archives maintenance at the Bishop's Office. A Veterans Affairs grant was directed at the conservation of the highly significant Mons Edward O'Sullivan Goidanich WWI Travelling Altar. Further funding through the City of Ballarat's “Community Impact Grant Programme” paid for the acquisition of six display cases and magnifying glasses. The support through the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Foundation funded eight new plan drawers for vestments, architectural plans, maps and drawings.

The opening of the archives is planned for late October with set programs organised for 2023. Anyone interested in assisting in the archives or if you have any questions on caring for archives, please contact Dr Samantha Fabry for more information at archives@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph 0415600180.

Year 6 primary school students from St Mary's Clarkes Hill, St Brendan's Dunnstown, St Michael's Daylesford, St Patrick's Gordon, St Brigid's Ballan and St Augustine's Creswick are participating in an initiative aimed at developing personal and interpersonal growth and awareness, as well as networking opportunities, as part of their final year at primary school.

This initiative is aimed at giving our senior students, our young leaders, the opportunity to know themselves, and each other, in community; to create and connect. It is an initiative that brings together all Year 6 students from six smaller, rural Catholic primary schools in our area. The Year 6 students from each school will come together and spend time both face to face and virtually, throughout the year, to build networks (of other students heading to the same secondary school), and to provide them leadership opportunities that their individual schools may not be able to offer in the same way.

The program will include excursions, guest speakers and school visits, as well as providing opportunities for them to take meaningful action in their communities in a variety of ways, including areas such as Catholic social justice initiatives. They are meeting face to face regularly and also virtually. One of the sessions they participated in earlier this year was a day spent with the College Captains of Damascus College, Loreto College and St Patrick's College, discussing leadership and the transition to secondary school.

On Friday, July 29 they all met at St Brigid's Ballan for a liturgy celebrated by Fr Justin Driscoll, who also facilitated a session on Catholic Social Teachings with them. We look forward to seeing this initiative grow each year and provide important opportunities for some of the wonderful young leaders in our Diocese.



Little Feet Big Footprints: A Young Leaders Initiative

Ethan Corfee - former Principal of St Michael's PS Daylesford



Mosaic to celebrate Feast Day

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School in Alfredton created a mosaic that many hands worked on for many months. The inspiration for the mosaic panels come from our school motto...*With God first, We will Live, Learn and Thrive!* It was blessed by Parish Priest, Fr Ed Moloney and launched to celebrate the Feast Day of St Thomas More on June 22, 2022.

The first panel comes from the words of St Thomas More himself... “God First.” This panel is about our Catholic school community. There are the symbols for the sacraments and the way we celebrate together and learn about the Catholic Faith. The fire of Confirmation, the bread and the wine of Eucharist, the waters of Baptism, the Bible and if you look very carefully...there is an image of St Thomas More, our school’s patron saint.

The second panel contains messages and symbols about how we want to live, what kind of people we want to be in our thoughts, actions, the way we treat ourselves, each other and the world we live in. The heart stands for living with kindness and care in how we act, think and feel. The hands are about putting kindness into action...in all we do because we are the hands of God here on earth. We surrounded the heart with a rainbow which represents living our lives with hope in the future and finally, the water and plants represent caring for the environment and being stewards of God’s creation.

The third panel is about “where”...where St Thomas More school is and who we are. Surrounding our school emblem, our school cross we see the Arch of Victory which is the gateway to Alfredton, the swans on the Lake symbolising Ballarat, the Southern Cross in the night sky representing Australia and Bunjil...reminding us that we live and learn on Wadawarrung country.

The fourth section focuses on the ‘learn’ part of our motto...with symbols of some of the things we learn about or do at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School...such as music, maths, sport, reading, writing, thinking and asking questions about the world we live in.

The final panel looks at the idea of thriving! Other words that can describe thriving could be words like flourish...bloom...grow...prosper...reach goals...achieve...be happy, healthy. The flowers and tree in this part of the mural symbolises our St Thomas More community growing strong, healthy and proud, thriving now and into the future!

Simon Duffy – Principal, St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Let us not soundproof our hearts; let us not remain barricaded in our certainties. So often our certainties can make us closed. Let us listen to one another.

Pope Francis - Oct 2021

THANK YOU KATHLEEN



On September 10, 2022 St Patrick's Cathedral Liturgy Committee farewelled Kathleen Hayes after many years of service on the Committee. Kathleen has been instrumental in preparing and providing formation for many ministries at the Cathedral. She has been involved with the Baptism Program, RCIA and the formation of Altar Servers. Kathleen has also been Sacristan, Minister of the Word and Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion and conducted many sessions to assist in the formation of parishioners who have taken on these important Liturgical roles.

For in excess of forty years, Kathleen has been a loyal and constant support to the Cathedral Administrators and Priests in Residence. She has been the go-to person for all aspects of the liturgical life of the Cathedral Parish and has willingly offered support and assistance in all matters large and small.

We thank Kathleen for all she has done and continues to do for the Community of St Patrick's Cathedral and wish her many blessings, peace and fulfillment in the coming years.

Susan Crowe - Parishioner

Around the table: Kay Curran, Deneise Walsh, Kathleen Hayes, Judith Gustus, Les Stewart, Fr Ed Moloney, Susan Crowe, Helen Lee, Vincent Sully.

Synodality is an expression of the Church's style. The word "synod" says it all: it means "journeying together". And the movement is the fruit of docility to the Holy Spirit, who directs this history, in which all have a part to play.

Pope Francis (tweet) - Oct 9, 2021



Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop

On Monday, August 8, 2022 St Mary's Primary School in Hamilton celebrated the Feast Day of St Mary MacKillop.

Our celebration began on the Sunday with a whole school Mass with the parish community.

On the Monday we had another celebration and prayer at school, where children participated in many different activities such as:

- learning about who was Mary MacKillop;
- what makes a saint;
- Mary MacKillop quotes - and the meaning of these;
- Mary MacKillop organisation - Mobile Kindy in Fiji;
- Mary MacKillop organisation - and how they are working in different parts of our world today.

We shared a Baker's Delight pizza lunch where we raised money for the Mobile Kindy in Fiji.

We had a wonderful day and learnt how we can all be inspired by Mary MacKillop's example.

Lindy Cullinane and Mharni Gordon
Religious Education Leaders



Life is exciting



Life as a newly ordained priest is exciting. Having been appointed Assistant Priest to St Paul VI Parish and residing in Warracknabeal, I have spent a lot of time in the car. I was given the mandate by the Parish Priest, Monsignor Glynn Murphy to dedicate 70% of my time toward school ministry - of which we have six. I find myself trying to fit in a nursing home visit or two when travelling out to St Patrick's Primary School in Nhill, or St Joseph's Primary School Hoptoun, or Our Lady Help of Christian's Primary School Murtoa. This is necessary, as there are some fifteen nursing homes in a parish which spans an area once cared for by seven priests - now we are two.

Priestly ministry has been very satisfying. I'm constantly busy, but never stressed. The weekday Mass parishioners at St Mary's Warracknabeal are a tremendous support and encouragement – keeping me grounded and connected to a flourishing community – providing me with stability whilst I traverse around 1000kms weekly and attending to an array of responsibilities. Time spent in prayer in the morning and evening however is what I credit most to this pace of life I am currently enjoying. Knowing all the time that He whom I serve and spend my energy for is with me, watching over me and is the One really doing the work – pouring out His grace upon the ground I till and the ground I don't. Keep me and all the priests of the diocese in your prayers.

Fr Matthew Restall

Faith in Action

"It is in giving of ourselves that we gain so much" St Patrick's College Ballarat recently held their annual Social Justice Faith in Action Assembly. The Assembly focused on the ways our Christian faith compels us to act for good in our community and urged students to get involved and help out their 'neighbour'. A call to a generosity of spirit is what Year 12 student, Lochlain Kelly, encouraged students to undertake at the Faith in Action Assembly. "Each of us can offer our time, our knowledge, our skill, our generosity, the gift of our presence, to help our neighbour", Lochlain said.

The College's Faith in Action domain has many varied programs that run throughout the year, from conducting a weekly tutoring program in the western Melbourne suburbs for primary and secondary level students with a refugee background, to helping a local primary school with the provision of odd jobs. "The commitment to our tutoring program is not just one of academic assistance. Powerfully, the program offers the gifts of relationships and social support that responds to the dignity of those involved. In a spirit of service, we show up and ask, 'what can we do to help?' Little actions can sometimes have a big impact," Lochlain said.



Lochlain Kelly



Aidan Hanrahan

At the assembly, St Patrick's College welcomed back 2019 College Captain, Aidan Hanrahan. Aidan was an active leader in the Faith in Action domain and credits this as one of the most rewarding experiences of his life. "Some of the greatest connections and memories I've made whilst at the College were made in this group."

"Faith in Action, without a doubt, influenced the person I've become today. If I didn't see that lightbulb moment when tutoring a disadvantaged student, or the eyes of a homeless person light up when you give them what might be their only meal of the day, I might not have discovered my passion for giving to others and making myself better," Aidan said.

At the conclusion of the assembly, St Patrick's College was honoured to present several cheques to some major charity partners thanks to the fabulous fundraising efforts of students and families, who generously donated and supported the College Edmund Rice Day Walkathon. As Old Collegian Aidan Hanrahan so eloquently summarised in his address to the Faith in Action Assembly, "It is in giving of ourselves to the College community that we gain so much more back."

