

The people come to greet their new Archbishop



Moments for all ... CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: About 130 clergy were among more than 700 people to fill St Christopher's Cathedral for the installation Mass; Archbishop Prowse hams it up with four-year-olds Jed Oliva and Jeneva Saemo, from Gungahlin, after the ceremony; Archbishop Prowse waits while Archdiocesan Administrator Mgr John Woods reads the Welcome to Country; the new Archbishop celebrates Mass with his fellow bishops, including Cardinal George Pell; St Christopher's Cathedral Choir and St Caecilia's Choir, directed by Jaki Kane, filled the cathedral with beautiful music.



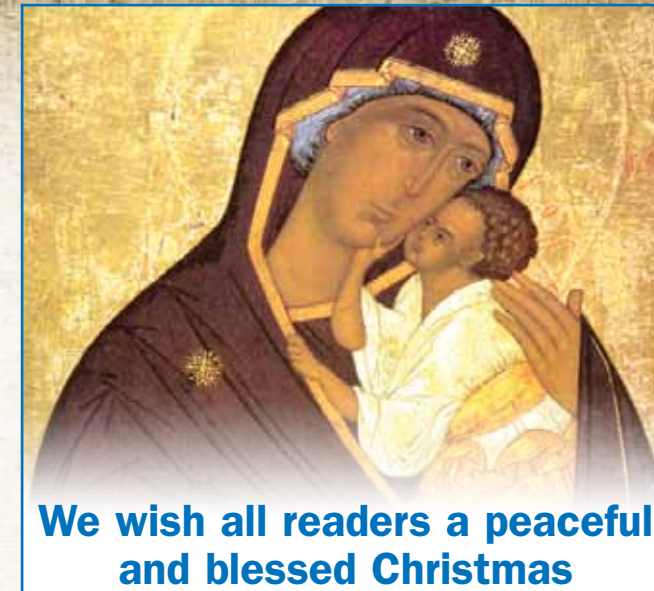
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VOICE

ARCHDIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN
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We wish all readers a peaceful and blessed Christmas

'It is Christopher...'



Halleluia ... the newly installed Archbishop Christopher Prowse leaves the cathedral (top) and is welcomed (above) by archdiocesan youth team representative Daniela Kesina.

By Fiona van der Plaats

As the new Archbishop made his "humble request for entry" into St Christopher's Cathedral, the name he shares with the seat of his Archdiocese emerged as much more than a happy coincidence.

"It is Christopher knocking on the cathedral door of St Christopher's," Archbishop Christopher Prowse said at his liturgical installation in Canberra.

He then proffered himself as "Christopher" in more than name only to the people of this Archdiocese.

"I want to carry you and your burdens to Jesus, the great burden-bearer, across the dangerous river of life," he said, having explained the story of his namesake saint, who carried a child he later learnt was Christ through raging waters.

The Archbishop then suggested the people of the Archdiocese could share his name as "a metaphor for missionary discipleship".

"In these burdensome times, let the 'Christopher' in each one of us truly believe that in Jesus alone the yoke becomes easy and the burden light."

This offer was witnessed by more than 700 guests in the cathedral as well as more than 2000 online viewers, including schools, groups and individuals from 35 countries, who accessed the archdiocesan live stream of proceedings.

Among the guests were ambassadors and high commissioners, politicians, heads of churches, Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Paul Gallagher, and about 30 Catholic bishops, including the immediate past Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn Mark Coleridge and Cardinal George Pell.

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• For full text of Archbishop Prowse's homily, see Page 19

• More pictures, pages 2 and back page.

Special four-page wrap of our new Archbishop's installation

Pope invites us to join conversation on family

All members of the Archdiocese have been offered a rare opportunity to share their views on family life in a modern world with the Vatican.

Mgr John Woods, on behalf of the Archdiocese, is keen for as many people as possible to have their say in a national response to Pope Francis' Extraordinary Synod on "pastoral challenges of the family in the context of evangelisation".

Mgr Woods invited people to "prayerfully and purposefully" consider a series of questions prepared by the Vatican in the lead-up to the synod, to be held in Rome next October.

The questions cover the following issues: the Church's teaching on the family; marriage; the family in the context of evangelisation; pastoral care in difficult marital situations; same-sex unions; education of children in irregular marriages; openness to children; and the relationship between the family and the person.

The Vatican has asked all bishops around the world to consult as widely as possible within their dioceses on the issues. In a letter accompanying the Vatican questionnaire, the bishops of NSW and the ACT described the synod as a "rare and important occasion".

"The Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, seeks your contribution to a conversation the Holy Father has invited us to enter, and we hope for a wealth of thoughtful and prayerful responses as we work to maintain Gospel truths, strengthen family life, and reach out and help all people caught up in difficult situations," they wrote.



The bishops added that people could still participate in the "conversation" even if they did not want to cover all the issues in the questions.

"You do not need to have a response to each one, nor feel the need to give a specific pastoral answer for every challenge that sits before us in these difficult times for the family.

"Your honesty and goodwill are invaluable at a moment such as this."

The deadline for responses is 6 December. Mgr Woods urged parishes and schools to distribute and discuss the questionnaires, information on which is available at www.cg.catholic.org.au/synod2014.

Another award for Trish

It has been a year of public recognition for Aranda parish's Trish Mowbray, who has been chosen as the ACT's Local Hero in the Australian of the Year awards for her work with people with disabilities.

Mrs Mowbray, who was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in this year's Queen's Birthday honours, will be the territory's finalist in the national Local Hero category, the winner of which will be announced on Australia Day.

"I didn't see that one coming," she said of the Local Hero award.

"It's a big surprise, especially when you think that the people you are up against are all wonderful people doing wonderful things."

Mrs Mowbray and her family, including husband Glenn, three grown boys with Down syndrome, a daughter and a grandson, have already been involved in filming for footage to be used at the Australian of the Year ceremony in January.

But, after all the fuss dies down, it's "back to business as usual", she said of her work on disability projects with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, her extensive volunteer roles in disability groups and sacramental programs, and her family commitments.

"They are proud, of course," she said of her family's reaction to the award, "but they keep our feet on the ground."

Give a gift at Christmas

You can make Christmas brighter for new mothers and their children at Karinya House this Christmas by putting a gift under the Christmas tree in the Catholic Bookshop in Favier House, Braddon. Please do not wrap your presents. Karinya House provides professional care and support for women in need during and after their pregnancy.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Thursday 19 December
5.30pm – 7pm

Canberra Campus
223 Antill Street
Watson ACT 2602

acu.edu.au/connect

1300 ASK ACU

Appeal to help our neighbours

Catholics of the Archdiocese are being called on again at Christmas Mass to support an appeal for those in need across the neighbouring region.

Through the Archbishop's Christmas Appeal, the Archdiocese will contribute to the National Council of Churches in Australia Christmas Bowl Appeal, as well as join with Fr Mick Burke and the Gunning/Yass friendship of Timor Leste to help in building a medical clinic in a remote mountainous region of Oecussi enclave operated by Carmelite nursing sisters.

Appeal funds will also help with modifications to a monastery and provide a water supply in Ba Ria Vung Tau, Vietnam, sup-

ply and pre-position emergency relief supplies in Samoa, and provide water and sanitation to schools in Wewak Diocese, Papua New Guinea.

Last year, the appeal raised \$65,917, of which \$25,000 went towards building a church, clinic and convent in Oecussi village in Timor Leste.

Funds also went to disaster relief education, water and sanitation projects in Kiribati (\$10,000); construction of a staffroom, furnishing a classroom and providing computers in Jharkhand, India (\$9000); and repair of two churches at Mabri and Gagan in Bougainville Diocese, PNG (\$11,917). The Christmas Bowl Appeal received \$10,000.

ARCHBISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL

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The Rheinberger Centre, PO Box 7174, Yarralumla ACT 2600.

Inquiries: Tel: 02 6163 4321

Mission plan for Remarkable Young region

A two-priest mission will be set up in Young to take responsibility for the parishes of Young, Grenfell and Boorowa.

Current Young parish priest Fr Richard Thompson has been appointed parish priest of Mary Help of Christians, South Woden for a term of six years, from the first weekend of January. He will succeed Fr Laurie Blake, who is retiring.

The new parish priest when appointed will be responsible for what will be known as the Young Mission. He will continue with pastoral responsibility for and administrator status over St Joseph's, Grenfell, and will have the added responsibility of administrator of St Patrick's, Boorowa. An assistant priest will be appointed to the Young Mission.

Current administrator of Boorowa Fr Martin Maunsell will return to Sydney in January. The Archdiocese has asked for a member of the Sydney clergy to work here in lieu of Fr Tony Percy continuing as rector of Good Shepherd Seminary until the end of next year.

Deacon Patrick Whale will continue to serve Boorowa parish.

The Archdiocese will also appoint a new parish priest to Sacred Heart parish, Cootamundra, with pastoral responsibility and administrator status over Harden-Murrumburrah parish. Current parish priest Mgr Kevin Barry-Cotter will retire early next year.

In another clergy change, Page parish priest Fr Michael Mullen and Samoan chaplain resident in and assisting in Page parish Fr Pale Leota will take on pastoral responsibility for St Vincent's, Aranda, from the first weekend of January. This will follow the retirement of parish priest Fr Frank Fuchs.

Fr Mullen is appointed administrator of Aranda parish. He and Fr Leota will continue to live in Page while Korean chaplain Fr Paul Yoo will continue to live in the Aranda presbytery.

Speaking last month, Archdiocesan Administrator Mgr John Woods acknowledged the "generous commitment over many years" of Mgr Barry-Cotter, Fr Blake and Fr Fuchs. He thanked Fr Maunsell for his service in the Archdiocese.

Remarkable story has a ring to it

A book written to mark Canberra's centenary and the story of 39 Catholic schools owes its title to a bell that once woke the Good Samaritan Sisters of the capital's first Catholic school, St Christopher's.

Ringing in the Years, by Jenny Jeffery, charts the unfolding history of Canberra's Catholic schools from the first in 1928 to the newest, John Paul College, this year.

The bell was also used as the school bell at St Christopher's School, then at St Bede's Primary School, Red Hill, before coming to St Francis of Assisi, Calwell. It has also been rung at significant celebrations of Catholic education in Canberra including the 75th anniversary in 2003 and the centenary of Canberra Mass this year.

"People are really proud of their schools and very proud of being part of the story of the school," Mrs Jeffery said at the launch of the book.

"They were keen to pass on a sense of what is special about the particular school and would cite some incredible examples.

"Some things change, some things stay the same. What is always the same is the way schools endeavour to live out their mission. Today, as every day of the last 85 years, our schools strive to present the truth of the Christian message, in places of wonder, learning and peace."

Director of Catholic Education Moira Najdecki welcomed more than 130 people to the launch. They included Archbishop Francis Carroll, former director Geoff Joy, current and past chairs of the Catholic Education Commission, clergy and religious, principals, parishioners, parents, students, school and CEO staff.

Bishop Pat Power, who launched the book, said remembering was "a very important part of the Judeo-Christian tradition. As we remember who we are



TOP: Bishop Pat Power launches the book while Sr Sue Hallams SGS holds the famous bell. ABOVE: Author Jenny Jeffery (right) signs a copy for Molly Whyte and Terry Hackett. ABOVE RIGHT: Original student at St Christopher's Edna Keir with daughter Marlene Keir.

and where we have come from both individually and as a people, we better understand God's plan for us and his love for us.

"In a special way, let us remember the religious, sisters, brothers and priests who in a truly pioneering spirit gave such great impetus to the story which has unfolded in a way that enabled the Good News to continue to be proclaimed in the years ahead.

"Our author has given us a glimpse of the spirit of sacrifice embraced so generously by the religious who were trail-blazers in this remarkable story.



"The students, teachers, ancillary staff, the parents, the priests and parishioners, the supporters, all make up the human face of God in our Catholic schools."

Mrs Jeffery said Ringing in the Years shows the rich diversity of Catholic schools: parish primary schools, regional secondary colleges, providing both single sex and co-education, systemic schools, congregational schools, schools which sadly had to close, schools which amalgamated and the more recent development of preschools.

For each decade, she interviewed an eye-witness, a significant person in Catholic schooling with a story to tell. The first eye-witness was Edna Keir, a member of the first cohort in the first school, St Christopher's, in its first year, 1928. She recently celebrated her 90th birthday.

