

# CATHOLIC VOICE

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Meet our college leaders for 2014 – centre pages

FREE

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## College's 'awesome' new start

### Gungahlin school spreads its wings for a spacious new year

After spending its first year in a borrowed corner of Mother Teresa Primary School in Harrison, the fledgling John Paul College now has room to spread its wings in its own space.

The college will start this year in its spacious new premises in Nicholls, having been handed the main classrooms and facilities that form the first of three stages in a \$29m development.

Principal Catherine Rey said the college's 100 foundation students had enjoyed their year at the "most hospitable" Mother Teresa school, but the primary school now needed the space for its first year 6 classes.

"It's almost a case of the sublime to the ridiculous, going from what seemed like a lot of us in a small building to a small number of us in a very big building," she said.

More than 150 families representing the 225 year 7 and 8 students enrolled in the college this year toured the new facility, built around an open and flexible floor plan, late last year.

Belinda and Steve Coulter, whose son Leigh was in the college's first student cohort last year, said they were impressed with the new building.



Impressed ... Belinda and Steve Coulter in the new John Paul College building with son Leigh, one of the foundation students.

Mr Coulter said it was especially nice to finally have a canteen.

"Awesome," was the word from current student Daniel Cunneen, who said he was looking forward to having more space.

Anneke Hunder checked out the building with her sons Kial, an existing student, and Calam, in year 4 at Good Shepherd Primary School.

"The kids were so excited to see all this and I'm wowed by it," she said.

"It's great to see the real thing now, after we've seen all the plans. We've been made to feel a real part of it all."

Stage two of construction, due for completion later this year, will include a theatre and performance art facility, junior kitchens for hospitality students and textiles rooms.

Woodwork and music facilities will be handed over in the final stage.

Mrs Rey said one of the college's projects this year will be to set up its own canteen and aim to cook all the food from scratch using non-processed and locally sourced ingredients, including from its own kitchen garden.

• **Leap of faith gives college a jump start, Page 6.**

### Where money goes in 2014

Catholic Education Office capital works for 2014:

- **Lumen Christi Catholic College, Pambula Beach:** stage 2 of primary school and associated works. Capital grant of \$968,370.

- **John Paul College, Nicholls:** stage 2 of the new school. Capital grant of \$900,000.

- **Holy Family Primary, Gowrie:** stage 1 of 4, refurbishment of classrooms. Capital grant of \$700,000. School and Canberra Catholic Schools Building Fund (CCSBF) to contribute.

- **St Joseph's Primary, O'Connor:** stage 1 of 2, refurbishment of classrooms. Capital

grant of \$675,256. School and CCSBF to contribute.

- **St Vincent's Primary, Aranda:** stage 1 of 2, refurbishment of classrooms. Capital grant of \$508,106. School and CCSBF to contribute.

- **St Gregory's Primary, Queanbeyan:** construction of classroom block to replace transportable building. Funded by local community.

- **Hennessy Catholic College, Young:** continuing construction of multi-purpose hall and trade training centre, and minor refurbishments. Funded by capital grants and local community.





# First impressions of the Archdiocese

when I visited the Western Deanery. It was a luncheon at Cootamundra.

- Already I have seen that many have a great love of the poor and the marginalised. I witnessed this when I visited the Dorothy Sales Cottages, conducted by our CatholicCare. Neil Harrigan was so proud to introduce me to those beautiful residents – all suffering from brain injury impairments. I also witnessed this when I visited the Alexander Maconachie Centre. There I met Karen Flood and Anne Kelly – both wonderful volunteer chaplains – who introduced me so warmly to those imprisoned in that facility.

- Then I have reflected on how much the Sacraments, especially the Mass, are loved by you all. The many

youth from the entire Archdiocese that joined me for the National Youth Festival loved participating in the Mass and Confessions. Those at Fr Luke Verrell's recent priestly ordination clearly supported him every moment of his journey to Holy Orders. The parishioners at Goulburn, Cooma and Pearce seemed so "at home" in the Sacraments when I visited.

During 2014 I hope to visit all the Catholic communities in this vast Archdiocese. Please share with me the Christ-life within you. Show me how you love the poorest in your communities. Let me become what I am and truly what I want to be – your Archbishop CHRISTOPHER – the one who carries your burdens to Jesus and ONLY JESUS.

One final matter. In recent months, the Holy Father, Pope Francis, has written us a beautiful long letter. It is called an Apostolic Exhortation. Its title is: *Evangelii Gaudium* (the joy of the Gospel). It is the Pope's response to last year's Synod on the New Evangelisation. I was interested particularly to read this as I was privileged to attend the Synod with other Bishops.

Please try to read this Letter from the Pope. You can download it at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va) or purchase a copy. You will find it a fascinating Letter from our fascinating Pope! I will refer to it in coming issues of the Catholic Voice.

May the Holy Family bless your families and parish communities as we begin in hope the New Year of 2014 together.

Please continue to pray for your new Archbishop.

**Archbishop  
Christopher C Prowse**

## Archbishop's diary FEBRUARY

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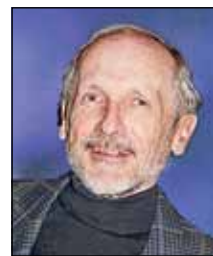
## around the catholic world

### When were you baptised?

VATICAN (VIS): The Pope has urged Catholics to find out the date of their baptism. Speaking at his first general audience of the year, he said it was "a happy date". "Obviously we do not remember the ceremony, especially if we were baptised soon after birth, but it is a pity not to recognise the importance of this day, as we thereby risk losing sight of what the Lord has done for us, of the gift we have received," he said. "We end up considering it merely as an event that took place in the past – and not even by our will, but rather by that of our parents – that has no effect on the present."

"A baptised child is not the same as a child who is not baptised; a baptised person is not the same as one who has not received baptism. It is an act that touches the depth of our existence. We are immersed in that inexhaustible fount of life that is the death of Jesus, the greatest act of love of all history; and thanks to this love we are able to live a new life, no longer at the mercy of evil, sin and death, but rather in communion with God and with our brothers."

### New leader for Jesuits



SYDNEY: A man who has spent most of his priestly life ministering in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and north Queensland has been appointed to head the Jesuits in Australia. Superior General of the Society of Jesus Fr Adolfo Nicolás has appointed Fr Brian McCoy to succeed Fr Steve Curtin as provincial superior of the Australian Province of the Society of Jesus. Melbourne-born Fr McCoy entered the Jesuits in 1966 and was ordained in 1977.

### It's not a promotion

VATICAN (CNA/EWTN News): The Pope has told the 19 men he will make cardinals this month that the role is not a decoration but rather a service to the Church. Pope Francis stressed to the newly-appointed men that "the cardinalship does not imply promotion," adding that "it is neither an honour nor a decoration. It is simply a service that requires you to broaden your gaze and open your hearts." The cardinals come from 12 countries, most from the Third World. Three are over the age of 80, and therefore not eligible to vote in the next conclave, including Archbishop Capovilla, who was Pope John XXIII's secretary and is the third longest-serving archbishop in the world.

### Caritas CEO is former diplomat



SYDNEY: A former high commissioner in Samoa is the new chief executive officer of Catholic aid agency Caritas Australia. Paul O'Callaghan, who takes over in Caritas' 50th year of operation, has held many senior positions in the Department of Foreign Affairs and the not-for-profit sector. He was most recently executive director of Catholic Social Services Australia and secretary to the Bishops Commission of Health and Community Services. Mr O'Callaghan said he was passionate about aid and development issues and the way Caritas Australia applies Catholic social teaching principles to its work.

### Bishop for Syro-Malabar Catholics



MELBOURNE: The growing Syro-Malabar Church in Australia has its own bishop. The Pope has announced Bishop Bosco Puthur as the first eparch for the Eparchy of St Thomas the Apostle of Melbourne. Bishop Puthur was born in 1946 in India and studied at the Pontifical College Propaganda Fide in Rome. He speaks English, Malayalam and Italian. He has served as a rector and lecturer at a number of Indian seminaries. Thousands of Syro-Malabar Catholics, primarily from the south of India, worship in dioceses across Australia. A growing number of priests from this tradition are serving in Australian parishes, including in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

### Funeral for homeless beggar

VATICAN (CNA/EWTN News): Vatican officials held a funeral Mass for Alexander Pawlewski, a beggar who was often seen on the streets of Rome and died from exposure to the cold. The Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Konrad Krajewski, the papal almoner, who is responsible for distributing donations to those in need on behalf of Pope Francis.

Mr Pawlewski, a 63 year-old Polish national, was found dead on the street with his sole possessions – a cardboard box he used as a bed and a blanket to keep warm.

The Community of Sant'Egidio, which has helped the poor around the Vatican for more than 30 years, often provided him with assistance. Vatican personnel and some homeless friends attended the funeral. Friends said no family member ever took interest in him.



# Cathedral bell to chime in a new year

By Louise Thrower,  
of Goulburn Post

It took just 30 minutes but attracted interested onlookers and a semi-nervous architect.

The restored two-tonne Murphy Bell was lifted 30 metres by crane into the Sts Peter and Paul's Old Cathedral bell tower in Goulburn.

The event was one more milestone in the church's restoration.

Crane operators had a few false starts when it was discovered counter weights placed above the bell were too heavy for the lift.

Once removed, the operation went smoothly. Earlier, workers had prepared the way.

Mary Queen of Apostles property supervisor Brian Watchirs said scaffolding and steel had been erected that morning to support the tower, allowing the bell to be "dropped in".

Once above the tower, workers delicately manoeuvred it inside and secured the structure.

The work will allow the bell to sound once again after many years.

The then-cathedral purchased the piece in 1869 from the Murphy of Dublin foundry.

Architects in recent years discovered it was installed incorrectly and ringing it caused a safety concern; the tower was leaning toward Verner St as a result.

The tower walls and footings are now underpinned.

A Gosford company restored the bell. It has involved abrasive blasting to clean the structure, powder coating, patina coating, replacement of the headstock with laminated jarrah, a new bell wheel and installation of an electromagnetic bell hammer.

Mr Watchirs said the parish would probably secure an automatic striker but the bell could also be rung manually. Once operating, the bell will ring out its angelic sound every day at noon for the angelus and six in the evening.



With this milestone out of the way, stonemason Ron Lodewijks' attention has turned again to the tower. Twenty tonnes of new sandstone will replace worn pinnacles and parts around the base. Some of this is handcrafted, ensuring it is in sympathy.

"We're retaining as much of the old stone as possible, as long as it is in good order," Mr Lodewijks said. The copper-clad spire was due to be lifted into position in mid January.

Among those watching the proceedings were avid photographers and onlookers, including a parishioner who was married in Sts Peter and Paul's in the 1940s.



Up she goes ... The two-tonne Murphy Bell is lifted into place (above and above left) in Sts Peter and Paul's Old Cathedral tower.



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# Happy memories as parish marks its 50th

The parishioners of St Thomas More's in Campbell are under no illusions about their church.

"It's a terrible building – cold in winter, hot in summer and has borers," said Heather Lipsett, 77, who has been part of the parish since it started 50 years ago.

Admittedly, the "temporary" church that was supposed to be turned into a school hall was a step up from the classrooms that hosted Mass when the parish opened for business in 1964.

But the block of land down the road in leafy Campbell is still waiting for that promised new church.

If anything, it is proof that a striking church building is not the be-all and end-all of a thriving parish community.

Mrs Lipsett and her long-term friend Pat Turnbull, 80, were among the original parishioners at St Thomas More's. They are still there today, celebrating its golden jubilee, having experienced the ebb and flow of parish fortunes through different eras.