Rachel Bryant - Marketing and Development Officer

Our Diocesan Community - October 2022

MINI VINNIES AT CAMPERDOWN



The Grade 4 Mini Vinnies volunteers at St Patrick's Primary School in Camperdown have been doing a wonderful job helping those in need. The group regularly meet at lunchtimes to discuss and organise their projects and then they go around to each classroom to share their ideas with the rest of the school and encourage everyone to support their projects.

Earlier this year they organised a Winter Appeal in which they collected coats, blankets, jumpers, beanies and

winter clothing. Recently they organised a food drive for non-perishable food items and they also held a casual clothes day to raise money for the local St Vincent de Paul Centre.

Andrew and Maureen from Camperdown's St Vincent de Paul Society came to collect the items and speak with the students about the importance of their work and how these items will be used. Students will also have an excursion to the St Vincent de Paul Centre to see how the most vulnerable in our community are being served.

The students are looking forward to designing and writing their own Christmas cards to share the peace and love of God's spirit and bring joy to others.

Tracey Hickey



Introduction to Parish

Fr William Lowry became Assistant Priest in Star of the Sea Parish, South West Coast after his ordination on July 22. Below are Bill's words of introduction to the Parish:

I thought I'd take the opportunity to introduce myself, so that you can all get to know your new priest a little better. My name is William Peter Lowry, though most people call me Bill. I'm not related to the Lourey's down this way nor to the test cricketer!

Yes, I am an Essendon supporter, and no, I will not be changing even despite an 18 year finals hiatus. I have many and varied interests. I heard golf is a respected clergy pastime, so I've decided to take that up. I also enjoy bike riding, fishing and reading.

I'm originally from Woodend, though my parents are now in Anglesea, and fostered a connection with the Ballarat Diocese through my studies in education at Australian Catholic University in Ballarat in the early 2010's.

Though I attended Catholic schools growing up, the Christian religion had little appeal for me. It was really by the grace of God and the good example and encouragement of Catholic laymen and women and priests that I found myself in the seminary in 2016. I think I am in that regard, a living witness that miracles do happen!

My intention in the parish is to try to be that same presence and encouragement. For each of us, our journey of faith is different, but it's always the same Spirit, the same Christ who invites us, draws us into a closer relationship with himself.

As we all set out together on this new journey as one parish, let us encourage one another to be the 'change' we want to see in our parish communities. To be light-bearers, bringing the lumen (the light of Christ) to the gentes (world) as the Second Vatican Council so encouraged us to do.

I can't promise that I will do everything right in my time here, or that I won't get on your nerves or say something out of turn. What I can promise you though, is that I will listen deeply, that I will care for and encourage each of you and try my best to be present, especially in your times of need. Please help me in this task also by doing the same, praying for me, providing me feedback, helping me identify and respond to the pastoral needs of our parish, so that I may be the priest God and the community of Star of the Sea Parish are calling me to be.

CatholicCare Victoria Housing appoints new CEO

Many parts of Australia are experiencing a housing crisis. Data from the Victorian Housing Register from December 2021 found of the 54,600 people who were on the social housing waitlist more than 17,500 were from western Victoria.

Factoring in soaring cost of living prices, this situation is only bound to get worse. CatholicCare Victoria Housing, formerly Centacare Housing Services, newest Chief Executive Fiona Williams understood the plight new renters were facing trying to break into the property market. Fiona started her role on July 5, 2022 replacing Ross Wheatland who served in this position previously since December 2020.

"The cost of living is increasing due to a range of factors, all of which are making it difficult for lower income families to make ends meet," Fiona said. "There are simply not enough homes for people to rent at prices they can afford." She said this issue is one of her priorities and is something CCVH is committed to addressing.

"There is always demand for social housing and with the current economic environment it's likely that demand will increase," Fiona said. "CCVH has developed a strategy to grow the amount of social housing we can provide and I'm privileged to be given the role of implementing that strategy."

Her other goals for the organisation include improving the quality of affordable housing CCVH make available as well as improving the accessibility of their services. "I will aim to provide good quality housing which is accessible for those who need it - by that I mean is close to transport, shops, schools and create housing which meets people's needs," Fiona said.

CCVH has secured funding from Homes Victoria, through the Big Housing Build, an initiative dedicated to improving the availability of social housing, to enact these changes. "CatholicCare Victoria Housing is currently delivering a number of funded projects which will result in increasing the numbers of properties we provide for social housing," Fiona said. "We will look for other opportunities to secure funding to deliver more housing for those who need it in our community."

Prior to working for CCVH, Fiona was Executive Director at Ontoit, an infrastructure advisory company specialising in the delivery of social infrastructure. Fiona was involved in the planning, delivery and maintenance of public, community, out of home care and disability properties across Victoria through this position.

She also played a part in establishing Homes Victoria. "I'm very excited to be in this new role. It's a fantastic time to be involved in social housing and to join CCVH," Fiona said. "My role provides me with the opportunity to apply the knowledge I gained from many years managing Victoria's public housing asset portfolio to CCVH."

She said her transition to CCVH has been one where she has been made to feel "incredibly welcomed". Chair of CCVH Neil Jens said he was "thrilled" to have Fiona join their organisation. "Fiona brings a depth of experience in housing services - as well as exceptional strategic and leadership capability - that will be an asset to Centacare Housing Services Limited as we embark on this new phase of growth," Mr Jens said.



Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Malvika Hemanth



As part of the Religious Education Unit on Sustainability and Care for Creation, the Year 3 and 4 students at St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill organised a Nude Food Day at school. On Wednesday, August 17, 2022 staff and students were asked to bring lunch boxes that were free of single use wrapping and packaging.

It was wonderful to see how many got on board with this great initiative and brought food in reusable containers or in compostable wraps. Not only do they show a commitment to improving our environmental impact, nude food days also significantly reduce the amount of paper rubbish at school.

Belinda Davies – Religious Education Leader

St Augustine's commemorates

St Augustine's Catholic Church in Creswick celebrated its 150th anniversary on September 17 and 18, 2022 - or rather the 150th anniversary of the opening of the current Church and belltower, built by the labour of a strong local community of the faithful and the vision of the local priest Father M.J. Shanahan.

Parishioner Neil Doolan is part of a collective of people who wrote a book for the anniversary - which he stresses is the 150th of the Church building itself, and not the Catholic Church in Creswick, which goes back considerably further. "There was actually (a church) built in 1856, a wooden church," Mr Doolan says. "Creswick was a mining town, but it was a little bit like a Wild West settlement. Really, that's the way it looks when you see some of the photographs. The Creswick Museum have a panorama taken in Creswick's main street in 1865. In the very background, you can just make out the original wooden Church. Some of those buildings are still here now, and, of course, descendants of the families are still here."



By 1856 some of those first Catholic families - Coffey, Sheahan, Glasheen, Fox - had built a wooden Church-school. In just two years it had almost fifty students and the Roman Catholic population had swelled too. By 1865, nine years later, a congregation of three hundred pushed the building to its limits. A new building was due and Fr Shanahan delivered it. Fr Shanahan was just five years into his ordination when he arrived from Ireland. Partial to riding around Creswick on a spanking white horse, he soon set about building in stone what had been timber. Furiously fundraising, from his arrival in 1869, it took just a year for the stonework contracts to be signed.

The Church was completed in 1872 - a gothic splendour and testimony to its congregation's generosity - and that of the entire Creswick community. On the day of the Church's opening, it was filled 'with the most respectable congregation of all denominations', according to the Creswick Advertiser, many of them having contributed to the building's construction. Fr Shanahan spent another sixty-seven years in the Ballarat diocese.

The book marking the sesquicentenary of St Augustine's was released in September. "When you think about everything that's happened, literally, inside that Church: all the people who would have gone there begging for help, in desperate times, or thanking God for something that they've had that turned out good in their life - if you think about that Church, it really would have been a huge emotional bank account," Neil Doolan says. There was a celebratory Mass at noon on September 18 followed by lunch, with a gallery of hundreds of photographs, artefacts and memorabilia. For book orders email staugustines150th@gmail.com

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier – text by Caleb Cluff (edited) and photo by Luke Hemer

The following story is from the book:

St Augustine's Creswick and sculptor Leopoldine (Poldi) Mimovich OAM (1920-2019)

Monsignor James McInerney was Parish Priest at St Augustine's, Creswick from 1951 to 1983 and became aware of sculptor Leopoldine Mimovich.

Mimovich, a renowned artist and sculptor whose work is largely religious in nature, migrated to Australia from Austria after the second world war with an established reputation as an artist and sculptor, but initially had difficulty in applying her artistic talents in Australia. Eventually, Mimovich's talents were acknowledged and today there exists a rich legacy thanks to her talents and efforts.



In the early 1970s Monsignor McInerney commissioned Mimovich to sculpt the centrepiece (The Eucharist) of a new wooden altar to conform to the reconfiguration of the Church brought about by the Second Vatican Council. This work was then followed a couple of years later by a commission to sculpt a 'Creswick' Madonna and Child which hangs in the church today. The sculpture is hewn from Queensland Beech timber which was sourced by Alan Eddy, the Principal of the then Victorian School of Forestry, Creswick. The wood had to be delivered green to Mimovich who then cured it for a year before starting work on the sculpture. In about 1974, Monsignor McInerney then commissioned a matching work, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and again this was made from Queensland Beech sourced by Alan Eddy.

There are a number of other works by Mimovich in the Ballarat Diocese including a work commissioned by Sr Anne McMillan rsm for Damascus College Ballarat and a bronze work (Paschal Mystery) in the Diocesan offices. A more detailed account of Leopoldine Mimovich can be found online at <https://art.catholic.org.au/2020/04/06/leopoldine-mimovich-immigrant-artist/>



Portland celebrates

Portland, founded by Edward Henty in 1834, is the oldest European settlement in this part of what was the Port Phillip District of the Colony of New South Wales. The Colony of Victoria was not proclaimed until 1850. Early records do not contain any recognition of Gunditjmara country and its peoples as a dynamic indigenous region.