Copies of the book are available from the Catholic Education Office, Manuka.

Abuse commitment statement highlighted

Parishes around Australia have been acknowledging the start on 9 December of royal commission hearings examining the Towards Healing protocols by reading the Catholic Church's child sexual abuse commitment statement at Mass.

The statement, which has been endorsed by Church leaders across Australia, acknowledges the damage sexual abuse has done. It acknowledges past failings including cover-ups, failures of leadership and not believing victims.

It also provides a commitment to work towards repairing past wrongs, listening to and hearing victims, putting victims'

needs first, and doing everything possible to ensure a safer future for children.

Mr Francis Sullivan, chief executive officer of the Catholic Church's Truth Justice and Healing Council, wrote to about 1100 priests suggesting they read the statement, first published in the Council's Towards Healing submission to the royal commission, at Mass, make it available in church foyers and publish it on parish websites. "This will be the first time the Catholic Church will be the central focus of the royal commission," he said. The commitment statement may be read at 131114-Our-Commitment-doc.

'Conservative approach' on fees

The Archdiocese's Catholic Education Commission has taken "a conservative approach" to school fee increases for next year.

"When setting the tuition fees for 2014, the commission was mindful of the uncertainty surrounding school funding for 2014 as a result of the new government funding reforms and so took a conservative approach to fee increases," director of Catholic Education Moira Najdecki said.

"Next year, as the impact of the new funding arrangements is made clearer, we will be able to better align public and private funding for our schools to meet the needs of our students."

School fees will rise by 3 per cent in ACT Catholic systemic primary schools, 4 per cent in ACT secondary schools and 3 per cent in NSW schools next year.

The commission recommended and Mgr John Woods approved the increases.

The tuition fee structure remains unchanged for 2014.

In ACT systemic primary schools, the fee per term for the first child is \$307, with a 70 per cent discount for a second child and 80 per cent discount for a third. There is no charge for a fourth child. A 20 per cent discount applies to the first child fee where there is a sibling in an archdiocesan secondary college.

In ACT systemic secondary colleges, the fees are \$766 per term for years 7 and 8, \$786 for years 9 and 10, and \$955 for years 11 and 12. A 20 per cent discount applies for a second child attending an archdiocesan secondary school and 50 per cent for a third child. There is no charge for a fourth or subsequent child attending an archdiocesan primary

or secondary school. The full fee is paid by the oldest child.

The Canberra Catholic Schools Building Fund contribution is \$146 per family per term.

In NSW primary schools, the fee is \$260 per family per term. A 50 per cent discount applies if a sibling attends an archdiocesan systemic secondary school. There is no charge for a fourth or subsequent child attending a systemic primary, central or secondary school.

In NSW secondary schools, the fees are \$391 per student per term for years 7 and 8, \$402 for years 9 and 10, and \$449 for years 11 and 12. A 60 per cent discount applies for the second child attending a systemic secondary school, and a 75 per cent discount for a third child. There is no charge for a fourth or subsequent child attending a systemic primary, central or secondary school.

Fees in NSW central schools are \$260 per family per term in primary, \$391 per student per term in years 7 and 8, and \$402 per student per term in years 9 and 10.

A 50 per cent discount applies on the primary family fee if a sibling attends the secondary section or another NSW systemic secondary school, a 60 per cent discount for the second child attending the secondary section or another systemic secondary school, and a 75 per cent discount for the third child attending the secondary section or another systemic secondary school.

A new fees schedule for Early Learning Centres has also been approved.

The resource fee next year per child per term is \$55; preschool fee \$55 per day; before-school care fee \$15 per day; after-school care fee \$26 per day and full-day fee \$96 per day. The vacation care fee is \$59 per day.

People across the Archdiocese are being urged to help those in need have a better Christmas.

"There are hundreds of reasons to donate, you only need one" is the theme of the St Vincent de Paul Society's annual Christmas Appeal.

Each Christmas, the society finds an increase in the number

'Hundreds of reasons' to donate

of people turning to it for assistance. From November 2012 to January 2013, the society in Canberra/Goulburn visited more than 4000 homes of people in need. During these visits, people were provided with urgent aid including food or food vouchers, clothing, furni-

ture, budget support, assistance with utility bills or back-to-school costs.

The society's Canberra/Goulburn president, Frank Brassil, said: "The society sees every day the harsh reality experienced by the 2.2 million Australians living in poverty.

"Australians are generous and willingly lend a helping hand to people who are struggling. Without the support of the community, we would not be able to assist families and individuals who turn to us each Christmas.

"The simple truth is that we depend on those who can aff-

ord it to dig deep and make a donation to the Vinnies Christmas Appeal.

"It is unacceptable that so many Australians are living in poverty each and every day. At a time of joy and celebration for most, far too many Australians face a bleak Christmas." To make a donation go to vinnies.org.au or telephone 13 18 12.

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Paul's path to priesthood

The journey is over, and yet it has just begun. Over the past year readers have journeyed with South Tuggeranong parishioner and former Marist College student Paul Nulley on his path to priesthood. This is his final column.

As I write my last column I want to thank you for joining me on my journey towards the priesthood this year – a journey which has now culminated in a mission!

As I see it, the mission is joining Jesus in proclaiming the fact that our God is love, that he deeply cares for each individual and desires their love. Moving from the seminary to the parish I have discovered a greater sense of excitement as I look around. I often wonder, “does this person know how much God loves them?” I often try to seek opportunities to introduce people to Jesus or to make their experience of him more concrete and real, even if it is just through a look, my words or my actions.

Then on the other hand there are those countless moments of encounter, when I realise that Jesus comes to me in those I serve.

Most clearly I've noticed Jesus' presence in the sick and elderly, but really, in anyone who is in need. I'm not sure if I can articulate exactly what this



Sense of unity... the oldest and youngest priests of the Archdiocese, Fr Frank Keogh and Fr Paul Nulley.

encounter is, but it is inevitably a privilege to try and bring some joy and love to those who are being configured to Christ crucified.

I've noticed that preaching has become part of my spiritual life. It is not just a matter of coming to know God in his Word, but often when I preach the scriptures make more sense to me and give me life. Although you'd have to ask my congregations if this is their experience of my preaching!

I write these reflections just as I've finished the diocesan retreat.

It was well timed. I found the retreat not just a time to reflect on the first weeks of priesthood, but an especially wonderful time to come together with the clergy of the archdiocese.

I was genuinely touched by their concern, interest and brotherly affection towards me. In a way, it is amazing how quickly I felt at home with these men. But in another sense, it couldn't be any other way. We've all been called by the Lord to the same mission, in the same diocese and each has given his life completely to this mission.

Looking around at these priests I was not only struck by the demographic and personality diversity, but how Our Lord had clearly given each one different gifts, had called them into a particular and different relationship with himself.

And yet there was a strong bond and sense of unity among us. It was wonderful to hear the many stories of priests who have gone before, what work various priests are doing, each contributing to the mission in his own way.

I went away giving thanks to God for calling me to share in the mission with these men.

I hope throughout this year you have been given an insight into the immediate preparations to priesthood. I thank you for your prayers and journeying with me. Know that there are others on a similar journey – we are blessed to have Rev Luke Verrell's ordination this month and we have six other men preparing for priesthood in our archdiocese.

Please pray for them and continue to pray that the Lord would send more labourers into his harvest.

Caritas appeal aids typhoon victims

Caritas Australia, the Catholic Church's international aid and development agency, has launched an appeal to help the thousands of victims of super typhoon Haiyan.

It committed an initial \$1 million to help in emergency relief efforts in the Philippines.

The typhoon, one of the strongest storms to make landfall, caused widespread devastation. Almost 10 million people were affected across 8000 villages, 447 towns, 48 cities in nine regions across the country. Pope Francis called for “concrete help” for the victims in the mostly Catholic country, saying the damage was enormous.

Donate online at www.caritas.org.au, telephone 1800 024 413 or mail to Caritas Australia, PO Box 7174 Yarralumla ACT 2600. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

First business manager dies

The Archdiocese's first business manager, Bob Smeaton, died on 19 November at Calvary Hayden Village, Bruce. He was 75. Robert Marshall Smeaton was appointed by Archbishop Francis Carroll in January 1990 and held the position until his retirement in June 2003. He was the eldest of 11 children. Mr Smeaton is survived by wife Carmel and children Elizabeth, Paul, Matthew, Mark, Sean, Anthony and Damian. Daughter Catherine is deceased.

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Choir deserves to be encouraged

I am writing in relation to the performance of the choir of the combined parishes of the Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese, held on Sunday, 29 September, at St Christopher's Cathedral. This beautiful choral arrangement has been on my mind since I attended, and I feel compelled to comment publicly.

Firstly, I wish to commend the excellent work by the choir, the conductor, Ms Sabrina de Souza, and the organising committee in presenting this arrangement of over 100 hymns relating to the themes in the Old and New Testament. I enjoyed the singing, the music and the enthusiasm of the choir greatly and was impressed with their performance.

Unfortunately, only about 30 people (my estimate) from the whole Archdiocese attended this concert, and I understand that a number of these were family of the choir.

From my own parish, only my spouse and I and one other couple attended, despite announcements in the parish bulletin in previous weeks. I understand the performance in Goulburn the following Sunday was better attended.

I was quite surprised at this poor attendance and felt the quality of the performance deserved more interest. I thought the cathedral would be packed, particularly since it was advertised as part of the 150th anniversary of the Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese.

I wondered where the joy and enthusiasm of Days in the Diocese, part of World Youth Day 2008, and the huge congregation attending the Mass in the cathedral for that event, had gone.

Since this performance in September I have learned that the choir, composed of some 38 members from Canberra, Goulburn, Queanbeyan and as far away as Narooma, spent months meet-

letters to the editor

ing together for practice and rehearsals, not easy for youngsters around 10 years old, nor for seniors from the coast.

And what a mammoth job for the conductor who selected the hymns, cleared copyright for their use, and arranged musical accompaniment in the absence of an organist or pianist.

I think there is much scope for the talents of this group, and so much potential benefit to members of our community in terms of sharing and celebrating our faith.

I hope that the efforts of the choir will be encouraged and stimulated, that future performances will be given more official recognition and support from all levels of the Archdiocese and that parishioners avail themselves more enthusiastically of such opportunities.

Catharina Koopman, Bruce.

Can't cherry pick the moral tree

Given that drug offences are associated with up to 70% of inmates in our prison, the excellent article Mercy and Listening Ear is Key to Jail Life (CV, November) about chaplains in our prison reminded me of the Vatican's position on illegal drugs, recorded at the third Global Conference on Drug Demand Reduction in September, 2000, in Palermo, Italy. It was attended by more than 700 delegates from 72 countries, including the Vatican's Cardinal Javier Barragan, president of the Pontifical Council for Pastoral Health Care.

It produced the Palermo Declaration which said in part, “Therefore we resolve and commit ourselves to creating drug-free societies throughout the world... Therefore we oppose and resist all activities that would increase the use of illegal drugs such as legalisation and harm reduction. We oppose any strategies or policies which encourage or enable continuous drug use, such as so called harm

reduction/harm minimisation ideologies and practices.”

With no reflection on our chaplains, these directions from the Vatican may cause discomfort in some Catholic quarters, but we cannot cherry-pick the Vatican's tree of moral direction.

Colliss Parrett, Barton ACT.

Cultural shift needed

Dr Pike questioned where the end point of the abortion debate might be in Life's Final Question – Burden or Choice (CV, October), while correctly observing that a cultural shift is required for change.

The will of the majority prevails in democracy and a strong Christian witness is currently lacking.

Anti-life developed in the medium of sexual revolution triggered by the introduction of the contraceptive pill in the 1960s. Pope Paul VI responded to social and spiritual need by affirming the natural and divine law concerning conjugal union in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae* (1968).

His prophetic words were largely rejected by Catholics, including pastors and teachers.

We are now living with the disastrous result of the sin of contraception being visited on marriage, family, youth and society. Death-dealing is promoted as an ideal, offering “freedom” by abortion to women and “compassion” to the old and suffering via euthanasia.

Similarly, the pill was seen as an assurance of “happy marriages” in the 1970s.

The required cultural shift must start with us, the Catholic/ Christian people by way of repentance.

“If my people who are called by my name... humble themselves and pray, seek my face, and turn away from their wicked ways, then I will forgive their sin...” (2Chronicles 7: 14).