Mrs Lipsett and her late husband Mick moved to Campbell from Perth as part of a Defence relocation in 1959.

She still lives in the house in which the couple raised their four children, all

of whom attended St Thomas More's primary school.

Mrs Turnbull moved in down the road a year later, having grown up in Braidwood and lived in Braddon, attending St Patrick's Church, for a while.

She and her husband Ross brought up six children in the St Thomas More's parish and put them through the school.

The two of them remember it as a happy little community, where the many stay-at-home mothers watched through the windows as their children played together out on the quiet street.

"It was a really good time for the parish," Mrs Lipsett said. "Everyone was friendly and the older people would come and see if you were OK or if you needed anything ... especially because a lot of us had moved with Defence and left our families behind."

The active Catholic Women's League at the time also contributed to the sense of community, Mrs Turnbull said.

They credit the late Mgr John Hoare, the Catholic chaplain at the Royal Military College and a key figure in the establishment of the parish, with creating a real sense of community, including setting up a Saturday men's working group to maintain the grounds.



Originals ... Heather Lipsett and Pat Turnbull are foundation members of St Thomas More's parish, which turns 50 this year.

Mick Lipsett was an acolyte and sang in the choir, and Mrs Lipsett remains involved as a eucharistic minister. Mrs Turnbull was in the altar society and counted the money after Mass for many years.

She fondly remembers the church being packed out for both weekend Masses during its heyday from the late 1960s to 1980s.

"We've had a lot of lovely people who have remained faithful to the parish over the years, but unfortunately a lot of

them are not around now," Mrs Lipsett said.

"I don't remember having any ambitions to be one of the oldest members of the parish, but that's the way it's turned out ... I look back and I can't believe it's been 50 years."

● St Thomas More's will launch its golden jubilee celebrations with a celebrated Mass on Sunday, 9 February, followed by a lunch in the school hall. Current and former parishioners and friends are invited.



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Contact: Shan 0412310364/ 0435312663

## Eddies builds on its traditions

Canberra Raiders rugby league coach Ricky Stuart joked about hoping his sons "won't be going through to year 13, or some even say year 14" at St Edmund's College like their father did.

But he was quick to stress how fortunate he was to have received such a good education and opportunities for mentoring.

That is why he did not hesitate to sign up as ambassador for the Eddie's House Project, an initiative of the St Edmund's College Scholarship Fund, which assists families in its community in difficult circumstances.

In a tight-knit community such as St Edmund's, it is the responsibility of the old boys to help where they can, he said. The first house project is a single-storey three-bedroom home in Ngunnawal, which will be built by a band of the



Team spirit ... Eddie's House Project ambassador Ricky Stuart (second from left), with real estate expert Michael Wellsmore, project leader Paul Scholtens and college principal Peter Fullagar.

college's old boys on land borrowed from the Village Building Company until the house is sold.

DJ Homes, run by old boys David Jones and son Grant, will manage the project. A band of glaziers, tilers, steel workers, legal experts, plumbers, certifiers and real estate agents have joined the project, scheduled for completion in July.



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# Vinnies sure it still has appeal

Many of this year's Vinnies doorknockers will sport a professional new look as they proffer a secure collection container for donations, rather than an open bag.

"The way things appear is very important," St Vincent de Paul Society archdiocesan president Frank Brassil said.

"People need to have confidence that their money is going into a well-managed, orderly system."

He added that not all volunteers in this month's annual Vinnies Doorknock Appeal in Canberra and Queanbeyan will carry the new money containers since "there is a cost in procuring those so it might take a couple of years".

But the army of year 11 and 12 Catholic school students expected to sign up after a recruiting drive late last year will be among the first bucket bearers.

Mr Brassil said a diminishing number of doorknockers posed the biggest challenge for the appeal, particularly as the volun-

teers traditionally recruited from parishes get older.

The society has turned to schools to help swell the ranks and also to "give the younger ones an understanding of our values and the work we do". It is also appealing to members of the wider community, not just parishioners and Catholics, to consider taking part.

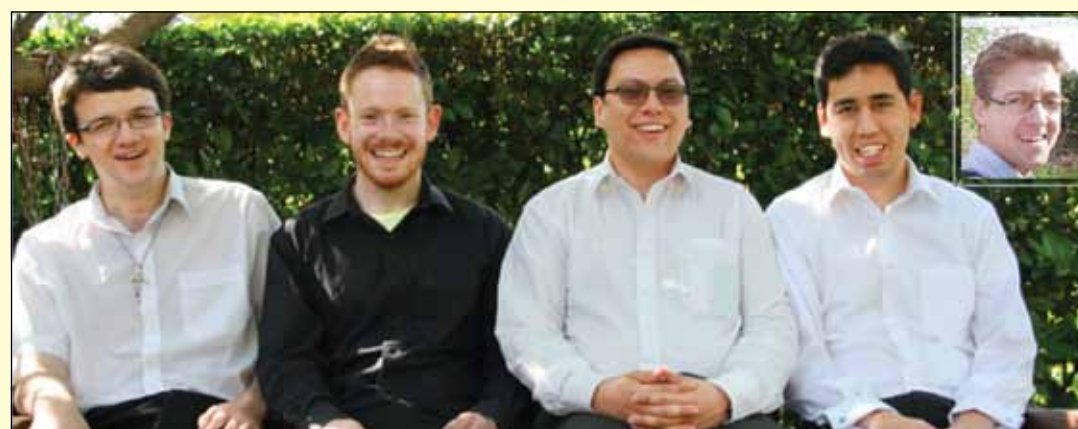
Vinnies aims to raise \$340,000 in this year's appeal, which Mr Brassil said is "stretching it a bit from last year's \$320,000 while not being unrealistic".

That figure covers just over a quarter of what the society spends on emergency assistance programs each year. "So it's a very important source of funding for us," said Mr Brassil.

He admitted that some people may see the appeal as "old fashioned", but it was part of a Canberra tradition and had grown in stature and success since the 1970s.

Anyone wishing to volunteer can do so by visiting [www.vinnies-doorknock.org.au](http://www.vinnies-doorknock.org.au).

## Pilgrimage to boost vocations



Members of the Serra Club of Canberra will visit archdiocesan parishes in March and April for adoration and prayer before the Blessed Sacrament for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

The inaugural event of the pilgrimage is likely to be on Sunday, 2 March in St Christopher's Cathedral. Serra will post final arrangements on its website [www.serracanberra.org](http://www.serracanberra.org) and in parish bulletins. Serra Canberra will use a monstrance blessed and donated by Pope Benedict XVI to the Serra Council of Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific. Inquiries: Treg Huthnance, [treghuth@home-mail.com.au](mailto:treghuth@home-mail.com.au) telephone 6291 0252.

One of the four prayers Serrans use at times of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is:

God our Father, Lord of the Harvest, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Saint Joseph her spouse, Blessed

Junipero Serra, Saint Mary of the Cross and all the saints, we pray for an increase in vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. May your disciples respond generously when you call them into the ordained ministry and consecrated life in the Church. Thank you, Lord, for those who serve us now as dedicated bishops, priests, deacons and religious. May they be found faithful in fulfilling the ministry for which they have been chosen. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

ABOVE: Archdiocesan seminarians... Alex Osborne, of Charnwood, William Burdett, of Gowrie, Joshua Scott, of Young, and Namora Anderson, of Queanbeyan, who are studying at Good Shepherd seminary. Trenton van Reesch, of Gowrie (inset), is at the North American College, Rome.

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# Enough to drive you to...

It was just a quick little honk, honestly. The lights had turned green and the car in front had not moved.

I waited a polite couple of seconds, but could see the driver was not paying attention, so I politely tapped the horn.

At my prompt, the driver took off like a shot, but not before flicking up her middle finger in a gesture some of us might know as "the bird".

My then eight-year-old son, sitting next to me, certainly recognised it. I think his crowd call it the "rude finger".

"Stupid idiot," he muttered.

"Watch your mouth!" I snapped, while muttering the same sentiment under my breath. You see, even though the occasional (OK, regular) curse is known to slip through lips in our household, calling anyone an "idiot" is a no-no. So much so that it took some years for my son to work out that it was not, in fact, the dreaded "F-word".

## In My Day



By Fiona van der Plaats

"But you said it was all right to call someone that in the car," he said.

So I did. Having been caught spitting out the phrase myself, more than once, in reference to a speeding P-plater, tailgating truck or careless car parker, I had declared that thoughtless and dangerous drivers were the only deserving recipients of the insult.

Which got me to musing about why driving turns me – and many others on the road, I'd suggest –

into someone I'd like to think I'm not.

I'm not in the habit of walking around bristling about how fast others are striding by or calling them names because they've ducked in front of me on the footpath, so what is it about sitting behind a wheel that strips me of any grace and tolerance?

Is it a power thing? Competitiveness? Or maybe paranoia about the damage that can be done on the road? Whatever the reason, surely it can't be enough to justify the way some of us think and behave behind the wheel.

Perhaps it would pay for me to take that much-adapted saying "Make the Lord your steering wheel, not your spare tyre" a little more literally. Now, if only those other wretched people who call themselves drivers would do the same ...

\*IN MY DAY is a column about modern society, community and the things that arise in our day-to-day world that cause us to reflect on how we live together and interact. Contributions of about 350 words are welcome. Send them to catholic@cg.catholic.org.au



The future ... Braydon Dunbar, 8, and Calam Hunder, 9, both have brothers at John Paul College and are looking forward to their own time in the new buildings in coming years.

## Leap of faith gives college a jump start

As confident as she was in the John Paul College formula, principal Catherine Rey knew she and her team were asking their foundation families last year to take a leap of faith.

"We really have to recognise the courage of those parents and families. They were coming to a school with no building of its own and with a new model of learning," she said.

The self-directed learning model, in which students at the Gungahlin college are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning processes and experiences, was new for most parents and students.

"I've been delighted with the way the students have embraced this, especially since it requires very explicit planning and organisational skills," Mrs Rey said.

A "large pool of wisdom" from around the Archdiocese and beyond had been tapped to come up with the right model for the college.

Mrs Rey said one of the big successes was the concept of mentor teachers, where all members of the teaching staff each took responsibility for about 14 students.

"Mentor teachers are more like coaches. We don't do much of the talking. Our job is to listen and ask probing questions."

Teachers meet with the individual students every few weeks for a two-way debrief, and then provide a written report to parents.

"That level of communication is virtually unheard of in most schools, but it absolutely crucial to the self-directed learning part," she said.

The model has also brought out the best in the teachers, Mrs Rey said.

"Our staff have been such great problem-solvers. They have faced challenges every day and they have all stepped up and worked out how to make it all work."

The college's paperless approach to education, in which it relies on iPads and "cloud" storage of electronic information, has set it apart, Mrs Rey said.

"We are cutting edge in that area. We have no textbooks ... and we develop all our own resources, which has been very challenging and very rewarding at the same time."

Among those who took the leap of faith with the school last year was the Coulter family, who enrolled their son Leigh in the first year's intake.

"We weren't sure about how the self-directed learning would go, but it has been fine," mother Belinda said.

Anneke Hunder, whose son Kial also started at the college last year, said the approach to technology had been a steep learning curve, more for the parents than the students.

"They'd have to send off an assignment online and they'd say, 'It's OK, Mum, it's in the cloud'."

## Help Religious Sisters - the unsung heroines in the Church!

**They smile, they heal, they teach, they comfort.** Around the globe Catholic religious sisters quietly perform their dedicated and heroic service without remuneration and barely even noticed by the wider world. But in order to help others, they themselves also need to be helped, for although they are ministering angels to so many, they themselves still need their daily bread and a roof over their heads.