The establishment of Portland Catholic Parish followed the 1844 visit of John Bede Polding OSB (Archbishop of Sydney) to Melbourne, Geelong and thence to Portland, in response to the pleas of the Catholics of Portland for a permanent priest to administer pastoral care in the region. It was described in the "Portland Guardian" that the "public services" of the archbishop, "were well attended, Protestants, forming as large a proportion of the congregation as members of the Catholic Church."

In 1847 Archbishop Polding formally proclaimed the Parish of All Saints Portland with All Saints Parish being the oldest Parish and having the oldest school in what has become the Diocese of Ballarat.

Rev Fr John Kavanagh arrived by ship in Portland on September 19, 1847, to take up his pastorate; signing himself as "Minister of Portland & Port Fairy". This pioneer Priest ranged far and wide in his duties as Pastor to the Catholics of the region. Between his arrival and his departure to another appointment in early 1849, his journeys on horseback around the region included visits to (what became) Hamilton, Dunkeld, Heywood, Mt Gambier, Wannon Falls, Penshurst, Coleraine and Harrow. Fr Kavanagh set about the building of the first Catholic Chapel on land set aside by the Colonial Secretary's Office

in 1846. This chapel was always envisaged to be a church/school building and served the community as a church until 1862 and as a school building until its demolition in 1978. From 1847 to the present day, All Saints has been served by thirty officially appointed Parish Priests.

It is important to remember that the impetus for the establishment of our parish was the insistence and determination of local Catholics. It is notable that Catholic Education of the children and youth of the parish resided in the hands of dedicated lay Catholics from 1849 - 1885, until the arrival (in December 1884) of the Sisters of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Loreto Sisters).

All Saints Parish Primary School is today served by a team of lay teachers who are dedicated to the Parish School as a principal mission in the life of the local Church and wider community.

Over the weekend of August 27 and 28, 2022, the parish held numerous celebrations to mark this historic event. On Friday, August 26, a Mass and BBQ were held at the



Parish School. Before Mass began, the students gave a presentation telling the community what they had learnt about the parish and its life over 175 years. On Saturday, August 27, the parish hosted a dinner at the Royal Hotel with Bishop Paul Bird CSsR in attendance, along with over eighty others. A local Celtic music group entertained the gathered group. Following dinner Mr Bernard Wallace, a prominent local historian, gave an address on life in Portland in 1847 and what that life was like for Catholics and the wider pioneer community. Sunday, August 28 saw the culmination of these celebrations with the Anniversary Mass, celebrated by Bishop Paul. After the Mass, a commemorative tree planting took place in the front garden of the Parish Church. Lunch was then served at Bayview College by all who could attend.

*Compiled by Rev Gregory AD Tait PP
30th Pastor of All Saints Parish Portland.*

Penola Excursion

Recently, we went to Penola on a bus with lots of people from St Joseph's in Coleraine. We went to the playground and met some of the people from St Malachy's in Edenhope and we made friends with some of them. We played on the playground before walking to the Mary MacKillop Centre just around the corner. Mary MacKillop is known as Saint Mary of the Cross and she died on August 8 a long time ago. Mary MacKillop opened a school so the poor people could learn. God told Mary MacKillop to take care of the poor people and she was very wise. We went inside to the old school and it was pretty cool. We saw where she slept and ate in the school house.



Foundation/Year 1 students - Sacred Heart Primary School Casterton

Inter-generational Nature Club Inspires learning friendships

The former St Therese Little Flower Church has gradually been transformed into a fabulous new creative space for the Loreto College Ballarat VCAL/VCE Vocational Specialisation program. The facility now includes a kitchen, flexible function and creative space as well as an outdoor pizza oven (built by the students), hot houses and vegetable garden, and the students have been using the fresh produce for all kinds of wonderful creations including their own labelled pasta sauce. It is an exciting space that is creating a plethora of new opportunities for our students, including the Botanikids program.



Ballarat's Botanikids and Loreto College students have collaborated to create an inter-generational Nature Club. Parents, grandparents, pre-schoolers and teenage students come together to engage in learning about nature and the wonders of water, soil, seeds and leaves. Each week the Loreto College students create fun and hands on activities for the pre-school students and their carers to play, while enjoying the company of each other. This is a great new community event, which is growing in popularity and forming new friendships between Loreto College and Botanikids.

The Botanikids program is designed by retired primary school teachers and its educational focus is nature related. The program participation is part of the Loreto College VCAL integrated curriculum, where the students have the opportunity to engage in real world workplace opportunities.

VCAL Coordinator, Jill Wheatland said, "There is significant educational value for the students, the young children and their families. The Loreto students work closely within a multigenerational learning space. They design early childhood learning opportunities through the activities they create, they engage with the parents and also the grandparents who attend the program."

The feedback from the families, volunteers and students has been overwhelmingly positive. One of the parents in attendance shared her thanks, "I just wanted to say thank you. My daughter had a great time and I really felt a part of the community which is a lovely feeling. You should be quite proud of these girls in the program, they relate well with us, the children and the parents too. A real inter-generational community endeavour seldom seen. Thank-you."

Judy-Ann Quilliam - Director of Marketing and Development



FOUNDATION STONE CENTENARY AT CHARLTON

On Sunday, October 23, 2022, St Joseph's Community Charlton celebrated 100 years since the laying of the foundation stones of the Presbytery and the School/Hall. In 1921 a very successful bazaar was held to raise funds to build a new Presbytery. Enough money was raised to also build a new School/Hall.

On October 28, 1922 Most Rev D Foley, Bishop of Ballarat, blessed and laid the foundation stones of the Presbytery and School/Hall. Fr Cornelius Kelly was the Parish Priest.

The main part of the Presbytery has not changed much, although in the 1950s a housekeeper's flat and a new additional shower area were added. Alterations to the kitchen and laundry area were also made.

The School/Hall was used as both a school and hall until 1959, when a new four roomed school building was erected and Fr Charles Mulcahy was Parish Priest. The School/Hall was still utilised as a school room when numbers demanded, but is now used exclusively as a hall. Functions include catering for funerals, dances, concerts, parties and other events. Mass was held on Sunday, October 23 followed by a tour of the Presbytery and School/Hall. A light luncheon was provided.

Anne Kenny - Parishioner

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION LEADERS CONFERENCE

Eighty leaders in Religious Education from both secondary and primary schools gathered at the Mercure Ballarat on August 18 and 19 to hear Dr Emmanuel Nathan speak on "A pedagogy of interconnectedness: Reimagining the teaching of the Bible for an Australian Catholic Religious Education context". Dr Emmanuel Nathan is a senior lecturer in Biblical Studies and Comparative Theology and the Director of the Research Centre for Studies of the Second Vatican Council at the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, Australian Catholic University, Sydney.



Emmanuel guided participants in an exploration of Scripture through Bibliodrama, as a number of those present took on roles based on the Old Testament Scripture of "Elisha and the Shunammite Woman" (2 Kings 4). He facilitated this activity with humour and a gentleness that ensured all were confident that they could reimagine the teaching of the Bible in an age where many of our students are confused by the stories held within the Bible as they grow from literal understanding to a more symbolic understanding of it. Subsequent to this, Religious Education Leaders have been using Bibliodrama in their classes with students with some success.

A pre-reading article "The Role of the Bible in Religious Education Reconsidered" (Pollefeyt & Bieringer) had been sent out to those attending with a series of reflective questions that were discussed as table groups. Responses from these discussions were then relayed to the whole group with Emmanuel further elaborating on the importance of using Scripture well in Religious Education.

To further aid teachers in this task, Emmanuel had the group explore a number of commentaries on Genesis, demonstrating that each piece of Scripture is looked at and interpreted differently by each of us. To assist us with our teaching of Scripture the use of good commentaries can only help the teacher in their role. The Catholic Identity and Mission Team from Catholic Education Ballarat prepared prayers for the beginning and conclusion of the two-day conference. Participants were invited to enter into this time of prayer through words, song and reflection.

Dr Susan Crowe - Education Officer: Sustainability, Liturgy and Special Projects

BUSY, BUSY, BUSY

St Alipius Parish Primary School Ballarat East celebrated NAIDOC Week late in term 2 with the whole school community. The school's twenty-seven Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students were presented with their own NAIDOC top, designed by one of their Aboriginal staff members, Jared Spicer. A NAIDOC launch for the whole community was held in the McInerney Centre, followed by a day of celebration with Indigenous Outreach Projects and their hip hop crew. It was a wonderful celebration of the strong culture that exists within the school community.



In term 3, 12 students were appointed Laudato Si Student Action Group members. The Laudato Si Student Action Group received funding from Ballarat Community Health as part of their "Go 4 Green" initiative. This funding will

support the group to work within their school community to take care of their common home. They have plans to improve lunchboxes, implement a new worm farm, improve the waste management system and have a First Nations community member in to speak about the history of caring for this land prior to settlement. Student agency and voice are so important and the members of this group work to empower each other, knowing they are the last generation that can prevent irreparable damage to our planet.



On a wintry day recently, St Alipius Parish School Principal Emily Clarke braved the conditions to get dunked in an icy tank of water, all in the name of a good cause - Fight MND. The students relished the opportunity to dunk Emily, as well as some other courageous staff members. The fundraising event attracted the attention of local radio station 3BA and host Paul 'PT' Taylor joined Emily on the dunk tank. Through raffle tickets and donations, the school raised over \$2500 for the Fight MND Foundation, in the pursuit to find a cure for Motor Neurone Disease. It was a fantastic day for the community!