Mrs Marie Kennedy, Goulburn.

Internet www.cg.catholic.org.au

Historic day for MGL priests, brothers

In a first for the Church in Australia, the Missionaries of God's Love (MGL) priests and brothers will be inaugurated as a religious institute by Archbishop Christopher Prowse early next year. No other congregation of consecrated men has gained this level of canonical recognition in Australia.

More than 20 MGL priests and brothers will make their perpetual vows public and a similar

number will renew their initial vows during the inauguration at St Christopher's Cathedral on 8 February.

The MGL was established in 1986 by Fr Ken Barker, who was ordained as a priest of the Archdiocese in 1974.

In 1992 Archbishop Francis Carroll established it as a public association of Christ's faithful. Then in August 2012 the Congregation for Religious Institutes

and Societies of Apostolic life gave approval for it to become a clerical religious institute of diocesan right.

The MGL priests and brothers have formation houses in Canberra and Melbourne. They also have mission houses in Canberra, Melbourne, Darwin, and Manila in the Philippines, and will open a mission in Indonesia at the beginning of next year.

In their missionary work they focus on the new evangelisation, especially with young people, and seek to reach out to the poor, disadvantaged or marginalised.

They describe their charism as charismatic, contemplative, Eucharistic and missionary.

In recent years the MGL has become multicultural in its make-up. It draws young men from other cultures with a view to training them to return to their

homes and found missions. The MGL sprung up in the midst of a lay charismatic community, Disciples of Jesus, and retains its unity with this community.

The MGL sisters are on the verge of obtaining their first canonical recognition as a public association of Christ's faithful, and aspire to become a religious institute in time.

Information: www.mglpriestsandbrothers.org.

Our next priest aims to keep it simple

It will be all about keeping it simple when Deacon Luke Verrell is ordained a priest at St Christopher's Cathedral on 13 December.

"I do a lot of marriage celebrations and one of the things I often say to the couples is to keep it as simple as you can. You just let the liturgy do what it does," Deacon Verrell said.

In fact, preparing for an ordination is a bit like organising a wedding, he says.

There are venues to arrange (although his reception will be at the Queanbeyan home of his parents Pauline and John), invitations to send out and, instead of a ring and wedding outfit, a chalice and vestments to buy.

Deacon Verrell, who has most recently been posted at St Bernard's in Batemans Bay and has also served at Cootamundra and at the cathedral, is approaching his ordination with "a feeling of excitement".

"There is a feeling that this is completely right and this is where I am meant to be. I'm feeling ready and looking forward to being a priest in this diocese," he said.

Deacon Verrell, 30, studied at the Good Shepherd Seminary in Sydney and entered the diaconate in March last year.

"My work as a deacon is not the role of a 'lesser priest', but rather has its own particular vocation and role of service in the Church," he said.

"It is a gift I have dearly loved and will still keep, but my priestly ordination will entail something entirely other to what I have experienced before and is not simply an upgrade.

"As monumental as it is, I can still approach ordination with confidence. To do so, I need to merely keep doing what I have been doing already – pursuing a Christian life prayerfully, chastely and in service of the Archdiocese.

"What God has in store for me is for him to know and for me to find out."

He acknowledges that the date of his ordination, Friday the 13th, might be considered ominous by some, but purely by chance it has turned out to be an appropriate one for him.

Deacon Verrell originally chose 6 December because it was the first convenient date, but then pushed it back a week when he realised the new Archbishop Christopher Prowse would not be available.

He then discovered it was the feast of St Lucy (meaning "light"), or Lucia in Latin, which translates to his own Christian name.



Let the liturgy do the work ... Deacon Luke Verrell, pictured officiating at the marriage of school friend Chris Gribble and Rowena Thomson in Gowrie in September, says the organisation of an ordination is a bit like that of a wedding.

Slow, slow, quick, quick, slow



Out of Errol Stephenson's stable of snails, all called Turbo, came a big blue-backed one that had been weight training, or at least "lifting little twigs with his eyes", since the start of the year. This Turbo, bulked up on a diet of bugs, grass and honey treats, could have been a contender for the annual Melbourne Cup snail race at St Bede's Primary in Braidwood.

But not even his year 1 trainer's fervent barracking, (above) could get him to the finish line ahead of his faster, or less-slow, opponents.

Maybe Turbo had the same problem as Scout Benning's Zoom Zoom, who despite a diet of strawberries, lettuce and rhubarb, failed to fire. "He probably ate too much," Scout, from year 4, ruminated.

In the end, it was an unassuming little snail named ... er, Snail ... that won the St Bede's Cup. Snail slid gracefully to the edge of the watered-down ring to take the honours for its modest kindergarten owner/trainer Molly McPhail. The secret to her snail-training success was to entice her snails along with scraps of lettuce.

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Reunited... De La Salle provincial Br Mark McKeon, with Br Gerald Barrett and three members of the class of 1944, Terry McDonnell, Bevan Cootes and Ted O'Connor.

Coota remembers its pioneer religious

More than 250 former students all felt like winners when they gathered for the Cootamundra Catholic schools reunion marking 100 years since the arrival of the De La Salle brothers.

An old boy of the school had more than most to be pleased about as one of the owners of the winning horse in the Nuns and Brothers Handicap, the feature event of the town's weekend race meeting.

The oldest ex-student to attend was Wagga Wagga man Patrick Fitzgerald, 91, who said he learned that commonsense was as important as education and remains so.

Centrepiece of the celebrations was a dinner attended by De La Salle provincial Br Mark McKeon.

He said the Cootamundra community of brothers was only their fourth in Australia. They arrived in October 1913 to open a school for boys built by the energetic then parish priest Fr Terence O'Shaughnessy

at his own expense. The brothers opened their first novitiate at Cootamundra when the priest gave them 6 hectares of land. The novitiate opened in 1915 and remained the house of formation until 1935 when the brothers moved it to Castle Hill.

As well as being the centenary of the arrival of the De La Salle Brothers, it was also the 131st anniversary of the arrival of the Sisters of Mercy in Cootamundra. They came on 26 September, 1882, to staff the school that had operated with lay teachers for the previous decade. The Catholic school was the first education facility in Cootamundra, operating before the state school opened in 1875.

The brothers withdrew from Cootamundra in 1977 after 65 years of teaching. The Sisters of Mercy were actively engaged in the school from 1882 to 1992.

'Be vigilant' youth urged

Young people feeling hurt or disillusioned by those they see as having brought the Catholic Church into disrepute through sexual abuse have been encouraged to play their part in bringing new life to the Church.

Auxiliary Bishop of Sydney Peter A Comensoli (pictured) told a packed audience at the latest Guinness and God talk at King O'Malley's in Canberra that the "scourge of sexual abuse" has brought the Church in Australia to the "foot of the cross with Jesus" and that is also where its young members need to place themselves.

Speaking on what the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse means for young people, Bishop Comensoli said that by standing at the foot of the cross, "we can also be in hope of the



resurrection" and, from there, "preparing for Pentecost".

"We need to remain strong in our faith," he said, pointing out that the fact some people in the Church were guilty of sexual abuse or of not dealing with abuse appropriately "does not mean our Church is not a good thing".

With the royal commission due to examine the Catholic Church from 9 December, Bishop Comensoli said now was "a time for humility, simplicity ... and a time for truth".

The Church still had good stories to tell, he said. "We can be humble but still remind people of the good things."

At the same time, he advised young people to "be vigilant" both in caring for victims and in promoting a new culture of trust within the Church.

He said they, like all Church members and leaders, should be prepared to "really listen" to victims and to help them deal with bringing perpetrators to justice.

Bishop Comensoli pointed out that the bulk of cases of sexual abuse in the Church coming to light now happened during from the 1950s to 1980s, and that few allegations of abuse occurring since the introduction of the Towards Healing protocol in the early to mid-1990s had emerged.

Dam interesting day out for retired clergy

Fr Kevin Flynn doesn't mind a catch-up with former colleagues. The retired priest, from Queanbeyan, is one of the first to thump old mates on the back and rib them about their football team.

But he was almost apologetic in admitting that friends were not his primary reason for attending a social gathering of the Archdiocese's retired clergy at the Cotter dam, outside Canberra.

"I'm more interested in the dam, to be honest," he said, having clambered over rocks to get as close to the dam wall as the safety fencing would allow.

Fr Flynn developed an interest in dam engineering while working as a curate in Jindabyne in the 1960s, when the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme was under construction.

He remembers brazenly walking with a fellow priest into one of the tunnel sites. When a contractor from Utah accosted them, one of the workers who knew the young curate called out, "If he is not safe in here, none of us are."

Not only did the two "intruders" get to stay in the tunnel but the contractor became a firm friend after that.

The wonders of engineering were not the only attraction for the nine priests who attended the get-together, organised by the archdiocesan Clergy Retirement Foundation. It was a rare chance for the priests, including Fr Hilton Rob-



At the wall ... (from left) Fr Hilton Roberts, Fr Brian Maher, Bishop Pat Power, Fr Adrian Cork, Fr Kevin Flynn, Fr Paul Tarpey, Fr Henry Byrne and Fr Peter Gannon at the Cotter.

erts, Fr Brian Maher, Bishop Pat Power, Fr Adrian Cork, Fr Kevin Flynn, Fr Paul Tarpey, Fr Henry Byrne, Fr Peter Gannon and Fr John Ryan, to catch up with old friends and renew acquaintances from way back.

Foundation secretary Kevin Croker said the get-together was a way to show support for the retired clergy apart from attending to their practical needs. The foundation looks after 19 retired clergy in the Archdiocese.

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Building community - it's a given

Fiona van der Plaat meets a man who has experienced many sides of life, and just wants the opportunity to give something back.

Ensconced in his office in a tin shed along Kambah Pool Road in south Canberra, next to a stocked pantry that would do a corner store justice, a chook pen and a vegie garden, Yellow Van director Dave Burnet is in his element.

"We're a real family here," Mr Burnet said, proudly conducting a tour of the food rescue service headquarters he calls "second-hand heaven".

Resurrected from the 2003 bushfires, it has been moulded into shape with donated time and materials.

"Everything is donated," he said. That includes the furniture, heating, industrial dishwasher in another shed out the back and, the latest inclusions, two commercial fridges from a corporate supporter.

This is the way the Yellow Van service works, relying entirely on the generosity of the community (including 140 corporate volunteers and a band of 40 regular volunteers) to allow it to continue to gather excess food and deliver it to people in need across the region.

Apart from the three yellow vans themselves, Mr Burnet, 54, is the public face of a charity that Canberrans have embraced since it started as part of the OzHarvest model in 2008.

It has since taken its own path, naming itself after its distinctive vehicles and operating under the auspices of Communities@Work.

The essence of the charity has not changed, however, nor has its leader. It is a responsibility Mr Burnet takes personally and executes with passion.

College's 'special girls' meet up again

For Denise Armati, it "almost seemed sacrilegious" that the church in which she had attended compulsory lunchtime Mass as a student more than 50 years ago was now the modern Merici College's gymnasium.

But that was a minor matter. Of more interest to Mrs Armati and a group of 30 classmates from all those years ago was the tour of their old campus in Braddon and the "eye-opening" evidence of how much education has changed.

The "old girls" had gathered to mark half a century since the foundation class at what was known as Canberra Catholic Girls High School finished the full five years of secondary schooling.

The women, some of whom had not seen each other since leaving the school, were treated to what Mrs Armati described as a "spectacular" lunch prepared by the college's hospitality students. As part of the celebrations, she delivered a speech she gave at a Merici awards



Changed man ... Dave Burnet in the chookyard out the back of his Yellow Van office.

The Yellow Van story is such a good one, he says, that he can't help but sound passionate when he talks about it.

"I'm no salesman," he said of his ability to attract an ever-growing list of volunteers and corporate supporters. "I just talk about it and it sells itself."

The job of establishing the service, handed to him unexpectedly just when he was ready for a change of pace, "has changed me and my whole attitude".

"I really had no concept of the level of need in the community," he said.

He did, however, have an inkling of what it meant to be in need, having come from a "low-socio-economic background".

His mother and one of his brothers also suffered from mental illness and "I tried to find help for them but it was pretty hard".

"I guess I have seen it from both sides and this has given me the opportunity to give back," he said.

Mr Burnet has taken the long and winding road to be where he is now.

