



YEARN TO LEARN
Be listeners, teachers urged
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JESUS WELCOMED THEM
(LUKE 9/11)

Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Archbishop of Canberra Goulburn

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MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE – ARCHDIOCESAN AND REGIONAL GATHERINGS (2015, 2016)

PROUD CITIZENS

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FREE

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Deep profound wounds

‘The Catholic Church is very grateful for the Royal Commission into child abuse’

ARCHBISHOP Christopher Prowse has joined other Catholic bishops of Australia in speaking out on behalf of the Church on the “atrocities” which occurred during decades of child sex abuse.

“The Catholic Church is very grateful for the Royal Commission into child abuse,” he said.

“It has really helped us to focus on this issue and to assure future generations that these criminal acts will not happen in the future, please God.”

Appearing before the Commission on day 11 of the hearings, Archbishop Prowse discussed the “gravity” and “scourge” of the sex abuse and he forecast what things will look like going forward.

“As a consequence of these sessions here, I have it in my heart to go around the diocese for listening sessions,” he said.

“I want to gather the victims and their families.

“I want to go out and find the victims I’ve met over the years – I call them wounded healers.

“I don’t think we can go ahead without the wounded healers standing alongside us, walking together, correcting us, directing us, working in with us.”

He also spoke of the need to work transparently with governments saying that the Catholic Church did not have the means

to deal with it alone and nor should they.

“I as Archbishop for instance, can’t be making unilateral decisions about these matters without going to these other instrumentalities and working through it in that way,” he said.

“The days of us just in-house looking at these on our own are gone.”

He also said that he was petitioning with the ACT Government on reporting matters.

“There’s slightly different legislation in the ACT and we have been petitioning with the ACT Government to raise the bar on reportable conduct policies to be equated with NSW,” he said.

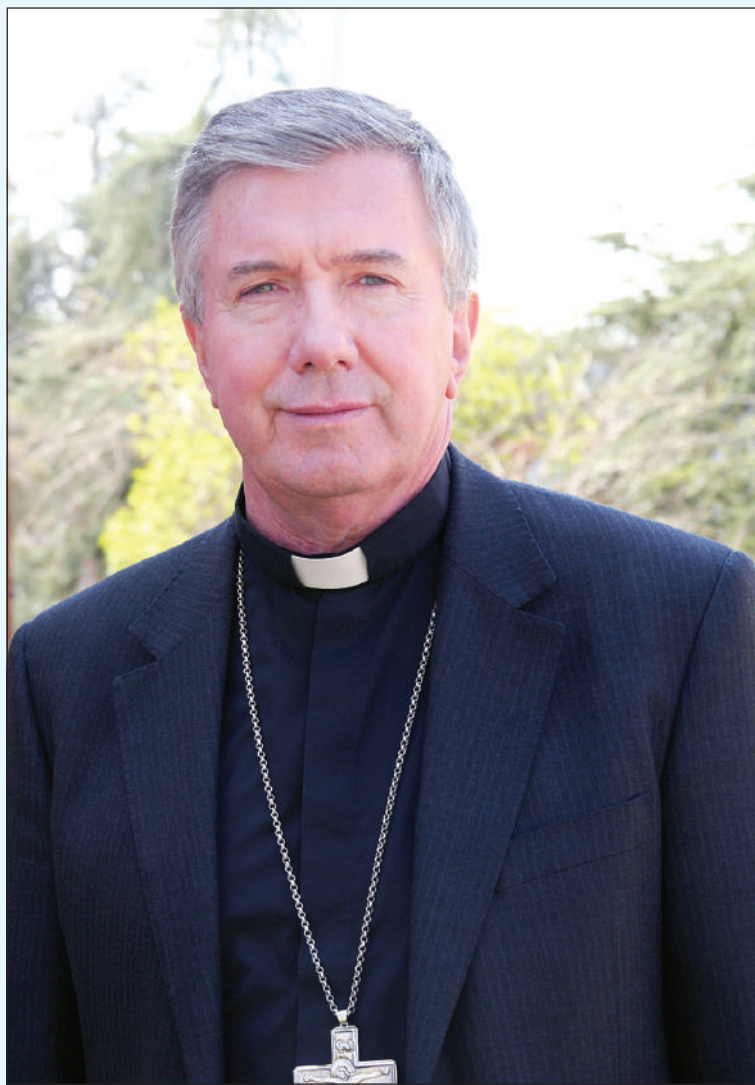
Writing a letter of consolation to the Church in the Archdiocese, Archbishop Prowse offered his support to those affected by the abuses.

“My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, this is a most difficult time for you,” he said.

“As your shepherd, I wish to express and assure you of my solidarity with you and my prayers for you.

“The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sex Abuse has revealed deep wounds.

“Victims of child abuse by priests and religious have suffered enormously. Their wounds are deep and profound. Let us



pray for them. In particular, may Jesus, the Divine Physician, heal them.”

In his letter, Archbishop Prowse offered as a prayer the passage of Scripture from 2 Corinthians 1:3-4.

He asked for Church members to support and care for their priests in a time of fragility and thanked those who had remained steadfast in the faith during difficult times.

In a recent address given at CatholicCare’s strategic plan launch, Archbishop Prowse said he had taken heart from the courage shown by victims of sex abuse.

in the light of sex abuse of minors, and some personnel of the Church have clearly been found to be perpetrators of these atrocities.”

He assured people that measures were now put in place to ensure that the atrocities were a thing of the past.

Following four years of submissions before the Royal Commission, CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council, Francis Sullivan described all that had occurred as an “indictment”.

“We acknowledge that around 40 per cent of the Commission’s private sessions reveal claims of abuse within a Catholic institution,” he said.

“The data tells us that over the six decades from 1950 to 2010 some 1265 Catholic priests and religious were the subject of a child sexual abuse claim.”

Other figures to emerge from the Commission findings include that over the past 35 years, 4444 people have reported that they have been the victim of child sex abuse by clergy and religious.

The average time between an alleged abuse occurring and the reporting of it was 33 years; the average age of the child being abused was 10 ½ for boys and 11 ½ for girls.

“These numbers are shocking. They are tragic and they are indefensible,” Mr Sullivan said.

“It is a history that must be told and reckoned with.

“Even for one child to have been sexually abused by a Catholic priest or religious is as appalling to all faithful Catholics, as it is to all within our community.

“How the Catholic Church dealt with child sexual abuse is very much the concern and responsibility of today’s leadership.

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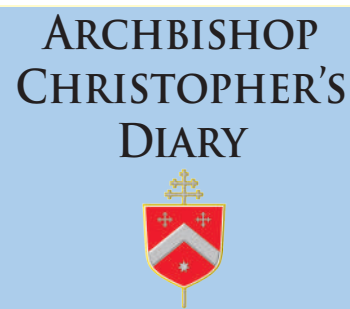
“One of the great gifts of this troubling time is the emergence of victims and victim support groups,” he said.

“They have had the courage to articulate their grievances. I see them as real wounded healers who are moving from the margins into the centre of Church focus.”

He also spoke about trust issues which exist as a result of the offences.

“A question asked of religions today, and particularly Christian Churches which includes the Catholic Church, is ‘can we trust you?’” he said.

“This question has been asked



March
WEDNESDAY, 1 10.30am
 Caritas launch of Project Compassion, St Clare's College, Braddon

FRIDAY, 3 5pm Man Overboard

SATURDAY, 4 6pm
 Mass, Ss Peter & Paul, Goulburn

SUNDAY, 5 11am Mass, Cathedral
 – Rite of the Elect

THURSDAY, 9 4.30am
 Australian Catholic University Scholarship Awards Ceremony ACU, Watson

FRIDAY, 10: 4.45pm
 Catholic Schools Week Recognition Awards Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral

SATURDAY, 11: 6pm
 Mass, Mary Help of Christians Parish, South Woden

SUNDAY, 12: 11am
 Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral

SATURDAY, 18: 6pm
 Mass, St John Vianney's Parish, Waramanga

SUNDAY, 19: 11am
 Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral
 6.00pm Service of Choral Evensong, St Paul's Church, Manuka

FRIDAY, 24:- SUNDAY, 26: 9am
 Parish Visitation, Tumut/Gundagai/Jugiong



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ARCHBISHOP'S MESSAGE
 ARCHBISHOP
 CHRISTOPHER PROWSE

THERE is an oil painting technique called **chiaroscuro**. It was perfected in the Renaissance by masters such as Da Vinci, Caravaggio and Rembrandt.

It contrasts darkness and light to produce an almost three-dimensional dramatic form. We see it also today in cinema and black and white photography. It can often elevate a rather ordinary scene into a wonderful masterpiece of transcendent beauty.

During our Lenten journey this year to the Easter Mysteries of our faith, we may wish to see a kind of theological/pastoral **chiaroscuro** in the events of our everyday life.

The dark sufferings of our daily Calvaries are placed together with the blazing light emanating from Jesus rising in the midst of all this chaos to bring redemption and hope into our lives.

All of this happens by placing our lives into the death and resurrection of Jesus. As St Paul says:

Light and darkness

"If we have died with him, then we shall live with him" (2Tim2:11).

These last days have been a kind of **chiaroscuro** for the Archdiocese and beyond.

The darkness of the Royal Commission

There has been the darkness of all that has transpired at the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse* over these past weeks.

The Catholic Church's entry into this tragedy in recent history has been a real humiliation to us all. Pope Francis says: "It is a sin that shames us".

The only real heroes in all this chaos have been the victims/survivors. They have had the courage to come forward and articulate what has happened to them and sought a compassionate response. Many have received this. Too many have received, however, responses from the Church authorities that have been disgraceful. We are so sorry for all this.

I am grateful that the Royal Commission has provided a foundation for this evil darkness

to come to light. Hopefully, a long journey of forgiveness and healing has begun.

Progressively, newer mentalities and structures are being placed to bring the victims strength and help. It will take a long time to bring these "wounded healers" from the margins to the centre of Church life.

Mistakes on the journey happen but, please God, we learn, repent and continue alongside the victims, our new teachers, on the road to conversion.

The light of vocations to the priesthood and deeper prayer.

Incredibly, in the midst of this darkness, has come an unexpected faith light. It is an increase in men offering themselves for the priesthood in the Archdiocese as seminarians.

Just when you might think that people may be rushing to the exits, something opposite seems to be happening.

In these past weeks, I have sent three young men to the seminary to begin their formal discernment with the Church regarding the

priesthood.

They are fine men, faith filled and full of hope. They truly believe that God is calling them to priestly service. We pray for them all and for more vocations.

They join four other men further down the discerning path towards priesthood. Also, there are quite a few more mature men who are indicating a desire to become permanent deacons in the Archdiocese. All of this is heavenly music to the ears of the bishop!