Emily Clarke - Principal

Our Diocesan Community - October 2022

Thank you for giving...

On Tuesday, September 6, 2022, Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School Murtoa welcomed Fr Matt Restall to our parish and together celebrated a 'Gifting Mass' at St Mary's Church, Murtoa. The focus of this Mass was to reflect and pray for community members who need assistance in a wide range of situations. As a school community, we offered up a variety of supplies of food and toiletry items that were generously collected and donated by our students, staff and families over the weeks leading up to the Mass. The generosity and kindness of our community can be felt through seeing our students presenting baskets to the Church altar, giving people access to much-needed food and items for everyday living.



Margaret Howison from St Vincent de Paul joined us and spoke to us about how our prayers and supplies help those in need. Margaret accepted the baskets of supplies on behalf of St Vinnies and the Christian Emergency Food Centre. Margaret praised our students for their behaviour, attitude, understanding and reverence towards making our world a better place.

In our learning, we are collectively and collaboratively being proactive in helping the less fortunate. In working with St Vincent de Paul we know we will definitely make a difference to many people's lives and make our world a better place - "We are called to live in justice. We are called to love tenderly and walk humbly in all we do!" An amazing team school community effort - thank you, everyone! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlMvM6Ff7g>

Cathy Grace - Principal



Celebrating in Donald

Sunday, July 17, 2022 saw parishioners of St Mary's Church in Donald, and many guests, celebrate the centenary of the arrival in Donald of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions. This community of Sisters were the leaders of Catholic Education in Donald from 1922 until their departure at the end of 1961, at which time the stewardship of local Catholic education was passed to the Sisters of Mercy.

Four Sisters made the trip from Perth to Donald back in 1922 and were welcomed and accommodated by the local community. The St Joan of Arc Convent opened in 1923 and, from that time, the Sisters also took in boarders so that young girls from the surrounding district might also receive a Catholic education.

The Mass, celebrated by Fr Gerry Prunty, Parish Priest, saw several nods to the Sisters, from inclusion of hymns that have significant meaning to the Order, the use of the Order's crest as the background in all of the slides during Mass, and those Sisters present participating in the Mass through reading, offering the prayers of the faithful and bringing the gifts of bread and wine to the altar. At the conclusion of Mass, Sr Catherine Brabander, Provincial Head of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions, gave a short presentation to those present on the history of the Order and of its presence in Donald. The Mass and the presentation by Sr Catherine was streamed via YouTube to other places within the East Wimmera Parish, as well as to those Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions (and many of their Lay Partners in Mission) so that they could participate remotely. This YouTube video is still available to view on the St Mary's Donald YouTube site <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NKdpyN1oMEE> Following Mass, parishioners and the Sisters gathered for lunch at the Mount Jeffcott Hotel in Donald. Plenty of stories and laughter could be heard all across the room. Formalities saw Sr Catherine acknowledge the parish for providing the centenary celebration and the cutting of a cake by those Sisters present.

Michael Flagg - Parishioner

'COMMON THREADS'



As part of the 150th anniversary celebrations, Emmanuel College Warrnambool celebrated the launch of a new commemorative historical book, "Common Threads" with a book launch on Thursday, August 25, 2022.

Featuring a timeline filled with photos, stories and quotes from the school's community through the decades, "Common Threads" incorporates many voices into a storytelling narrative that is inclusive of Emmanuel's diverse history.

The book launch saw staff, students, alumni and guests come together in the Emmanuel College library to listen to Principal Peter Morgan, Jean Christie author of "Common Threads", students Emily Edwards and Ash Parrott, who read out excerpts from the book. The College is grateful to have had Sisters of Mercy, Sr Marie and Sr Kathlyn, attend the book launch and cut the 'common threads' cake to

commemorate their long-standing relationship with our College and the launch of the book.

Peter Morgan said he hopes the school and wider community will feel a sense of joy when reading the stories. "Common Threads" has been at least three years in planning and a solid year of researching, sifting and sorting through archival materials and conducting interviews with alumni."

"We are indebted to our Emmanuel College staff, author Jean Christie and Graphic Designer Melissa Crothers, for their compilation of so many materials into such an enjoyable and compelling format."

"I feel incredibly proud to be Principal of Emmanuel College, following in the footsteps of the pioneering women and some extraordinary leaders."

"Holding the completed book in my hands is a joy, and I hope others too will feel a sense of joy as they absorb the stories from the past 150 years and begin to imagine where the next 150 years may take us."

Encouraging all students to have a sense of pride in knowing they are a part of Emmanuel College's history, every student's name from the College in 2022 will be printed inside the book's dust jacket. You can order "Common Threads" at <https://www.emmanuel.vic.edu.au/150-years>

Montanna Macdonald
Marketing and Community Engagement Coordinator

St Joseph's Lake Boga: Final Mass of Thanksgiving

Earlier this year, parishioners, past and present, gathered at St Joseph's Church Lake Boga for a final Mass of Thanksgiving after a few postponements due to COVID lockdowns. Bishop Paul Bird joined the Thanksgiving celebration and all shared lunch afterwards. The Lake Boga Mass community had made the decision to let go of the Church as it was becoming increasingly burdensome to upkeep. Looking forward, they will form a new Families and Faith group to continue supporting each other into the future.

The text below is taken from a history prepared by Teresa O'Brien that was shared on the day.

Since 1865 when Lake Boga was first visited by a priest from the Inglewood Mission and then from the 1890's when it became one of the Mass centres in the area, the Catholic community has congregated to celebrate and is an integral part of the Swan Hill Parish and the broader community.

The original Catholic Church on the corner of Lalbert Road and Tyrell Street was opened in 1898 and the local congregation raised funds with a ball and other activities to furnish and improve the Church that was not only servicing the Lake Boga people, but also servicemen stationed at Lake Boga. However, unfortunately it was destroyed by fire in 1981. The town would not be without a Church for long, as the congregation rallied, and the former Presbyterian Church on Kunat Street, built in 1912, was purchased and became St Joseph's Church. It was at this time that a couple of local men travelled to Robinvale to collect the pews, statues and Stations of the Cross that had been kindly donated after the building of a new Church in Robinvale. More can be read at: <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Lake-Boga-Thanksgiving-Celebration.pdf>



James Kerr - Parish Priest, Northeast Mallee



Honouring in Mildura

The Sacred Heart Parish in Mildura is a multicultural parish represented by communities from all over the world. Each community celebrates their most important feast in Church once a year, with lots of enthusiasm as it is an expression of their faith. For Christians in India, August 15 marks two important celebrations, the Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary and Independence of India.

We are happy about the coincidence of our Independence day with the Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady. While the former is symbolic of political liberation, the latter is the complete liberation from anything that binds us. This year marked the 75th year of independence of India, proudly celebrated by Indians all over world with different programs. 'Gharo Ghari Tiranga' campaign means the national flag was hoisted in every home for three days. 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' is an initiative of the Government of India to celebrate and commemorate seventy five years of Independence and the glorious history of its people, culture and achievements. Through these programs the patriotism of the citizens of India has improved.

The colors of the Indian flag epitomise the virtues of Mother Mary. In the national flag the top band is of saffron colour, indicating strength and courage. The white middle band indicates peace and truth. The last band is green in colour and shows fertility, growth and auspiciousness. The Dharma Chakra intends to show that there is life in movement. It has got twenty-four spokes symbolizing twenty four virtues of life and also twenty-four hours in the day, the so called 'Wheel of Time'. So Mary is the model in front of us with all her virtues and we are inspired by all these stories.

The Mildura Kerala/Indian community were privileged to celebrate Mass with fellow parishioners on Sunday, August 14, 2022. It was a great experience for every one of us and a proud moment as an Indian. It was a wonderful feeling receiving blessings from Blessed Virgin Mary. We take this opportunity to thank Fr Matt Thomas, Fr Shaiju Mathew, Carmel in the parish office and all other parishioners for their support and love. May the Blessed Virgin Mary intercede with Jesus for you all and for your dear ones.

The Mildura Kerala/Indian community

Congratulations to Eilish

Grade 3/4 teacher Eilish Flagg from St Mary's Primary School in Warracknabeal has been selected to be a delegate for Australian Catholic University in the III Uniservitate Symposium to be held in Rome, Italy in late October this year. During her undergraduate studies, Eilish was selected as a participant in an ACU program involving service learning in Solomon Islands. Recently, this long-running program won the Asia-Oceania Uniservitate Award, an international award recognising outstanding contributions to service learning in Catholic Higher Education.

Eilish has been selected based on her contributions to the program both during her official participation in the Solomon Islands, and in a number of activities following this where she has offered her services voluntarily to support the staff, other students and people in Solomon Islands. Eilish has returned to the Solomon Islands at her own expense a number of times to continue the service contributions she began in her initial involvement. Her outstanding contributions make her very worthy of this opportunity to liaise with other graduates and scholars of service learning from around the world, to explore the ways in which service learning in Catholic educational institutions can help to enhance social responsibility and overcome global inequity.

We are very proud of Eilish's selection for the program. We look forward to hearing of her experience and Eilish sharing knowledge and ideas from the symposium for continuing and growing the Catholic mission of social justice at St Mary's. Congratulations Eilish!



Nerrida Holland - Principal

Photo: David Ward WimmeraMallee News



Celebrating the Feast of St Mary MacKillop

St Patrick's Primary School Stawell recently celebrated the Feast of St Mary MacKillop. This occasion was marked with a parish liturgy in the school hall. Across the school, the students have been learning about St Mary MacKillop. This is very timely with the school re-introducing the weekly St Mary MacKillop Award.