He left school in Weston Creek in year 10 and took up an apprenticeship as a laboratory craftsman at Australian National University's research school of physical science.

"We were making stuff for laser beams and all that. It was cutting-edge." He can even boast about contributing to

work on early elements of the scientific engineering feat known as the Hadron particle collider.

He then went backpacking, working on prawn trawlers in Queensland and helping to build a house outside Lismore, before taking up a position as an inspector with the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation in Melbourne.

After six months, he decided to kick back and "raise chooks and vegies" on a shared farm near the Dandenongs.

One day, he decided he'd had enough of that and walked to a phone booth on the highway, looked up mining companies in the phone book and

scored a job in Tasmania. Ten months working underground as a fitter and turner in Rosebery, where life was "very hard and very rough", was enough to shoo him back to Canberra, where he did a photography course and eventually wound up as video tape technician at Capital Television.

He soon became a news editor and later joined the Seven network in the press gallery. His wife, Louise Cullen, was a press gallery journalist and eventually the pressure of juggling stressful deadlines and travel with a young son, Mikey, meant something had to give.

Mr Burnet was happy to give it all up to be a "home dad" for a while before going for a job as a community transport driver. That's when the plans to start up a local version of OzHarvest were waved in front of him.

The venture now collects and dispenses four to five tonnes of food and other grocery items a week, and that has been known to double at Christmas time.

Mikey, now 15, is a student at St Edmund's College, where he leads a partnership between the Yellow Van and the college's catering school.

"He has a real social conscience," Mr Burnet said, remembering when Mikey used to ride with him in the van, wearing an oversized yellow t-shirt.

Over the years, Mr Burnet says his Catholic faith has "helped me get through some pretty dark times".

His media experience, too, has helped him "connect people". All of which has served his, and the Yellow Van's, ultimate aim - "to make a better community".



Unique ... "old girls" from the Canberra Catholic Girls High School (now Merici College) foundation class at their 50-year reunion.

other since leaving the school, were treated to what Mrs Armati described as a "spectacular" lunch prepared by the college's hospitality students. As part of the celebrations, she delivered a speech she gave at a Merici awards

ceremony earlier in the year, in which she remembered her days at the fledgling school.

"The school was totally unique. Eris O'Brien, a very progressive man, was the Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn. He built many

schools and churches in now inner Canberra," she said.

"He invited seven orders of nuns to send two staff to this new school. Each order sent their best, as this was to be a unique and very competitive situation.

"The longest serving Canberra order, the Good Sams, was invited to provide the headmistress Sr Clare, and the second-oldest order, Sisters of Mercy, to provide the deputy Mother Aquinas."

It would have been a "challenging" situation for the sisters, who would have to have adjusted to cultural and ideological differences.

Mrs Armati said the class, being the first to pass all the way through the school, always considered itself a special group and tried to start traditions.

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Come ye to Bethlehem 2013



By Bishop Pat Power

“Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem...” (Luke 2:4)

As we remind ourselves each year, Joseph and Mary made their long journey, compelled by a census. It became a journey of joy as Mary gave birth to a baby whom we call the Prince of Peace.

As we sing Christmas carols we are invited to think of Bethlehem on the night when Jesus was born. This year I’d invite you to think also of what Bethlehem has become today.

To make the journey from Nazareth in Israel to Bethlehem in the occupied Palestinian territories today, Mary and Joseph would have to cross through approximately 70 Israeli barriers – checkpoints, fences, walls and barriers which would involve multiple interrogations and delays – and they would be lucky to be allowed through at all.

These same barriers prevent shepherds watching their flocks, either by day or by night. Most people in Bethlehem have been cut off from their grazing lands, having significant economic effects. To get work in nearby Jerusalem means being able to get a special permit, which are difficult and few in number.

The Magi would probably not have been able to get anywhere near Bethlehem, and the Holy Family certainly couldn’t have fled to Egypt when the threats to life began.

As I write, there are reports of Israeli settlers throwing rocks at Palestinian cars entering Bethlehem, and destroying Palestinian olive trees. A new film made by Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers titled Bethlehem is dubbed a dark thriller for its close-up portrayal of life in the West Bank.

So is there a bright shining star over Bethlehem today that guides us to the Christ?

Indeed there is! Ask any who have taken the road to Bethlehem – and they will speak of the life of Christ lived out among the people.

Firstly in this place there is such assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. That while the reality of life stands so bleakly - people know without a doubt that God continues to dwell amongst the people, and that the love of God will prevail.

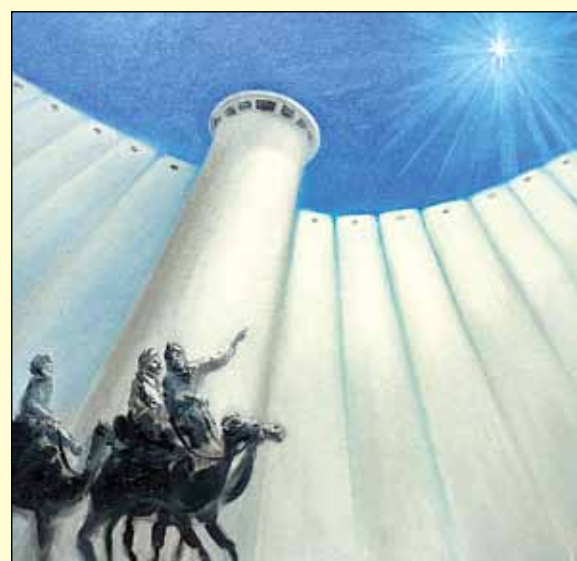
You can hear the convictions of Christ from church leaders, who speak with the words of the prophets calling for justice and mercy.

And of the many Christian organisations in Bethlehem there are so many people who follow the way of Christ – to both resist evil and love our enemies.

I invite you to behold the Bethlehem of today and enter the story of the journey of Christ. The parallels of the suffering of the people today with the story of Jesus’ entry to this world allow us to enter the story of Christ’s entry to our world in a profound way. Because the journey of Christ, though it comes through suffering, is always a journey of joy.

• Bishop Pat Power is a member of the Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network www.pien.org.au. For some Advent reflections from Christian Palestinian leaders, go to www.kairopalestine.ps.

Picture (top) by Sherry Ann. Artwork (above) by Dora McPhee, used with permission.



A day that’s all about people

Whether the Christmas table features puff-puffs, hoppers or pho, the basics seem to transcend cultural differences when it comes to celebrating a Catholic Christmas. Family, friends and food – and, of course, Jesus – will be at the heart of gatherings across the Archdiocese, regardless of ethnic backgrounds. FIONA VAN DER PLAAT spoke to three Catholic families from different cultures about their plans for Christmas this year and what makes it a special time for them.

Dhanushka Galister has never experienced Christmas celebrations quite like those she was a part of in her parents’ home region of Jaffna, in northern Sri Lanka, a few years ago.

She remembers the street being full of children. Fireworks were being set off everywhere and one even flew through the wheel of the scooter she was riding on with a friend.

It was the sort of happy community gathering that Dhanushka, in year 10 at Telopea Park School, and her family love but, of course, are not likely to replicate in Canberra.

Not that the absence of rogue fireworks and unbridled children is going to stop them making Christmas a big occasion.

Dhanushka, along with her sister Geerthika, a university student in Townsville, and her parents Michael and Koshiny, usually spend Christmas in Sydney with Mr Galister’s family or in Canberra with fellow members of the local Tamil community.

Either way, they will be surrounded by hordes of people they love and plenty of food, particularly curries and hoppers (fritters with banana and other fillings).

They usually leave the decision about where they will go until just before Christmas. The one constant in either case is Mr Galister’s mother, Rose, who turns up wherever the gathering is and starts cooking at 4am on Christmas Day.

Dhanushka says Christmas just wouldn’t be the same without “Mummy”, as the whole family calls Rose.

“It’s the food my grandma cooks ... there’s something so special that,” she said, adding that she is particularly fond of her crab curry.

Mrs Galister agrees. “If she doesn’t cook, it doesn’t feel like Christmas.”

If the Galisters go to Sydney, they will attend Mass at St Anthony’s in Toongabbie on Christmas morning before gathering for a day of eating and relaxing with up to 20 family members.

If they stay in Canberra, they will go to Mass up the road at Holy Spirit and then return home to Nicholls where they will host a crowd of 10 to 15 Tamil families, many of them Hindu.



Food and friends ... (from left) Michael, Dhanushka and Koshiny Galister in their Nicholls home.

“We enjoy the friendship and Christmas is the time we all come together ... It’s about renewing relationships between friends,” Mr Galister said. Mr and Mrs Galister, who came to Australia more than 20 years ago and were married in a “proposed” arrangement, are part of a tight-knit

Tamil community that, due to the civil war in Sri Lanka, is spread all over the world. The family stays involved with cultural activities through the Canberra Tamil Association. “(Tamil culture) is such a big part of us, even though we live in Australia. I really enjoy it,” Dhanushka said.



Open door ... Paul and Terri Forka with their sons Tyler (left) and Jordan.

African village, but their door is open at Christmas time to anyone who would like to share their food and friendship.

If the happy faces of their two boys, Jordan, 5, and Tyler, 4, are not welcoming enough, the relaxed hospitality and the table laden with puff-puffs (African doughnuts), beans and rice, traditional vegetables and semolina dishes do the

job. Even though the house is usually full with interstate friends and relatives, the Forkas say they always have room for more. “You don’t even need to call, you just come,” he said.

The family and their visitors start the day with a “big breakfast” before they all troop off to St Christopher’s Cathedral for Mass.

They then return home to what Mr Forka calls the Christmas “feasting period”, since the meal time depends on when people turn up.

The trick is simply to keep the food on the table and the drinks cold.

The catch for the family this year is that Mrs Forka has recently finished her nursing studies and is not sure if she will be rostered to work in the aged care unit at Canberra Hospital on Christmas Day.

Before Christmas Day, the African community, which gathers for Mass and a bring-a-plate meal once a month during the year, will have its own Christmas Mass with Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Paul Gallagher on 15 December at St Peter Chanel’s, Yarralumla.

“The singing is beautiful ... everybody joins in,” Mr Forka said.

Last year, they organised a special barbecue to follow, but he is still thinking about how to cater for the Christmas numbers this time.



Family and faith ... (from left) Lisa, Thuy, Quoc and Dalena Tran in the courtyard of their new home in Forde.

The Silent Night that stretches between cultures

For Quoc and Thuy Tran and their teenage daughters Dalena and Lisa, Christmas is about family. Lots of it.

“We usually have a giant family gathering, with all the aunts and uncles nearby,” Dalena said.

That usually stacks up to a crowd of about 20 people at one of their homes.

“It will probably be here this year,” Dalena said, gesturing at the expansive living area of their new home in Forde, twice the size of their previous one and freshly blessed by their friend Bishop Pat Power.

The family attends the Vietnamese Christmas Mass, celebrated by Fr Peter My, at St Thomas the Apostle at Kambah at 9pm on Christmas Eve. It finishes just before the start of the parish’s midnight Mass.

Christmas hymns and carols sung in Vietnamese, and practised by the choir in the preceding weeks, are what make the Mass extra special, Mrs Tran says.

Jingle Bells and Silent Night are among the favourites, proving that some things just don’t change between cultures.

Mr Tran plays the piano, just as he does for the Vietnamese community’s other Masses during the year.

“He told me he taught himself to play on a piano in the church near where he lived in Vietnam (in a village about eight hours outside Ho Chi Minh City),” Lisa said.

Mr and Mrs Tran come from opposite ends of Vietnam and met in a refugee camp in Indonesia.

Mr Tran, now a taxi driver, spent three years in the camp before coming to Australia in 1992.

Mrs Tran, who works in a nail salon, finally made it out to Indonesia after twice being caught and imprisoned for trying to escape Vietnam. She came to Australia in 1993.

They were married in Canberra and both their children were born here.

Now they comfortably merge their own Vietnamese Christmas traditions with Western ones. Pho (a classic Vietnamese dish of beef and noodles in a light broth) and fried rice, along with spring rolls for the children, feature on the Christmas table.

But barbecued lamb, turkey and chicken, not to mention little meat pies for the kids, might also be found on the platters.

“It depends on what everybody wants to eat,” Mrs Tran said.

This year, the new house will be adorned with a smattering of fairy lights, though nothing too fancy, says Dalena.


