

Priest for life

Canberra Dominican Fr Kieran Adams OP talks about his priestly journey

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Hopeful hearts

Archbishop Christopher touched by the faith, hope and love of Christians in the Middle East

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Isaac's rapid rise

Hawks star says his Catholic faith keeps him grounded

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FREE

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Bombala's incredible transformation

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

THREE years ago, the future of St Joseph's Primary School in Bombala looked bleak, with the small country school barely meeting enrolment requirements to keep the school running.

Now, as students return for the beginning of the 2015 academic year, the school is thriving and full of hope for the future, in what has been an incredible transformation.

Enrolments have increased at a time when it appeared impossible, and a new principal, Phil Stubbs, has given the school community a new lease of life.

Speaking to *Catholic Voice* recently, Mr Stubbs said it was a "leap of faith" on his part when he decided to take on the job of principal, having been coaxed out of retirement by the Catholic Education Office.

"I was aware that they were on the verge of closing a couple of years ago due to low enrolments but it didn't take long to recognise the strengths and potential of the school," he said.

Director of the Catholic Education Office Moira Najdecki said she was eager to have Mr Stubbs involved with St Joseph's for a number of reasons.

"He had only retired for about two weeks when I called him," she said. "He's had familiarity with the area, he's had experience, he's a very steady hand, and people have confidence in him – that's why I was keen for him to be involved."

It was a big change for Mr Stubbs too, whose 36 years in education had been largely working in secondary schools. He also had to consider the 100km distance between his home and Bombala.

To negotiate the distance between his home and the school, Mr Stubbs has a unique working arrangement – he's on-site five days a fortnight and works from



Some of the happy faces at St Joseph's Primary School in Bombala. The school was on the verge of closure three years ago, but has since had a strong revival, thanks largely to the support of the local community. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

home the other five days.

St Joseph's is a school with a long and proud history, having been established in 1888. Yet in 2012, with declining enrolments, the school almost closed.

"It was pretty close," Ms

19 in 2012 its future was once again on a knife's edge.

"It really was on the brink," Ms Najdecki said. "It's not just about numbers in a school though, it's about to what extent can you offer a good curriculum.

"A lot of work was done by the Catholic Education Office, St Mary's Parish and the wider Bombala community to foster enrolments, once it became apparent that the school might close unless a critical threshold

of 45 students in 2015 and a progression from two to three classes," Mr Stubbs said.

Another teacher has also been employed by the school for 2015, taking the staff body to nine.

Ms Najdecki said she was extremely pleased with the school's progress in recent times and hopes its 126-year history continues for many more years.

"We see Bombala as a really important school in terms of the fact that it's been there for a long time, and there aren't any other Catholic options in that area," she said.

"All credit to the principals and the staff over a number of years, and the community for getting in there and fighting."

"All credit to the principals and the staff over a number of years, and the community for getting in there and fighting."

Najdecki said. "They got down to 18 students in August 2009. We'd been monitoring it for a few years and we put them on notice that it would close if it dropped and stayed below 20."

The school managed to gain 21 enrolments the following year, but when numbers fell to

"In 2012, all of those students were in one class, Kindergarten to Year 6, which is not really what we would say is an ideal educational environment."


With the school's future in jeopardy, the local community's support was the catalyst for a remarkable revival.

of enrolments was maintained," Mr Stubbs explained.

Their work resulted in enrolments rising to 35 in 2013 and 40 in 2014. The school's growth looks set to continue this year.