Earlier this year, the teaching staff undertook a professional development day led by Jim Waight from the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL). Jim's session focussed on the history and charism of our school. Given the school's Joesphite background, a great deal of the day explored the story of Mary MacKillop and the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

As well as determination to improve the lives of the less fortunate, Mary MacKillop also had a wonderful turn of phrase. A number of inspirational quotes have been attributed to her. Anyone who knows me knows that I love a good quote and I often draw on Mary's saying.

As part of their learning, senior students researched quotes from St Mary MacKillop, selected their favourite quote and designed and created 'stained glass windows' featuring how this quote would look in our world today. Stained glass windows are very important to the Church to pass on God's message. When people were unable to read or write, stained glass windows offered a way to educate people. In order to convey the Story of Christ in a way that anyone could understand, the Church used art.

This is what Pope John Paul II stated about the use of art to spread the gospel:

"The Church needs art. In order to communicate the message entrusted to her by Christ, the Church needs art. Art must make perceptible, and as far as possible attractive, the world of the spirit, of the invisible, of God. It must therefore translate into meaningful terms that which is in itself ineffable. Art has a unique capacity to take one or another facet of the message and translate it into colours, shapes, and sounds which nourish the intuition of those who look or listen. It does so without emptying the message itself of its transcendent value and its aura of mystery."

Chris McAloon – Principal

ACU teaching students explore the new tech world

As more technology is used every day in classrooms, students can immerse themselves in different scenarios that enhance their learning. Virtual reality headsets are taking that a step further - whether it's a personal guided tour of the cramped surroundings of the International Space Station, experiencing first hand the claustrophobic living quarters of Anne Frank and her family as they hid from the Nazis during World War II or specially designed educational computer games.

As the use of virtual reality in school classrooms is increasing, so too is the use of them in universities to train the next generation of teachers in the new technology. Bachelor of Education students at Australian Catholic University's Ballarat campus will explore the emerging worlds of virtual reality as part of their studies so they can use the technology in their classrooms in the future.

ACU Ballarat Campus Dean, Professor Bridget Aitchison, said virtual reality offered immersive experiences for students and options for children who learn differently. "Not all students learn well by just listening or reading, some do better with experiential learning and this offers a whole new world, being completely immersed in learning as if you are there," she said.

There are two types of virtual reality - computer-generated experiences like games where you can pick objects up and

explore them, and virtual reality movies which are educational and insert users in to a scenario. "With the VR movies it's like you really are there," Professor Aitchison said. "I've tried one about the International Space Station and it's amazing because you are there, you look down, you look behind you, you look up, you are surrounded and the astronaut is talking to you." Professor Aitchison has also trialed a virtual reality tour of Anne Frank's house, admitting that even though she had read Anne Frank's "The Diary of a Young Girl" and knew the cramped conditions she and her family hid in, it was not until the VR tour that she fully comprehended how claustrophobic their living conditions really were. "As technologies emerge our schools are using them so teachers need to be prepared for new ways of learning and new technologies."



*Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier:
text by Michelle Smith and photo by Lachlan Bence*

Photo: ACU education students Billie Barton and James Mowatt

THE FEAST OF ST JAMES IN YANAOCA



My first encounter with the Moor Slayer was in October 2006 during the Camino Frances in Spain. The image of an armoured Knight wielding a metal sword, seated upon his fierce and treacherous-looking steed and trampling upon terrified Moors, was somewhat unsettling. Ignorant of the lore behind the image, I had no idea that this effigy depicted James the Greater, brother of John and son of Zebedee, known as Santiago in Spanish.

According to tradition, the remains of St James occupy a silver cask venerated in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in the Region of Galicia, north-western Spain. Tradition maintains, St James the Greater travelled as far as the west of Spain to preach the gospel. His mission was a failure and he returned to Jerusalem where he was beheaded, the first of the Apostles to

be martyred. His disciples then transported his remains back to Spain and they were rediscovered there in the 9th Century in the Field of Stars or Compostela as it is now known.

The image of St James the Moor Slayer is associated with the Battle of Clavijo which historians now declare to be historically incorrect and was claimed to be the beginning of the expulsion of Muslims from Spain between CE 711 and 1492 – a period known as the Reconquista Española. In a vision, St James appeared mounted on a horse with a sword in hand, leading this expulsion of the Muslims. Little did I know when I first encountered this image that I would one day minister in the high Sierra of southern Peru in a parish that claims St James as its patron, and proudly exhibits this rather brutal icon upon the sanctuary of its 18th Century Church. The statue still causes me enormous discomfort, as it speaks so clearly, although perhaps inadvertently, not only of the brutal expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Spain but also of the Spanish imperialistic conquest of this land.

To open up any dialogue with the locals regarding my personal misgivings would be to no avail. Historical truth belongs to a landscape far removed from their own. The Shining Path Terrorists sought to exorcise what they understood as superstition and ignorance from the minds and hearts of these people. But in the end, all they did was perpetuate the same cruelty and callousness I see depicted in this icon of St James. The people of the Parish of Yanaoca see nothing incongruous in the image of the Moor Slayer. St James is their protector and I am sure they hardly notice the lowly figure crouched beneath the horse and the triumphant Knight. For them, I suspect, any link between this figure and the fisherman from Galilee would be dubious, and the reconquest of Spain which culminated in the so-called victories of their most Catholic Majesties Ferdinand and Isabela, belongs to a history that is not their own.

So, on July 25, they proudly processed along the dusty streets of Yanaoca, carrying their treasured icon upon their shoulders. They sing loudly and dance in a manner that expresses both spiritual freedom and profound reverence. On the given signal, they stop and pray with such persuasion and I am left to marvel at their depth of conviction.

Later that night, as I read an article on the controversy surrounding the Traditional Latin Mass and Pope Francis' *Motu Proprio*, I am reminded that for the people with whom I am now living such issues have absolutely no bearing. I wonder how their forebears coped with a Eucharistic liturgy that was celebrated in Latin and whose rituals strove to draw them into the heavenly court of the Universal King under the semblance of a medieval European banquet hall. I am sure the gold, silver and precious stones of vestments, altarpieces and sacred vessels impressed them. But I am not sure that it enhanced their spirituality or brought them closer to God.

Their language, Quechua, is fascinating in the way that it seems to come from the earth and woven into it are so many nuances that communicate respect and gentleness. Their language in its very self speaks innately of the divine, respect for creation and the dignity of the human person. It lends itself much more readily to our liturgy than English or Spanish or, for that matter, Latin. These people also know what celebration is and they know that our faith should free us, not constrain us.

Fr Michael McKinnon - Yanaoca

Receiving Sacraments

Timboon Parish celebrated Confirmation and First Eucharist during July. All credit to Charlotte and William's families who prepared them at home using the diocesan catechetical material. There was great parish support from pre-ceremony practices, music and the personalised overheads and finally the party food. A team effort. Thank you all.

Ruth Hoffmann - Sacrament Co-ordinator

Our Diocesan Community - October 2022





The Mildura branch of the Knights of the Southern Cross (KSC) have an active membership of twenty-four men who are supported and encouraged by their families as they set about achieving their goal of raising money to assist those people and organisations within the Sunraysia district who need their help.

WONDERFUL PEOPLE

The men work on the entry gates at harness racing, horse racing and motorbike meetings where they are paid for their attendance. They also help with parking for the Mildura Show, the Hattah Motorbike Race and the Field Day held in Mildura.

The Catholic Primary schools are very grateful to the KSC for the barbecues they cook to feed the children on the days they have sports and other celebrations at their schools. The feast of St Mary MacKillop is co-ordinated by

the KSC and prior to COVID they had a procession, meal and a concert after the celebration of Mass, where there would be a hundred or so people in attendance. They also cook at the celebrations of St Rocco and St Anthony.

Usually at the Christmas celebration, cheques are presented to those people and organisations who are to be assisted by the KSC. Some of these organisations are Palliative Care, St Joseph's College, the Sisters of Charity, St Vincent de Paul, Men's Health, Dementia Services and many other people in need of assistance.

The members will continue to do this work, even though membership is depleting due to some sick and elderly passing away and other members no longer able to give the same time due to mobility issues as they grow older. There are some parish members who lend a hand when needed, even though they are not paid up members and the Knights are very grateful for their assistance. There has also been some joint co-operation between the KSC and Rotary to provide sufficient numbers at events where they are working and hopefully this will continue.

The Mildura KSC are a well known and highly regarded group and we hope they will continue to work in the Mildura Parish, possibly with some adjustments to the number of events at which they will work.



PEAK "FOOTY DRIVE"

Project-based subject PEAK at Mercy Regional College Camperdown inspires Year 8 students to turn their passions into tangible initiatives benefiting the community.

In one of the PEAK projects, a group of boys worked hard to set up a 'Footy Drive' to collect jumpers, boots and footballs that their peers no longer use. All donations will be sent to CLONTARF Foundation in Kununurra, Western Australia – a foundation that helps to improve the education, life skills and self-esteem of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men.

The boys are extremely grateful to everyone who has supported their idea.

Lenny: "When I lived in Kununurra, I saw how much Aboriginal kids loved footy and that gave our group the idea."

Ned: "We just love footy, and we wanted to help out an Aboriginal community that possibly don't have jumpers and boots to use all the time. We hope that with our donations they will get a chance to play more footy!"

Ben and Sonny: "It's been really cool to know that the community is happy to donate things to us and that we are part of making some other kids happy through football."

Max and Xavier: "We gained a lot of new skills while working together, planning, and sending official emails to big organisations such as Sherrin."