Attached to this "light" is the continuing enquiry from the general public about becoming a Catholic. This is done via the RCIA. How I have prayed that every parish has an active RCIA group!

So, dear friends in Christ, in the **chiaroscuro** of our Emmaus walk together to the Father's House, may we never give up.

Jesus is walking and leading us, even when we reject him and walk other paths. He loves us and mercifully leads us back to him in the conversion we pray for during this Lenten season. Jesus is our hope and salvation always!

Blessings of adoration A bright 'culture of life'

THE Archdiocesan Legion of Mary group heard about the blessings linked to adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in Indonesia during a retreat at Galong.

Retreat director Fr Hugh Thomas, a Sydney-based Redemptorist, has visited Indonesia for the past 10 years promoting adoration.

Together with Fr Doug Harris, of Perth, he has received many invitations to give retreats and to set up chapels of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration.

They have helped to establish 45 adoration chapels, including 30 which have a 24-hour roster.

Fr Thomas recounted his experiences and acknowledged the generosity of hundreds of Indonesian people who have taken part in adoration.

He spoke of the remarkable increase of perpetual adoration

around the world since the pontificate of St. John Paul II citing a paragraph from the pastoral letter *Dominicae Cenae* (1980).

"The Church and the world have a great need for Eucharistic devotion. Jesus waits for us in this sacrament of love. Let us be generous with our time in going to meet Him in adoration and in contemplation full of faith and ready to make reparation for the great faults and crimes of the world. May our adoration never cease."

Pope Francis said: "I want to encourage everyone to visit, if possible, every day, especially amid life's difficulties, the Blessed Sacrament of the infinite love of Christ and His mercy, preserved in our churches, and often abandoned, to speak filially with Him, to listen to Him in silence, and to peacefully entrust yourself to Him."



Fr Hugh Thomas (middle) with members of the Archdiocesan Legion of Mary. Picture: John McLaurin.



Pro-life advocates (from left) Erin Burton, Perpetua Yeo, Rachel Vala, Benedict Slee, Chiara Moore, Dominic Swan and Felicity Yeo.. Picture: Loui Seselja..

A group of young pro-life advocates in bright yellow shirts came to Canberra recently spreading the "culture of life".

Travelling through the ACT as part of their annual walk from Brisbane to Melbourne, they visited and spoke at 10 churches in the Archdiocese.

Seven out of the ten-strong crew found time to visit Parliament House, and the Australian War Memorial.

They also enjoyed walking around Lake Burley Griffin while praying the Rosary, their preferred form of prayer.

Crossroads is an international apostolate which functions also in the US, Canada, Ireland and Spain.

Their mission involves prayer, sacrifice and witness, and they describe themselves as "pro-woman, pro-child, pro-life".

This year's Crossroads walkers included Erin Burton, Perpetua Yeo, Rachel Vala, Benedict Slee, Chiara Moore, Dominic Swan and Felicity Yeo who came from a number of dioceses across Australia.

Mr Slee, a spokesperson for the group of walkers said they had received plenty of affirmation for their venture with some parishioners saying that it was a wonderful example for other young people.

"We do not always see the success of our mission, or the conversations that our shirts start," he said.

Be listeners, teachers are urged

CATHOLIC Education in the Archdiocese kick-started the 2017 school year with a Students ‘Yearn to Learn’ Conference at the National Convention Centre in Canberra.

More than 2000 people attended the conference which featured internationally recognised speakers including Alfie Kohn, Kath Murdoch, Prof Tom Lowrie and Erin Erceg.

The gathering of education professionals from 56 Archdiocesan schools opened the new academic year, and signalled the beginning of a new era under Ross Fox who replaced Moira Najdecki as director of Catholic Education.

Jeff McMullen was master of ceremonies for the conference which had ‘Engaging the Hearts and Minds of 21st Century Learners’ as its theme.

In his welcoming address to attendees, Mr Fox thanked all for attending especially those who travelled from as far away as Pambula and Lake Cargelligo.

He focused mainly on the conference title, speaking about yearning to learn as something which should be “an intense feeling of longing.”

He said that schools could be places that killed curiosity



More than 2000 education professionals from the Archdiocese packed out Canberra’s National National Convention Centre for the Yearn to Learn Conference. Picture: Loui Seselja.

and learning and he raised some concern about the gulf between schools and the world beyond.

“When was the last time you really yearned to learn?” he said encouraging teachers to set aside time in the week for their students to learn about their passions.

And he challenged the teacher cohort encouraging them to ask their students rather than tell them and to be listeners more than talkers.

“We are the inquirer,” he said. Mr Fox also talked about inquiry based learning and encouraged

attendees to learn from the experts presenting on the day.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse followed Mr Fox in giving an address. “Let us remember what the Latin word is in its meaning. The Latin word to educate is ‘*educare*,’” he said.

“This literally means ‘to draw out.’”

“Education is to draw out from the depths of another person that which is lying deep within, but dormant.”

Archbishop Prowse used as an example, the story of Michelangelo, the great medieval artist who always created his masterpieces from shapeless blocks of marble.

He also focused on the word “yearn” drawing a Scripture parallel to the conference title, citing a passage from Psalm 42 which reads “like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul yearns for you, my God.”

He discussed Australia’s secular society describing the “sidelining” of religious sentiment as “absolute nonsense”.

“Religious yearning and longing is part of our human life and we have a deep inner yearning for God within us,” he said.

“The longing for the transcendent in the human life is something we are born with. We can’t run away from it, indeed, it runs towards us. “We were created to be in union with God (and) for Christians this union is expressed in our encounter with Jesus Christ, the fullness of God made present in our world.”

THE CORE

AN AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY (ACU) EDUCATION IS MORE THAN A DEGREE. IT’S MORE THAN A RITE OF PASSAGE, OR A SET OF PRACTICAL SKILLS.

An Australian Catholic University (ACU) education is learning to look at the world through a new perspective, with empathy and confidence. It’s learning to lead, and to listen. It’s challenging stereotypes, and having the courage to make an impact.

The University’s Core Curriculum lies at the heart of this transformation. It’s a key part of every ACU student’s education – giving them time to reflect on a life well lived, and consider ways we can change the world by applying the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

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They are about the dignity of the human person.

They are about solidarity – belonging to one human family regardless of race or religion.

They are about the common good – everyone should have access to what they need to live a fulfilling life.

They are about participation – we all have the right to take part in decisions that affect our lives.

They are about the vulnerable – caring for the underprivileged is everyone’s concern.

And they are about stewardship of the earth – it’s our collective responsibility to care for the world and its resources.

Seeing the world through these principles will change the way our students look at those around them, the way they practice their future profession, and the way they make personal and professional decisions throughout their lives.

The Core at ACU is made up of two units, and a community engagement unit.

There’s even the chance to complete a unit overseas – in cities such as Rome, London, Beijing, Paris or New York.

The Core is unique to ACU. It gives students an edge with employers, who recognise in our graduates a sense of curiosity, a defined creativity, and an ability to engage with the world in a meaningful way.

acu.edu.au/thecore





Months after going to the 2016 WYD in Krakow, pilgrims met for a reunion attending Mass at St Christopher's Cathedral. Picture: John McLaurin.

Krakow's WYD spirit is alive and well

THE SPIRIT of World Youth Day is alive and well in the Archdiocese after last year's pilgrimage group to Krakow met up for prayer and to explore and reflect on what they brought back from their experience.

Attending Mass together at St Christopher's Cathedral, the group enjoyed re-living the iconic moments of their time away and were keen to ensure that the zeal remained strong.

Group member Damien Webb said it was good to have the group come together for reflection.

"It was fantastic to see this amazing group catch up; they had become like

family during their time away together," he said.

"We were blessed to have Archbishop Prowse re-join his fellow pilgrims for this event.

"It was refreshing to see that changes had been made to better the lives of the individuals, their friends and the students in their care, and that the World Youth Day presence has made deep and meaningful changes to the lives of the individuals.

"The group still has a desire to spread their light to others and are ever thankful for the life-changing experience that they were granted."

Students thirsting to help

GOING to the Philippines and living with the Franciscan Sisters of St Anthony over the past two years has been an invaluable experience for students from Pambula's Lumen Christi College.

This year their aim is to help provide the impoverished Filipino community with clean water.

"The Sisters feed nearly 300 people every week and do this by pumping from a well that we wouldn't use for animal water,"

teacher Wendy Mockler said.

"At present, there is no fresh clean drinking water available at their home.

"As part of our ongoing commitment to social justice initiatives, we have launched a campaign to finance the installation of a water filter at the Sisters' house."

Mrs Mockler says the school has raised \$5000, but is still \$2000 short of what it needs.

Ahead of World Water Day

on March 22, she has put out an appeal.

"We have secured \$2500 funding from the local Pambula-based Social Justice Advocates Group," she said. "Our school based funding has yielded around \$1000.

"We have a campaign running where we are hoping to net \$1500 but will still be shy of the mark."

For information on how to donate go to <https://pozible.com/project/lccc-clean-water-project-4>



**m|❤️
s|c Missionaries of
the Sacred Heart**

**YOU JUST HELD HER,
LET HER CRY AND
SAID NOTHING.**

EVERYONE HAS A STORY.

I remember it well. A man collapsed and died at the front gate of his home after work. I was called to the hospital, anointed the man and prayed with his gathered family.

His wife wrapped her arms around me and began to weep. I held her, feeling quite helpless to do anything else.

The following Sunday after mass a young man approached me, saying, "I want to thank you Father for what you did for my Aunt. We were all telling her not to worry, Uncle is in heaven now. You just held her, let her cry and said nothing. That's what she really needed. Thank you Father."

He shook my hand and walked away, leaving me stunned.

— Fr Patrick Sharpe msc

To discover more MSC stories please visit whatsalifeor.com/stories, attend a discernment weekend retreat, volunteer as a short term lay missionary or just call Fr Peter 0408 299 170

Inspired to spread the mercy of God

THE BEAUTIFUL streets of Krakow, Poland, may be memories in the minds of young people who attended World Youth Day, but for high school students from the Archdiocese the celebrations were far from over.

Senior students from Catholic high schools all around Canberra gathered at St Clare's College in Griffith to take part in Mercy in Action, a post-WYD event based on the Gospel verse Matt 5:7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy".

The youth rally kicked off with a performance by Canberra musician Ariana Strmota, before launching into games and an introduction to the rally's theme, reflecting on the true meaning of mercy through the example of Jesus Christ and His self-sacrificial love.

Andrew Lemalu, of the National Evangelisation Team (NET), shared his experience of God's love and mercy.

Sam Clear inspired students with accounts of his 2006-2008 pilgrimage around the world, and discussed the practical applications of both corporal and spiritual acts of mercy.