Each year the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) supports over 9,000 religious sisters in every corner of the globe. Many religious congregations turn to the charity for help, not least for the formation of their precious new vocations. While many congregations in the Western world have few or no new vocations and even seem to be dying out, in other parts of the world the religious communities are filled with young and smiling faces.

ACN also helps those sisters active in the charitable apostolate, relieving them of the daily burden of supporting themselves while they also care for the poorest of the poor, whether in the slum quarters of the great cities, in the vast expanses of the Amazon rainforest, or in the remotest regions of the African Savannah.

It is vital that the indispensable work of religious sisters in Christ's Holy Catholic Church and throughout the missions worldwide continues. Religious sisters are the unsung heroines in the Church. ACN is therefore proud to help them in their efforts to make the world a better place, even just a little.

The average grant ACN gives to support a religious sister or novice is \$300 – but whatever you can afford will be enormously appreciated. ACN forwards the donations directly to the religious superiors in charge of the religious communities and congregations.

**To send your donation please fill in the coupon below. Anyone able to help this cause and who ticks the box below will also be sent a complimentary Vatican Rosary blessed by Pope Francis.**



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Some of the young and vibrant Dominican Sisters from Ho Chi Minh City that ACN supports

The Papal rosary designed by the Vatican rosary makers will be sent out to all those who assist this cause and tick this box.



# Golden times for coast church

In the words of parish administrator Fr James Antony, St Joseph's Church, Merimbula, "crossed a landmark in its history" when it celebrated its golden jubilee late last year.

Two days of celebration opened with a Saturday evening Mass, dedicated to the memory of all parishioners, and family members and friends of current parishioners, who have died.

A dinner that night attracted people from the wider parish community encompassing Merimbula, Pambula, Wyndham and Eden, who were entertained by Luca Ziino on the keyboard.

Bishop Pat Power, who concelebrated Mass on the Sunday with Fr Antony and Fr Paul Bateman from Moran's Crossing, acknowledged the members of the parish for working together in a non-denominational way for the good of the whole community.

He then unveiled and blessed a commemorative plaque, and cut a celebratory cake after a barbecue lunch in the church grounds.

Students of Lumen Christi Catholic College's Dig group accompanied the welcome to country on their didgeridoos, while budding artists Luca and Amelie Ziino, Jared Westerlaken and Liam McManus provided musical entertainment. The Lumen Christi stage band and vocal group provided a grand finale to the weekend of celebrations.



Set in stone ... Bishop Pat Power blesses a plaque (left) to commemorate the jubilee; Luca Ziino and his four-year-old sister Amelie entertain (above) and the jubilee Mass (below).



## Parish moves for clergy

Mgr John Woods, the Archdiocesan Administrator for the past 18 months, has returned to his previous position as Archdiocesan Vicar General for the time being.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, who thanked Mgr Woods for "the care and diligence he has given to his role of Archdiocesan Administrator over these months", said the position would be reviewed. So, too, would that of Chancellor Fr Julian Wellspring.

These positions were announced, along with a number of other clergy appointments, following a meeting of the Archdiocese's consultors.

Clergy appointments included:

Fr Tom Thornton as parish priest of Young, Grenfell and Boorowa, which will form the Young Mission. Fr Paul Nulley as assistant priest in the Young Mission from 8 February.

Fr John Armstrong as parish priest of Batemans Bay.

Fr Peter Day as parish priest of South Tuggeranong. He will continue to live and carry out his ministry at HOME in Queanbeyan. Fr Luke Verrell as assistant priest at South Tuggeranong.

Fr Joshy Kurien as parish priest of Cootamundra from 8 February.

Deacon Dominic Byrne to Batemans Bay.

It was also confirmed that Canberra priests would help Fr Troy Bobbin in Queanbeyan where necessary, given Fr Kurien's move to Cootamundra, and that Fr Joseph Punnakunnel will return to Gungahlin after a holiday and surgery in India.

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# 40 days: take stand for life

By president of ACT Right to Life Association  
Bev Cains

From 5 March to 13 April 13, 40 Days for Life, a peaceful, prayerful, effective, coordinated international mobilisation, is going to take place.

We pray that, with God's help, this will mark the beginning of the end of abortion in our national capital and beyond.

The 40 Days for Life is a community-based campaign that draws attention to the evil of abortion through the use of a three-point program:

- Prayer and fasting
- Prayer vigil
- Community involvement

40 Days for Life takes a determined, peaceful approach to show communities the consequences of abortion in their own neighbourhoods, for their own friends and families. It puts into action the desire of many to cooperate with God in carrying out his plan for the end of abortion in Australia.

The campaign parallels biblical history where God used these periods to transform individuals, communities and the entire world. From Noah in the flood to Moses on the mountain to the disciples after His resurrection, it is clear that God sees the transformative value of His people accepting and meeting a 40 day challenge.

## Prayer and fasting

Christ has told us that some evils can only be cast aside by prayer and fasting. Prayer and fasting go hand in hand. Fasting is a sacrifice that helps us reach beyond our own limitations (with God's help). It is not a Christian diet! It is a form of physical prayer. You can fast from food, alcohol, from arguing with parents/spouses/ friends. You can fast from television; refrain from attending the movies and, above all, you can fast from anything that may separate you from God.

## Peaceful vigil

40 Days for Life's most visible aspect is a peaceful prayer vigil outside an abortion facility. In Canberra it will be the ACT Health Building, corner Moore and Alinga streets, Civic. Other vigils will be held in Brisbane, Melbourne, Tweed Heads, Perth and Adelaide. More Australian sites are being planned.

As well, thousands of prayer vigils are taking place around the world. By participation you will not only be joining with other Australians in prayer but with an estimated 600,000 participants in 522 cities, in 21 countries.

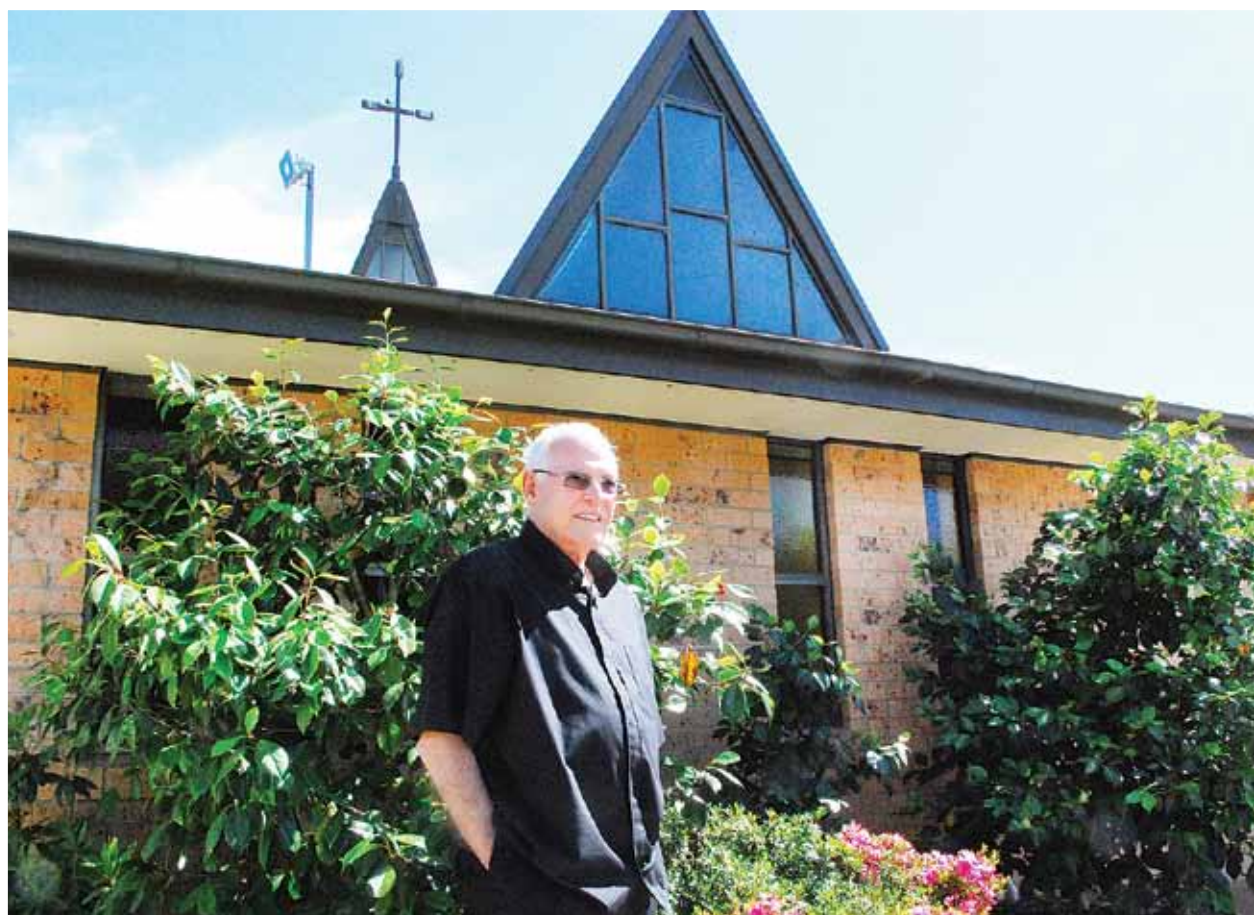
## Community outreach

During 40 Days for Life, the message is proactively taken to the community through focused efforts. Those who are not able to attend the vigil site, may elect to pray alone or in a group in churches or in a home. Daily devotional prayer or reflections are available at [www.40daysforlife.com/canberra](http://www.40daysforlife.com/canberra).

The campaign against abortion is vital. How can anyone speak of human rights if the most basic of human rights, the right to life, is denied?

Go to our local website [www.40daysforlife.com/canberra](http://www.40daysforlife.com/canberra) and learn more about the worldwide campaign. You can register to get updates on progress, and you may register in time slots you choose, to attend the vigil from 5 March.

After the last 40 days for Life vigil (September-October) 44 clinics were closed, 88 workers resigned and, above all, 8245 lives were saved. You can be part of this great work.



"Spare tyre" ... Fr Frank Fuchs' ministry has spanned two faiths and two countries.

# Colourful pastor looks to challenge of retirement

By Fiona van der Plaats

It is not hard to imagine Fr Frank Fuchs getting up to "a bit of mischief" as a lad with his twin brother Douglas.

The newly retired Aranda parish priest has a cheeky demeanour that adds weight to his admission that the pair "gave Mum an interesting time".

That was why the Anglican-raised brothers were sent to Christian Brothers schools in Queensland – "to sort out the naughty boys".

It was an early introduction to the finer points of Catholicism for the young Frank, who is not exactly sure now why he converted to Catholicism, much to his father's disgust. But it made sense at the time and it has served him well.

After spending a year in Papua New Guinea as an Anglican Franciscan, Fr Fuchs returned to Australia and joined the Marist Brothers, who put him to work for two years in their school at Preston.

"I was given no training. I walked into a classroom of 65 10-year-old boys and just had to learn on the job," he said.

"I discovered I was quite a good teacher. One of the brothers said I was born to teach. It must be just part of who I am."

He loved the work but there was a lot of it and, in 1966, he headed back to PNG, where he worked in the schools and became a deacon.

Port Moresby, where he worked, was rough but he learnt to negotiate it.

"One night I was held up by blokes with guns who wanted to steal my car. I said, 'Don't take that. I've just had it fixed up.' So they said, 'Sorry, Father.' Then they went down the road and stole the nuns' car."