Emily Stephens, O'Keeffe Community Leader, "I actually had goosebumps when we saw all the donations come together. This was a passion project which will have a positive impact on others, especially young Indigenous kids who have the same love of footy as these boys. It was very heartening to watch the boys connect their love of footy to helping others. We have absolutely loved watching them create this initiative, make contacts and bring it to fruition."

Katya Belokon - Marketing, Communications and Community Engagement Officer

STAINED GLASS REMEMBRANCE

Nestled next to St Patrick's Church in Gordon is a non-descript brick building. Erected in 1965 as the Sisters of St Joseph Convent, the building has a set of modest stained glass windows, one of which commemorates the ultimate sacrifice made by Thomas Joseph Fletcher during WWII.

Tom was a farmer from Wareek, near Maryborough, whose family were originally from Mt Egerton. Tom, who never married, was almost 40 years old when he volunteered to serve in the Australian Army. A man of deep faith, he refused to carry a rifle. Instead, Tom served as a medical orderly and stretcher bearer on the front lines of Kokoda.

In September 1942, under heavy fire from Japanese troops, Tom volunteered to repeatedly go forward to rescue wounded soldiers. He saved more than a dozen injured men by treating their wounds and carrying them back to relative safety while being shot at the whole time.

During his company's retreat a group of soldiers, including Tom Fletcher, was cut off behind enemy lines. With the Japanese closing in, Tom volunteered to stay behind with seven badly injured men, while those who could escaped. The village was eventually overrun by the Japanese and Tom and the injured soldiers he was caring for were all executed. Tom was posthumously awarded the Military Medal for his gallant distinguished service.

Back home in Gordon, where his family were parishioners, a portion of a stained-glass window in the Convent was created to remember Tom Fletcher and his bravery.



Jason Fletcher
(Tom Fletcher is Jason's grandfather's cousin)

Social Justice in action



Year 11 students at Damascus College Ballarat experienced what it was like to sleep rough on Friday, September 9, 2022 at the College Vinnies Winter sleep out. Raising money for the St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal, twelve students volunteered to brave the cold weather and sleep overnight with only a sleeping bag and a cardboard box.

Throughout the evening a presenter talked to the students about the complex set of circumstances that can lead to homelessness and they also were shown a video to learn more about the cause. During the night

students were woken and asked to move on and find another place to sleep, providing a realistic representation of what it would be like to be homeless on the streets.

Social Justice is an integral part of the Catholic heritage at Damascus College. Assistant Principal - Catholic Culture, Tony Haintz, said it was important to carry on the values of Catherine McAuley, the foundress of the Sisters of Mercy. Tony said that many years ago, Catherine saw people struggling and was dedicated to helping people in need. It was her Christian response to human suffering in Dublin, Ireland, that led to the foundation and unfortunately, people are still experiencing the same issues today, in Ballarat. "It is important that we continue to help those in need and continue Catherine's legacy," he said. "Participating in the sleep out and raising money through sponsorship is a rewarding experience for students, and so is knowing the funds received go towards helping people either facing or experiencing homelessness," he said.

At Damascus, students engage in community development events, developing within themselves the virtues of compassion, unity, justice and understanding. As a Catholic school, Damascus College encourages an attitude of action for social justice and community service. This is put into practice in several ongoing activities at local, national, and international levels as part of the Christian Personal Development Award at the College.

Sarah Boswell - Leader of Marketing and Development



Assisting in Parishes

Having joined the Diocese back in November 1988, I have worked in multiple positions over the years. Initially it was as diocesan accountant, working with Jim Ryan before becoming CDF Manager, then Business Manager before moving to my current role as Parish Finance and Administration Officer. This role commenced in 2017 when I moved to part-time employment. This involves working three days per week and I try to spend two days “on the road” and one day in the office/working from home. A typical year can involve 35,000km’s but I enjoy getting out and visiting parishes.

When Bishop Paul created my current role, we recognised a need for the diocese to provide more “hands on assistance” to parishes. As parishes know, compliance plays an increasing role in parish administration and whilst this is not everyone’s favourite topic, we need to ensure that our priests, staff, volunteers and parishioners are kept up to date and safe. In a practical sense, this involves offering assistance and advice in anything from accounting/bookkeeping,

GST, employment, banking and investments, risk management and property management to just being a sounding board for ideas. In short, anything and everything that a parish might want. You ring and I’ll be there!

The last couple of years have been particularly challenging for parishes. COVID has made life tough, and I am not sure that we will ever get back to pre-COVID days. We need to continue to strive for better and more efficient ways to operate. That’s my job!

Mark Bromley

SNIPPETS FROM EDENHOPE

When the Sisters of Mercy closed the doors to their Convent at 32 Lake Street, Edenhope for the last time in 2013, they kindly gifted the small Stations of the Cross from their Chapel to St Malachy’s Primary School. Recently, the Stations were relocated to the schools front foyer, along with new signs placed in the walkway garden bed named in honour of the Sister’s long association with St Malachy’s School and the Edenhope community. “Mercy Walk” was officially opened by long time staff member, Mrs Maureen Payne. (Maus)

On Sunday, August 21, three young students from St Malachy’s Primary School celebrated their First Holy Communion with family and friends. Congratulations to Rhianna McClure, Lizzie Merrett and Eddie Frost. Thank you to Fr George Kuruvila for making their special day such a wonderful celebration.

The Mini Vinnies at St Malachy’s have been busy supporting one of the Foundation students who is unwell and receiving medical treatment in Adelaide. At the recent community market \$213.00 was raised by the Mini Vinnies to buy a petrol voucher to help with travel costs for Synthia’s family.

On Tuesday, August 16, St Malachy’s hosted the Western Trinity Athletics Sports with St Joseph’s Coleraine, Sacred Heart Casterton and St Malachy’s. Congratulations to everyone on their achievements. We were very fortunate that the weather was kind to us and we managed to get through the full program. It was lovely to see so many parents and grandparents making the trip to Edenhope to watch their children and grandchildren compete. Congratulations to MacKillop House who were overall winners on the day.

Thanks go to Sherryn Simpson for her coordination of the day and the staff and parent helpers for their help. After two years of cancellations due to COVID, it was great to see a return of the sports day in 2022.



John O’Sullivan - Principal



GATHERING AGAIN

Catholic Education Week in May was an opportunity to celebrate our Catholic identity and dialogue with the Catholic faith tradition – along with the world in which we live – to interpret and proclaim the good news.

With COVID restrictions reducing and schools able to engage with each other, local Catholic schools in Sunraysia came together after two years of remote learning. This year, we were pleased to have St Mary's Robinvale Primary School join our Combined Schools Mass celebrations. Fr Matthew Thomas and Fr Shaiju Mathew celebrated Mass with 1100 staff and students. Local Sisters of Mercy were also present to celebrate Catholic Education in Sunraysia. The Mass was a special time that enabled our staff and students to reflect on the importance of Catholic Education in their lives and the wonderful work being completed by everyone in our local Catholic schools.

We pray that all our school communities inspire from within to be people of peace, hope and love in these times. May our staff and students take this opportunity of celebrating together to hear the Word of God and 'go into the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.' (Mark 16:15).

Paula Cox - Director of Catholic Identity, St Joseph's College Mildura

Principals: L-R: Andrea Welsh – St Mary's PS Robinvale, Narelle Gallagher – OLSH PS Merbein, Mark Gibson – Sacred Heart PS Mildura, Marg Blythman – St Joseph's College Mildura, Naomi Kennedy – St Joseph's PS Red Cliffs, Vince Muscatello – St Paul's PS Mildura

finally celebrating



Swan Hill was finally able to celebrate its traditional Festa of Our Lady of Mt Carmel on Sunday, July 24, 2022, after two years of frustration and disappointment due to COVID lockdowns,. Although a smaller celebration than perhaps Our Diocesan Community - October 2022

seen in the past, it was certainly a joyful and lively one nonetheless.

After sharing a beautiful pasta lunch, the annual raffle was held, before finishing on a high with some very energetic music and dancing! A big thank you to the organising committee for their perseverance over these last few years, to the choir who travelled from Sunraysia especially for the day, and to all those who helped with the food, raffle and decorations.

Fr James Kerr – Parish Priest



Wycheproof Celebrations



Mass at St Michael's Church Wycheproof (part of the East Wimmera Parish) on June 25, was a very happy occasion with the celebration of the sacraments of First Eucharist and Confirmation. Six candidates, together with their families, sponsor/s, friends and extended members of the parish enjoyed the evening with proceedings celebrated by Fr Gerry Prunty. Candidates proclaimed readings and personal prayers. Each candidate also received certificates with a sash and medallion too.

A commemorative booklet was prepared and featured personal interests of the candidates, their respective sponsor, saint names and a summary of why each had chosen these. The selection of names is a special part of the evening – each candidate choosing a saint's name with whom they identify and admire.

Local musician Oli Ward demonstrated his talents on the organ to welcome parishioners and guests with the fitting entrance hymn 'Come to the water' and later in the evening 'Come as you are'.

At the conclusion of the evening, a beautiful supper was shared in the decorated Church meeting room alongside plenty of good conversations and camaraderie. A selection of commemorative cakes were cut and enjoyed as well as speeches.

At this time, Jacinta Miller acknowledged Joan MacDonald and Fr Gerry, who both prepared the candidates for the occasion. Joan, in particular, hosted various gatherings over the course of several weeks culminating in this celebration. It was wonderful to see and welcome Lois Forrester in the crowd, together with her husband John. Lois looked happy and healthy and was pleased to be in attendance. One of the candidates, Finbar, had been her pen-pal in 2021, as part of the Wycheproof P-12 College popular pen-pal program, and both were pleased to catch-up with one another.