An encouraging talk by Sr Kathryn, of the Missionaries of God's Love, was followed by guided reflection and a performance by Mad-die Chynoweth and Lucy Sugerman. St Clare's College student Sophie Barton said the evening was "a really positive and energetic night where I met lots of young people from all around Canberra.

"I know that everyone that came enjoyed the night and can't wait for the next rally."

The rally inspired students to bring God's mercy and compassion into the lives around them.



Some of the participants at the St Clare's College for the Mercy in Action Youth Rally.

CatholicCare there for all

A NEW strategic plan might have brought about a change of logo, slogan, vision and mission statement, but CatholicCare will continue to serve the community in the same way it has known for the past 60 years.

The new slogan “there for any human” is a continuation of the organisation’s past service as a welfare arm of the Archdiocese accepting people from all walks of life.

Respect, stewardship, solidarity and excellence are the core values.

Archdiocesan CatholicCare Chief Executive Officer Anne Kirwan was one of the main drivers behind the new strategic plan for 2017 and 2018.

She spoke about a new optimism and said the recent launch and re-branding enabled the organisation to prioritise what it stood for and to give it a fresh look, while embracing the challenges of a changing society.

In her address, she promoted the goals, direction and future sustainability of the organisation, highlighting a need for being a provider of choice, being able to empower people while helping develop healthy and inclusive communities through collaboration for the common good.



Archbishop Christopher Prowse congratulates CatholicCare CEO Anne Kirwan at the 2017-18 launch with Senator Zed Seselja in the background. Picture: John McLaurin.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse reaffirmed his support at the launch emphasising the wide expanses of the Archdiocese which pushes as far as Lake Cargelligo in the west, Goulburn and Crookwell in the north and Eden in the south.

“Christianity going out to the periphery is not new,” he said.

“The Catholic Church working with those on the fringes has been happening for more than 2000 years.

“I commend this new strategic

plan for CatholicCare and this awareness-raising program today to let everybody know that we are here to serve the needy at all times.”

He acknowledged the leadership of Ms Kirwan, thanking her for providing enthusiasm and expertise in difficult times.

“I commend Anne and her 270 staff for the many acts of kindness that they offer to the needy,” he said.

“Every year about 10,000 people are helped very practically by the CatholicCare of the Archdiocese.”

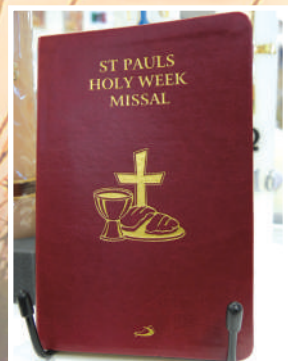
Peter Gordon was master of ceremonies. Indigenous elder Warren Daley opened proceedings by giving a welcome to country on behalf of the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the land.

Liberal Senator Zed Seselja and Liberal Member for Ginninderra Elizabeth Kikkert showed their support by attending as did Archdiocesan Financial Administrator Helen Delahunty and newly appointed Catholic Education Director Ross Fox.

To learn more about CatholicCare in the Archdiocese call (02) 6295 4300.

OPEN WEEKDAYS 9.30am-5pm, SATURDAYS 9am-1pm

Catholic Bookshop celebrates Lent and Easter



Sacrifices worth it for proud citizens

BEING received as Australian citizens rates among the proudest moments in the lives of Queanbeyan parishioners Herbert Joey, Roweliza and Danielle Quinones.

The family received the honour at the town's Australia Day ceremony with about 50 people officially welcomed on the day by the new Queanbeyan-Palerang Council.

Originally from the city of Kabacan in the southern Philippines, the Quinones immediately fell in love with Australia on their first visit.

Mr Quinones first came out in 2009 to study accounting in Sydney.

In 2012, he moved to Queanbeyan for employment and was joined that year by his wife and daughter who came on holiday.

They liked it so much that they decided to stay. Mrs Quinones said it was an emotional moment for the family when they were told that they were going to be made Australian citizens.

"Right from the start in 2009 it was Herbert Joey's goal to bring us all here. We are so happy that it has actually happened and we are so lucky to be in this country and feel very proud to call ourselves Australians," she said.

"We definitely did it tough in the early years with Herbert Joey being in Australia and Danielle and myself being in the Philippines.

"At the time I was practicing medicine over there and it was difficult for us being apart.

"When we arrived here we didn't know anyone, but over the past four years we have made some wonderful friends and are so happy.

"We had to make some sacrifices, but it has all been worth it."

The Quinones are most content calling Queanbeyan home and have fitted into everyday life knowing that modern technology keeps them in touch with extended family back in the Philippines.

They appreciate the laid-back

lifestyle in Australia enjoying the strong café culture as well as plenty of barbecues Danielle is enjoying life as a year-four student at St Gregory's Primary School.

Having already visited the Gold Coast, Melbourne and the South Coast of NSW, the Quinones are looking forward to exploring other parts of Australia.

Queanbeyan's Herbert Joey, Roweliza and Danielle Quinones are happy to have been made citizens on Australia Day. Picture: Supplied.



Ebing family Waramanga



Deputy Chief Minister Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development Yvette Berry (left) presents Craig and Helmein Ebing with their certificates. Picture: Supplied.

The St John Vianney community at Waramanga are rejoicing after Helmein and Craig Ebing became Australian citizens at a naturalisation ceremony.

The Ebings were delighted to have Sr Frances Fitzpatrick, Helen Casey and Nicola Ironside attend the citizenship ceremony as witnesses.

The process to become Australian citizens was long and included a citizenship test where 75 per cent of questions had to be answered correctly.

Topics covered include questions about Anzac Day, equality, freedom of speech, voting rights, the Aboriginal flag and the Australian government.

Mrs Ebing believes "learning Aussie slang was harder".

The South African couple have lived in Australia for four years after leaving Johannesburg.

Since arriving in Canberra, they have worked for the Catholic Education ICT department.

Mr Ebing is the service desk manager, while Mrs Ebing provides support for five Archdiocesan schools of which St John Vianney's is one.

Chemistry right for man of service

A man who is synonymous with support for aged care facilities has been named this year's Yass Valley Citizen of the Year.

Peter Doyle served as a Yass Valley councillor for 14 years. For 20 years he has been involved in fund raising for Yass aged care facilities, the past 10 years as president of the Yass Aged Care Foundation.

Mr Doyle served a number of years on the Mount Carmel School Committee and he remains a member of the St Augustine's Finance Committee.

"It is a great honour and something which I didn't expect," he said.

"It's nice to be recognised for the various

jobs which I have held in the district."

Although widely recognised for being one of the town's pharmacists of years gone by,



2017 Yass Valley Citizen of the Year Peter Doyle with Mayor Rowena Abbey
Picture: Yass Tribune.

it is Mr Doyle's extra-curricular activities and service to the community which have gained him this year's recognition.

Mr Doyle's father was the local pharmacist in Lake Cargelligo, and his uncle was in the same profession in Yass.

In 1954, his uncle sold the Yass Pharmacy to Mr Doyle's father and Mr Peter Doyle took it over in the late 1970s before selling it in 2005.

Apart from his university years in Sydney he has always been a part of the Yass community.

When he was at college in the city there was chemistry in more ways than one.

It is where he met his wife of 49 years Geraldine, who is also a pharmacist. Furthermore it was Geraldine's pharmacist sister who introduced them.

Trish always has time for her community

Day in, day out, Gunning's Trish Hallam tackles whatever she sees that needs to be done.

Her commitment to her local community was officially recognised on Australia Day when she was named Gunning Citizen of the Year.

Like many country people, Mrs Hallam, who has three daughters and 10 grandchildren, wears many hats.

Since marrying her fourth generation sheep farmer husband in 1976, she has devoted time and energy to many organisations in and around Gunning.

These include the parish pastoral council, Gunning Show Society of which she is treasurer, Art Show committee, local health service, primary school and St Vincent De Paul Society in Yass.

Over a number of years she has helped with the printing of the local town newsletter.

Growing up down the road at Yass, she had a strong sense of community which she inherited from her mother.

"Mum was heavily involved with the Catholic Women's League and the Country Women's Association, so I guess in a sense



Gunning's Trish Hallam (right) with Upper Lachlan Mayor Brian McCormack and other Gunning Citizen of the Year Kathleen Webster. Picture: Supplied.

I have just followed her lead," Mrs Hallam said.

In addition to the voluntary roles, she looks after the finances

of the family farming business.

She also plays the organ at Mass, which she has done for the past 40 years.

Anne finds joy in walking with others

BY FIONA VAN DER PLAAT

WHILE laughing with one of the residents of HOME in Queanbeyan as they drove to an appointment at Calvary Hospital, Anne Pratt was reminded of how much she enjoys what she does.

“It’s such fun being with them,” she says of those she supports as manager of the facility which, as its name suggests, provides a home for up to 19 people with chronic mental illness.

“When you see people at their lowest and you walk with them on their journey and see them come out the other end happy and cared for, it is such a joy.”

Mrs Pratt sees the part she plays in their lives as a privilege, not a job. She has not expected to be honoured for the four years she spent helping a dedicated group of community members bring Fr Peter Day’s vision for HOME to life, or the seven years she has spent managing it since.

Nor did she expect accolades for the time she spent volunteering at and coordinating St Benedict’s Community Day Centre in the years before HOME.

But the acknowledgement has come anyway, in the form of an Order of Australia Medal in the



Anne Pratt at HOME in Queanbeyan. Picture: John McLaurin

Australia Day Honours.

The medal has given Mrs Pratt cause to reflect on the success of HOME, which receives no government funding and relies on the goodwill of the community.

“I am really proud of it. It is beyond a passion for me. I have a real love for what I do and for the people,” she said.

“These people have real gifts and we help them recognise that

so they can change their lives and not be defined by mental illness, which can take away the person they are and leave them as a shell.”

The residents and staff are like family members for Mrs Pratt,

who feels the loss of any of them deeply.

This is especially poignant, since it was the death of her husband Bernie, who took his own life in 2001 after years of clinical depression, that prompted her to start volunteering at the St Benedict’s centre.

She says her 23-year marriage to Bernie “gave me a great understanding of what people with mental illness go through when they are sick”.

Sixteen years later, she is more convinced than ever this was meant to be her vocation. “I am at that stage in my life where I know God has had a hand in where I need to be,” she said.

Mrs Pratt is conscious of keeping a balance, however, taking time out with her two daughters and two granddaughters, and her other family members and friends, and slipping in a spot of golf where possible.

And she feels she has quite a few years left in the tank for HOME – if it will still have her, she emphasises – and for her commitment to raising awareness of mental illness in the community.

“I feel as if I have the energy to keep going for some time yet,” she said.

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When I was recently at an event I was speaking to a group of people about what I do and I was surprised to learn that some of them hadn't used a Broker as they still thought that we charged a fee for our service.