"The dividends of hard work by many people are starting to pay off with a school enrolment

ARCHBISHOP
CHRISTOPHER'S
DIARY



February 1st
11am Mass - Feast of Senor Sto Nino - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 5th
Anniversary of the dedication of St Christopher's Cathedral

February 7th
10am Charismatic Conference talk - St Brigid's Church, Dickson

February 8th
11am Red Mass - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 9th
7.30am Parliamentary Christian Fellowship Ecumenical Service - Canberra Baptist Church, Kingston

10am ACT Legislative Assembly Prayer Service - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 11th
9.45am St Edmund's College Opening School Mass and installation of new principal - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 13th
11.30am Merici College Opening School Mass - Merici College Auditorium

February 17th
Shrove Tuesday

9.30am Project Compassion Launch - St Francis Xavier College, Florey

February 18th
Ash Wednesday

February 20th
9am St Francis Xavier College Opening School Mass - Florey

7.30pm Lenten Devotion - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 22nd
11am Mass - Rite of Election and Enrolment - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 26th
11am Episcopal Ordination/ Installation of Bishop-Elect Patrick O'Regan as ninth Bishop of Sale Diocese

February 27th
Parish Visitation - St Jude and St John Vianney, Waramanga

7.30pm Lenten Devotion - St Christopher's Cathedral

February 28th
Parish Visitation - St Jude and St John Vianney, Waramanga

4pm Blessing and opening of refurbishment and 50th anniversary celebration - St Clare's College

Let us come together in 2015

ARCHBISHOP'S MESSAGE

ARCHBISHOP
CHRISTOPHER PROWSE

DEAR friends in Christ Jesus, “Embrace” and “Year of Consecrated Life” - two invitations.

Please God, we have started 2015 in joyful hope! May all respond with generous hearts to all that the Lord Jesus is to offer us this year. In our joys and sufferings during 2015 we implore his many blessings upon us. We ask Mary, our heavenly mother, to intercede for us.

May I bring to your attention two significant celebrations this year:

Embrace

There is the upcoming Archdiocesan Assembly. We will reflect on the vitally important topic of marriage and family life in our localities. The Assembly will be held at St Clare's College, McMillan Crescent,

Griffith, ACT, on Saturday, March 21, 2015, commencing with Mass at St Christopher's Cathedral on Friday night, March 20. The Assembly is called 'Embrace'.

I am asking all of us to reflect with the universal Church on these topics. As you know, the two Synods in Rome called by Pope Francis are centred on these themes. We need to make our local contribution to these discussions held worldwide.

Three topics are to be discussed. First, there is to be a general consideration of the “lights and shadows” of marriage and family life actually lived out today. What are strengths and challenges faced on a daily basis? In your own family? In Australia?

Secondly, we need to reprise the beauty and radiance of marriage and family life in our Catholic teaching. Both the Scripture and Tradition need to be examined with fresh eyes!

Thirdly, we need to discuss particular pastoral issues in marriage and family life today. We are all aware of problems confronting our families (eg.

separation, divorce, poverty, cohabitation). How are we to respond as Catholics?

No doubt, there will be much information about “Embrace” in these coming weeks. Please read it. Please join us for ‘Embrace’. See you there!

Year of Consecrated Life - 2015

We all know of truly dedicated priests, nuns, brothers and consecrated people in our Archdiocese in the past or present who live out their service of the Church in consecrated life.

The invitation from Pope Francis is to join him during 2015 to deepen our appreciation of their gifts to the Church. We also wish to pray for an increase in vocations to consecrated life.

I propose we gather, with our religious, for a Diocesan Mass on Sunday, June 7, 2015, at 11am at St Christopher's Cathedral, to thank those living out the consecrated life. There will be an opportunity for those present to renew publicly their religious vows in the grateful presence

of all gathered. I hope that this Mass will encourage other such Masses in the various parishes of the Archdiocese.

To be encouraged, also, are published testimonies or stories of our religious in their own words, in our local newspapers and bulletins. Why did they become a religious? What has been their faith journey?

There are so many truly wonderful testimonies of faith to be shared so we can give thanks to the Lord's “calling power” alive among us. Please try to make these “faith stories” known in any way you can in your communities. Let us all show some imagination here!

As we launch into 2015, let us trust Jesus more than ever! Let him lead the Archdiocese with the guiding power of the Holy Spirit.