Candidates were Isabelle Mulquiny, Desmond Polzin, Eabha Polzin, Finbar Polzin, Scarlett Sacco and Zara Sacco (Scarlett and Zara are the grandchildren of Joan and Leo Keane).

The St Michael's Church community congratulates all candidates, each being exceptional examples of young leaders who will strengthen and enlighten their communities now and well into the future.

Article courtesy The Sea Lake and Wycheproof Times Ensign and The Buloke Times, text by Jackie Noonan

A tribute to Pat Gleeson; teacher and music lover

Much-loved and esteemed pianist and teacher Pat Gleeson lived her entire life at 613 Urquhart Street, Ballarat, even from birth. She was a significant piano teacher in the Ballarat district, influencing the musical lives of many generations of students, in whom she instilled a love of music through a disciplined and well-rounded approach.

Miss G, as she was affectionately known, prepared her students for examinations, eisteddfod and community concert performances. She was intensely interested in the lives of her students and their families.

Former students speak of her with warmth and affection, understanding the importance of the hard work and discipline required to achieve excellence. Many remained in contact and continued to visit her until her death.

Pat attended Urquhart Street Primary School, where her father was the Principal. Her education continued at Loreto Dawson Street and Loreto Abbey Mary's Mount, where she studied piano. During the war years, US soldiers, billeted in Ballarat, were invited to the Gleeson home for afternoon tea and to listen to a young Pat play the piano.

She continued her piano studies with Roy Shepherd at the Melbourne Conservatorium. Her long teaching career included conducting choirs at Loreto College, where she also taught piano. The sure knowledge that her pianistic ability was a gift from God and her deep faith sustained her throughout her life. She was a lifelong parishioner at St Patrick's Cathedral, where for many years she played the organ.

Pat was well-known for her generosity. She was involved at Nazareth House and gave much of her time organising concerts and playing piano regularly there for the residents. She volunteered at St John of God Hospital and played the piano regularly at Gandarra at the Queen Elizabeth Centre. She led a peaceful, contented life of gratitude for all she had.



Bronislaw Sozanski (edited) - first published in the Ballarat Courier
In the preparation of this obituary Bronislaw acknowledged the generous assistance of Lauren Knight, Kaye Valpied and many former students and friends whose lives were touched by Pat.

NURTURING OUR SPIRITS...

Twenty two Early Career Teachers from both primary and secondary schools across the Diocese of Ballarat, gathered in Hall's Gap for a two day retreat. Jim Waight from Catholic Education Ballarat (Education Officer: Formation and Mission) facilitated the days and guided the teachers through storytelling, reflection, prayer, scripture and exploring their own spirituality.

A number of quotes from various documents and 'heroes' of our Church were offered to participants to assist in their exploration of the Sacred. "Act not out of fear but solely from love" says Mary Ward and St Mary MacKillop states, "We must teach more by example than by word." These quotes spoke loudly to many participants.



The group was encouraged to walk around the grounds of the motel and to explore further afield a number of times during the days (making the most of the environment and the weather), taking the opportunity to take photos or just experience the Sacred and the sacramentality of Creation.

As the days progressed other quotes regarding education and the role of the teacher in the Catholic school were offered to the group, "...every Catholic educational institution is a place to encounter the living God who in Jesus Christ reveals his transforming love and truth" (Benedict XVI, 2008) and, "To educate is an act of love, it is to give life" (Francis). The opportunity given to the Early Career Teachers – to take the time to reflect upon their role in Catholic Education, was gratefully accepted by all in the group and they wish to thank their Principals and school communities for supporting them to come away for this time of retreat and renewal.

Dr Susan Crowe -Education Officer: Sustainability, Liturgy and Special Projects

Luke in Rare Air on Everest



Year 10 and 11 students at Trinity College Colac were fortunate to have former Colac man Luke Rollnik as a guest speaker recently. Luke achieved a dream and joined an elite club when he climbed to the summit of Mount Everest in May this year.

Luke shared his inspirations, his preparation for the trek and what he learned along the way. It was a project years in the planning with intense devotion to preparation, safety and gradually building the fitness, skills and mindset required to succeed.

Luke shared photos and videos from his earlier climbs and from Everest, where for a moment in time he was the highest person in the world looking down on billions of people. He placed a photo of a good friend, who had died from cancer, on top of the world.

Luke told the students their attitude determines their altitude and they need to stay positive through adversity. He challenged them to quit the things that hold them back from their dreams and to dream big. He said there was no such thing as an overnight success, that it was necessary to do the work and not to compare themselves to others. Luke is a passionate supporter of the Nepalese people and schools in the area and plans to return there in March next year leading a team to Base Camp and supporting communities along the way.

Steven O'Dowd - Development and Communications Leader

New logo for Wimmera-Mallee Parish

The new Wimmera-Mallee Parish logo, designed by Ebony Scott and drawing together symbolically the four former parishes making St Paul VI Parish, debuted on the parish bulletin on August 28, 2022. May St Paul VI pray for our well-being in God, together with the prayers of our Church and school Saints.

Ebony Scott, a current student at St Brigid's College Horsham reflects:

The opportunity to be a part of the design competition for the new parish logo was given to me in Year 11 Visual Communication during lockdown. After reading the design brief, our class brainstormed a variety of different words that represented the Wimmera region. I started sketching some ideas that included some of the words on the list. I drew six different logos but decided on the final design as it wasn't like logos previously used by the parish. From there, I created the logo digitally, using different colours and elements to design several versions of the logo. I decided upon the final logo and had it sent to Monsignor Glynn Murphy, Parish Priest.

Earlier this year I was notified that my logo had been chosen. After a few changes to the logo design, we meet with local graphic designer, Claudia. Claudia used her knowledge and experience with a detailed graphic design software and upgraded the logo. After another meeting with Claudia and Monsignor Glynn, a final logo was decided.

The official description of the logo is:

- The Cross is at the centre of our lives, reminding us of Jesus' sacrifice for us and our call to live life to the fullest.
- The gold outer ring represents the abundant sunshine in our climate.
- The blue represents the Wimmera River, other waterways and lakes and wide skylines across our parish.
- The green represents the growth cycles and the earth, the foundation of our farmers.
- The four shaded quadrants represent the four former parishes coming together as one.
- The people represent the diversity of our parishioners' backgrounds and ages, living together as the faith community of St Paul VI Parish.
- The trees represent our native and loved gum trees.
- The platypus represents our native fauna in McKenzie Creek.
- The sheep, wheat and grapes represent the livestock, cereals and wine produced throughout local agriculture – while reminding us in faith of the Lamb of God and His Eucharist of salvation.



Integral Ecology and Conversion

At the invitation of Bishop Paul Bird, Kerry Stone and Jillian Hogbin spoke at the mid-year gathering of the Council of Priests in the Ballarat Diocese about actioning the Caritas Australia - Catholic Earthcare Parishes Program.

In 2015 Pope Francis released the encyclical 'Laudato Si', which brought together a comprehensive understanding of scripture and church teachings to call for action to address the spiritual, social and economic crisis that has manifested in environmental devastation across the planet. Pope Francis called us to hear the 'Cry of the earth, and the cry of the poor'. In 2020 the Pope's Dicastery for promoting Integral Human Development produced a framework which is known as 'The Laudato Si Action Platform'. This is a seven-year plan for action, encompassing seven sectors in the community: families, dioceses and parishes, schools and universities, hospitals, business, agriculture and religious orders culminating in a concrete way for moving with action.

In 2021, the Australian Catholic Bishops embarked on a seven year journey towards the Laudato Si goals. Their social justice statement 'Cry of the earth, Cry of the poor' invites and encourages all Catholics to commit to the 'Laudato Si' goals.

During the presentation Kerry Stone asked those gathered to consider how the Diocese of Ballarat would take

up the invitation to action. Kerry and Jillian introduced the Caritas program - Catholic Earthcare Australia, as a way of stimulating and sustaining ecological conversion. This model provides a concrete way to plan for action in parishes through action plans, based on setting local Laudato Si goals with support from Caritas Australia. In this way we are hopeful that as a diocese we will be able to continue to enact Decree 8 from the 2022 Plenary Council which encourages all Catholic people to accept Pope Francis' invitation to join the Laudato Si' Action Platform and either develop Laudato Si' Action Plans, or participate in existing Laudato Si' Action Plans, as a vehicle for their ecological conversion.' If you or your parish would like to explore this call to action further, please contact Jillian Hogbin through the Diocesan Offices.



AJASS IMMERSION

On Sunday, September 10, 2022, we flew to Tasmania on an AJASS Immersion, AJASS being The Association of Josephite Affiliated Secondary Schools. We were very excited to represent St Mary MacKillop College Swan Hill on this pilgrimage.

During our time in Tasmania, we joined eighteen other students from various AJASS schools around Victoria and Tasmania, we learnt about the lives of St Mary MacKillop, Julian Tenison Woods and the Josephite Sisters. We spent a large part of our time at the Josephite Historic Centre in Hobart gaining a better understanding of the work of Julian Tenison Woods and St Mary MacKillop, how they moved around Tasmania, opened schools in remote areas, taught and looked after people in these communities.

We travelled to Geeveston, Richmond and Oatlands which were some of the towns where the Josephite Sisters opened schools and provided children with the opportunity to gain an education. We heard about the hardships the Sisters endured and the dedication and commitment they showed in their work.

Over the three days, we formed strong bonds with each other and enjoyed all the different experiences we encountered, developing a deeper understanding of the charism of the Josephite Sisters begun by St Mary MacKillop.