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Vinnies aims new homeless focus

BY EMILY SHAW

BARNIE van Wyk has filled the CEO's chair for a few weeks, but he has big plans for the future of the St Vincent de Paul Society Canberra/Goulburn.

Mr van Wyk succeeded Paul Trezise who retired this year and was farewelled last month at the society's office in Deakin.

Mr Trezise's farewell was attended by about 40 people including society board members, employees and volunteers.

They were delighted by his claim that the CEO position was the best job he'd had.

Mr van Wyk described Mr Trezise as "an inspiration".

"I am humbled both by his efforts in SVDP and to have received such a comprehensive and supportive handover," he said.

From a man whose own resume includes upper-level management in the business sector in his native South Africa, as well as nine years on the Royal Australian Navy's Central Canteen Board, an integral position in rolling out the first 15 trial sites of the NDIS and work in the transition of property management for the Department of Human Services, this is no small accolade.

Over the course of his tenure as St Vincent de Paul Society CEO Mr van Wyk has set himself a "massive task". He intends to guide SVDP in the creation of a new strategy to address



St Vincent de Paul Society CEO Mr Barnie van Wyk (left) with outgoing CEO Mr Paul Trezise. Picture: Supplied.

homelessness and create a more suitable and affordable housing situation.

Acknowledging the work of members and increasing community engagement are also on the list, as is a strong focus on attracting more members and volunteers

in the 25-55 years age group.

He wants to strengthen existing partnerships and create new ones across all areas of the society's work, and to bring innovative approaches to strengthen strategies already in place. He credits the platform built

by Mr Trezise as giving the society the resources to achieve these goals and he is confident they will deliver results. "The organisation is in great shape," Mr van Wyk said. "The people are amazing and have real passion for what they're doing."

Deep profound wounds

Continued from page 1

"The hypocrisy involved in these historic failures is grossly unbecoming a Church which seeks to be, and should be, held to its own high standard."

Mr Sullivan also acknowledged the ongoing hurt of victims.

"Let us not forget that every person who has come forward carries with them the suffering, damage and loss, which child sexual abuse inevitably causes," he said.

"They have borne the risk of further traumatising in order to share their experiences."

The recently released figures reveal to some degree the extent of the damage caused.

However it is widely accepted that it is highly likely there remains a number of victims who have not yet come forward.

Matt Casey, director of the Archdiocesan Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding, said the Church and its agencies had much better practices in place than in the period between 1950 and 2010.

"The recently released figures from the Royal Commission are shocking and shameful," he said.

"In the period of 1950 to 2010,

73 allegations were made against 43 people, 25 lay people and 18 clergy (in the Archdiocese).

"Clergy were the subject of 60 per cent of allegations but the most significant perpetrator, a priest, accounted for 23 victims, nearly 30 per cent of the total.

"As in other parts of the Church most complaints arose in the '60s, '70s and early '80s.

"The steps Archbishop Prowse has taken including the establishment of the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding (IPSS), has placed the Archdiocese in a good position to benefit from the learnings of the Commission.

"He has placed victims at the centre of our efforts to address wickedness and harm that has been done.

"Importantly he has focused the local Church around a culture which, as Jesus Christ urged us, places the wellbeing of children and vulnerable people as a prime responsibility.

"Addressing the awful revelations of the Royal Commission is a responsibility for us all. Initiatives such as the IPSS and its regular meetings with the

Archbishop, Vicar General and heads of agencies enable lay people to have an immediate and authoritative presence in the formulation of policy around safeguarding and the response when issues arise."

Archdiocesan Vicar General Fr Tony Percy was rector of Good Shepherd Seminary in Sydney between 2008 and 2015.

He said the process with which seminarians are now selected and assessed in their formation is much more stringent.

"If we are unsure about a seminarian, then we always resolve in favour of the Church community," he said.

Fr Percy also encouraged a cultural shift in parishes calling for "co-responsibility" between the priest and parishioners, asking for "lay people to rise up".

"There's been an over-play of clergy and a lack of participation by lay people," he said.

"They've (the priests) got spiritual authority, which they should have, and it's important to have people who know something about the Spirit, but we've got to slowly change the culture."

Last year, led by school

principal Richard Sidorko, Marist College Canberra held a 'Liturgy of Lament' to say sorry to former students and their families who were victims of sexual abuse.

To read the Royal Commission transcript in full go to <http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au/royal-commission/case-study-50-catholic-church-authorities,-february-2017,-sydney/case-study-50-transcripts.aspx>

To read the Archbishop's Letter of Consolation in full go to cgcatholic.org.au/

Anyone who has been affected by sexual abuse at the hands of Catholic clergy, or an employee or volunteer for the Church can contact Mr Casey on 0411 096 173 or the IPSS directly on (02) 6201 9872. Alternatively they may wish to send an email to ipss@cgcatholic.org.au

The Truth Justice and Healing Council may be contacted Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm on (02) 6234 0900. More details including an email option is available on the website <http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au/>

Service to Church ‘a joy and privilege’

HARDEN-MURRUM-BURRAH’S Sue Orchison says she couldn’t be happier after receiving a papal honour for 16 years’ service to the Church.

Mrs Orchison was awarded the Dame of the Order of Pope St Sylvester I following a career which saw her work for several bodies in the Church.

Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana invested her at a farewell lunch on her retirement attended by Archbishop Christopher Prowse.

Mrs Orchison, an accomplished iconographer, said she got “quite a surprise” when told that she had been recognised for her time working for the Church.

A mother of three and grandmother of three she started formal work for the Church by organising the children’s page in Catholic Voice.

“I wrote a small message each month to the children which taught me so much about my faith in a simplified manner,” she said.

“I’m told it was popular reading with the adults and children.”

Following this, she became a secretarial assistant at the Australian



(L-R): Catholic Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Mrs Sue Orchison, His Excellency Most Reverend Adolfo Tito Yllana and Mr Geoff Orchison. Picture: Contributed.

Catholic Bishops Conference) and later joined the staff of the Apostolic Nunciature in Red Hill where she processed requests for papal blessings.

At the same time she joined the Archdiocese in a number of part-time capacities including working in the archives and also for the Clergy Retirement Foundation.

The award is most fitting for Mrs Orchison considering her love

for the Church which is evident in her appreciation of its members.

“It has been a joy and privilege working for the Catholic Church of Australia,” she said.

“It is an honour to serve our beautiful retired priests who have given their lives to God and to us.

“The Nuncios whom I assisted have a great heart for Australia. They travel to the ends of earth to be here with us, then travel to

the remotest towns to bring the presence and love of the Church to people.”

She also recalled a couple of stories of her time working for the Church.

“One of my precious memories was assisting in the office at plenary meetings of the Australian bishops in Sydney,” she said.

“I would join the bishops for Mass in the morning and read the first reading and psalm, and remember going over the reading repeatedly the evening before to understand the meaning of what was being said and deliver the Word with clarity, understanding and revelation to the 30 bishops present.

“A daunting task but one I relished with shaking knees.”

The other one involves a couple of archbishops from the Archdiocese past and present:

“I was at the first plenary meeting Archbishop Prowse attended in 2003,” she said.

“During that time Archbishop Francis Carroll was president of the ACBC.

“After one plenary meeting I drove him, in the driving rain, back to Canberra.

“We said the Rosary on the way and arrived home safe and sound.

“I have a great love and respect for bishops and the difficult ministry they have in our Church and in the world today.”

Her ministry in iconography began at St Benedict’s, Narrabundah, in 2003 and continues to this day, where she runs workshops at St Clement’s Monastery in Galong.

“Our faith is so rich and exciting,” she said.

Her icons of St Mary MacKillop are displayed at St Christopher’s Cathedral and at Sale Cathedral. She also has works at the Apostolic Nunciature, parishes and schools and private collections in many parts of Australia.

She was a part of the music ministry for two decades at Kambah parish, and has continued this at Harden-Murrumburrah.

Like many Australians, she has a special affection for St Mary MacKillop and considers herself fortunate to have been at her canonisation in Rome, while she also feels blessed to have met Pope Benedict XVI when he came to Sydney for World Youth Day in 2008.

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Hennessy College gets a new principal



Hennessy Catholic College's first female principal Trazel Scott has settled right in to her new position. Picture: Rebecca Hewson.

BY REBECCA HEWSON

SCHOOLS have been back only a little while, but Hennessy Catholic College has seen some changes with its first female principal.

"Absolutely thrilled to be here," Trazel Scott said about her appointment as principal.

"I've had 25 years of teaching in Canberra in an all-boys school, a co-ed school and an all-girls school," she said.

"So for the last 14 years I've been looking after the well-being of a thousand girls and now it's absolutely such a privilege to come to Young to be a part of the community, to live in town and immerse ourselves in the life of the school, the town, the church - it's excellent."

Having come from a big school in Canberra, Mrs Scott is impressed with Hennessy Catholic College as a whole.

"The school is amazing, I'm so

humbled by it. It is brilliant," she said. The transition into the position didn't slow Mrs Scott from getting down to business.

"I met the kids yesterday, we did a big, full school assembly and so to see all 500 of them in one place was so good," she said.

"The energy that was there was amazing. All the kids I've met are just lovely; they seem keen to be here and there's a real sense of community."

"I feel very blessed to be coming in and to be a part of that."

It's not just the students that Mrs Scott has been focused on either. The week before school went back, the new principal took all staff to Canberra to attend a conference.

"Part of the responsibility of the principal is to implement the strategic plan and the recommendations from the strategic plan," she said.

"We had registration last year.

"With registration comes recommendations also, so part of my responsibility is to work with staff to look at those recommendations and see how we can move forward with them."

Mrs Scott has started bringing about a plan that monitors and tracks the well-being of students.

"I'm really looking at bringing in an extension of what we already have here to our academic tracking of students' well being and looking to bring that in pretty quickly," she said.

"Just tying in all the things that are already here in such a way that helps teachers maximise student potential."

When Mrs Scott was asked if there were other changes she would make, she said: "Maybe looking at brightening up the website."

(Original story was published on the Young Witness website on February 9, 2017.)

Mary farewells her school

BY CRAIG THOMSON

ST MARY'S Primary School stalwart Mary Mannion has packed her desk, said her goodbyes and started a new adventure after 25 years' service to the Young school.

Mrs Mannion said she is looking forward in retirement to travelling and spending more time with her husband.

"I will cherish my time at St Mary's as the school's secretary for 25 years," she said.

"I have seen so many students

go through their primary education and then some of them return to school with their children. I am extremely grateful for the role that everyone has played throughout my years at St Marys, students, staff and parents.

"My husband and I are looking forward to our sea change, with our children and grandchildren."

School principal Louise Grant wished Mrs Mannion good luck in her retirement but said she will miss her.

"Mary has so many shining

virtues and she has inspired all of us at St Mary's to be the best we can be," she said.