With Lent approaching (Ash Wednesday, February 18) we do this in faith and repentance.

May the Lord bless you and your loved ones always.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse
Catholic Archbishop of
Canberra and Goulburn

MANUKA PRECINCT UPDATE

All in readiness for work to begin

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

WITH all the details of construction work now finalised and a price established, a contract for the Manuka precinct project is expected to be signed in the coming weeks.

Archdiocesan financial administrator Helen Delahunty said unlike a standard building contract, which precedes decisions about the exact nature of the work, the contract for the Manuka project is different.

“We’re making sure that we finalise exactly every separate aspect of the job before we sign the contract,” she explained.

“There’s been a lot of work with the builder, the architect and ourselves to nail absolutely everything, down to the handles on the drawers in the independent living units (ILUs).

“I have also received a final price that we’ll be paying, and happily the price is... what we expected.”

In December, CatholicCare staff relocated to offices in Red Hill, leaving the Franklin

The Cathedral parish office and the CatholicCare buildings will be demolished soon as part of the redevelopment of the Manuka precinct. PHOTO: LOUI SESELJA

Street building empty and ready for demolition. The Cathedral-based priests also moved to the newly renovated and modernised presbytery at 57 Franklin Street.

Cathedral staff will move into offices in the Catholic Education Office by the middle of February. They will retain their

existing telephone number.

Ms Delahunty said demolition will commence at the end of this month or early in March, with construction expected to begin in April.

Interest in the 44 ILUs, which will consist of one, two and three-bedroom homes, is continuing to grow.

CATHOLIC

VOICE

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Pope asks for responses to Synod survey

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

POPE Francis is once again seeking the thoughts and ideas of Catholics worldwide on topics relating to marriage and family, in preparation for this year's Synod on the Family.

The Pope and the Synod of Bishops have released a set of questions for Catholics to respond to, in a similar manner to what took place before last year's Extraordinary Synod.

However, this year the Australian Bishops have reorganised and simplified the Vatican's 46 questions into 30 clear and concise questions, in an attempt to make them more user-friendly.

Rather than refer to Papal

documents, the questions are more straightforward. For instance, one question asks: Does the process of declaring nullity need to be simpler, less difficult and less costly?

Responses to the questionnaire will form the basis of the

values and family ministry.

"Feedback will assist dioceses locally and will be used to contribute to a national response to the Vatican," Mrs Burt said.

"The Vatican requires responses by April 2015. As a

It is expected to be a much larger event than the 2014 Synod, which involved presidents of the world's Bishops Conferences. Several representatives from each Bishops Conference will attend this year's Synod.

Last year's survey attracted

dioceses because this consultation represents a further opportunity to provide feedback to the forthcoming Synod of Bishops," she said.

"It's a time to reflect, think, question and pray about the many challenging issues facing families today, and as the *Relatio Synodi* document states, to reflect upon the 'critical and invaluable reality of the family' in the Church and the contemporary world, as we move towards the Ordinary General Assembly in October 2015."

Responses to the survey are anonymous, and can be submitted until Monday, February 9. The survey is available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/2015synodsurvey>.

"It's a time to reflect, think, question and pray about the many challenging issues facing families today."

Synod's working document, which is expected to be published by the end of July.

Executive secretary of the Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life Alison Burt told *Catholic Voice* the questions in the survey seek to reflect on wide-ranging areas of family

result, dioceses are working to an even shorter timeline for feedback."

The theme of the Synod, which will be held from October 4 to 25 in Rome, is 'The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and the Contemporary World'.

more than 1,000 responses from Australians, and many more from Catholics around the globe.

Mrs Burt encouraged Catholics to take the time to respond to the survey.

"I believe it's important for people to contribute to the process where possible within their

Everyone invited to embrace Assembly

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

CATHOLICS of all ages are being encouraged to attend this year's Archdiocesan Assembly, which will be held on March 21 at St Clare's College in Griffith.