The memory of the nuns' reaction to that still makes him chuckle.

He worked in a number of roles in that diocese before the archbishop asked him to train as a priest. He resisted at first but was won over by the chance to study in Rome for four years.

After he was ordained, he became the archbishop's "spare tyre", filling vacancies whenever they came up, including ministering to villages along the Kokoda Trail.

"I was greatly blessed by being in PNG – all those people with absolutely nothing but still so joyful," he said. "The children were very naughty and cheeky, but you had to love them."

He still has close ties with a PNG family two generations of which he has put through school.

In the mid-1990s, Fr Fuchs returned to Australia. Told there was nothing for him in Queensland, he wrote to Archbishop Francis Carroll, who sent him to Cootamundra and Merimbula for short stints, then to Young for three years, Bombala for four years and Dickson for nearly three years.

"I was a spare tyre again," he said.

His final post, as parish priest in Aranda (which will now be administered from Page) for six years, has been his longest.

He is retiring in the area, having moved into a unit in Cook, but has mixed feelings about it all.

"I can understand why some priests don't want to retire. I'm kind of thinking, 'What am I going to do with myself?'" he said.

But his dance card is already filling up, with Sunday Mass at Kaleen already on the books, Calvary Hospital making overtures and local schools looking for his support.

It seems he might not have time to get up to much mischief in his retirement.



# Vlad has designs on solving any problem

By Fiona van der Plaats

Vlad Mosmondor's designer's eye never rests. It is always on the lookout for ways to improve his surroundings and few structures escape that critical eye, churches among them.

In fact, tinkering with churches and what goes in them has been a big part of his life.

"I have always loved working for the church," he said, especially the Croatian and Catholic churches, with which he has strong connections.

Churches have also thrown the 64-year-old designer from Yarralumla welcome challenges over the years.

"I do things that others won't touch, like fixing mistakes in buildings," he said. "I like to have a high degree of difficulty in everything I do."

He is happiest when he has a problem to solve.

When he walked into Holy Trinity Church in Curtin, for instance, his first thought was, "This is a beautiful church but something is missing."

With that, he sought the blessing of parish priest Fr Tony Frey to move a large crucifix from the wall and suspend it above the altar so as to create more of a focus point.

It wasn't an easy job, entailing detailed research, logistics and engineering gymnastics, but he and a few friends with know-how made it happen.

He and daughter Monica, a graphic designer, also came up with the concept of creating "stained glass" windows out of reflective film to improve the outlook from the church.

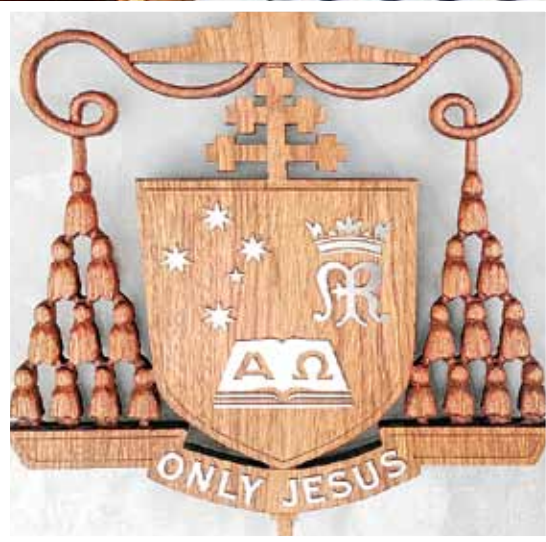
Meanwhile, having been asked to use donated funds to create a shrine at St Peter Chanel's in Yarralumla, Mr Mosmondor took the chance to solve another problem at the same time.

He built a "grotto" to the Virgin Mary in a corridor that not only provided shelter and privacy but filled in a spot that had previously attracted visitors engaging in illicit activities.

Mr Mosmondor was also heavily involved in Fr Frey's refurbishment of St Benedict's Church in the 1980s and remembers fighting for a ramp-style entry, rather than just a side access ramp, to reflect his Catholic values of inclusion and equality.

"In any job you do, you look at it from the point of view of how you can improve it so it can benefit everyone," he said.

That was the philosophy behind the coat of arms he designed and hand carved for St Christopher's Cathedral in 1982, at the request of Archbishop Edward Clancy.



Degree of difficulty ... Vlad Mosmondor with his fibreglass bust of Sir John Gorton (above), and the coat of arms with Archbishop Christopher Prowse's motto Only Jesus, on the sanctuary in St Christopher's Cathedral.

**'In any job you do, you look at it from the point of view of how you can improve it...'**

The piece was designed to be part of the cathedral furnishings, with only the personal crest or insignia needing to be changed for each new archbishop.

It served Archbishops Clancy and Francis Carroll before being "rested" during Archbishop Mark Coleridge's tenure.

Mr Mosmondor was delighted to see the piece he donated returned to its place in the cathedral with the installation of Archbishop Christopher Prowse late last year.

He takes pride in his work and is not fussy about the nature of the art form – anything from construction to painting to sculpture – or the materials he works with.

One of the front fences of his home, for instance, has been put together using an intriguing mix of stainless-steel scraps. "I just found different parts of it and made it up as I went along," he said.

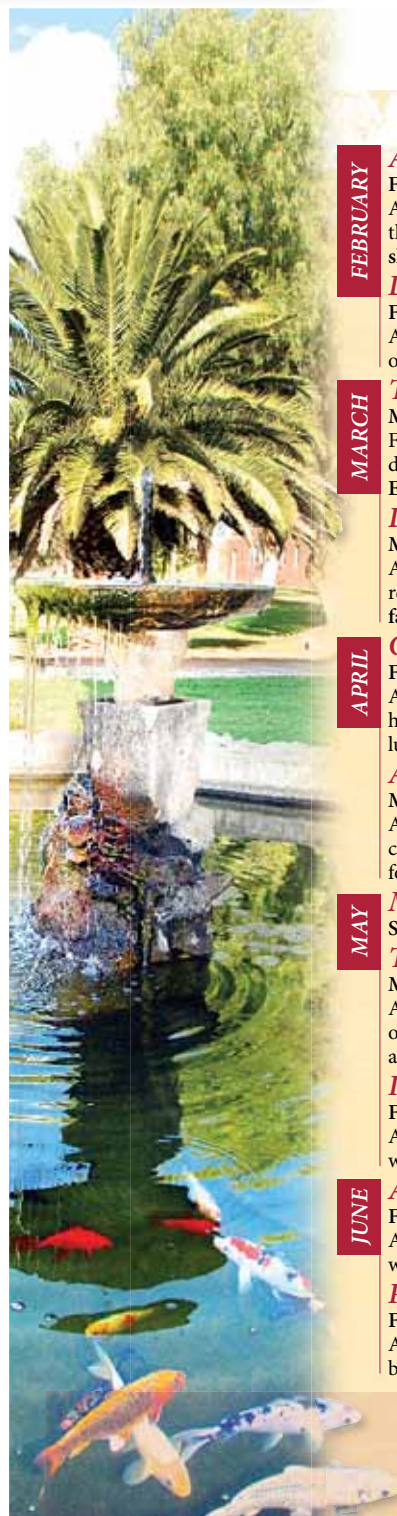
He also has on display in his home office a bust of Sir John Gorton, which he cast in fibreglass after a couple of short sittings with the then prime minister in 1969.

The home he shares with his wife Lili and two daughters, Monica, 30, and Melissa, 28, is full of his artistic touches.

He married Lili, who was born in Croatia and grew up in Austria, in 1981, after she had travelled to Melbourne to visit her brothers and came across Mr Mosmondor during a weekend trip to Canberra.

His own upbringing was also in the former Yugoslavia, which he left with his mother Melissa and older half-brother in 1967 to follow his father Steve to Canberra.

● Cont Page 12.



## A Weekend Away Can Work Wonders

Friday 14 – Sunday 30 February, Richard White and Fr Bill Goldman CSsR  
A relaxed spiritual retreat to reconnect with life and the Spirit commencing with the evening meal and finishing with lunch on Sunday. En-suite \$300. Single room, shared facilities \$260

## Life Journey Expressed in Art

Friday 21 – Sunday 23 February, Sr Helen Barnes rsj  
A weekend art retreat commencing with the evening meal and finishing with lunch on Sunday. Single room with shared facilities \$260 plus materials \$25

## The Emmaus Journey

Monday 10 – Friday 14 March, Fr Leo Coffey CSsR and the Retreat Team  
For those retired or in the second half of life. A happy blend of 'holiday' and 'holy day'. This four day gentle experience leads to a sense of wholeness and well being. En-suite \$550. Single room with shared facilities \$450

## Directed Retreat

Monday 17 – Monday 24 March, Richard White  
An opportunity to spend time in quiet and with the help of the retreat director, to reflect and discover how the Spirit is working in one's life. Single room with shared facilities \$550

## Gold in the Memories

Friday 4 – Sunday 6 April, Sr Helen Barnes rsj  
A weekend art retreat reflecting on religious and secular rituals and symbols that have nourished our lives. Commences with the evening meal and concludes with lunch on Sunday. Single room with shared facilities \$260

## A Retreat in the Spirit of St John's Gospel

Monday 7 – Monday 14 April, Fr Pat Corbett CSsR  
A contemplative journey through the Johannine Scriptures. A six day retreat commencing with the evening meal on Monday and concluding after breakfast the following Monday. En-suite \$650. Single room with shared facilities \$550

## Marian Procession at St Clement's

Sunday May 4

## The Mystics, Friends for Our Lives.

Monday 5 – Monday 12 May, Sr Moya Unthank rsj  
An introduction to the great mystics of the Church, as friends and companions for our lives and prayer. Commences with the evening meal on Monday and concludes after breakfast the following Monday. Single room with shared facilities \$550

## Images of Mary - Art for Our Times

Friday 16 – Sunday 18 May, Sr Helen Barnes rsj  
A weekend art retreat commencing with the evening meal on Friday and finishing with lunch on Sunday. Single room with shared facilities \$260 plus materials \$25

## A Time for Yourself: For Health Care Professionals

Friday 13 – Sunday 15 June, Sr Helen Barnes rsj  
A weekend art retreat commencing with the evening meal on Friday and finishing with lunch on Sunday. Single room with shared facilities \$260

## Portraits of Jesus in the New Testament – The Gospels and St Paul

Friday 20 – Friday 27 June, Fr Michael Fallon MSC  
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ABOVE: St Francis Xavier College captains (from left): Stenelee Taminaya and Josh Thomas, and vice-captains Alysha Swan and Sam Bewick.

ABOVE RIGHT: Lumen Christi Catholic College leaders (from left): vice-captain Louis Chaley-Gray, captain Tom Baker, captain Chloe Copas and vice-captain Kirsty MacKinnon.

RIGHT: St Edmund's College students pass the flame of leadership (from left): Patrick Egli (vice-captain 2013), Matthew Quinn (vice-captain 2013), Tom Larkin (captain 2013) Jack Gibson (captain 2014) James Kenny vice-captain 2014) Rosario Trimboli (vice-captain 2014).

FAR RIGHT: Trinity Catholic College leaders (from left): Vice-captain James Walsh, captain Lachlan Croker, vice-captain Cassandra Russell and captain Piper-May Holmes.



LEFT: Daramalan College leaders (from left): Taylor Pobjie, Jack Cartwright, captains Shayna Siakimotu and Daniel Hirst, Alex Hodge, Patrick Gills.