"Her spirit of service is legendary and her legacy will be long lasting."

(Original story was published on the Young Witness website February 9, 2017)

CAPTION: School Principal Louise Grant was sad to see retiring school stalwart Mary Mannion leave the school. Picture: Craig Thomson.



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Three put on notice for praying on abortion

THREE men were issued with criminal infringement notices (akin to on-the-spot fines) for engaging in "prohibited behaviour" on February 2 outside the abortion facility at 1 Moore St in Canberra City.

Another person was given a warning on that day for reading the Bible outside the facility - and served with a notice for doing the same thing the following week.

The ACT, like Tasmania and Victoria, has legislated to create a "bubble zone" around the site, extending about a block in any direction, within which specified behaviours are prohibited.

These including engaging in "a protest, by any means, in relation to the provision of abortions in the ... facility", which, it is understood, the men are accused of.

Kerry Mellor has previously been issued with two such notices; one was withdrawn, apparently because he was not in fact in the "zone", and the other has apparently lapsed.

Since the introduction of the legislation, members of the group, some of whom have been praying the Rosary at the site for a number of years, had modified their approach,

removing signs, crucifixes and statues.

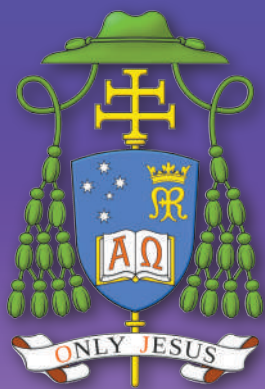
John Popplewell, a long-standing member of the group who had also been served a notice, explained "we were never protesting - but after the legislation was passed, we stopped using the signs, to make it clear. And since Kerry was given his first notice, we're being even more low-key until the legal aspects are resolved. Most people in the street wouldn't be aware of us."

"Unfortunately, the authorities are dragging the chain a bit. It seems like they might realise they don't have much of a case."

Mr Mellor agreed they were not protesting: "My prayers are not directed toward politicians or the public," he said.

"We're praying here much as one might pray at a graveside, or the site of a massacre."

Witnesses say police have changed tactics. Previously they had sent police cars, paddy wagons and up to six uniformed officers to confront the small group, but more recently they had taken what was described as a "softly-softly" approach, with plain clothes police officers approaching individuals and asking them generally what they were doing.



JESUS WELCOMED THEM (LUKE 9/11)

Pastoral Letter of Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Archbishop of Canberra Goulburn

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE – ARCHDIOCESAN AND REGIONAL GATHERINGS (2015, 2016)

You may recall that in 2015 I wrote to you a Pastoral Letter on the topic of marriage and family life. This was in response to our very well attended Archdiocesan Assembly in Canberra on this topic (March 2015).

One of the major recommendations of our 2015 Assembly was the desire to continue a discussion on this same topic but in smaller groupings around the archdiocese. At the same time, providentially, Pope Francis hosted two international Synods on the same topic in Rome and subsequently published his well accepted Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* (*The Joy of Love*, 19th March 2016).

Assisted by both our combined assembly and the fresh Papal teachings on marriage and family life, we embarked in 2016 on Regional Deanery Assemblies. These were held in the five Deaneries of the Archdiocese (Monaro, Coastal, Central Northern, and Western). Unsurprisingly, given the demographic and social differences within our relatively large geographic diocese, responses varied considerably.

Nonetheless, having attended every deanery gathering and carefully listened to what was shared; I believe some commonalities can be discerned. For me, these common expressions on our shared journey of faith are like footprints of the action of the Holy Spirit in our midst. They are a little like our Emmaus scene for our place and time. Perhaps they are part of our answer to what the Risen Lord might pose to us as a question: *“To my Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, what questions and observations have you been making about marriage and family life over these gatherings? Where are your joys and sorrows? How have you been my merciful presence, especially to the battlers? What pastoral plans are you developing for the future to foster marriage and family life?”*

What responses, however tentative, are we beginning to formulate in answer to the



RCIA candidate Blake Gracie (middle) accompanied by his sponsor, is welcomed by Archbishop Christopher during the Rite of Elect.

Lord’s questions?
Let me make an attempt in response.

First, I think most warmed to the present challenges in marriage and family life as expressed by the speakers and those who offered testimonies in the 2015 Canberra assembly. Feedback has indicated that the present realities – in all their hopes and setbacks – were reasonably represented in the talks presented. That is quite a blessing of the Holy Spirit already! We all know that family life has and is changing so rapidly. There would be very few families that could honestly say that they have no “issues” in their marriage and family. In this new and emerging patchwork of family life today, we are all caught up in its challenges and demands. As Pope Francis wisely noted: “It is a matter of reaching out to everyone no one can be condemned forever because that is not the logic of the Gospel.” (AL 297)

Yet, in all this, after the 5 deanery gatherings, I went home every time feeling that the wonderful Catholic people gathered really do still believe deeply in marriage and

the family. That is, in our Archdiocese people still believe in the beauty and necessity of family life as “The foundation of society; all social arrangements proceed from it.” (Do Cat 114)

Secondly, in the regional gatherings there was one expression that was mentioned every time in regard to the family of the Church and every family contained there within: the importance of WELCOME.

When we ponder upon the Gospels, the notion of WELCOME is prominent. Constantly we hear that “Jesus welcomed them” (Luke 9/11). But the welcome, in the merciful heart of Jesus, was to be directed particularly to the hungry, thirsty, naked, stranger and prisoner. Jesus insists that in welcoming these poor ones “You welcomed me” (Matt. 25/35). This is the type of welcome the Church really means when it uses this word. St Paul summarises the Tradition so well when he teaches: “Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” (Romans 15/7).

“Welcome” And Our Catholic Parishes

Let us reflect a little more about this term WELCOME on a pastoral level. What could this term really mean for the typical Catholic parish?

I suppose there are a superficial and a profound understanding to the term WELCOME in Catholic parishes.

We all know Australians are a very pragmatic and busy people. So we have to be sensitive in avoiding a shallow approach to “welcome”.

On the one hand, sometimes I have been aware of certain parishes that stress welcome but welcome is not really given.

Here are some questions to answer regarding “welcome”.

Is it a real “Catholic welcome” when people generally sit in the same seat in the Church and are irritated when visitors take “their seat”, especially at times of First Eucharist and Confirmations? At these times do the “regulars” think or speak negatively at those who attend these occasions in large numbers and then go “missing”? How do we cope with crying babies and those unfamiliar with Church “behaviour”? Does the Sign of Peace become a real gesture of reconciliation? Are there greeters at the entrances to the Church? Is there a choir to assist in lifting the liturgical prayer to a heightened sense of joy and hope? Does the homily really relate both to the biblical readings of the day and help link the Living Word of God to everyday life in a thoughtful manner that excites evangelisation? Is some hospitality offered to all occasionally after Mass? What about the behaviour of Catholics in Church car parks?

On the other hand, I have encountered some wonderful examples of “Church welcome” that are profound and deeply Christian.

Here are some such examples.

Is there an active RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) in the parish that is linked both with liturgical life of the parish and the parish school – a winning combination? How can we honestly call a parish a “welcoming” community if we do not welcome people into the welcoming arms of the Lord Jesus in the life of the Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist?

This RCIA group functions even if there are no enquirers over certain times. It becomes a kind of adult education group for the parish and develops lay leadership in the parish. The parish may think of joining pastoral forces with the neighbouring parish to ensure that

the RCIA team consists of trained lay leaders that offer service to both parishes.

Indeed, a welcoming parish avoids any sign of parochialism. It is at the service of its neighbouring parish and shares pastoral resources which assist the spread of the Gospel. It is a sad day when one parish is strong in a given aspect of pastoral life and its neighbour is withering on the vine in this same area.

“Welcome” is extrovert and never introvert. It looks out to help and serve where there is need. This is especially so in our service to the poor and marginalised, so insisted upon in the Scriptures. I notice this seems to happen



often in a marvellous manner, for example, via the St Vincent de Paul Society. Also, the resources of the Archdiocese, through the Archbishop’s Office for Evangelisation, are always ready to assist parishes needing pastoral resources of any kind.

I believe that a mature understanding of the term “welcome” must be linked to a key term used in the reflections of Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia*: accompanying, discerning and integrating weakness (Chapter 8).

Welcome via accompaniment of families

From our Assemblies, we all know afresh the joys and sorrows that accompany families today. In extending our pastoral notion of



WELCOME to Pope Francis’ considerations, we could start to talk about an ON GOING WELCOME VIA ACCOMPANIMENT OF FAMILIES.



vigour and new initiatives. The Assemblies so often highlighted this area.

I know from World Youth Days, national and regional youth gatherings, and strong parish youth groups that the YOUTH SPEAKS TO YOUTH strategy is a winning way of engaging with young people on the level of Church engagement. Youth speak of being lonely when they attend Mass on their own. However, when they go in a group, there is a new vitality all together.

So, in parishes (especially our schools) and in the wider Archdiocese, let us offer a WELCOME to some new approaches to our vitally important accompaniment of our young



people, especially the strugglers. The Bishops of Australia have declared 2018 a National Youth Year (10 years after World Youth Day, Sydney). Also, the next International Synod in Rome will be on the topic of Youth. It is a providential time to focus pastorally on youth.

As this apostolate is vitally linked to family life, it is best to include it in the COMMISSION FOR MARRIAGE, FAMILY AND YOUTH.

Welcome via accompaniment in prayer

Another area of priority that was mentioned at all five Deanery Assemblies was the importance of PRAYER.

The thirst for prayer was clearly stated by so many. Particularly the prayer for healing in the family was spoken of many times. More



May I offer an observation? The parishes are the pastoral heart of any diocese. But they are not the only ecclesial group that enrich the life of the Church.

In the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, for example, I have become aware of many wonderful trans-parish new ecclesial groups present and thriving among us. Many are aimed at marriage and family enrichment. Some have been quietly operating in the archdiocese for many years. Some are more recent and are a gift from our migrant communities. The observation I make is this. I notice that these two living centres of pastoral vitality do not seem to have a great deal to do with each other. Indeed there is a considerable



ignorance of the existence and value of these groups. Yet parishes have much to offer these groups and, certainly, these groups have much to offer parishes. I can think of the following areas: Pre-marriage preparation, on-going marriage enrichment, family support and prayer, ministry to youth, practical help to the weak and lonely.

I hope to form a new **Archdiocesan Commission on Marriage, Family and Youth**. A major responsibility of this commission would be to gather the scattered pastoral resources found in these areas of Catholic life and showcase them for us all. Also, it would find ways where this mutual enrichment can assist in ensuring that our WELCOME is one that truly ACCOMPANIES FAMILIES ON LIFE'S JOURNEY.