Otto Conlan, Grace Doherty & Anna Whiting - Year 10 Students

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MARY!

Mary's birthday on September 8 was a day of celebration at St Mary's Primary School in Donald. Each year, on this day, the school celebrates its Feast Day. A Mass shared with parishioners was a wonderful way to commence celebrations. The Grade 6 students handed out special 'Mary' bookmarks to commemorate the occasion.

After Mass students returned to their classrooms and worked on special Mary craft projects. Students gathered before recess and proudly shared their creations.

Mary's birthday coincided with R U OK? Day. This was the perfect opportunity to check in with each other and share ways of caring for each other under the love and protection of Mary, our Mother.

Mary Hogan - Religious Education Leader



GREEN SPARKS AT VINNIES SHOPS

Around 100,000 electrical goods will be saved from landfill under a 'test and tag' scheme at Vinnies Shops in Ballarat and across the state. The Green Spark program has trained volunteers at Vinnies Shops to test and tag electrical appliances for safety so they can be re-sold.



Until now many electrical items have had to be dumped at landfill because stores were unable to sell untested goods. "This program launch represents a formalisation and expansion of Vinnies' passionate commitment to reducing harmful e-Waste in our community," said Vinnies Victoria Executive General Manager Commercial Services Jeff Antcliff.

Ballarat Area Support Manager Graham Staniforth said the Green Spark program is not just about sustainability but also giving customers more options in store.

*Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Michelle Smith (edited) and photo by Lachlan Bence.
Photo: Vinnies Shop Wendouree volunteer Ross Allen*

Catholic Leadership Award

Being nominated and then receiving “The Catholic Leadership Award” is both humbling and overwhelming, and I am enormously appreciative of both the honour and the recognition. Teaching is a vocation – it is something you are, not what you do! I consider myself to have been very fortunate and I am grateful for the many, many students, colleagues and mentors who have inspired, collaborated, encouraged and respected me through my career. Teachers, who show their resilience and adaptability every single day, juggling both the rewards and challenges, and the many friendships I have from teaching, are my tribe!

I grew up on a dairy farm in a little place called Lancaster outside of Kyabram in the northern part of Victoria. Being Catholic and following the strict ways of the Catholic Church was integral to who we were and how we lived. I attended the little state school up the road where the local priest would come and take the Catholic kids out of class into the corridor where we would go through the Mass book and the Catechism. At home mum would always find time in her very busy life to prioritise the strict adherence to following the Church’s teachings, sitting with us and studying the “My Way to God” books, daily prayers, the rosary then culminating with the weekly Mass. This was interspersed with the enormous daily grind of both domestic and farm jobs. Mum’s dedication and commitment has definitely influenced my faith today.

This year is my fortieth consecutive year of service to Catholic Education; I have worked in primary, secondary, tertiary and systemic sectors and have incorporated many formal leadership roles across those forty years. It remains a driving passion for me to ensure that a quality Religious Education remains a primary focus in our Catholic Schools. I have worked with so many amazing people and I have been mentored by incredible innovative and hardworking leaders.

In 1990, Maree and I made a sea change from Brunswick to Buninyong and I became the Principal at St

Michael’s Primary School Springbank. I would drive our old Torana out, in all weathers, and it was not unusual for snow to fall at the school! These were busy and exciting times. We had a great ‘Small Schools Network’ out on that side of town where the local Catholic small schools would collaborate and share their expertise to provide a breadth of experiences for the students in these vibrant and active communities, and I remember this time fondly.

It was during this time I recommenced my studies that would go on for some years, incorporating a Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership, a Graduate Diploma in Religious Education, a Masters in Religious Education and a Masters in Theology. During these years of study my love for learning, my passion for exploring new or more contextually appropriate ways of doing RE and my curiosity for new theological understandings were ignited and fueled. With a young family, there was not much time for draft writing of essays!

From St Michael’s Springbank I then went to St James Primary School in Sebastopol where I worked under Sr Maureen Connelly rsm and the amazing Sr Kate McGrath rsm, who fostered a great sense of community. I had eight wonderful years at St James working with a great team of educators and families.

My next career move would then take me in a completely different direction but one that was enormously satisfying both professionally and personally. I successfully applied for a position at the Catholic Education Office as an Education Officer in the area of Religious Education. I began this job with Fr Kevin Lenehan who inspired all who had the very good fortune to work with him. Fr Kevin was a democratic, respectful leader, who combines his phenomenal intellectual and academic prowess, with true humility, inclusion and kindness. It was under his leadership that our small, hardworking team became involved in the Inter-Diocesan Project that led to the development of the first version of the Ballarat Diocesan



Religious Education Curriculum of ‘Awakenings.’ This project successfully gathered all stakeholders across the Diocese to work on a shared project of renewal, content wise and pedagogically in the quest for a Religious Education Curriculum that was right for the people of its time.

I am very proud of my contribution to the development of ‘Awakenings’ and the work that was done by our team in the schools of the diocese supporting its implementation. During these years I had the privilege of working with many dedicated school teams and parish teams on a wide range of projects. There were years of delivering Sacramental Information night meetings, curriculum planning days, school reviews, whole school professional development days and staff meetings. All of these supported the communities of our diocese in their amazing efforts to do what they do and to help them in their desire to do things even better.

Whilst at the Catholic Education Office I was also very involved on the College Board of my children’s school Damascus College and about ten years ago when I was Chairperson of the College Board, I was encouraged to apply for the role of Learning Area Leader: Religious Education. Mr Matthew Byrne and Sr Marie Davey rsm took a risk with an untried secondary school teacher at the time and I am so glad they did. They too have provided constant

care, innovation and leadership to both myself, and many others, and this is reflected in the outstanding community Damascus College is today.

I recently attended a talk in Melbourne by the great American Benedictine Sister, Joan Chittester. She concluded her presentation by saying there is no point being a prophet in our time unless we can do

it with joy and happiness. People who know me, know that I have always worked hard but they also know that I have always also enjoyed a laugh, and can appreciate the humour in many situations!

In conclusion, my hope is that our Catholic Schools will continue to be authentically inclusive and welcoming communities that acknowledge that we are all made in the image and

likeness of our loving God; and that schools can be places where people of all faiths, genders, sexualities are therefore welcomed and respected equally.

When I reflect on my career, it is the connections and relationships that are most important to me and I have a lifetime of memories of interactions for which I am grateful.

Martin Ryan

Celebrating 100 years of the Brigidines in Horsham

Catholic Education in Horsham, under the tutelage of lay teachers, dates back to the 1880s. In 1918 however, the Rev D Howell, (Parish Priest 1917-1929) approached the Mother Provincial of the Brigidine Congregation of Sisters in Victoria, Mother Paul Barron, with the request for some Sisters to come to Horsham to establish a boarding and day school.

On April 10, 1920, following the building of the Brigidine Convent, Mother Paul Barron 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 and Brigidine Education in Horsham was to have been celebrated over the June long weekend in 2020. However plans were shelved as the global pandemic closed down any hope of holding celebrations at that time.

Two years on, we proceeded with a weekend of celebrations to mark the milestone.

On the weekend of July 16-17, 2022 all were invited to participate in tours of the three schools – Ss Michael & John's Primary School, Horsham, Our Lady Help of Christians, Murtoa, and St Brigid's College, Horsham. Celebratory Masses at Murtoa and Horsham and social gatherings in the Parish Centre took place.

There was also a presentation of a Commemorative Quilt which will hang in Horsham's Parish Office and the launch of a book 'The Spirit of Brigid Alive in Horsham - 100 years of Brigidine Education' recognising the one hundred years of Brigidine Sisters in Horsham. The book can be ordered by emailing brigidine100@gmail.com.

Kingsley Dagleish, Chairperson

Centenary of Brigidine Education in Horsham Committee

Photo - Top: The Brigidine Centenary Committee - Jill McGennissen, Kingsley Dagleish, Carmel Officer, Maree Becker, Sr Jacinta Rice csb, Chris Robarts, Alison McKinnon, Margaret McCluskey.

Bottom: Brigidine Sisters in Ss Michael & John's Church following the Sunday Mass.



In drafting the Document for the Continental Stage of the 2021-2023 Synodal Process, about fifty participants from all over the world, including Australia, met in Frascati, Rome at the John XXIII Centre to listen, dialogue and discern from the Synodal Syntheses produced from the consultation of the People of God. Adopting the method of spiritual conversation, during the twelve days of work, the “experts” wrote the Document for the Continental Stage. At the heart of the work were the 112 syntheses of the Bishops’ Conferences (out of 114), but also those of the Eastern Catholic Churches, Religious Congregations, Ecclesial Associations and Movements, the Vatican Dicasteries and individual contributions that reached the General Secretariat of the Synod. An unprecedented response from the local Churches!

<https://www.synod.va/en/news/witnesses-to-the-wonders-the-lord-is-working.html>

Photos: Front cover: Oil of Chrism - Decanter and bottles for distribution to parishes. Back cover: 1. St Alipius Parish School celebrated NAIDOC Week with tops being presented to the school’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. 2. St Patrick’s Cathedral Window - The Miracles: Cure of the man born blind. 3. Mercy Regional College students, staff and parents ventured into the icy water of Lake Bullen Merri in order to raise awareness and funds to support the work of local mental health organisations. 4. Early Career Teachers across the Diocese of Ballarat gathered for a retreat.

We are a community of communities from the Murray to the sea. Inspired by the Gospel and nourished by the Eucharist, we follow the example of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, reaching out in joyful and humble service, caring for all of God’s creation, growing in love day by day and looking forward to life with God forever.

Vision Statement for the Diocese