But, among all the Christmas trappings, the true meaning of the Trans’ Christmas will not be lost.

“It’s a special time to gather with family and Jesus,” Mrs Tran said.

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BOOROWA: Christmas vigil 6.30pm (families) Boorowa, 8.30pm Frogmore, 7pm St Clement's Galong. Christmas Day 8am Boorowa, 9am St Clement's Galong, 9.30am Binalong.
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BRIBAREE: Christmas vigil 6pm.
BUNGENDORE: Christmas vigil 6pm. Christmas Day 9am.
CAMPBELL: Christmas Day 10am.
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CHARWOOD: Christmas vigil 7pm. Christmas Day 9am.
COOMA: Christmas vigil 6pm Cooma, 9pm Nimmitabel. Christmas Day 8am Adaminaby, 10am Cooma.
COOTAMUNDRA: Christmas vigil 7 pm Cootamundra. Christmas Day: 8am Stockinbingal, 8am Wallendbeen, 9.30am Cootamundra.
CROOKWELL: Christmas vigil 9pm Crookwell. Christmas Day 8am Binda, 9.30am Crookwell.
EVATT: Christmas vigil 6pm. Christmas Day 9.30am.
GOULBURN: Christmas vigil 6pm (children), 8pm Old Cathedral, 6pm Marulan, 6pm Taralga. Christmas Day 9am Our Lady of Fatima.
GRENFELL: Christmas Day 8am.
GUNGAHLIN: Christmas vigil 7pm (children) 10pm (carols 9.30pm). Christmas Day 9am. No 8am or 5.30pm Mass.
HALL: Christmas vigil 7pm.
HARDEN-MURRUMBURRAH: Christmas vigil 7pm.
JUGIONG: Christmas Day 8am.
KALEEN: Christmas vigil 8pm. Christmas Day 8am.
KAMBAH: Christmas vigil 7pm (children), 9.30pm Vietnamese Mass, midnight. Christmas Day 10am. **KIPPAX:** Christmas vigil 6pm 9pm mid-night (carols 11.30pm). Christmas Day 9am. No evening Mass.
LAKE CARGELLIGO: Christmas vigil 7pm Tullibigeal, 9pm Lake Cargelligo. Christmas Day 9.30am Lake Cargelligo.
MICHELAGO: Christmas vigil 7pm.
MORUYA: Christmas vigil 6pm (outdoor), mid-night. Christmas Day 8am Tuross Head, 10am Moruya. Extra Sunday 5pm Mass Carroll College Broulee on 29 December and 5, 12 January.

Where to find Mass this Christmas

NAROOMA-COBARGO: Christmas vigil 6pm Cobargo, 8pm Narooma. Christmas Day 7.30am Bermagui, 9.30am Narooma.
NARRABUNDAH: Christmas vigil 6pm, 8pm (charismatic), midnight. Christmas Day 9.30am.
NORTH WODEN: Christmas vigil 5.30pm Curtin (children), 7pm Garran, midnight Curtin. Christmas Day 8.30am Garran, 9.30am Curtin.
O'CONNOR: Christmas vigil 6pm 9pm. Christmas Day 9am.
PAGE: Christmas vigil 6.30pm 9pm. Christmas Day 9am.
PAMBULA: Christmas vigil 5pm Merimbula (children) 7.30pm Eden, midnight Pambula. Christmas Day 10am Merimbula.
QUEANBEYAN: Christmas vigil 6pm (children, Molonglo St), midnight St Raphael's (carols 11.15pm). Christmas Day 8am 10am St Raphael's.
SOUTH TUGGERANONG: Christmas vigil 6pm (children's outdoor) Calwell, 9pm Gowrie, midnight Gowrie. Christmas Day 9am Gowrie. No 6pm Mass.
SOUTH WODEN: Christmas vigil 6pm 9pm. Christmas Day 8.30am 10.30am, all Sacred Heart, Pearce.
SYRO-MALABAR MASS (Malayalam language): Christmas vigil, 6pm, Yarralumla.
TARALGA: Christmas vigil 6pm.
TEMORA MISSION: Christmas vigil 6pm (outdoor) Temora, 6.30pm Barellan. Christmas Day 8am Barmedman, 8am Ardlethan, 10am Temora, 10am Aria Park.
TRADITIONAL LATIN MASS: Christmas vigil mid-night Garran. Christmas Day 5am, 10am Garran.
TUMUT: Christmas vigil 7pm (outdoor). Christmas Day 8am Talbingo, 10am Tumut.
WANNIASSA: Christmas vigil 7pm (children) 9pm. Christmas Day 9am. No evening Mass Christmas Day.
WATSON: Christmas vigil 6pm (children), 10pm. Christmas Day 8am 10am (no 6pm).
WESTON CREEK: Christmas vigil 6pm Holder (family), 6pm Waramanga (family), 9 pm Holder (carols 8.30pm). Christmas Day 9am Waramanga (carols 8.30am).
WESTERN MISSION: Christmas vigil 5.30pm Burcher, 7pm West Wyalong, 9pm Weethalle. Christmas Day 8am Ungarie, 9.30am West Wyalong.
YASS-GUNNING: Christmas vigil 5.30pm Gunning, 7pm Yass, 8.30pm Murrumbateman recreation hall. Christmas Day 8.30am Yass.
YOUNG: Christmas vigil 6pm (outdoor family), 9pm. Christmas Day 9.30am.

Building the Church

www.cdf.cg.catholic.org.au



LEFT: Down to business ... Jessica Jenkins in year 1/2.

ABOVE: Every block counts ... Kathleen Quinlin and Ethan Agoth in year 1/2.



TOP LEFT: IT girls ... Matilda Mahar is all smiles with her year 5/6 friends.

ABOVE: What to read? ... Owen Nihill and Ellie Carr in year 1/2.

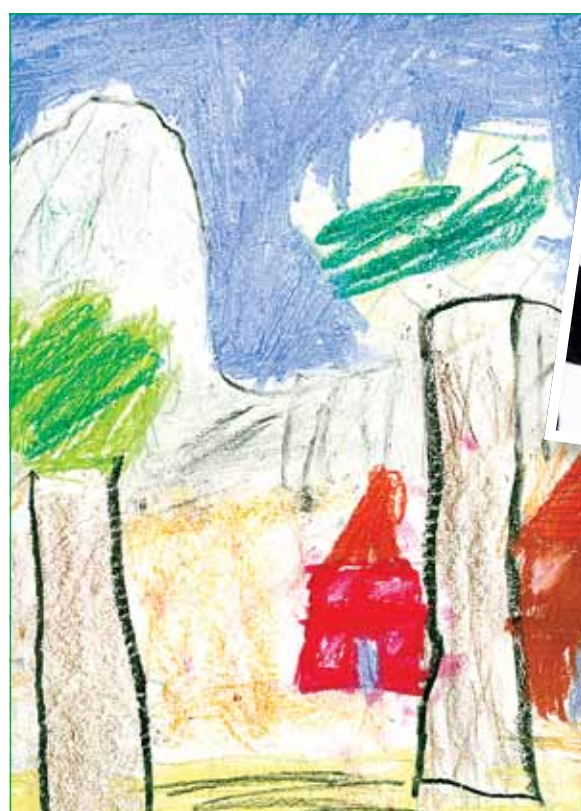
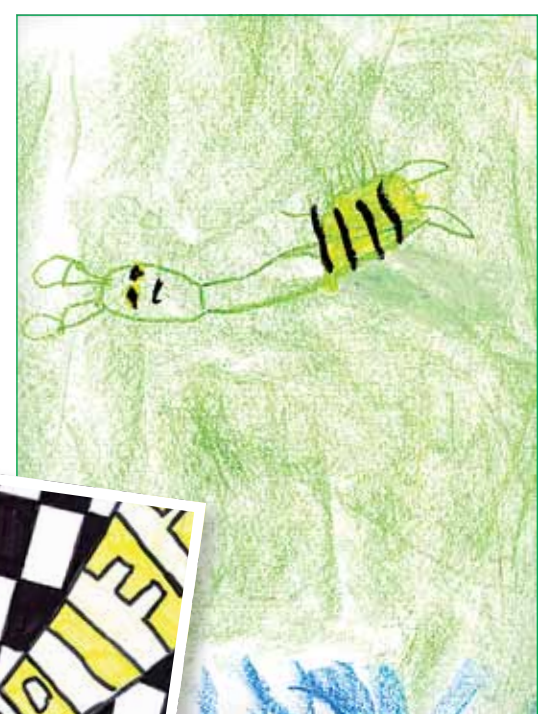
Even with the bustle of renovations and fete preparations going on around them, the students of St John Vianney's were still able to concentrate on the jobs at hand and, importantly, to keep smiling while they were at it.



ABOVE: Screen time ... Darcy Lynch and Ben Christofani (year 5/6) in the computer lab.

LEFT: Reflecting ... year 2 students during prayer time in "The Atrium".

BOTTOM LEFT: Write stuff ... Harry Luck-Cameron (year 1/2) shows he knows his "oy" sounds on the whiteboard.



These masterful artworks are by ... LEFT: Ellie Carr (year 1/2); CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: McKinley Darby (year 5/6); Anthony Isaacs (year 1/2); Hannah Fisher (year 5/6).

NYP 2017

January

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Dates to remember in January

- 1** Feast of Mary, Mother of God; World Day of Peace
- 26** Australia Day
- 27** Australia Day public holiday
- 29** School term 1 begins NSW

February

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Dates to remember in February

- 1-28** St Vincent de Paul doorknock appeal
- 3** School term 1 begins ACT
- 9** Golden jubilee Mass, St Thomas More, Campbell
- 11** World Day of Prayer for Sick
- 26** 60th anniversary St Edmund's College

March

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Dates to remember in March

- 2** Youth leaders commissioning Mass
- 4** Guinness and God
- 5** Ash Wednesday
- 9** Rite of the Elect Mass, Cathedral
- 10** Canberra Day public holiday
- 17** Feast of St Patrick
- 19** Feast of St Joseph

April

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Dates to remember in April

- 1** Guinness and God
- 11** School term 1 ends ACT, NSW
- 13** Palm Sunday
- 18** Good Friday
- 20** Easter Sunday
- 25** Anzac Day
- 27** Canonisation John XXIII and John Paul II; Divine Mercy Sunday
- 28** School term 2 begins ACT
- 29** School term 2 begins NSW

May

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Dates to remember in May

- 5-9** Australian Catholic bishops meet
- 6** Guinness and God
- 11** World Day of Prayer for Vocations
- 13** Feast of Our Lady of Fatima
- 19-22** Clergy assembly
- 24** Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, patron of Australia; youth leaders network breakfast

June

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Dates to remember in June

- 1-8** Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- 3** Guinness and God
- 8** Pentecost Sunday
- 9** Queen's Birthday public holiday
- 27** Feast of Sacred Heart of Jesus
- 27** School term 2 ends NSW
- 29** Feast of Sts Peter and Paul

July

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Dates to remember in July

- 1** Guinness and God
- 4** School term 2 ends ACT
- 6** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday
- 16** Feast of Our Lady of Mt Carmel
- 15** School term 3 begins NSW
- 21** School term 3 begins ACT
- 26-27** Propagation of the Faith appeal

August

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Dates to remember in August

- 5** Guinness and God
- 8** Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop
- 15** Feast of Assumption of Our Lady
- 23** Youth leaders network breakfast
- 24** 40th anniversary of foundation of Carmel of Ss Peter & Paul, Canberra
- 31** World Day of Migrants and Refugees

September

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Dates to remember in September

- 2** Guinness and God
- 7** Father's Day Appeal
- 14** Child Protection Sunday
- 19** School term 3 ends NSW
- 26** School term 3 ends ACT
- 27** Feast of St Vincent de Paul
- 28** Social Justice Sunday
- 29** Family and Community Day public holiday ACT
- 30** Explosion youth conference - 4 days

October

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Dates to remember in October

- 1** Feast of St Therese of Lisieux
- 4** Feast of St Francis of Assisi
- 6** Labour Day public holiday
- 7** Guinness and God
- 8** School term 4 begins NSW
- 13** School term 4 begins ACT
- 15** Feast of St Teresa of Avila
- 18-19** World Mission Day appeal
- 21** Children's Mission Mass
- 25** Carmelite fete, Red Hill

November

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Dates to remember in November

- 1** All Saints Day
- 2** All Souls Day
- 11** Guinness and God
- 23** Feast of Christ the King
- 24-28** Australian Catholic bishops meet
- 30** First Sunday of Advent

December

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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Dates to remember in December

- 3** International day of People with Disability
- 8** Feast of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin
- 10** School term 4 ends secondary ACT
- 17** School term 4 ends primary ACT, all students NSW
- 25** Christmas Day
- 26** Feast of St Stephen; Boxing Day
- 28** Feast of the Holy Family

No-one is born except into a mother's arms

It's hard to say something consoling in the face of death, even when the person who died lived a full life and died in the best of circumstances. It's especially hard when the one who has died is a young person, still in need of nurturing and care in this life, and when that young person dies in less-than-ideal circumstances.