BELOW LEFT: Carroll College Broulee leaders (from left) back: Renee Tyrrell (Xavier House captain), Ashley Carrasco (MacKillop House captain), William Lucas (college captain), Brendan Marshall (MacKillop House captain), Perry Wignell (Chisholm House captain), Luke McCann (college vice-captain). Front: Samantha Law (college captain), Isabella Valentini (Chisholm House captain) and Isaac Sullivan (Xavier House captain). Absent: Jairo Parsons (indigenous student leader) and Natasha Price (college vice-captain).



St Clare's College leaders (from left top): College captain Rosemary Georgelin, Lily Glavinic (arts and culture). Middle: Erin Foote (faith and community) and Jessica Langtry (sports). Bottom: Ashleigh Simpson (social justice).

# Our new college leaders for 2014



ABOVE: St Mary MacKillop College captains Claudia Holland and Reece Inkpen.

ABOVE LEFT: Hennessy College Young leadership group (from left) back: Luke Morton, Jack Bladock, Michael Livolsi, Beau Shoard, Mitchell Trinder, college captain Thomas Morton and year coordinator Mark Schmidt. Front: Principal Dr Peter Webster, college captain Molly Hurley, Brooke Dewar, Lucy Williams, Samantha Doolan, Alexcen Berry and Georgie Butt.

BELOW: Marist college captain James Dimmock (right) is congratulated by vice captain Nick Wood (left) and service captain Joe Whyte.



ABOVE: Merici College leaders (from left) front: Rachel Monck (expressive arts captain), Karly O'Malley (Brescia vice-captain), Claire Smart (spirituality captain), Harriet Rooks (school captain), Maddison McGarry (school vice-captain), Lauren Abraham (sport captain), Tully Jucumsen (Brescia captain), Harriet Ticehurst (expressive arts captain). Second row: Bella Densworth (Penola captain), Jordan McGarry (Balgo captain), Celia Cossetto (sport captain), Sarah Melis (Seiwa captain), Zufi Emerson (SRC captain), Zoe Alleyn (Tulow captain), Abby Smith (SRC captain), Brooklyn Perrin (Tulow vice-captain), Courtney Petty (Balgo vice-captain). Third row: Alison Taylor (social justice captain), Sandra Mei Refuerzo (spirituality captain), Isabella Cadona (Ningil captain), Mikaela Sergi (Ningil vice-captain), Taylor Gallagher (Penola vice-captain), Ima Gina (social justice captain), Madison Hardgrave (Seiwa vice-captain), Mikaylah Fogarty (sustainability captain), Alessandra Carrera (sustainability captain)

ABOVE: Merici College leaders (from left) front: Rachel Monck (expressive arts captain), Karly O'Malley (Brescia vice-captain), Claire Smart (spirituality captain), Harriet Rooks (school captain), Maddison McGarry (school vice-captain), Lauren Abraham (sport captain), Tully Jucumsen (Brescia captain), Harriet Ticehurst (expressive arts captain). Second row: Bella Densworth (Penola captain), Jordan McGarry (Balgo captain), Celia Cossetto (sport captain), Sarah Melis (Seiwa captain), Zufi Emerson (SRC captain), Zoe Alleyn (Tulow captain), Abby Smith (SRC captain), Brooklyn Perrin (Tulow vice-captain), Courtney Petty (Balgo vice-captain). Third row: Alison Taylor (social justice captain), Sandra Mei Refuerzo (spirituality captain), Isabella Cadona (Ningil captain), Mikaela Sergi (Ningil vice-captain), Taylor Gallagher (Penola vice-captain), Ima Gina (social justice captain), Madison Hardgrave (Seiwa vice-captain), Mikaylah Fogarty (sustainability captain), Alessandra Carrera (sustainability captain)





## HOME BASE



Gerard Heffernan

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Buying your first home can be an exciting experience, below are 5 tips that will help you feel confident and knowledgeable –

### 1. Do Your Homework

Before you even start looking at houses, it is important to do your homework. Take a hard look at your finances, and determine what you can afford.

### 2. Develop a Routine

If you don't take this seriously, you may find you're left with sub-par results. Therefore, it is important to get into the routine of searching for homes and doing your research.

### 3. Get Savvy

There are a lot of resources out there that can help you with deciding on your property purchase, so make sure that you take advantage of them.

### 4. Hire an Inspector

Have a qualified inspector carefully inspect the house inside and out.

### 5. Work with a Mortgage Broker

A good broker knows the entire process inside and out and can help you every step of the way.

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## Services work at working together

Canberra is blessed with the number of services dedicated to people with substance-abuse or mental health issues, according to CatholicCare's executive director of service delivery Anne Kirwan.

But the problem this presents is that it is difficult for many agencies and workers in these areas to keep a handle on what exactly is available.

This problem is exacerbated for people who suffer from

disorders in both areas, otherwise known as comorbidity, since there is a danger of one condition being treated while the other is left neglected.

Speaking at a comorbidity interagency day, held at Australian Catholic University by CatholicCare, Ms Kirwan said 60% of people with drug and alcohol dependency also had mental health problems.

It was imperative that services worked together to

ensure people received treatment for both conditions.

"CatholicCare is trying to take the lead and show how to best work with people in the area of comorbidity, and the best way seems to be to get everyone together," Ms Kirwan said.

At the sixth annual interagency day, the number of agencies involved had grown to 60, with more than 400 workers and clients getting together.



Sharing ... Amanda Bode from Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Association ACT (left) and Kim Fleming from Directions swap information at CatholicCare's comorbidity interagency day.



Members of the western deanery got together late last year for a gathering at Sacred Heart parish, Cootamundra.

They are (from left) back: Fr Pat Kenna, Fr Bernie Hennessy, Fr Mayne Murphy and

Fr Frank Keogh. Middle: Fr Mick MacAndrew, Fr Joshy Kurien, Fr Martin Maunsell, Sr Carmel Piffero RSJ, Sr Maria Dunnell RSJ, Deacon Patrick Whale, Will Burdett, Sr Mary Murphy RSJ, Sr Helen Barnes RSJ, Mgr John Woods and Sr Ann

Steenbergen RSJ. Front: Fr Paul Nulley, Sr Frances McAleer, Fr Tom Thornton, Fr Richard Thompson, Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Mgr Kevin Barry-Cotter, Sr Cathy Hodge, Mr Richard White and Fr Allen Crowe.

## Amicus stalwart remembered

When members of the friendship group Amicus meet for their first function of the year, at the Woden Southern Cross Club in early February, they will raise a glass to their old friend Brian Fitzgerald (right).

Long-time group member Patricia Clark says Mr Fitzgerald, who died in February last year, liked to start the year's social program at the club and she hopes it becomes an annual tradition.

Mr Fitzgerald, an Action bus driver until he retired in 2010, oversaw the evolution of Amicus from a fledgling group for Tuggeranong parishioners to an organised social network for people all around Canberra who are single, divorced, separated or widowed.



He was originally handed the Amicus reins in 1999 by Mgr John Woods, then parish priest of Calwell, who saw the need for a mutual support network for people without partners. Mr Fitzgerald, honoured with a Mass and memorial at his plaque involving Amicus members on 2 February, was also involved in the St Vincent

de Paul Society, as treasurer for the Calwell conference, and in his Tuggeranong parish.

This year's diary for the Amicus group, which usually meets on the second and fourth weekend of each month from February to December, includes day trips to Bungendore and the Collector pumpkin festival, curry and casserole nights, Christmas in July, ten-pin bowling, lunches and movies.

## Vlad loves a problem to solve

• From Page 9.

"With our religion, we were always discriminated against in the communist country, so Dad could never really find happiness there," he said.

By the time he migrated, at 18, he had finished art school in his home country and was surprised to learn he was not needed for national service. So he enrolled in Narrabundah High School for two years to help him learn the language and assimilate.

Mr Mosmondor went on to spend most of his working life as a designer with the National Capital Development Authority and then the CSIRO. He can see examples of his work, including logos and pieces of art, in landmarks such as Regatta Point, the High Court and Parliament House. Now retired, he is busier than ever on his own projects and with a small company he set up to get Monica started with her graphic design work.

He has also spent many years teaching his skills, notably through what is now the Canberra Institute of Technology, and is keen to foster ongoing generations of passionate and skilled designers.

"People like me, we have done our bit. Now it's time for the young people to take over."

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Grinning winners ... CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Snail Cup winner Molly McPhail (kinder in 2013); the Snail Cup final; Katelyn Wilkinson and Pippi Cairns (year 1) after winning their "horse race"; Lachlan Yule, Cooper Griggs and William Sutherland (kinder) watch their classmates race.

It was Melbourne Cup Day and the young "horses" were racing around the chair-track in the school hall for sport, while shell-saddled mounts were being prepared for the annual St Bede's Snail Cup. Despite all the excitement, the focus was still on schoolwork in the classrooms.



Fun and focus ... CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Nate Lamond (year 3/4 in 2013) deep in concentration; "race horses" Errol Stephenson and Harry Waters (year 1) run neck and neck; Izak Hilhorst (year 5/6) in research mode; Scarlett Bunn, Hugh Lyons, Ellie-Rose Roberts and Maddison Smyth get down to numbers in year 2.

These artworks are by ... CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Albert Hazell's (year 2 in 2013) drawing of Josh; Darcy Lyons (year 3/4); Brad Nicholson (year 3/4); Hugh Lyons (year 2).





By Fiona van der Plaats

St Clare's College students Alicia Evans and Laura Rainey are good at making friends. They need to be. For "Defence kids", having to regularly resettle in new towns, or even countries, and new schools is a way of life.

Laura, 16, has lived in Auckland, England, various places around NSW and Canberra and says she has had no choice but to be open to cultivating new friendships.

"You get to the stage where you're just like, 'Hi, I'm Laura. Will you be my friend?'"

St Clare's Defence transition mentor Lyndal Martin, a military nomad herself, says that children of Defence personnel often "become more confident about things like making friends because they have to".

That doesn't mean moving is easy for them, though. Nor is having a parent away on extended deployment, invariably in dangerous parts of the world.

Hence the existence of Defence transition mentors (DTM) in secondary schools and Defence school transition aides (DSTA) in primary schools where the number of children from military families warrants it.

Nine Catholic schools around Canberra have staff members dedicated to the wellbeing of children from Defence families.

The Defence Community Organisation's regional education liaison officer, Suzanne McBride, says that while the organisation finances the positions and supports their work, the officers are entrenched members of staff at their respective schools.

Their job is to help Defence families connect with the school and wider community, and to be a point of contact for both children and parents who need practical or emotional support.

"We try not to set Defence up as a special group within a school. We are all about integration and inclusion, so friends are always invited to activities and events," she said.

Ms McBride says the transition officers are drawn from various backgrounds, including teachers, chaplains, psychologists and youth workers. Although some are from Defence families themselves, this is not a requirement of the job.

Sonja Mingay, the transition officer at St Thomas More Primary School in Campbell, where up to half the students are from Defence families, is married to a Navy man and used to be in the Army herself.

With three children of her own, she knows what it is like to care for a family with a parent away on deployment.

"The role of a DSTA is being a good listener and being a positive person ... The children need to know you are approachable and that you are there for them," she said.

Three of her charges, Lily Alexander (one parent in the Army and the other in the Navy), and Ashlyn Radford and Lachlan Faul (both with dads in the Army), talk about their many moves and how difficult it is to have parents on extended deployment.

Ashlyn says she felt "really sad and a bit angry" when her father was away for months in Afghanistan.

And Lachlan reports having thrown a chair at the wall in frustration while his dad was in Afghanistan for 11 months and could not attend his sporting events.



# 'Defence kids' face their own battles



ABOVE: Friends ... St Clare's "Defence kids" Alicia Evans and Laura Rainey.