With less than two months to go, preparations for the Assembly, which is called 'Embrace', are in full swing, with organisers hoping to attract a large crowd.

"The Assembly is open to all members of our Archdiocese," Sharon Brewer, coordinator of parish pastoral support, said. "We strongly encourage people who may not be attending Mass regularly to come along and to hear about families and marriage – topics that are important to all of us."

Mrs Brewer said the Assembly would be an excellent opportunity for both married and unmarried Catholics to learn about the Church's teachings on marriage and family life.

"The fact that Pope Francis has called two Synods on these topics would seem to imply that he is keen to deeply explore how Catholics see marriage and family life in light of their faith," she said. "The Assembly will allow all of us to take a fresh look at what the Church actually says about marriage and family life, as well as the facts, figures and the lived experience of Catholic families."

The Assembly will be preceded by a Mass on March 20 (7pm) at St Christopher's Cathedral, where Archbishop Christopher Prowse will pronounce a special blessing upon all married couples and families.

Mrs Brewer said the Mass would be a great opportunity to bring together the whole Archdiocesan Catholic community. "Let us fill the Cathedral to



Lara and Tim Kirk, who have five children, will speak about the integral role their Catholic faith plays in their marriage and family life at the Archdiocesan Assembly on March 21.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

overflowing, a sign to the wider community of how much we value marriage and family life," she encouraged.

There will be three presentations during the Assembly, the keynote address being Archbishop Christopher's talk on 'Living the Joy of the Gospel in Marriage and Family Life'.

University Vice-Chancellor Greg Craven and local couple Tim and Lara Kirk will also deliver presentations.

The Kirks, who have been married for 24 years and have five children, will speak about how their family, work, and all aspects of their life are given purpose by their Catholic faith and relationship with God.

Mrs Kirk said she and husband Tim decided to take part as speakers because they value the importance of marriage and family for individuals and for society.

"We're also happy to promote the vital role a living, personal and communal faith has in helping families to survive and flourish," she said.



SAVE THE DATE

WHAT:

Archdiocesan Assembly

WHERE:

St Clare's College,
Griffith, ACT

WHEN:

Saturday, March 21

For more information
or to register, go to:
embrace2015.org.au

"We find that when it comes down to it most young people want a lasting love and a happy family life but many don't have confidence that it is possible."

"I think it's so important to give whatever encouragement we can, while being real about the struggles, to young people wanting to establish a stable future based on a happy family life."

Another major part of the Assembly will be an Expo showcasing the spiritual and practical offerings the Archdiocese provides for families and individuals.

A number of Catholic agencies, movements and groups will set up stalls during the Assembly, providing information to anyone in attendance.

Registrations for 'Embrace' open on February 2, and can be completed online at embrace2015.org.au. Those who wish to register to attend the Mass on March 20 can do so at the same website.

Shelter to continue tackling binge drinking

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

WHILE most Canberrans were busy unwrapping presents and feasting on Christmas dinners, a dedicated team of health workers were assisting those who took to binge drinking over the holiday period.

The Sobering Up Shelter (SUS) in Ainslie, which is run by CatholicCare and funded by ACT Health, cares for highly intoxicated people and aims to educate them on the risks of excessive alcohol or drug use.

In December, ACT Policing signed an agreement to keep working with the SUS for the next three years, and CatholicCare CEO Anne Kirwan said it was a significant occasion.

"The MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) signifies the commitment between CatholicCare and ACT Policing in how we approach and care for intoxicated people, and recognises that public intoxication is a health and welfare issue," she explained.

In 2014, the SUS also celebrated its 10-year anniversary, and Ms Kirwan said it's been a decade of hard work.

"It's been quite a journey to get to where we are with the Shelter, the establishment of the service and getting our systems right," she said.

"We're now running extremely well, and we would be hopeful that we will continue to expand in the future."

The SUS is open from 11pm to 11am on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, with three staff on duty.