As a priest, I have, a number of times, had to preside at the funeral of someone who died young, either as the result of illness, accident, or suicide. Such a funeral is always doubly sad. I remember one such funeral in particular: A high-school student had died in a car accident. The church was over-packed with his grieving family, friends, and classmates.

His mother, still a young woman herself, was in the front pew, heavy with grief about her loss, but clearly weighed-down too with anxiety for her child. After all, he was still just a boy, partly still in need of someone to take care of him, still need-

ing a mother. She sensed how, dying so young, in effect, orphaned him.

There aren't many words that are helpful in a situation like this, but the few that we have say what needs to be said - even if on that day, when death is still so raw, they don't yet bring much emotional consolation.

What's to be said in face of a death like this? Simply that this young boy is now in more-loving, more-tender, gentler and safer hands than ours, that there's a mother on the other side to receive him and give him the nurturing he still needs, just as there was one on this side when he was born. No-one is born, except into a mother's arms. That's an image we need to keep before us in order to more healthily imagine death.

What, more precisely, is the image? Few images are as primal, and as tender, as that of a mother holding and cradling her new-born baby. Indeed the words of the most-renowned

Ron Rolheiser

Fr Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in Texas. www.ronrolheiser.com



Christmas carol of all time, Silent Night, were inspired by precisely this image.

Joseph Mohr, a young priest in Germany, had gone out to a cottage in the woods on the afternoon of Christmas

words and froze them in our minds forever.

The ultimate archetypal image of peace, safety and security is that of a new-born sleeping in its mother's arms. Moreover, when a baby is born, it's not just the mother who's eager to hold and cradle it. Most everyone else is, too.

Perhaps no image then is as apt, as powerful, as consoling and as accurate in terms of picturing what happens to us when we die and awake to eternal life as is the image of a mother holding and cradling her new-born child.

When we die, we die into the arms of God and surely

we're ready, still in need of nurturing, still needing someone to help take care of us, still needing a mother. We're in safe, nurturing, gentle hands.

That can be deeply consoling because death renders every one of us an orphan and, daily, there are people dying young, unexpectedly, less-than-fully-ready, still in need of care themselves. All of us die, still needing a mother. But we have the assurance of our faith that we will be born into safer and more nurturing hands than our own.

However, consoling as that may be, it doesn't take away the sting of losing a loved one to death. Nothing takes that away because nothing is meant to.

Death is meant to indelibly scar our hearts because love is meant to wound us in that way. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer puts it: "Nothing can make up for the absence of someone we love. It is nonsense to say that God fills the gap; God doesn't fill it, but on the contrary, God keeps it empty and so helps us keep alive our former communion with each other, even at the cost of pain."

"The dearer and richer our memories, the more difficult the separation. But gratitude changes the pangs of memory into a tranquil joy. The beauties of the past are borne, not as a thorn in the flesh, but as a precious gift in themselves."

'It's okay if we die before we're ready, still in need of nurturing, still needing a mother. We're in safe, nurturing, gentle hands'

Eve to baptise a new-born baby. As he left the cottage, the baby was asleep in its mother's lap.

He was so taken with that image, with the depth and peace it incarnated, that, immediately upon returning to his rectory, he penned the famous lines of Silent Night. His choir director, Franz Gruber, put some guitar chords to those

we're received with as much love, gentleness, and tenderness as we were received in the arms of our mothers at birth.

Moreover, surely we are even safer there than we were when we were born here on earth. I suspect, too, that more than a few of the saints will be hovering around, wanting their chance to cuddle the new baby. And so it's okay if we die before



Adding colour ... Hallam Young and his Mr Spotty artwork.

New talent spotted

Few viewers of Hallam Young's Mr Spotty artwork would appreciate the significance of the colours dotted through the acrylic-on-wood painting. It is only in recent years that the 22-year-old, one of the 40 artists with CatholicCare's Hands On Studio for people with disabilities, has begun to use colour in his art.

"I watched him doing black-and-white drawings with only a pencil and ruler for a very long time before he introduced curves when he was in year 9. The colour didn't come into it until later," his mother Judanne Young said.

Mrs Young and her husband Louis were proud guests at the opening of the studio's Art of Nature exhibition at the M16 Artspace in Griffith. The exhibition included three pieces by Hallam Young in his first public show.

One Hands On artist who has made a name for himself over the years is Stephen Corsini, whose large painting of Canberra landmarks in honour of the capital's centenary was the centre-piece of the exhibition. CatholicCare chief executive officer Neil Harrigan, who opened the exhibition, liked the painting so much he bought it to add to his growing collection of Hands On pieces.

Works by the Hands On artists are on display at Dish@Oatley, 60-62 Oatley Court, Belconnen, until 24 January.

E-mail ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au

Get the FaCTs on your faith

By Felicity de Fombelle

Fitting in study while working part-time was not easy for mum-of-three Catherine Grinsell-Jones (pictured right), but now she has finished, she is keen for more.

The Curtin parishioner signed up for the Archdiocesan Faith and Catholic Theology (FaCT) course because she wanted to better understand her faith.

"The self-paced format appealed as I could fit it in around my family and household commitments," Ms Grinsell-Jones said.

"All the presenters were very supportive, well-educated and experienced. I found the discussion groups so worthwhile and would recommend the course to anyone wanting to explore their faith."

The FaCT course is for Catholics who are curious about their faith and want to make it a real and positive part of their work, marriage and family life.

John Austen (pictured above) had not previously done any religious study and said the workload was challenging, but not too demanding. "The content stretched me which was a good thing," he said. "I was also challenged by the discussion groups - it was good to share our thoughts and hear different perspectives."



"I would recommend the course to anyone wanting to deepen their understanding of the faith, whether just for general interest or to help them in a role within the Church."

The FaCT course will be delivered by Archdiocesan coordinator of Faith Formation and Spirituality Shane Dwyer.

Students can choose their own level of study depending on interest. They can enrol for the Certificate IV in Christian Ministry and Theology or they may choose to do one subject for personal interest.

There are no weekly classes to attend and much of the course is delivered online, so distance learning is available for people in more remote areas.

* A FaCT information session will be held at 5.30pm on Wednesday, 4 December, at the Rheinberger Centre, Yarralumla. Inquiries: Go to www.cgfact.org.au or telephone 6163 4300.

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Friday - 6 pm
Saturday - 9 am
Sunday - 11.30 am (sung)
St Thomas More, Campbell
Sunday - 8.30 am
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With Christmas and new year fast approaching, thank you to all who have joined with us in prayer and generosity to support so many through the works of Catholic Mission this year.

It is at this time the commercial hype yells "presents" with the majority having limited lives and usefulness.

An alternative present could be to check out, select and give one of Catholic Mission's Life-Giving Gifts, advising the ones you love that you have supported, on their behalf, a project that enables opportunity otherwise unlikely to others experiencing extreme need.

Gifts start from as little as \$8 for the very popular laying hen for an orphanage in Peru, through to \$154 for a sewing machine for a disadvantaged woman in India, or a very generous \$12,000 to build a new church in the Philippines. Projects are listed at the Catholic Mission website www.catholicmission.org.au/gifts.

You will receive a beautifully designed printed card featuring an image indicative of the project your gift supports, on which you can write a personalised message or you can choose to send an e-card either immediately or on a specific date if you purchase your gift online.

We wish all a holy, safe and joyous Christmas.

God bless,
Deacon Joe Blackwell

The Rheinberger Centre, P O Box 7174, Yarralumla 2600. asst.missions@cg.catholic.org.au. Tel: 6163 4321.

Butler who saw black side of America's past

The Butler. Starring Forest Whitaker, Oprah Winfrey, David Oyelowo, Vanessa Redgrave, Jane Fonda, Terrence Howard, Robin Williams, John Cusack, Liev Schreiber, and Alan Rickman. Directed by Lee Daniels. Hopscotch. 132 minutes. M (Mature themes, violence and coarse language). Reviewer: Peter W Sheehan*.

This is an American historical film that was inspired by a 2008 story published in the Washington Post by Wil Haygood, titled A Butler Well Served by This Election. The film was inspired by a true story about the life of Eugene Allen, an African-American, who served as a butler in the White House for 34 years. It canvasses Allen's service to eight US presidents. In the movie, Allen is known as Cecil Gaines.

Cecil (Forest Whitaker) was born on a cotton farm in the US, and had a traumatic family life. The film tells of his father being murdered by the white master of a house, and he was trained as a "house nigger" by the master's mother (Vanessa Red-

grave), who felt sorry for him. She taught him how to serve others.

Cecil finds work in a fashionable hotel where his efficient obsequiousness attracts the attention of a White House aide. With the aide's support, he is hired by the White House, where he endures humiliation as a black person in ways that he has been familiar with. But Cecil is proud of being a butler and loves the rituals and formality of his role, and he is very good at his job. It is a butler's job to "see what it is that they need", and "you hear nothing, you only serve". He is told that "when in a room with white people, the room should feel empty when you are in it".

Cecil has a son, Louis (David Oyelowo), who joins the civil rights movement and is arrested as a radical. His other son dies in the Vietnam war. As Cecil services the White House, it is Louis who introduces us to the realities that lie in the world outside it. While Cecil is looking after his masters in the White House, his wife, Gloria (Oprah Winfrey) waits at home. In



Cecil Gaines (Forest Whitaker) and wife Gloria (Oprah Winfrey) in a scene from The Butler.

frustration, she takes to alcohol and is tempted with a sexual dalliance.

The film canvasses the early development of the civil rights movement, examines the atrocities of the Klu Klux Klan, analyses the Black Power struggle of the 1960s, and moves on to Barack Obama's election that held out enormous promise to black America in 2008.

While the presidents ponder what to do about blatant racial discrimination, Cecil brings them sandwiches and tea. The film presents him as an unassuming person, who also happens to be an enduring witness to incredible historical events. Archival footage is used effectively.

It is inevitable that a film such as this has to confront the accuracy of its story-line. In that respect, it is controversial. There is argument, for example, about whether it is unreasonably critical of Reagan's approach to apartheid, the killing of Cecil's father is not quite as depicted, and Jane Fonda delivers a brief, unnervingly sharp performance as Reagan's wife, Nancy.

This is an ambitious, sweeping period drama that is melodramatic. As it moves from president to president, a talented ensemble cast passes before our eyes. There is Robin Williams as Dwight D Eisenhower, Liev Schreiber as Lyndon B Johnson, John Cusack as Richard

Nixon, and Alan Rickman as Ronald Reagan.

There is a sustained, powerful performance by Forest Whitaker. His acting is as subtle as it is effective, and Oprah Winfrey is wonderful as wife Gloria.

In the final run, the dramatic power of the movie loses out to the expansiveness of its historical sweep. But it presents a moving and powerful account of significant events related to the growth of civil rights in America.

There is never any question that this is a film about racial inequality, and the need to fight racial discrimination in every way.

• Peter W. Sheehan is an associate of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting.

Compelling look at the senseless taking of a life

Fruitvale Station. Starring Michael Jordan, Octavia Spencer, Melonie Diaz, Chad Michael Murray, and Kevin Durand. Directed by Ryan Coogler. Roadshow. 85 minutes. M (Violence, coarse language, drug use). Reviewer: Peter W Sheehan.

This American film is based on the true story of Oscar Grant (Michael Jordan), who was killed by a police bullet fired at the Fruitvale Bay Area Rapid Transit Station, in California on New Year's Day, 2009. Criminal charges were laid and the officer in question was

jailed. The film begins dramatically with archival, live footage of two police officers beating Oscar on the subway platform. Director Ryan Coogler dwells on Oscar's daily routines and actions. He depicts Oscar as an ordinary black youth caught in tragic circumstances. The

movie indicates racial provocation in his killing, but racism is not the main thrust. It is absorbing to watch as events unfold with considerable tension on the last day of Oscar's life. All of Oscar's flaws are there, but Coogler argues that his humanity transcends them.