LEFT: Empathy ... St Clare's Defence transition mentor Lyndal Martin spends time with "Defence kids" Laura Rainey (left) and Alicia Evans.

BELOW LEFT: There for them ... St Thomas More's Defence schools transition officer Sonja Mingay with (from left) Ashlyn Radford, Lily Alexander and Lachlan Faul.



This is especially so for Alicia, who tends "to get a lot more stressed about stuff" when her father is on deployment with the Army. They are also able to find links with other Defence students through activities and get-togethers organised by Mrs Martin and mentors in other schools.

The activities might include selling Legacy badges and poppies, making meals for families with parents on deployment or staging farewells for students moving on to their family's next posting.

"You get your regulars and some who just pick and choose what they want to do," Mrs Martin said.

"I just make sure I'm there for them if they need me."

Ms McBride said her organisation also has programs in place to help Defence students in schools where there are no transition officers, including a KidSmart program for younger children and TeenSmart for the older students.

The constant moving has also played havoc with Lily and Lachlan's sporting endeavours, forcing them to change teams and even the type of sport they play.

For the older girls at St Clare's, Mrs Martin, who has had to raise three children around her husband Rowan's many Army deployments, is an empathetic ear and shoulder to cry on.



# Wake up before death comes to wake you up

In his autobiography, *Report to Greco*, Nikos Kazantzakis recounts a conversation he once had with an old monk. Kazantzakis, a young man at the time, was visiting a monastery and was very taken by a famed ascetic, Fr Makarios, who lived there.

But a series of visits with the old monk left him with some ambivalent feelings as well. The monk's austere life-style stirred a certain religious romanticism in Kazantzakis, but it repelled him too; he wanted the romanticism, but in a more-palatable way. Here's their conversation as Kazantzakis records it:

"Yours is a hard life, Father. I too want to be saved. Is there no other way?"

"More agreeable?" asked the ascetic, smiling compassionately.

"More human, Father."

"One, only one."

"What is that?"

"Ascent. To climb a series of steps. From the full stomach to hunger, from the slaked throat

to thirst, from joy to suffering. God sits at the summit of hunger, thirst, and suffering; the devil sits at the summit of the comfortable life. Choose."

"I am still young. The world is nice. I have time to choose."

Reaching out, the old monk touched my knee and said:

"Wake up, my child. Wake up before death wakes you up."

I shuddered and said:

"I am still young."


"Death loves the young," the old man replied. "The inferno loves the young. Life is like a lighted candle, easily extinguished. Take care - wake up!"

Wake up! Wake up before death wakes you up. In a less dramatic expression that's a virtual leitmotif in the gospels. Jesus is always telling us to wake up, to stay awake, to be vigilant, to be more alert to a deeper reality. What's meant by that? How are we asleep to depth? How are we to wake up and stay awake?

How are we asleep? All of us know how difficult it is for

**Ron Rolheiser**

Fr Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in Texas. [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com)



us to be inside the present moment, to not be asleep to the real riches inside our own lives. The distractions and worries of daily life tend to so consume us that we habitually take for granted what's most precious to us, our health, the

## None of us can live 70 or 80 years as if each day was his or her last day. Or can we?

miracle of our senses, the love and friendships that surround us, and the gift of life itself.

We go through our daily lives not only with a lack of reflectiveness and lack of gratitude but with a habitual touch of resentment as well, a chronic, grey depression, Robert Moore calls it. We are very much asleep, both to God and to our own lives.

How do we wake up? Today there's a rich literature that

offers us all kinds of advice on how to get into the present moment so as to be awake to the deep riches inside our own lives. While much of this literature is good, little of it is very effective.

It invites us to live each day of our lives as if it was our last day, but we simply can't do that. It's impossible to sustain that kind of intentionality and awareness over a long period of time.

An awareness of our mortality does wake us up, as does a stroke, a heart attack, or cancer; but that heightened awareness is easier to sustain for a short season of our lives than it is for 20, 30, 40, or 50

years. Nobody can sustain that kind of awareness all the time. None of us can live 70 or 80 years as if each day was his or her last day. Or can we?

Spiritual wisdom offers a nuanced answer here: We can and we can't! On the one hand, the distractions, cares and pressures of everyday life will invariably have their way with us and we will, in effect, fall asleep to what's deeper and more important inside of life.

But it's for this reason that every major spiritual tradition has daily rituals designed precisely to wake us from spiritual sleep, akin an alarm clock waking us from physical sleep.

It's for this reason we need to begin each day with prayer. What happens if we don't pray on a given morning is not that we incur God's wrath, but rather that we tend to miss the morning, spending the hours until noon trapped inside a certain dullness of heart. The same can be said about praying before meals. We don't displease God by not first centring ourselves in gratitude before eating, but we miss out on the richness of what we're doing. Liturgical prayer and the Eucharist have the same intent, among their other intentions. They're meant to, regularly, call us out of a certain sleep.

None of us lives each day of our lives as if it was his or her last day.

Our heartaches, headaches, distractions and busyness invariably lull us to sleep. That's forgivable; it's what it means to be human. So we should ensure that we have regular spiritual rituals, spiritual alarm clocks, to jolt us back awake - so that it doesn't take a heart attack, a stroke, cancer, or death to wake us up.

# Kath still a good sport at 99

By Fiona van der Plaats

If Kath Bellchambers still had full use of her legs, she would be taking on all-comers with her table tennis paddle in hand.

At nearly 99, however, the spirit is willing but the body is saying enough is enough.

It has served her well over the years, mind you.

It enabled Mrs Bellchambers to carry her table tennis career into her 70s, and saw her through decades of hockey, tennis, bowls, golf and just about any other sport available to her in the small town of Batlow.

It hasn't been a bad effort for a body that could easily have lost its mobility when she broke her back in a car accident at the age of 12.

She recovered, but that accident, which happened on a holiday trip just before she was due to be sent to boarding school, put an end to her schooling.

Not that the young Kath minded.

In fact, she had prayed during the year before that she might get sick so she did not have to go away to school.

"My prayers were answered," she said, even if a little more dramatically than she had intended.

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Fond memories ... Kath Bellchambers, nearly 99, was among the eight founding students of St Mary's Primary School in Batlow 90 years ago.

What it all meant was that Mrs Bellchambers got to stay in the town that would be her home for more than 80 years.

Having moved from Goulburn when she was seven so her parents could run the local post office, she and four of her seven brothers and sisters were among the eight founding students at

St Mary's Primary School in Batlow.

She remembers her early days in the rundown little schoolhouse with Sr Barbara in charge. The children spent their breaks playing marbles and hopscotch, and chasing a plague population of rabbits around the yard.

"They used the cane in those days," she said, chuckling.

"I remember my best friend grabbed it out of the nun's hand one day and broke it in half and threw it in the fire."

By the time Mrs Bellchambers finished primary schooling, the student numbers had grown beyond 100 and they were housed in a new building.

They are years she remembers fondly and she was disappointed not to be mobile enough to make it from her current home at Calvary retirement village in Canberra to the school's 90th anniversary celebrations late last year.

It would have been nice to take some of the 12 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren back to her home town.

They could see where her mother Violet kept the post office running and raised eight children, including a newborn, after her father died young, and where Mrs Bellchambers worked as a telephonist and later in the general store.

It was also where she met and married Arthur Bellchambers, who ran the local chemist shop and later the bowling club; where she brought up three sons; and where she was an integral part of the community, including St Mary's parish.

"Mum was the one who got that Catholic church going. She always had a raffle book in her hand or a bazaar going on," Mrs Bellchambers said.

"We were into everything ... I really have been lucky."

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## SHORTS

**12 Years a Slave.** Starring: Chiwetel Ejiofor, Michael Fassbender, Lupita Nyong'o, Benedict Cumberbatch, and Brad Pitt. Directed by Steve McQueen. Icon Films. 134 minutes. MA15+. Restricted. (Strong themes and violence).

American-British historical drama tells the true story of an African-American man, who survived 12 years of slavery after he was abducted in Washington DC and sold. No retribution occurs in the movie for the abduction of the people into slavery, and terrible injustices are mostly never righted. It brilliantly portrays the immense hurt and pain of the enslaved. For those who can bear it, it is a film that should definitely be seen.

**Inside Llewyn Davis.** Starring: Oscar Isaac, Carey Mulligan, John Goodman, Justin Timberlake, F Murray Abraham. Directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. Roadshow. 105 minutes. M (Frequent coarse language and mature themes).

A film from the Coen Brothers about a 1960s folk singer. Glum and bleak but very good. It is a slice of life, a visit to a time and place, a memoir of the music of the period and what it meant. Challenging and effective.

**The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug.** Starring: Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage, Orlando Bloom, Aiden Turner, and Evangeline Liddy. Directed by Peter Jackson. Roadshow Films. 161 minutes. M (Fantasy violence). 161 min.

The second part of a trilogy of films, based on Tolkien's 1937 novel. High-action-packed, energetic, imaginative adventure tale that has many dark and gloomy moments. However, it has tremendous momentum and is gorgeous.

**Frozen.** Animation film voiced by Idina Menzel, Kristin Bell, Jonathan Groff, Josh Gadd, Robert Pine. Directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee. Walt Disney. 108 minutes. PG (Some scenes may scare young children).

Adaptation of the story of The Snow Queen, by Hans Christian Andersen. It will appeal predominantly to a female audience, but there is enough action and comedy to attract the boys.

# Spectacular, but does it work?



**47 Ronin (3D).** Starring: Keanu Reeves, Tadanobu Asano, Rinko Kikuchi, Hiroyuki Sanada, Min Tanaka, and Ko Shibasaki. Directed by Carl Rinsch. Universal Pictures. 119 minutes. M (Fantasy themes and violence). Reviewer: Peter W Sheehan\*.

This American fantasy action and sci-fi adventure film tells the story of how a band of samurai restore honour to their people after a treacherous warlord deceitfully disgraces their leader, who is ordered to suicide.

After his death, which is much mourned, they are banished, never to return.

The group is known as the 47 Ronin, and the story is based loosely on the true tale of 47 samurai who avenged their disgraced master's death in the feudal era of Japan.

The plot is complex and typical of Japanese story-telling, it is full of ritual suicides, and martial-arts fighting. The violence is gruesome, but it is relatively bloodless.

As the tale unfolds, Lord Kira (Tadanobu Asano) and his love-mate witch, Mizuki (Rinko Kikuchi) plot to bring a rival war lord, Lord Asano (Min Tanaka) down. Their treachery causes Lord Asano to be disgraced,

and they turn the samurai into Ronin, which in Japanese story-telling, means "masterless samurai".

One year later, Kuranosuke Oishi (Hiroyuki Sanada) draws the band of Ronin together to avenge the act.

To help him do that, he enlists the aid of a half-breed, Kai (Keanu Reeves), who is especially gifted. Kai is the illegitimate child of a British sailor and a Japanese peasant woman, and he has been trained by demons when a boy to be a skilled killer.

The plot thickens when we find out that Kai secretly loves Mika (Ko Shibasaki), the daughter of Lord Asano. He wants desperately to stop Lord Kira marrying Mika.

To do so, he must not only survive the wrath of Lord Kira and his military followers, but also the initial distrust of the band of Ronin, and the witchcraft of Mizuki.

Despite the complexity of its plot, this is a visually impressive adventure movie that uses the beauty and grandeur of Japanese landscapes and scenery very effectively.

The 47 Ronin are on a noble quest that exposes them to a series of challenging trials, and there is a strong supernatural element.

The movie spends a lot of time exploring the themes of honour, redemption, and loyalty.