Welcome via accompaniment of our youth

It is in the area of our apostolate to the YOUTH that this accompaniment needs fresh



broadly, the deep encouragement to pray and to find an appropriate type of prayer in today's hectic world was requested. How can we speak of WELCOME if it does not begin in prayer? If we do not WELCOME Jesus deep into our hearts, then anything else to support marriage and family life will ultimately fail and look more like techniques and simply professional advice offered to troubled hearts. But the Church is not a therapeutic organisation amongst others! Through our Baptism and Sacraments – especially the Eucharist – we are the People of God on pilgrimage to the Father's home in heaven. By prayer in its many forms we come into contact with our deepest vocation in Christ – to be with Jesus for others!

A very simple and ancient way of praying is called Christian meditation. It is a daily

discipline of listening to the Spirit of the Living God alive deep within us. It is to encounter Jesus by recalling the three "Ss" of meditation – silence, stillness and simplicity.

I hope to stress this aspect of welcoming Jesus deep within our hearts and communities in the times ahead. Without this of greatest priority, then "in vain do the builders labour."

Accompanied by the Holy Family

Over the five Deanery Assemblies I carried with me a beautiful icon of the Holy Family. It was given a place of honour in all our venues. It became like a little

procession throughout the entire year as I travelled with the icon around each Archdiocesan deanery.

May the Holy Family guard and guide us in the future years of our Archdiocesan pilgrimage. May the Holy Family accompany us as we attempt to accompany each other more attentively in our troubled times.

Please feel my immense gratitude to all who attended these Deanery Assemblies during 2016. I also thank sincerely, all those who, in whatever way, helped the organisation of these gatherings, both parish and Archdiocesan leaders.

May we conclude with the prayer of Pope Francis to the Holy Family?



Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendour of true love; to you we turn in trust.

Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel and small domestic churches.

Holy Family of Nazareth, may families never again experience violence, rejection and division; may all who may have been hurt or scandalised find ready comfort and healing.

Holy Family of Nazareth, make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family, and its beauty in God's plan.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, graciously hear our prayer.

AMEN (Amoris Laetitia, n.325)

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MISSION

CSYMA rally to the call in mass numbers

HUNDREDS OF young people from all over the Archdiocese and beyond joined Archbishop Christopher Prowse and several other priests at the Catholic Schools Youth Ministry Australia (CSYMA) Youth Mass and Rally at St Christopher’s Cathedral on February 26. Photographer Loui Seselja was there to capture the fun.



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Aust Day honour for ACU head

AUSTRALIAN Catholic University Vice-Chancellor and President Prof Greg Craven has been named in the Australia Day Honours List.

He was made an Officer of the Order of Australia in the General Division, in recognition of his “distinguished service to tertiary education through leadership and representational roles with a range of institutions, to the Catholic Church in Australia, and to constitutional law”.

Prof Craven said he was “very humbled and honoured” to receive an Order of Australia Award, and said it was a credit to the work and enterprise of all staff at ACU.

“I don’t see this as a personal award but as one really recognising what all my colleagues at ACU have achieved over the last decade,” he Craven said.

He noted that the award highlighted two of his great passions; the law and education. “It’s very nice that the citation mentions constitutional law. It reminds me of when I used to have academic credibility,” he said.

ACU Chancellor John Fahey said the award provided important recognition of the significant contribution Prof Craven has made to Australian life.

End child trafficking: call

“THEY are children, not slaves!” was the theme for Bakhita Day as bishops and religious leaders supported a call from Pope Francis to end human trafficking, particularly against children.

Bishop Terry Brady, chairman of the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life, said, “St Josephine Bakhita’s feast day is an opportunity to raise awareness about human trafficking involving children.

“Pope Francis has called us to make a difference.

“Sometimes our steps are small, but together we can achieve a great deal especially when we work with others to stop human trafficking.” Sr Anne Tormey RSM, president of Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans, also supported the initiative.

“This day can be an opportunity to learn about trafficking locally and globally, to advocate for legislation and pray for the protection of children who become victims of human trafficking,” she said.

St Bakhita is the patron saint of victims of slavery.

The United Nations estimates that one in

every three victims of human trafficking is a child.

It is estimated that 30 million children have lost their childhood through sexual exploitation over the past 30 years.

Annually, millions of children are trafficked into domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, pornography production, forced marriage, illegal adoption, forced labour, and to become child soldiers.

The bishops of Australia and religious leaders called for a commitment to prevention, victim protection, the legal prosecution of perpetrators, and partnerships for change.

This commitment starts at home by raising awareness and preventing exploitation of children in all aspects of Australian society.

St Josephine Bakhita died on February 8, 1947. She was born in Southern Sudan in 1869 and was kidnapped for slavery in Sudan and Italy.

After gaining her freedom, she dedicated her life to sharing her story and to supporting the poor and suffering.

Later, she became a Canossian Sister and was canonised in 2000.

Three-year wait over for north Qld diocese

SURFERS Paradise parish priest Fr Timothy Harris, 54, is the new Bishop of Townsville.

“I’m very conscious that the Diocese of Townsville has been without a bishop for three years,” Bishop-elect Harris said.

“It has been on all of our minds. If the bishop is a sign of unity, which he is, I hope that I can strengthen the unity of the vast Diocese of Townsville and build on the work of Bishop Michael Putney and, since his death, on the efforts of Diocesan Administrator, Fr Mick Lowcock, the Parish Priest of Mount Isa.

“I’ve been a pastor all my life so I would like to understand the diocese through the eyes of the local people. As the new bishop, I will need to listen to the local experience and learn from the people.”

Born in Brisbane, Bishop-elect Harris received his primary education at Nundah Convent and Virginia State School, and his secondary education at St Joseph’s College Nudgee. He joined the Bank of



New South Wales and worked in public relations for five years.

In 1991, he graduated with a Bachelor of Theology. He was ordained a priest in 1992, and served in several parishes, including the past seven at Surfers Paradise.

Guidelines launched

THE AUSTRALIAN Catholic Bishops Conference has launched guidelines about the appropriate sacramental preparation for people with disability.

The purpose of the guidelines is to address concern raised by clergy, pastoral ministers, other concerned Catholics, people with disability, their advocates and their families for greater consistency in pastoral practice in the celebration of the sacraments throughout Australia.

The guidelines explore many ways in which parents, friends, parish and school can work together to ensure that people with disability have an opportunity to learn about and celebrate the sacraments, and grow more deeply in their knowledge and love of Jesus.

A copy of the guidelines may be bought from the ACBC shop, www.catholic.org.au/shop/acbc-shop



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Lent and preparing for Easter



LITURGY MATTERS
BY JENNY ANDERSON

HOW do you prepare good liturgy? We don't have to start from scratch; we have a framework that has stood the test of time. It can be found in the Missal.

The Missal provides the structure for every liturgy, like the frame of a house. We also have a set of standards, if you like, about how it works, a guide to best practice. We don't have to reinvent the wheel, or come up with something new. We have our frame and our guidelines.

In the case of the liturgy, the guidelines can be found in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

The General Instruction has guidelines for how to prepare. What parts are essential for the liturgy to stand? What parts can be changed to adapt to architecture or environment?

What parts need to be chosen



to suit the local community in this time and place? What will speak to the season or circumstances the community find themselves in?

All of this is in the Missal and the General Instruction. From there, it is time to understand the liturgical season, the culture and languages of the people celebrating, the songs they know and love, the flowers that are in season, and so forth. This is where liturgy preparation happens.

Will we use the long or short form of the reading? Which

Eucharistic prayer will be prayed? Which Mass setting will be sung? How will we prepare the environment? There are lots of great resources that can help you reflect on these questions.

As March begins this year, we enter the season of Lent and start preparing to celebrate Easter.

Lent is a season of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in preparation for the celebration of Easter. It prepares catechumens (those preparing to be received into the Church) for initiation, and

prepares the faithful to renew their baptismal promises.

As Archbishop Christopher Prowse pointed out last month, it is a Kairos time: an opportunity to step out of our ordinary, everyday activities and be deliberate in seeking and responding to God with silence, stillness and simplicity. It is a time for conversion of heart.

This is what our liturgies should reflect during Lent. We allow more space for silence and stillness – for a community that is not used to silence, this can be challenging.

Our environment can also reflect this simplicity. Look around your liturgical space. What can be simplified for this season?

Lent is characterised by the stripping away of decorations and symbols so they have greater impact when they return with the Easter season. Decoration at the altar is kept to a minimum, stripping away flowers and altar frontals as another image of fasting.

The liturgical colour for Lent is a royal purple suggesting the kingship of Jesus achieved through his suffering, death and resurrection. How can your liturgical environment better reflect this season?

Musical arrangements for Lent should be simplified and only accompany singing. The Gloria is omitted and the Alleluia gives way to the Lenten Gospel Acclamation. This helps make them more special during Easter celebrations.

Lent is a time to consider a cappella arrangements, or chanted texts.

You may also consider not singing at some times you would usually sing e.g. during the Presentation of Gifts.

Liturgical musicians can note the changing of seasons by changing the Mass setting that is sung as the liturgical seasons change. The setting for Lent should be simple and reflective.

As Lent draws to a close, Holy Week begins, leading us into the Easter season – the high point of our liturgical year. Everything flows from it and leads back to it.

Next month, we will look more closely at Easter. Meanwhile, have a look at the links on the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle website to help prepare for Easter: <http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/catholic-faith/liturgy/the-liturgical-year>.

DARAMALAN COLLEGE 2018 ENROLMENT INFORMATION



DARAMALAN OPEN EVENING

THURSDAY 30 MARCH 2017

- TOURS: 5.00pm - 6.30pm
- YEAR 7 INFO SESSION 1: 4.45 - 5.15pm
- YEAR 7 INFO SESSION 2: 7.00 - 7.30pm
- YEAR 11 INFO SESSION: 6.00 - 6.30pm

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DARAMALAN COLLEGE



BELOW THE SURFACE

BY NAOMI WALTON

DECLUTTERING has become a new trend in many blogs and books, and some households. There are a number of methods; KonMari method of keeping only “what brings you joy”, minimalist methods of keeping only what is used, or recycling a number of items each day over a month.

Less clutter, less stress, less mess to clean up. More living space, simplicity, feeling relaxed in our homes. I see the appeal in decluttering.

We have a similar practice over the season of Lent. To sacrifice something not needed, repent of our “mess” and sin, give to others, make room in our life to be more connected with God.

No wonder Lent lasts 40 days! (Or 46 including Sundays). We need this long to declutter and connect. If it were easier, we’d start any ol’ Monday to be more

deeply connected and renewed in our faith.

The “rules” of Lent have varied among different groups, and over time. A common practice is to give something up. It’s concrete. The rules are simple. We know what to do. On the other hand, building connection and relationship is less clear. And by nature of our being, simply saying we will connect with God doesn’t mean we know what steps to take, despite our best intentions.