Highly intoxicated people – often aged between 18 and 30



CatholicCare CEO Anne Kirwan and police officer Rudi Lammers sign an agreement to continue working together for the next three years in support of the Sobering Up Shelter in Ainslie. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

– are brought to the SUS by police or ambulance officers, instead of being taken to a police cell for the night.

Manager of the SUS

have all five beds full because people have come in and they've either been transferred to hospital, gone back to the police, or they've had a respon-

gently speak with individuals about their behavior and the risks entailed.

"We'll have a chat to people... and let them know that

"Our goal is to get as much information to people as possible so hopefully they can make better choices in the future."

Lyndall Evans says while demand for the service varies, there'll always be someone who needs to sober up.

"Thursday's our quietest night and Saturday's our busiest," she said. "Sometimes we'll have a busy night but we won't

sible person come and pick them up.

"One night we had 13 people come through, which is a very busy night for us."

The morning after someone has arrived at the SUS, staff will take the opportunity to

the purpose of what we're doing is actually just to give them a guide of whether or not they're drinking or drugging too much or if it's putting them at risk," Ms Evans said.

"Some people are very upfront about the fact that

they're in party mode, and this is what happens... but people are for the most part very open to having feedback on what their drinking means."

While the majority of those brought to the SUS are accompanied by police officers, Ms Kirwan said young people who have been to the Shelter before sometimes bring their friends in when they notice they have become intoxicated.

"We would really encourage that, as we are a safe, non-judgmental service that is there to care for people who are at risk or unable to care for themselves," she said.

The SUS is the only of its kind in the ACT, but Ms Kirwan said three similar services have been established in NSW.

"We're unique in our service in that we predominantly provide support to young people who are binge drinking," she said.

"Binge drinking in Australia is really part of our culture, and that's a concern for us.

"The following morning is often the opportunity... our goal is to get as much information to people as possible so hopefully they can make better choices in the future."

Ms Kirwan admitted it had taken a lot of hard work to get the SUS running effectively, but she's confident the service is making a difference.

"The evidence is there that our service gets outcomes for people, that people who stay at our service are more reflective about their drinking and that we change drinking behaviours, and that's the goal," she said.

Caritas prepares to launch Project Compassion

ON February 15 Caritas Australia, the international aid and development organisation of the Catholic Church, will launch its annual Project Compassion appeal – one of Australia's largest humanitarian fundraising and awareness-raising campaigns.

Each year Project Compassion, which runs through the six weeks of Lent, brings hundreds of thousands of Australians together in solidarity with the world's poor.

Caritas Australia CEO Paul O'Callaghan said Project Compassion was an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of caring supporters, all in the name of justice and peace.

Last year, supporters, schools and parishes across Australia raised nearly \$11 million to help the world's poorest communities.

"Project Compassion has transformed the lives of many of the most marginalised people around the world," Mr O'Callaghan said.

"It's thanks to the generosity of the Australian supporters, that Caritas has been able to work alongside communities over the long-term in Asia, Africa, the Pacific, Latin America and with First Australians."

The theme for this year's Project Compassion is "Food for Life". It focuses on the ways in which Caritas Australia is working with partners around the world to empower vulnerable people to establish sustainable food sources and develop income streams for life.

"Food is essential for all life, and while we may take it for granted in Australia, many of the world's poorest people do

not have a reliable food source, or enough money to buy food everyday," Mr O'Callaghan said.

"Without food, the rest of life is impossible to contemplate. How can you plan for the future or educate your children when you fear you will be hungry?"

During Lent, Australians are invited to raise funds for Project Compassion in a variety of ways. This can be by direct donation, raising money through a range of events, such as Caritas Ks which raises money by walking, running, cycling or swimming kilometres for compassion, or by hosting a 'Fish Friday' event where people eat small fish meals and make a donation.

To donate to Project Compassion, or for fundraising ideas go to www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion or phone 1800 024 413.