The 47 Ronin are noble and proud and their adventuring is solemn. They are men "who put honour and service before their fear of death".

Because of the weight of the issues at stake, the pace of the movie is slow. However, the visuals make up for plot, and there is much to marvel at in the settings of the movie.

Much of what is shown in this movie reminds one of The Lord of the Rings, but it is not as enjoyable.

This is a more ponderous movie and less fun. It doesn't have a lot of character development; it is edited clumsily at times; and it lacks a smooth pace.

Nevertheless, it deals with Japanese fantasy in a memorable way.

Despite what is good about it, it is likely to go down in history as a failed Hollywood spectacle, largely because of the inevitable contrast that will be made with The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit series

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

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## All action and espionage

**Jack Ryan: Shadow Recruit.** Starring: Chris Pine, Kevin Costner, Kenneth Branagh, Keira Knightley. Directed by Kenneth Branagh. Paramount. 105 minutes. M (Violence and infrequent coarse language. Reviewer: Fr Peter Malone MSC\*.

This film will probably not be on Vladimir Putin's must see list. But, by the last scene, it will definitely be on President Obama's list.

It is an action thriller, an espionage drama, based on characters created by Tom Clancy. Jack Ryan appeared on screen a quarter of a century ago in the form of Alec Baldwin in The Hunt for Red October. He was then portrayed by Harrison Ford in the 1990s, Patriot Games and A Clear and Present Danger. His previous incarnation was by Ben Affleck in The Sum of All Fears 10 years ago.

This time it is a much younger Jack Ryan, played by Chris Pine who has come to substantial screen presence with his role as Captain Kirk in the new Star Trek films. He is young when the film opens, doing his PhD in London at the time of 9/11. He joins the marines, fights in Afghanistan, writes high-powered confidential reports and saves two fellow-marines - all before the title comes on screen.

During his rehabilitation and learning to walk again, he is helped by his physio supervisor, Kath (Keira Knightley) and visited by a CIA officer (Kevin Costner). Then it is 2013, Jack is a 30s something financial analyst on Wall Street, already in a relationship with Kath (no wasting time with onscreen romantics here). Transition to Moscow and an introduction to the villain, an ultra-patriotic financier who is masterminding a plot to bring the US economy to Depression. Everything introduced - and then into it.

If you enjoyed the Bourne films, then you will probably like this one. There are fights and a desperate car chase. The rest is a day in New York to stop an activated "sleeper" from performing another terrorist attack. It's very ra-ra pro-US - and the Russians sinister.

• Fr Peter Malone MSC is an associate of the Australian Catholic Film Office.

## Human values shine

The Railway Man has been named Australian film of the year by the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting.

"This deeply moving film about war, love, revenge, retribution and forgiveness was a standout in regard to promoting the best of human values which our prize enshrines," award jury chair Fr Richard Leonard said.

In it, a World War 2 Thai-Burma railway survivor (Colin Firth) confronts his past, physically and emotionally. "This film is all about costly reconciliation, the purging of hatred and moving towards reconciliation," Fr Leonard said. The film stars Nicole Kidman as the ex-soldier's wife.



# A path of hope in a troubled world

**Signs of the Times: Seven Paths of Hope for a Troubled World** by Jean Vanier (translated by Ann Shearer). Darton Longman & Todd, 2013, 151 pages, \$23.95. Reviewer: Janet Moyle.

The festivities of the holiday season are behind us and important events such as the Ashes and the Australian Open have been played, won or lost. The long, lazy days of summer invite relaxation and a national 'switching off' from serious concerns.

So Jean Vanier's latest book *Signs of the Times* is a sobering return to reality.

It is 50 years since Vanier founded L'Arche, then a new kind of Christian communi-

ty welcoming people with intellectual difficulties in a shared life of freedom and mutual respect. Vanier is a philosopher and humanitarian who continues to live in France in the first L'Arche community. He is the author of many books including one on John's Gospel.

He identifies seven paths towards societies which are more truly inclusive of all their members, whatever their weaknesses and strengths. He calls these paths of hope.

Jean Vanier has walked the walk so he is qualified to talk the talk. In this he is at one with the vision of Vatican II and with the inspiration and leadership of Pope Francis.

Each of the seven chapters (a good Biblical number) is thought-provoking. For example, in the chapter "From humiliation to humility" he states that our society clings to models of power and forgets the strength that lies in humility.

We have even elevated Mother Teresa into a superior figure, he says, when actually she was "little" Mother Teresa. She was a light for the world precisely because of her lack of grandeur.

Similarly, when talking about another path "from conformity to conscience", he says we are often afraid to look reality in the face. "One of the great problems of our Church", he writes, "is its

concern for its reputation and fear of humiliation".

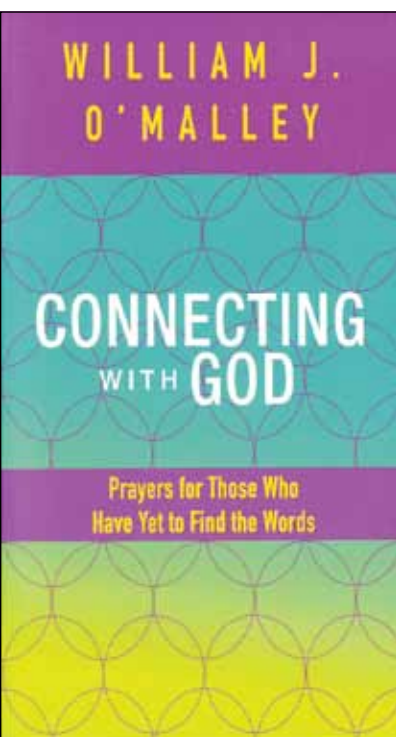
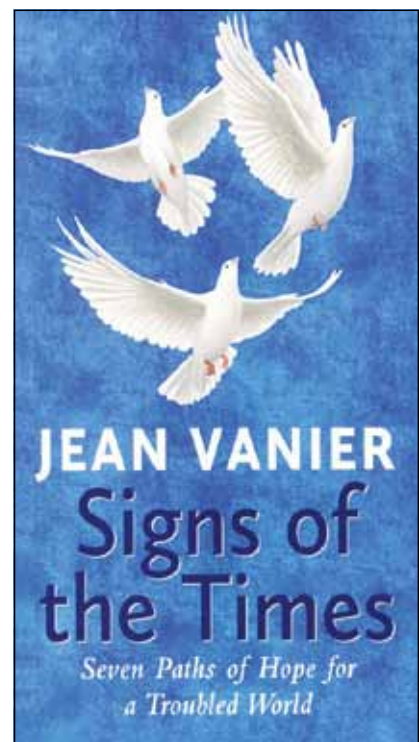
Now doesn't that strike a chord? He calls this "the tyranny of normalisation".

But, he declares, accepting the truth demands we take the path of humiliation to achieve transformation.

This is a deceptively simple book made accessible by a very able translator.

It contains a wealth of wisdom and spiritual depth for those interested in social justice issues and in living more simply and inclusively themselves.

Dare I say that Jean Vanier himself is a path of hope for this troubled world.



## How to start talking to God

**Connecting with God** by William J O'Malley. Orbis Books, 2013, pb 170 pages, \$23.95. Reviewer: Margaret Ryan.

Perhaps you know someone who would quite like to pray, but doesn't know how to begin?

Maybe you know quite a bit about God, but haven't yet let God get close to you?

O'Malley takes relationship and connectedness as the premise for prayer, quoting Teresa of Avila: "For prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God."

O'Malley SJ is a prolific author (30-plus books on spirituality and Christian living), teacher (in school and university, currently at Seattle University) and octogenarian.

He is aware that real, lasting and deep relationships often grow gradually, and require commitment and effort. The book's subtitle is "Prayers for those who have yet to find the words".

Chapter 1 is called "Ahem, uh, hello?"

He has provided one short chapter for each week of a year, and each provides the

scaffolding for rocket take-off (when the reader has confidence to close the book and deepen the established relationship!).

Each chapter (around three pages) has seven sections: opening and closing prayers, a hoped for grace, a psalm (scriptural), a hymn (song or poem from a wide variety of sources), a reading (story or reflection) and a short extract from scripture. The scripture sections are rendered in contemporary, informal language.

Chapter titles include: Patience, Questioning, Excuses, Spunk, Feeling Lost and Hangin' in There.

There are also suggestions on how to use the book. The author provides a helpful resource to kick start a spiritual conversation, a personal link to God. The language and structure are refreshingly ordinary (God is addressed as "Great Friend"), direct and insightful. Each chapter is short and inviting. Definitely worth a look.

## Pray with all the Church

**The Everyday Catholic's Guide to the Liturgy of the Hours** by Daria Sockey. Servant Books, 2013, pb, 116 pages, \$21.95. Reviewer: Margaret Ryan.

As Christians, we are strongly encouraged to pray constantly, but do we, can we?

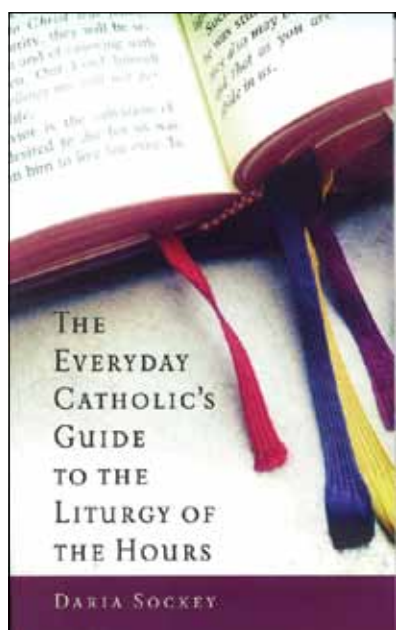
The Liturgy of the Hours is one solution. For many years it was known as The Divine Office, and has been prayed for centuries by the ordained as well as by religious women and men.

Since Vatican II, many lay men and women have embraced this tradition, conscious that each day they are, whether alone at home or with a group

of friends, joining with and praying on behalf of the Church across the world.

Though there are seven "Hours" (each takes from 10-15 minutes if prayed without pausing) in a day, most people would pray morning and evening prayer only. Christians are not alone in sanctifying the hours. Muslims pray five times a day and Jewish people have three principal times of prayer.

E-mail [ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au](mailto:ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au)



This book works as a "Liturgy of the Hours 101". The first section offers a rationale, a mini history and encouragement to begin. Part II provides a detailed explanation of the structure of the prayer, and commentary on the prayer forms (psalms, antiphons, readings, canticles...) and where to find the Liturgy of the Hours online. The three books covering the calendar and Church year are called breviaries. Part III responds to common objections to this prayer and recommends ways to personalise it.

Sockey is a mother of seven, an experienced homeschooler and a writer who has undertaken some graduate courses in theology. Her outlines are clear and the book would be helpful to those wishing to know more about the prayer. I would have liked to see more of the Church's vision for the prayer and would have appreciated some expressed passion for the psalms: the basis of this liturgy.

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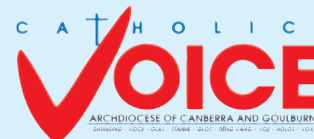
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# Coming Events



**ADORATION OF BLESSED SACRAMENT** – St Benedict's, Narrabundah, Monday 8am-10pm, Tuesday noon-10pm, Wednesday and Thursday 1pm-10pm and Friday 7am- Saturday 8am.