SHORTS

The Counselor. Starring: Michael Fassbender, Penelope Cruz, Brad Pitt, Javier Bardem and Cameron Diaz. Directed by Ridley Scott. Twentieth Century Fox. 117 minutes. MA15+. Restricted. (Strong bloody violence and sex scenes).

Thriller with a stellar cast. The Counselor refers to an unnamed, naive lawyer who decides to traffic in illegal drugs with his business partner. It has the potential to be much better and is a disappointing attempt by director Scott to play everything on the dark side.

Mr Pip. Starring Hugh Laurie, Xzannjah, Healesville Joel, Eka Darville, Florence Kororo and Kerry Fox, Emily Barclay. Directed by Andrew Adamson. Paramount. 116 minutes. M (Mature themes and violence).

A New Zealand production, based on a story by a journalist reflecting on the experiences of Bougainville in 1989, the closure of the copper mine, the financial crisis, the rise

of rebels and the intervention of the PNG military. In many ways, the film takes on too many issues, but, by the end, the audience does have the opportunity to consider them all, whether political and economic, educational, economic or dealing with refugees and working migrants.

Sister. Starring: Kacey Mottet Klein, Lea Seydoux, Martin Compston, and Gillian Andersen. Directed by Ursula Meier. Palace Films. 97 minutes. M (Mature themes and coarse language).

Swiss drama of a young boy, Simon, who lives with and supports his older sister, Louise, by stealing from guests at an upper-class ski resort. Basically, it is about poverty, emotional as well as physical, and the will to survive. This is a movie to think about a lot more after it is over. Its enjoyment value creeps up on you, as the extent of the troubles of Louise and Simon become obvious, and you know that there is no real solution in sight.

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Being charmed into prayer - try it

Prayer. Our Deepest Longing, by Ronald Rolheiser. Franciscan Media, 2013, pb 70 pages, \$13.95. Reviewer: Margaret Ryan.

This isn't just another book about prayer! This is Rolheiser! The title could easily have been "Charming Readers into Prayer".

Ronald Rolheiser is a US Catholic priest (Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate) and an internationally acclaimed spirituality author of seven books and speaker.

Catholic Voice features one of his columns each month.

Rolheiser knows about the seductions that militate against prayer in modern, western society: busy and distracted lives, a sense of boredom with prayer, a misunderstanding of the nature of and emotions connected with prayer, our sense of shame before God.

This slim volume is written conversationally and gently, revealing empathetic understanding of the human condition.

The author explores the nature of God (a tender father/

mother who accepts and delights in us) and prayer (a way of experiencing God's unconditional love).

Rolheiser's experience is that most people avoid prayer because they haven't known this depth of love in their life.

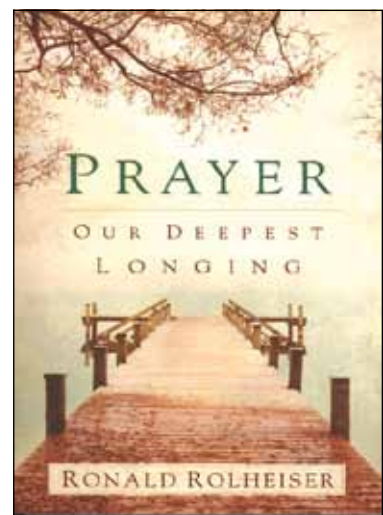
It was Jesus' intimacy with the Father, borne out in attitudes and behaviour, that prompted the disciples to ask him how to pray.

One of Rolheiser's gifts is the ability to transform some of the mystique about prayer into language and images available to everyone.

There is also some probing. The author challenges us to make time and space for solitude, to take some responsibility for liturgy, to be bold in prayer, to surrender to the Lover, to try contemplative prayer, to be faithful to and patient with God (and ourselves), to be alert to the power of ritual and to face personal "demons".

This could be your most worthwhile gift of 2013.

At this price, you could buy an extra couple for family or friends!



Daily reflections of a 'wise and humble' writer

Yes, And... Daily Meditations, by Richard Rohr. Franciscan Media, 2013, 416 pages, \$36.95. Reviewer: Margaret Ryan.

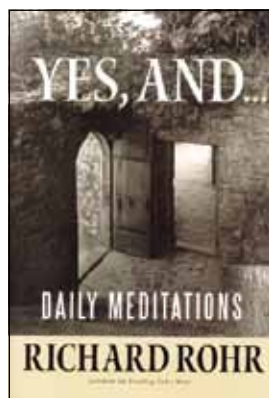
Do you want to make sense of your life experience through the lenses of the scriptures and Catholic tradition? Rohr's latest book successfully does this.

The author draws on his own life experience as imperfect human being, Franciscan priest, spiritual director, counsellor and leader of the New Mexico Centre for Action and Contemplation community.

Rohr has read widely and aligns his knowledge of scripture, mysticism and the saints, contemplation, theology and psychology in fruitful combination to present a (usually) pithy half page of material offered as meditation.

Most of these are excerpts from more recent books and CDs; some were written for this book.

The daily meditations are grouped under seven broad headings, which are explained succinctly; the excerpts follow. Some of Rohr's underlying prin-



ciples are: the interplay of scripture, experience and tradition; the benevolence of God's uni-

verse; the unity of Reality; the prophet's need to assist religion to critique itself; the practice of dying to "the false self"; letting go and then blooming authentically. A bibliography completes the volume.

Yes, And... has been serialised online for many months. It is a bonus to have the writings to hand in one place. The daily snippets offer much to ponder and provide considerable spiritual enrichment.

These writings are mature reflections of a septuagenarian, an intelligent, wise and humble

man prepared to share his understanding of aspects of scripture and Catholic spirituality. Because he presumes considerable life-experience and self-awareness, the book could appeal to more mature readers.

Rohr's understanding of human sinfulness, weakness and God's grace may challenge some older and eccentric theological views.

Highly recommended. The book is intensely hopeful, stressing God's grace and insights for possible transformation.

Getting to know the man who raised Jesus

Joseph, The Man Who Raised Jesus by Fr Gary Caster. Servant Books, 2013, 129 pages, \$22.95. Reviewer: Janet Moyle.

Go to Joseph by Michael O'Neill McGrath OSFS. World Library Publications, 2013, 131 pages, \$64.95. Reviewer: Janet Moyle.

With the onset of Advent it would seem apposite that two books on St Joseph have been published. The first concentrates on Joseph as the father of Jesus. The author rightly states that the Scriptures record no spoken words of Joseph. Gary Caster believes that Joseph was hugely influential in the formation of Jesus' character and that this influence is self-evident in the words and actions of the adult Christ.

Caster states that there are three critical moments in Joseph's life recorded in scripture. These are the time of his betrothal to Mary, the moment he learns that she is with child, and the revelation in Joseph's dream about her condition. These moments mark the transition from the old law to the new. He is the father of the new covenant of God's love. He raised Jesus and so raises every Christian. He has much to teach us.

Caster draws out Joseph's qualities in succeeding chapters. He backs up these listings with quotes from scripture, from church documents and from talks and homilies. He names Jesus' respect for women as having been learned

from Joseph. He writes powerfully of Joseph and Mary as virginal spouses who prefigure the union of Christ and his Church. This is a thoughtful, well-researched book. The traditional Litany of St Joseph is included which encapsulates many of the author's conclusions.

Go to Joseph, a large A5 sized hard-backed volume, is a total delight. It is the third of a trilogy of art and spirituality books centred on the Holy Family. The first two are Blessed Art Thou and At the Name of Jesus. The artist, known as Br "Mickey" McGrath, in addition to painting and writing, is a popular speaker and story-teller at conferences and retreats throughout the US.

Each of his gorgeous, captivating paintings is accompanied by a story, a poem and a prayer from different writers to enlarge our minds and gladden our hearts. Joseph is a man of love, commitment, hard work, obedience, silence. A white dove appears in most paintings, perched on his staff or his halo. Four small illustrations sum up what we know of Joseph. "Joseph has nothing to say... He just listens... and quietly does what he has to do... which was to take care of business."

Two of my favourite paintings speak of the tenderness and fatherhood of Joseph. The first is a nativity scene. Joseph and Mary are alone in a garage under a dim light bulb. There are tools on the wall, a kettle, a loaf of bread and an incense

burner on the floor. Mary, weary, is seated on a chair. Joseph, bare-foot, in jeans and a T-shirt has a hint of tats on his bare arms. He bends over to pick up the squawling infant who lies in a wheelbarrow. The second shows him in his workshop, Christmas lights festooning the darkened window. Baby Jesus is strapped into an infant capsule and Joseph is giving him a bottle. This outstanding book lends itself to meditation and prayer.



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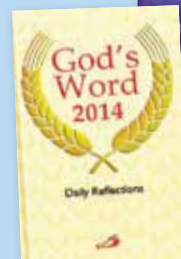
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God's Word 2014, \$14.95

Yes, And Daily meditations, Richard Rohr, \$36.95

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AMICUS - Support & friendship/social group for widowed, separated or divorced Catholics regular activities on second and fourth weekends. New members welcome. Inquiries: Len, telephone 6299 6606; Pat 6292 1631, Enid 6296 5592.

COMORBIDITY INTERAGENCY ANNUAL DAY - Hosted by CatholicCare Canberra and Goulburn, noon-2pm, 4 December, Blackfriars rose garden, ACU Campus, 127 Phillip Avenue, Watson. Organisations and consumers invited to free BBQ and entertainment to meet mental health and alcohol, tobacco and other drugs services. Inquiries: Abbey Higginson email abbey.higginson@catholiccare.cg.org.au or telephone 6163 7668.

CONVERSATION - A Conversation on Psychology and Religion, 1pm-4pm, Sunday, 1 December, St Clement's monastery, Galong. Facilitator Richard White. Inquiries: Telephone 6380 5222.

EXHIBITIONS - CatholicCare Hands On Studio three exhibitions: Art of Nature, Gallery 3, M16 Artspace, 21 Blaxland Crescent, Griffith, noon-5pm, Wednesday to Sunday, to 10 December; Dish@Oatley, 60-62 Oatley Court, Belconnen, to 24 January 2014.

HOLY SPIRIT SECULAR FRANCISCAN FRATERNITY - Meets third Friday of month, 7.30pm, St John Vianney's, Waramanga. Secular Franciscans try to follow Christ in the footsteps of St Francis. Inquiries: Tony, telephone 0407 072 139, Frank 0400 793 260, email sfo@fastmail.fm.

MEDITATION ON JESUS - In style of Fr Gilbert Carlo, meets Thursdays 7.30pm, St Thomas the Apostle, Kambah. Inquiries: Trish Jarzynski, telephone 6231 8468.

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NEW YEAR'S EVE PRAYER VIGIL - The Marian Movement of Priests seventh annual vigil, from 8.30pm, Tuesday, 31 December, St John the Apostle church, cnr Blackham and Chave streets, Holt. Inquiries: Judy and Joe Mewburn, telephone 6254 6202.

PADRE PIO PRAYER GROUP - Meets second Friday of the month after 5.30 pm healing Mass, parish centre St Benedict's Church, Narrabundah. Inquiries: Maria, telephone 6286 5679.

PARISH GOLDEN JUBILEE - St Thomas More parish, Campbell. Current and former parishioners and friends invited. Mass, 11am, Sunday, 9 February, followed by lunch.

SERRA CLUB OF CANBERRA - Rosary and Mass, 6.10pm, Thursday, 12 December, Holy Trinity Church, Curtin, followed by Christmas dinner, Southern Cross Club, Woden. Inquiries: John Malycha, telephone 6251 2912.

TWILIGHT ADVENT RETREAT - 7pm-9pm, 6 December, after 5.30pm healing Mass, St Benedict's, Narrabundah. Light supper served after Mass. Cost \$5. Registration for catering, telephone parish office 6295 7879 by 5 December.

Written entries are invited for the February 2014 issue to: Catholic Voice, GPO Box 3089, Canberra ACT 2601, or e-mail ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au by Wednesday, 15 January 2014. Entries which are accepted for this section are free, courtesy of sponsorship by the Catholic Development Fund.