Caritas Australia CEO Paul O'Callaghan is encouraging Australians to raise funds for the world's poor through Project Compassion. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Celebrating 50 years of seeking wisdom

BY ERIN GORDON

UPON walking into the newly refurbished St Clare's College in Griffith, you can feel the blending of old and new, of memories past and the potential of what the future will hold for the next generation of female students.

This year, St Clare's, or Catholic Girls' High School Griffith as it was originally known, is celebrating 50 years of providing secondary education to young women. Blessed by Archbishop Eris O'Brien and officially opened on May 30, 1965, the school began with 280 students. Since then, St Clare's has educated almost 10,000 girls.

Upon meeting the school's principal, Paul Carroll, it's easy to understand why the future of St Clare's looks full of potential. Mr Carroll is clearly dedicated to ensuring the students have the most rounded and supported education possible.

"For me, I believe that every female should have the opportunity to reach the highest accolades and have the same opportunities as men. They should be able to reach for the stars and not be held back," Mr Carroll said. "There is such a



St Clare's College is celebrating its 50th anniversary during 2015 with several special events planned throughout the year. The school was originally known as Catholic Girls' High School Griffith. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

great culture here among the girls for embracing life and getting involved. It's not just about academia, but community services, charities, sports, music, and singing. It's not uncommon to hear the St Clare's 'Seek Wisdom' song being belted from the courtyard with gusto."

Mr Carroll also praised the students for their awareness of social justice issues and concern for the less fortunate in the local community and beyond.

Last year alone, St Clare's students raised \$40,000 for local and national charities. They also hosted local St Vincent de Paul volunteers for dinner where the girls did everything from the event preparation to cooking the three-course meal for 80 guests in the school's new industrial kitchen.

Equal opportunity is another aspect that St Clare's prides itself on. Research has shown single-sex schools have a higher

level of female participants in what are generally thought to be more "male-orientated" subjects than at co-ed schools and St Clare's is no exception to this rule. They have high enrolment rates for physics, advanced maths, chemistry, technology and woodwork. There are also plenty of vocational education opportunities with children services, hospitality, business, IT, volunteering and fashion all available to the girls.

Browsing through the school hall, the pride of recent graduates is easy to see. Hanging on the eight house and school captain boards are names of cardiologists, bloggers, defence personnel, lawyers, stylists, nurses, screen writers, teachers, CEOs, and humanitarian advisors, just to name a few. What else hangs on the walls though are mothers and daughters, sisters, best friends and comrades.

With 1,060 young women enrolled in St Clare's College this year, it's exciting to think about what impact they will have on the future, but if it's anything like the last 50 years, the impact will be felt much further afield than the halls in Griffith.

50th Anniversary Events

February 28

Blessing and opening of refurbishment followed by a cocktail party

May 30

Gala Dinner

May 31

Mass and afternoon fair

August 1

College Musical 'Cats'

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Lawyers seek God's blessing for 2015

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

LAWYERS, associates, and their families and friends are being invited to a special Mass for lawyers to be held at St Christopher's Cathedral on February 8 at 11am.

Archbishop Christopher Prowse will be the main celebrant at the Mass, which is held to mark the commencement of the law year and is organised by the St Thomas More Forum.

Fr Julian Wellspring, parish priest of St Thomas More in Campbell, said the event, which he hopes will become an annual one, was held for the first time last year.

"For some years, the ACT Law Society hosted an ecumenical prayer service to begin the law year, and then they decided that rather than have a religious service, they would move to a secular inauguration of their law year," he explained.

"In light of that, and having been approached by some lawyers for a religious service to commence the law year, Thomas More Forum decided that we would look to inaugurate this Mass for lawyers."



Lawyers from Canberra's High Court will be in attendance at the annual lawyers Mass on February 8.

PHOTO: ONLINE

Fr Julian said the event has attracted interest from Sydney and Melbourne, and he expects there to be a similar crowd in attendance as there was last year.