**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.

**COMMUNITY OF RISEN LORD RETREAT** – 6.30pm-8pm, 7 February, St Benedict's Church, Narrabundah; 8, 9 February Daramalan College hall, Dickson, starts 4pm. Go to [https:// www.facebook.com/crlcanberra.act](https://www.facebook.com/crlcanberra.act)

**CONVERSATION AT ST CLEMENT'S** – 1pm-4pm, Sunday, 9 February, "The Heart is a Lonely Hunter", or "What do we really want out of life?". Facilitated by Richard White.

**HEALING DAYS** – 21-24 February, St Benedict's Mission Centre, Narrabundah, with Fr John Rea SM, Marist father from NZ with well-known healing ministry. 5.30pm Friday healing Mass, 10am-4pm Saturday retreat and Mass, 7pm Sunday charismatic healing Mass, 7.30pm-9.30pm Monday ecumenical healing service. Inquiries/registration: Telephone 62957879 (Mon-Thurs 9am-3pm).

**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](mailto:sfo@fastmail.fm).

**MACKILLOP PILGRIMAGE** – Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney, Wednesday, 12 March, Coach departs 6.30am, Holy Trinity Church, Curtin, 7am St Joseph's Church, O'Connor. Bookings: Judy and Joe Mewburn, telephone 6254 6202.

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

**MINISTRY TO THE NEWLY MARRIED** – a mentoring program for newly married couples; just married or soon to be married? Contact Catharina and Graham and Debbie and Brian, telephone 6231 3389 or 0414 878 167, email: [mnmm@grapevine.com.au](mailto:mnmm@grapevine.com.au).

**MUSIC CELEBRATION** – For 150th anniversary of Archdiocese. 1pm-4pm, Saturday, 15 February, Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, Narooma.

**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.

**REUNION ST JOHN'S AND ST JOSEPH'S, GOULBURN** – Boys and girls from the homes, along with family and

friends invited to reunion and lunch, 11am, Sunday, 16 March, Young Bowling Club. RSVP for catering: Phil Merrigan 0407 618 100, [philmerigan@exemail.com.au](mailto:philmerigan@exemail.com.au) or Maria and Lindsay Chesworth 0423 689 366. Go to [www.stjohnsgoulburn.org](http://www.stjohnsgoulburn.org).

**ST VALENTINE'S MASS** – St Thomas the Apostle parish, Kambah, to celebrate the love, romance and joy of Christian marriage, 6pm, Saturday, 15 February. Mass will include renewal of marriage promises for married couples, and a blessing for engaged couples. Everyone welcome. Mass followed by informal meal out together. RSVP: Caroline 6231 9219 or Trish 6231 8468 (ah) if coming to dinner.

**SERRA CLUB OF CANBERRA** – Rosary and Mass, 6.10pm, Thursday, 13 February, Holy Trinity Church, Curtin, followed by dinner at Southern Cross Club, Woden. Inquiries: John Malycha, telephone 6251 2912.

**WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND** – 21-23 March, Mt Carmel retreat centre, Varroville. Marriage enrichment experience for married couples. Bookings: Ardell and Bill Sharpe, telephone 4283 3435, email [wsharpe@bigpond.net.au](mailto:wsharpe@bigpond.net.au), [www.wmme.org.au](http://www.wmme.org.au) [www.facebook.com/WWMEasternUnit](http://www.facebook.com/WWMEasternUnit)

Written entries are invited for the March 2014 issue to: Catholic Voice, GPO Box 3089, Canberra ACT 2601, or e-mail [ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au](mailto:ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au) by Friday, 14 February. Entries which are accepted for this section are free, courtesy of sponsorship by the Catholic Development Fund.

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## MISSION TALK



As a new year resumes its general pace and congested nature, may we continue to treasure the true and influential gift Jesus is for us and others.

A life-changing gift whose presence and message we are all to share with others. However, for some its sharing is very costly.

During 2013, 22 missionaries died violently: 19 priests, 1 religious sister and 2 lay missionaries. Most were in Central and South America, 3 within both Africa and Asia and 1 in Europe. Others are missing, their fate unknown. Despite this, people continue to emerge ready to participate in the Church's mission, turning needs and hopes into possibilities.

Catholic Mission is conducting their St Peter Apostle Appeal which seeks to raise essential funds to support, train and provide necessary materials for students for the priesthood, religious life and service as catechists within missionary dioceses.

Are you able to help? The need is great and their means limited. Help us help them that others can encounter Christ's love through them.

Your generous gift and prayers make a difference. Contact us to support this appeal or to discuss other ways, individually or as a group, you can support these endeavours.

God bless,  
**Deacon Joe Blackwell**

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

## Cheers to all rounder

Philippa Harley (right) is the toast of Lumen Christi Catholic College in Pambula Beach after emerging as one of 13 Catholic schools students in NSW to top a subject in last year's Higher School Certificate. Philippa's first in history extension was the cherry on top of results that put her in the top band of her 10 units and earned her the title of an HSC "all rounder".



## Appy days for MGLs



When the Missionaries of God's Love brothers launched their MGLmedia website, Fr Dave Callaghan (above), who works on the site from his "studio" desk in the MGL house in Garran, said it was designed to "feed the faith of busy Catholics".

If that's the case, then the MGLs' latest offering, a smartphone app, must be a drive-through for the faith-starved. The app pushes through live recordings of homilies from Narrabundah, scripture reflections, blog posts and podcasts.

## From near and far

"Ultimately, we just want to bring Christ to the people," Fr Callaghan said of the ever-creative MGLs, who will be inaugurated as a religious institute by Archbishop Christopher Prowse this month.

**Reading is believing**



Not one to let the facts stand in the way of a good story, Canberra retired deacon Mick O'Donnell (above) has re-imagined the ending of a 1920s court case involving a former nun and a bishop in his second novel, *Betrayal: The Curse of Father Patterson*.

A bundle of "musty brown" copies of Sydney's *The Evening Standard*, featuring coverage of the trial, provided the fodder for the book, which comes hot on the heels of his first novel, a World War II mystery called *The Spectre of Stillsbury Lane*. Deacon O'Donnell is delighted *Betrayal* is selling well through outlets, including PaperChain in Manuka.

## A reel challenge

St Edmund's College students casting around for some way to participate in the school's "co curricula" program that doesn't involve being sporty, arty or scholarly now have something else to sink their hooks into.

Fishing has been added to the menu as part of an outdoor recreation pilot program. But it won't be the "easy" option, insists one of the program coordinators Dean Parkes, adding that it will have "a broader educational and vocational aspect to it".

Indeed, it could be said that many of those who attended the information night for the program listened with "baited" breath to what guest speaker Rob Paxevanos had to say about how a life of recreational fishing turned into a living.

## Flying the flag

Canberra Catholic school children are leaving their mark on the Australian International School in Hong Kong, having provided a senior head student for the second year running.

Proud dad and equally proud Canberran Anthony Murphy said his son Thomas, a former St Clare of Assisi in Conder and Marist College student, has been named head senior boy of the school this year, following on from Canberra's Hayley Reed, who was head sen-



ior girl last year. They are pictured right.

Thomas' sister Pamela was head junior girl last.

"We hold our heads up high and are always waving the Canberra flag high with pride," Mr Murphy assures us.

## More, more

Months of coordination, preparation and practice went into two performances by a combined choir from parishes around the region to celebrate the Archdiocese's 150th birthday last year.

By all accounts, the performances at the cathedrals in Canberra and Goulburn were impressive, if not well attended.

But the effort was not wasted, apparently, since organiser Sabrina deSouza has been fielding requests for encore performances, the first of which will be held at Our Lady Star of the Sea in Narooma from 1-4pm on Saturday 15 February.

If you're keen to host the choir in your area, Ms deSouza would be happy to hear from you via [sabrdes@hotmail.com](mailto:sabrdes@hotmail.com).



# Christ, the gift of priesthood in a nutshell

*As he ordained Fr Luke Verrell into the priesthood at St Christopher's Cathedral on 13 December, Archbishop Christopher Prowse said God had been "tugging the strings of your heart" for many years. Here, Fr Verrell reflects on his passage into the next chapter of his vocation.*

A priest in my first year of seminary told us the reason we were becoming priests then would not be the same reason we would keep throughout our priesthood. In my youthful gusto I internally shook my head at this, confident that my resolution would never change. It has.

Of the ten men who joined the Good Shepherd Seminary in 2005, six are now priests and three are awaiting ordination. Seeing classmates ordained priests while still remaining their good friends enables me to attest to the undeniable priestly change that ordination effects in a man. I would liken it to a man becoming a dad – his identity is transformed.

Many people will hope, as I do, that in my priesthood I may be personable and down to earth, able to show my own self in sincerity. However, while a priest's personality is a bridge drawing us to Christ, it is important to see past the priest himself and to Christ who is hidden in him.

Before I joined the seminary my family were all together in Queanbeyan: Dad (John), Mum (Pauline) and my siblings Claire (undertaking a degree) and Sean (still at school), and the family dog.

Now my brother is married, my sister is a mother of three and the dog is dead. But the greatest change that has come over our family during this time is the culture of being Catholic.

At one time our faith was real and serious, but discrete and personal. Throw in a newly ordained priest, a convert to Catholicism (my sister-in-law Kelly) and three new lives, and God becomes the dinner table around which we all gather, relate and reorient ourselves.

Children are the cure for an individualistic mentality. The effect of them is almost instant on new fathers, who are suddenly moved to make the world safe and peaceful beyond their own needs.

I am indebted to my sister for giving me my niece and two nephews, who enable me to experience children. Before my namesake Luke came along I had rarely held a baby. Now at each baptism I do I pose with the baby for a photo with a confidence and joy that I think



surprises the new mums. Luke has now begun school and so my experience grows.

God is unique in that his will is done in us with our perfect freedom. The Evangelists wrote the Gospels using their own language, culture, concerns and peculiarities and yet they still wrote only those things that God willed. Similarly, in my own life, God has not done away with me in order to make me holy, but rather as I become more Christ-like I also become more Luke-like.

This can be seen in my homilies. I've discovered you can get away with revealing things about yourself – my own spiritual struggles, hard-learned lessons and sinfulness – and people seem to digest it all.

I once complained to a priest about having poured my heart out to the congregation, exposing my inner fears and failures – all to get nothing more than "Night, Father" outside Mass. The priest said that to give a homily is to be hung on the cross bleeding and naked and to have gazers look on.

On a more positive note I have discovered great licence to speak with freedom, and an ability on the part of the congregation to take it all in their stride. As for doubts that I am merely preaching myself and not Christ, I take the advice of a wise priest, whose answer came with a dismissive confidence: "Just do it." (I think he might have been a sportsman too.)

Upon my ordination to the diaconate I worked a week in India as a volunteer in Mother Teresa's home for the dying. Alongside young people who came in sincerity and generosity, I realised an important difference between those who came in faith and those who didn't.

For some, their gift ended with themselves and their own efforts. Faced with the enormity of suffering and the littleness of my own contribution, I realised that while one might give their whole self to a cause, for those with faith it is not themselves that is given, but Christ. This is not just more, it is everything. This is the gift of the priesthood in a nutshell.

ABOVE: Newly ordained Fr Luke Verrell greets parents Pauline and John.

BELOW RIGHT: A choir's-eye view.

BELOW LEFT: Fr Verrell is vested by Fr Greg Morgan and Fr Nicholas Rynne.

BOTTOM RIGHT: The Archdiocese's two newest priests, Fr Luke Verrell and Fr Paul Nulley.



ABOVE: A new priest's blessing for his archbishop.

RIGHT: The newly ordained Fr Luke Verrell with Archbishop Christopher Prowse, mother Pauline Verrell, Luke Cimborra, Laura Cimborra, father John Verrell, Dennis Cimborra, sister Claire Cimborra, Kelly Verrell and brother Sean Verrell.