The Pope’s message for Lent in 2017 is about renewal. Renewing our conversion. Going deeper. Real love, intimacy and connection.

The Pope’s prayer for Lent in 2017: “May the Holy Spirit lead us on a true journey of conversion.”

His message is based on the story of Lazarus and the rich man in Luke 16:19-31. The Pope draws out that all people are a gift, sin blinds us, and the word (Bible) is a gift.

I gladly acknowledge I would like to be more deeply connected with the Living God. However, my scheming brain sets out to set up the perfect step-by-step plan of how to be totally connected



to God in 40 days. But where to start?

We can start with our approach.

The particular practices we embark on during Lent can be done mindfully. Meaning we become more settled in the here and now rather than worrying about the future or dwelling on the past. We connect our mind and body to the same experience.

Mindfulness is another recent popular activity, but we as

Catholics have a tradition of faith rooted in the practice of mindfulness. Adoration: sitting and being in the moment with Jesus.

So much of the Bible talks about this act of mindfulness: “be still and know that I am God”, Psalm 46:10. Even physical symbols, such as candles, help ground us to our senses and what is around us.

More broadly, mindfulness includes reducing worry by focusing

on what is in front of us rather than tomorrow’s to-do list or yesterday’s mistake.

Have you ever got to the bottom of your tea/coffee and not remembered drinking it? Try noticing every sip, how it feels in your body, the warmth, the enjoyment. That’s a mindful cuppa.

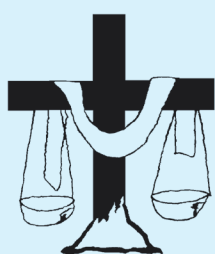
Adding mindfulness to Lent is similar. Whatever activities we use to engage in Lent, we can do so with more awareness - giving us a sense of being intentional and connected.

A mindful prayer may look like thanking God for what we have, for what is around us. Mindfully reading the bible may look like reading one line and letting it sink in rather than rushing through the words.

The art of a mindful Lent is about adding quality over quantity to our lives. Yes we are busy. Yes we need to be disciplined to participate in Lenten practices.

Mindfulness isn’t about doing more, but rather taking time to really experience what we already do. Experiencing a deeper conversion may start with listening to what God wishes to teach us during everyday moments.

Technology can be wonderful servant but dangerous master



JUSTICE MATTERS

CATHOLIC SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMISSION

IMAGINE a country without electricity, gas, radio, television, telephones, computers, planes, cars, buses and railway. It would look like a very different place from the Australia we know today.

These resources are all the product of technological change. Most of us would agree that we are better off for having them. We might complain at times about them, but not many of us would prefer to live without them.

One could make a case that they have adverse implications for social justice. Affluent people are normally the first to take advantage of the products of new technology, and hence are able to get even further ahead of their poorer contemporaries. Indeed it is fast becoming part of the conventional wisdom that rapid changes in technology are widening the gap between the very rich and the rest of us.

The reality is not so straightforward. As they mature, new technologies deliver benefits for the vast majority of people in countries such as Australia – so much so that most people find it almost unimaginable to live without them.

New technologies have also had enormous impacts on social services such as education and health. Individually and



collectively they have enabled us to learn much more and live longer and healthier lives than our forebears did.

Technological advances have facilitated activities that degrade the environment and create the conditions for unsustainable change in the climate. They will, however, be an essential element of any solutions to these challenges.

The rapid development of communications capability has been a bonanza for some people and organisations – a bonanza not only in wealth but also in power. At the same time it has been a democratising influence in opening pathways through which everyday citizens can make their voices heard.

Some of our fretting about rapid changes in technology may reflect simple frustration

more than anything else. Because our expectations are higher, our disappointment is greater when they perform poorly.

Many of our concerns, however, are about real issues, such as the loss of personal privacy and the sense that we are surrendering control of our lives to faceless machines and the operators behind them.

The exploitation of the internet to peddle pornography (and worse) and the difficulties faced by society and individuals in combating it are also critical issues. The dignity of the human person, so central to Christian ideas about social justice, is at stake in this context.

The threats that come with modern technology weigh heavily on more disadvantaged people in the community.

For example, their financial capacity often limits their participation in the online world unless they squeeze other elements of an already tight household budget to make room for the gadgets and services needed.

As technology-based services come to be regarded as essential, the pressure to prioritise them at the expense of other needs will grow – especially in the case of households with children.

Modern technology also changes the nature of work. It creates employment opportunities, but it also eliminates other jobs.

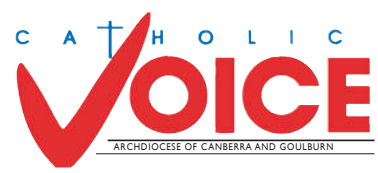
One can look at the aggregate figures and conclude that the net effects are not too dramatic. For the individuals losing employment, however, the future may be bleak. It cannot be assumed that displaced workers in dying industries can simply move into the newly emerging work environment.

This is not an argument for resisting change. It is an argument for recognising its adverse impact on many individuals, families and communities, and for action to support them through the transition. Work is central not only to personal wellbeing but also to family and community life.

In short, there is nothing to be gained by generalised hostility to or uncritical acceptance of technological change.

A Christian response is to view it as a gift from God that can be used for good or ill. At the same time, the potential for harm must be recognised and addressed by practical measures.

Please send comments on the article, or requests for further information about the Commission, to SocialJustice@cg.org.au.



Classifieds

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PRAYERS

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary (never known to fail): O most beautiful flower of Mt Carmel, fruitful vine, Splendour of heaven, Blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. O star of the Sea, help me and show me here thou art my Mother.

O Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech thee from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity (make request). There are none that can withstand thy power.

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee (three times). Holy Mary, I place this prayer in thy hands (three times).

This prayer must be said for three days and the prayer published.

CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

4 ____-cain, the first metal worker (Gen 4:22)

9 "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will ____ it up." (Jn 2:19)

10 Condition of the tomb on Easter morning

11 Abbr. for two OT books

12 Letter by which a priest is released from one diocese and accepted into another

13 Pilate's given name

14 ____ Being

17 Biblical hunter

19 Heroic St. Bernard animal

21 Land of milk and ____

22 "Dying you destroyed our ____"

23 ____-Cana Conference

25 St. Theresa, the ____ Flower

26 ____ of Cardinals

29 Son of Abraham

31 Biblical instruments

33 "I believe in ____ God..."

34 British Prime Minister who converted in 2007

35 Liturgical color

36 Reverence

DOWN

1 Sacred vessels

2 The daughter of Pharaoh found a baby here (Ex 2:5-6)

3 "Eternal ____ grant unto them"

4 What the serpent did to Adam and Eve

5 The ____ bush

6 Tribe of Israel

7 The bishops, collectively

8 Saint who gave his name to an alphabet

15 Papal

16 Starting point of the Exodus

18 Miraculous, for one

20 ____ Father

23 Element of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

24 St. Francis is the patron of this

27 The day of the Resurrection

28 A queen from this country came to hear Solomon speak

30 Biblical instrument

31 They fill the church

32 NT epistle

Solutions in the next Catholic Voice

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Written entries are invited for the July edition to: Catholic Voice, PO Box 7174, Yarralumla, ACT 2600, or email catholic.voice@cg.org.au by April 15. Entries which are accepted are free, courtesy of sponsorship by the Catholic Development Fund.

Archdiocesan & National Coming Events

March 5 (9.30am): Catechumens, candidates, sponsors, family members and RCIA team members will celebrate the Rite of the Elect at St Christopher's Cathedral with Archbishop Christopher Prowse. The Rite will commence in the Crypt at 9.30am and is followed by Mass at 11am.

March 10 (5.30pm): Healing Mass for the family at St Benedict's Narrabundah. Come along and pray for your family, both living and deceased, families of our nation and families of the world. Let us unite in praying for healing, hope, peace and joy to be kindled in every heart as we turn our gaze to God. All welcome

March 11 (7pm): Canberra Regional AMICUS (Latin for friend) Group formed in 1992 by Msgr John Woods and Fr Mick MacAndrew for separated, divorced and widowed Catholics, will meet in the BISTRO at a table under AMICUS. Contact Patricia on 0412 351 548.

March 18 (11am): The Solemn Blessing of the Stations of the Cross Bolo by Bishop Columba MacBeth-Green (see advertisement).

March 18 (11.30am): NEX-GEN's 50th Anniversary Charity Race Day at Thoroughbred Park. Raising money for Marymead's KC Getaways Program, a program which provides social support and

respite to children and families affected by disability. Tables of 10 and individual tickets available. Dress standards apply. To book now contact Cass on (02) 6162 5800 or email events@marymead.org.au

March 18 (6pm): CONNECT Mass at Mary Help of Christians Parish, Pearce.

March 26 (3pm): Canberra Regional AMICUS (Latin for friend) Group formed in 1992 by Msgr John Woods and Fr Mick MacAndrew for separated, divorced and widowed Catholics are having an MV Southern Cross Cruise and Snapper on the lake afternoon. Enjoy afternoon tea on board, followed by Fish'n'Chips twilight

dinner and live music. Meet at the Southern Cross Club Yacht Club Yarralumla at 2.45pm. Contact Patricia on 0412 351 548.

April 2 (5pm to 8pm): Youth Mass and Rally (East) at St Gregory's Parish Queanbeyan.

April 3 (9am to 6pm): Youth Ministers Formation Day. Venue to be announced.

April 8 (9am to 1pm): Marymead Garage and Plant Sale at 255 Goyder Street.

April 13 (3pm) to April 16 (1pm): Hosted by the Disciples of Jesus community and held in the beautiful bushland setting of Chevalier College Bowral, all are invited to Light to the Nations (LTTN) 2017. Finding Jesus through prayer, worship, drama, music and personal sharing, LTTN is for young people (16+), families and for the young at heart. Camping as well as other accommodation options are

The Catholic Prayer Journal

The Catholic Prayer Journal is geared to helping those seeking assistance with personal prayer. The journal contains 52 weeks of prayers and reflections and there is ample space for journalling in the 160 page book.

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available. For more information go to <http://ltn.dojcommunity.com/>

April 23 (2pm): The Church of St Paul, Talbingo is celebrating its 50th anniversary with an ecumenical service at 2pm, followed by afternoon tea. Everyone is invited to attend. For all enquiries contact Theresa Caffery on 0410 143 731.

May 2 (9am to 5pm): Marymead's 50th Anniversary Lawn Bowls Day at Weston Creek Labor Club.

May 21 (6pm): CONNECT Mass at Corpus Christi Parish, Gowrie.

May 27 (9am to 1pm): Marymead Garage and Plant Sale at 255 Goyder Street.