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It is Christopher

• From Front Page.

Also present were more than 130 clergy from the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, Melbourne Archdiocese and Sale Diocese, leaders of religious communities, representatives of parishes, schools and Catholic organisations and communities, and Archbishop Prowse’s friends and family.

Having “knocked” at the door of the Cathedral and been received by Archdiocesan Administrator Mgr John Woods, Archbishop Prowse heard a public reading, in both Latin and English, of the Papal Bull of his appointment.

The letter from Pope Francis confirmed that the then Bishop of Sale was “best suited to fill this vacancy” in Canberra and Goulburn thanks to his “well recognised and much esteemed spiritual and pastoral gifts”.

The Apostolic Nuncio then “installed” the new Archbishop in his cathedra, or chair of office, before representatives from the Archdiocese’s laity, religious and clergy filed up to welcome their “servant-shepherd Archbishop”, as he referred to himself.

Members of Archbishop Prowse’s family brought forward the offertory gifts during a Mass with all the dignity and warmth the occasion demanded, ending in a crescendo of Handel’s Halleluia Chorus from Messiah.

Soon after the ceremony, the Archbishop was to be found on the steps of his cathedral, talking to the media, as he will many times during his tenure, about “demonised” asylum seekers, the role of religion in society, and issues around marriage and family.

Then he was free to mingle with the faithful, who had waited patiently outside to meet the man for whom the Archdiocese has been waiting for 18 months.

See footage and highlights of the installation Mass at <https://vimeo.com/cgcatholic>



A ceremony of warmth and beauty



Leading the way ...

ABOVE LEFT: The Archdiocese’s deacons, led by soon-to-be-ordained Luke Verrell, head the procession into the cathedral.

ABOVE: Archbishop Prowse kisses the crucifix, watched by cathedral administrator Fr Francis Kolencherry and master of ceremonies Fr Warrick Tonkin, after being received at the front door.

LEFT: Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Paul Gallagher installs the new Archbishop in his cathedra, or seat of office, after reading the Papal Bull of appointment.

BELOW: More than 2000 people viewed a live stream of the installation Mass and the event was widely covered by media.

BELOW LEFT: Members of Archbishop Prowse’s family (from left) Stephen and Anne Prowse, Michael and Sandra Harrison, Lisa Hughes and Xavier Barker, and in the second row Archbishop Prowse’s Aunt Joan Hamblin (centre) and Michael McMahon (far right).

Pictures: Loui Seselja and Fiona van der Plaats.



Welcome ... FAR LEFT: Archbishop Prowse prepares to enter St Christopher’s Cathdal with cathedral administrator Fr Francis Kolencherry.

LEFT: Archdiocesan Administrator Mgr John Woods invites Apostolic Nuncio Archbishop Paul Gallagher to read the Papal Bull of appointment in Latin.

HOMILY OF ARCHBISHOP CHRISTOPHER C PROWSE AT SOLEMN MASS AND LITURGICAL RECEPTION AS SEVENTH ARCHBISHOP OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN

St Christopher’s Cathedral, Canberra, 19 November, 2013

Isaiah 63:7-9; 2Cor 4:5-12; Luke 5:1-11

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus,

This wonderful Mass has been so much anticipated by the dear people of the Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn. The word “family” comes to my mind quite spontaneously. Immediately we give praise and thanks to God, our Almighty and Merciful Father, who has gathered us all together from so many diverse places through, with, and in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that makes us the Catholic family that God wants us to be, in all our strengths and weaknesses. May this Holy Trinity guide the Archdiocesan family on this historic day when it welcomes and prays for her new Servant-Shepherd Archbishop.

When I reflect on my own personal family in this month of November, I think of my deceased parents, God willing, participating in this Mass in the great communion of the faithful departed. I have always thought I came from a somewhat ordinary and typical Catholic family of six children. However, given the fragile state of so many families today, I can now see I came from a united and loving family. The greatest gift my loving parents gave me, by co-operating with the creative energies of God, was life itself. But they also gave me another great gift which I wish to reflect upon in three points in this homily: My name – “*Christopher*”.

In the first place, devotion to St Christopher seems to have been more developed in Eastern rather than Western Catholicism. This was expressed in 1970 when his commemoration was dropped in the Roman calendar but promoted for local devotion. Be so that as it may, his life-story is instructive of Christian truths and discipleship, even today.

It seems that St Christopher was born about 250AD near present day Turkey. He has become the patron saint of travellers and transport. Even today, it is not impossible to see a little magnet of St. Christopher in the cars of the pious.

More specifically, legend has it that he was a tall man. He had a confused youth but was assisted immeasurably by his talks with a spiritual director. He asked this devoted hermit – “*How could Christopher serve Christ?*” The hermit’s answer was decisive in his life: It was by fasting and prayer. And, given Christopher’s size and strength, the hermit suggested he could serve Christ practically by assisting people to cross a nearby dangerous river. All this Christopher did with remarkable ability. But, deep down, he still was restless – until an extraordinary encounter took place.

One day, a little child asked Christopher to take him across the river. During the crossing the river became swollen and the child seemed intolerably heavy. Christopher could hardly make it across.

Once across, however, Christopher said to the child: “*You put me in the greatest of danger. I do not think the whole world could have been as heavy on my shoulders as you were.*” The child responded: “*You had on your shoulders not only the whole world but Him who made it. I am Christ, your King, whom you are serving by this work.*”

So St Christopher hence became defined as the “*Christ-bearer*”, “the one who carries Christ” through this encounter with the Christ-Child. He carried Jesus and the whole world on his shoulders. Or was it really Christ who carried Christopher and the whole world by his Cross and Resurrection?

So here I am as your new Archbishop. It is “*Christopher*” who greets you now. I want to be “*Christopher*” for you. I want to carry you and your burdens to Jesus, the great burden-bearer, across the dangerous river of life.

‘I want to be Christopher for you...’



I resonate with the Second Reading of this Mass and say I am only a fragile earthenware vessel that makes this invitation to you. Our Christian boast makes it quite clear, however, “*that the immensity of the power is God’s and not our own. We are subjected to every kind of hardship, but never distressed; we see no way out but never despair*” (2Cor 4:7-8).

So will you let this earthenware vessel carry you to Jesus in the times ahead as your Archbishop?

I am knocking at the door of the Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn. On the one hand we really do not know each other. But, on the other hand, in our common Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, we know each other in the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. So please let me into your hearts to lead you into the Heart of Divine Mercy, Jesus himself alive in our Catholic Faith. Please pray for me.

Secondly I make my humble request for entry in this fine Cathedral that incredibly bears the same name: St Christopher. It is Christopher knocking at the Cathedral door of St. Christopher’s!

This Cathedral, like all Cathedrals, derives its name from the bishop’s chair (the ‘cathedra’). It is from this chair that the bishop presides over the Liturgy. By symbolic extension, it is from here that the Bishop ‘carries Christ’ to the entire Archdiocese as the visible agent of unity in teaching, sanctifying and governing. I am the seventh Archbishop. The former bishops of Canberra & Goulburn, Archbishop Frank Carroll (who would have liked to be present) and Archbishop Mark Coleridge (present) and those who have died, have been successors of the apostles in service of the Gospel. I thank them sincerely for all their gospel efforts for this great Archdiocese. Let us pray for them in this Mass.

I look forward, in the years ahead, to listen to you all and to hear you recount the Gospel energies that have gone forth from this St. Christopher’s Cathedral and also from St. Peter & Paul’s in Goulburn, to all in this large and diverse Archdiocese. Starting 150 years ago in 1862, from the coast to the plains, from the mountains to the cities –

how have you carried Christ to the peoples of this place? How have you carried the poor, the lost, and marginalised to Jesus, the Good Shepherd?

It is clear to see that you have done this most eloquently via education, health and social services. However, not only am I keen to hear “what” you have done. Pragmatic Australians are generally good in this area. But, I am keen to hear also “how” you have done this.

The First Reading draws out the key words of our faith to help us adjudicate the ‘how’ of our apostolic endeavours. These words - “great kindness”, “mercy”, “abundance”, “faithful love”, “love and pity”, “lifted them up”, “carried them” (Isaiah 63:7-9) – must all be the attitudes that motivate all we do. It is the centrality and love of Jesus that must animate everything we do.

“Starting afresh from Christ” is our first response (Novo Millennio Ineunte 28-29). Otherwise, St Christopher’s Cathedral will simply be “Head Office” rather than “the eternal pomegranate” that bursts forth from this sacramental liturgical centre the seeds of the Gospel to the entire Archdiocese and far beyond.

We look particularly in our times to our Holy Father, Pope Francis’ example for our apostolic motivations. He seems to be developing a highly symbolic and prophetic Papal Magisterium that teaches mostly by simple actions of loving kindness, humility and mercy to the poor and marginalised. Let us follow his inspired example.

Thirdly, and finally, “Christopher” can be a name that all of us share collectively. It can become a metaphor for missionary discipleship.

As this Year of Faith and Grace closes, we have been focussing in Australia, and the Catholic world, on evangelisation. Very recently, Pope Francis, addressed in Rome leaders of the Council that co-ordinates the “new evangelisation”. He said “*Every baptised Christian is a “Christopher”, namely a Christ-bearer, as the Church Fathers used to say.*” (14 Oct 2013). It is our missionary identity. It will be lived out near the Calvary Cross of our crucified Saviour. Our

‘Christopher’ identity will only be fully understood as we hear Jesus’ words: “*Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, for my yoke is easy and my burden light*” (Matt 11:29-30).

Our burdens seem to abound. For example, in Australia we are now in a time of a Royal Commission and Parliamentary Enquiries into child sex abuse where we truly feel for its victims. In our times globally, the “authority” of personal experience and self-determination seem to undermine rational and traditional authorities of any kind, including those of the Church.

In our families, we see growing challenges to its stability and capacity to pass on religious belief in a culture no more “religious” but one of “choice”. So, in these burdensome times, let the “Christopher” in each one of us truly believe that in Jesus alone the yoke becomes easy and the burden light. It is not us carrying Jesus, but Jesus carrying us! Ultimately, it is a crisis of belief – Do we truly believe this? We pray: “Jesus, carry us home to the Father of all mercies”.

In the final analysis, we are left with the primal choice found in today’s Gospel. When Jesus said to Simon Peter: “*Put out into deep water and pay out your nets for a catch*” (Luke 5:4), he was left with a choice. He could ignore and dismiss the command of Jesus for good practical reasons and continue to mend and wash his nets.

Or, responding in raw faith to Jesus, pay the nets out for a catch in deep and unfamiliar waters. We know what happened. Obedience in faith led to a bountiful catch. Two boats were filled to sinking point with fish.

We are all left with a similar stark decision in our troublesome times where the fish seem to be found in other waters. Either we sit on the shore of life and mend and wash our fine Church buildings and institutions. Or we learn from the Faith of St. Peter and evangelise afresh in uncharted waters but knowing Christ, the fisherman of us all, commands us to a “new” evangelisation. Let us respond with Petrine Faith.

Let us go out with courage and hope in the deep waters to the new depths of evangelisation opening up in our times – the depths of discovery and science, the internet and social media, art and beauty, the new poor in families - First Australians, migrants and refugees, the search for God, the city and rural areas, politics and economics, culture and inter-religious dialogue, the search for meaning and purpose in life. Let us go fishing with Christ!

So many of us were delighted to hear Pope Francis’ homily at the Chrism Mass this year, (28 March 2013) in Rome. He stated that pastors must have “the odour of sheep” on them in imitation of Jesus, the Good Shepherd. But, in the light of today’s Gospel, it could also be said surely, using another significant ancient Christian leadership metaphor, that the “Christophers” of the future must also have the “odour of Fish” on them too!

It has been noted by others that bishops, priest and deacons make good shepherds but poor fishermen. Maybe we ought to reflect upon this as missionary disciples, named “Christophers”. We may not “smell” very pleasing to a world where institutional religions seem to be nowadays “on the nose”.

But, then again, we might find ourselves better placed pastorally to respond to today’s challenges. We will become close to the “scandal” of Christ Crucified. It is at Calvary that we are truly commissioned to become “Christophers” in our world, aching and searching for God. Here we will find our hope for salvation.

It is this hope that perfumes the world with the alluring fragrance of ONLY JESUS, ALWAYS JESUS, FOREVER JESUS.