March 20, 2018 to April 10, 2018: Mystics pilgrimage in Europe led by Dr Kerrie Hide and Sr Margaret Walsh pbvm. For further details please contact Sr Margaret Walsh by mobile on 0429 171 400 or by email at pbvm _mmwalsh@wagga.net.au

DISCLAIMER: To Catholic Voice's knowledge, the times and locations of these events are true and correct at the time of printing.

REGULAR EVENTS

CATENIANS in CANBERRA: Held at the Southern Cross Club Canberra, the Catenians meet on the third Thursday of the month at 6.45pm for the 7.15pm meeting which is followed by dinner at 8pm.

COMMUNITY OF THE RISEN LORD CANBERRA: Meets at 7.30pm each Friday evening in St Brigid's Church parish hall (2 Bancroft St Dickson)

for charismatic praise and worship with an anointed sharing of the word. Contact Shan on 0412 310 364 or Sean 0448 510 237.

GOOD SHEPHERD PRAYER GROUP: Meets each Wednesday from 7pm to 9pm in the parish room at St Peter Chanel's Church Yarralumla. Rosary, charismatic praise and worship, teachings, testimonies, prayer ministry, intercession and fellowship. Contacts Susanna on 0419 902 293, Neda on 0415 266 019 and Gabriel on 0432 082 642.

HOLY SPIRIT SECULAR FRANCISCAN FRATERNITY: Trying to follow in the footsteps of St Francis of Assisi the community meets at 7.30pm on the third Friday of each month for Mass at St Augustine's Church - 262 Beasley St, Farrer ACT.

MAN OVERBOARD: Man Overboard is a monthly gathering of young men discerning priesthood. It is a time to gather, reflect, and commune in order to feel supported during a time of such importance. Each gathering will be held on the first Friday of every month (public holidays excepted). Please RSVP to Rachel (Rachel.Romney-Brown@cg.org.au) for catering purposes or follow the prompts at <http://www.manoverboard.org.au/>

menALIVE: Encouraging authentic Christian manhood, the Canberra chapter of 'Men Alive' meet on the first Monday of each month at St Christopher's Cathedral for Mass at 5pm. Mass is then followed by drinks at 'Public Bar' in Manuka.

MINISTRY TO THE NEWLY MARRIED: A mentoring program for newly married couples or engaged couples soon-to-be married. Contact Debbie and Brian on (02) 6231 3389 or 0414 878 167. Email: mnm@grapvine.com.au

SERRA CLUB OF CANBERRA: Supporting and praying for religious vocations in the Archdiocese, the Canberra Serra Club meet on the second Thursday of each month. Rosary (6.10pm) and Mass (6.30pm) are at Holy Trinity Curtin and is followed by dinner at the Southern Cross Club Canberra. All welcome. Contact John Malycha on (02) 6251 2912.

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Things looking up but Raiders not out of the woods

BY JOHN MCLAURIN

YOU could forgive St Christopher's Cathedral Administrator Mgr John Woods for thinking he had the "Midas" touch when it came to the Canberra Raiders in the late 1980s and the early 1990s.

Having returned to the Archdiocese in 1985 after spending two years studying Canon Law in Canada, he took on the Raiders chaplaincy in 1986 as their second chaplain since they first played in the then NSWRL competition in 1982.

"There was no handbook when I started," he said.

"In the early days I regularly joined in some of the training, or I would run laps around Seiffert Oval and later out at GIO Stadium where I would also have a chat with the players and staff from time to time.

"Now I try to attend part of a training session each week and get to the home games. Being present and involved, you build credibility and from that more personal encounters can follow.

"I have only ever received a friendly welcome from the players, coaches and support and office staff."

In 1987, the "Green Machine" played in their first grand final, going down to Manly.

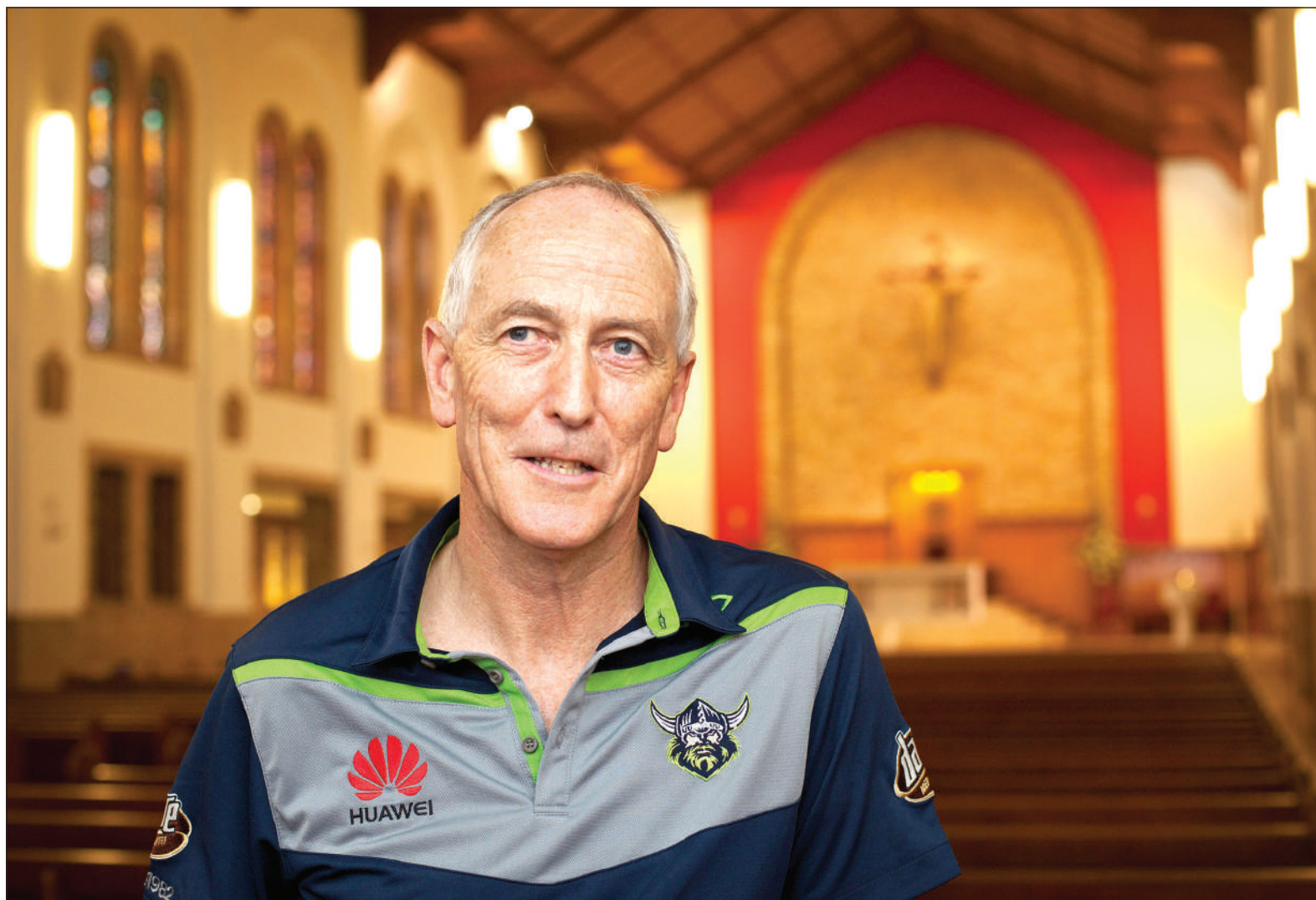
In 1988 they lost to Canterbury in the final 45 seconds of the preliminary final.

"We beat Balmain in the 1989 decider and went back-to-back in 1990 running over the top of Penrith before they got us back in 1991, and then we won against the Dogs in 1994," he said.

"If it hadn't been for the preliminary final in 1988 where we lost to the Bulldogs in the last seconds of the match, then we (the Raiders) would've played in five consecutive grand finals.

"And at that stage I thought I must've been going alright at this chaplaincy caper."

Having been to the top of the mountain, a number of years in the wilderness followed with intermittent finals appearances before last season when the Raiders evoked their glory days, winning 17 home and away matches before bailing out in the preliminary final



Monsignor John Woods displaying the Raiders 2017 club polo. PICTURE: Loui Seselja.

to Melbourne Storm.

The Raiders renewed success brought a smile to many people, none more so than Mgr Woods.

A proud Canberran, he has been with the club through thick and thin, late last year notching up 30 years as chaplain.

"In the past and to some extent still, there has been a bit of a stigma associated with Canberra," he said.

"Too cold, too many public servants, too many roundabouts and so on. Yet most who have come to Canberra from all over grow to love living here.

"But winning those premierships, I believe, really galvanised the city and proved that we could be a force to be reckoned with on the national stage.

"It's good to have the Raiders back up where they belong somewhere near the top."

Mgr Woods says being a chaplain to some of the nation's and

world's best rugby league players is one of the more enjoyable parts of his ministry.

Mixing it with names like Mal Meninga, Laurie Daley, Ricky Stuart and Bradley Clyde, he has had a front row view of what goes on behind the scenes to produce a world-class unit.

He also keeps a keen eye on the lesser lights. "I get a particular enjoyment in seeing a Canberra, Queanbeyan guy or boy from the bush make the grade," he said.

Mgr Woods is aware of some of the more personal aspects of players' lives. He says some are great role models on and off the field, but thinks they largely cop a bad rap in the media.

"The media tend to be all over any negative behaviour and yet much good is done by individual players and through club-supported initiatives," he said.

"All NRL clubs are trying to build a culture which makes them

appealing on the field and in the community. Coach Ricky Stuart is big on creating a culture that respects the past, but he is also about making history. The players know that he backs them and they very much respect his football knowledge and passion.

"While playing NRL is the aspiration for all who come to the club, many players won't make it and that can be a humbling experience. I take my hat off to them for their commitment.

"The vast majority will draw on lessons learned to forge careers and foster personal relationships. Sport is a gateway into the something more of what it is to be human."

Mgr Woods spent part of his sabbatical last year attending two sports conferences, one in York, England, and the other at the Vatican. At the conclusion of the latter, he presented a Raiders jumper to Cardinal Ravasi for Pope

Francis.

"No doubt the Holy Father will be cheering for the 'Green Machine!'" he said.

The club has strengthened last year's squad with the likes of Jordan Turner (St Helens), Dunamis Lui (Dragons), Makahesi Makatoa (Bulldogs) as well as Mounties players Brent Naden and Scott Sorensen.

Former Brisbane, Gold Coast and South Sydney big man Dave Taylor has also been training with the club in the hope of securing a green jersey.

This year expectations will be high for the Raiders because they won't be afforded the surprise packet tag that accompanied them last year when they went within a whisker of a grand final.

They went down to Melbourne Storm in the preliminary final, but regardless of how they fare in 2017, one thing is sure that they'll have Mgr Woods backing them.



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