"We had people from the High Court, we had people from the ACT Law Society, we had law students and we had people who work at the Attorney-Generals [departments], so there was quite a wide spread of people in different aspects of the legal profession," he said.

"It's important that we seek the blessing of God and encourage those who work in the area of justice to fulfil their vocation faithfully," he said.

Gerald Santucci, who has been a lawyer for almost 33 years, told *Catholic Voice* a Mass at the start of the legal term is based on a long tradition.

"St Thomas More, an eminent lawyer himself is the patron saint of lawyers," he said. "For lawyers generally, our

modern legal system has drawn its origins from Christian-Judeo principals. There is therefore a common sense in placing the year ahead in God's hands, through the merits of his Son, in the Mass for which St Thomas More gave his life."

In Sydney, an annual 'Red Mass' for lawyers has been held since 1931.

To register to attend the lawyers Mass, email forum@stthomasmore.org.au.

Final Masses a chance to celebrate history

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

ONE hundred and forty years of memories were celebrated at two of the Archdiocese's oldest Catholic Churches in December, as the churches hosted Mass for the final time.

St Columbanus' in Wombat and Sacred Heart Church in Murringo have served rural Catholics since 1874 and 1877 respectively, but both buildings will only be used sparingly from 2015.

Fr Tom Thornton, who is the leader of the Young Mission, which both churches are a part of, said dwindling populations and rising maintenance costs has prompted the difficult decision.

"The communities there have died, basically," he said. "We haven't got the congregations any more to justify it."

For several years now, Mass has been offered once a month at both churches, with only 10



Priests of the Young Mission, Fr Paul Nulley (left) and Fr Tom Thornton (right) with Phil Harding (middle), who served at Young from 1962-1968. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

or so people present of late, Fr Tom said. Both buildings are in reasonable condition, and St Columbanus' will be used as a prayer chapel for members of

the local community.

Earlier this year, Wombat residents took part in a charity walk to raise funds to preserve St Columbanus', as well as the

local Anglican church, St Matthew's.

Parishioner Margaret Bailes, who compiled a 140th anniversary booklet on the history of St Columbanus Church, said the church had a special place in the community from the beginning.

"It is clear that the community was very proud of their little church," she said.

"The people of Wombat worked very hard with working bees, and held bazaars to raise money to help pay for the cost of the building, and donated windows, candle holders and the crucifix in the church.

"It has always been at the heart of the Wombat Catholic community."

The church has been the venue for countless weddings – the last of which was celebrated in 2010 – as well as baptisms, the most recent being 2013.

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I will definitely continue to offer this in my new position!

I'd love for you to give me a call even just for a coffee and catch up!

Gerard Heffernan

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Pro-lifers ready for prayer surge in Lent

CATHOLICS and Christians in Canberra will once again take part in the annual 40 Days for Life campaign during Lent, which begins on February 18.

President of the ACT Right to Life Association Bev Cains said the prayer vigil would take place outside the ACT Health Building in Civic each weekday of Lent from 11.30am to 2.30pm.

"For more than 10 years, the 40 Days for Life international movement's focus has been on the unborn," she said.

"This movement has asked for a peaceful, prayerful effort to pray that, with God's help, we will save the lives of unborn children."

Ms Cains said 40 Days for Life campaigns will be held in several other Australian cities during Lent, including Perth, Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane.

This will be the second year 40 Days for Life has been held in Canberra.

"There are thousands of others prayer vigils which are taking place in 221 countries around the world," she said.

"By participation you will not only be joining with other



Participants in the 40 Days for Life campaign will pray outside the ACT Health building each weekday during Lent from 11.30am to 2.30pm. Similar prayer vigils will be held around the country during Lent. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Australians in prayer but with an estimated 600,000 participants in 522 cities, in 21 countries.

"My hope is that groups of people from various parishes will organise to share transport and go to pray outside the

Health Centre on the same day each week."

Those who are unable to attend the vigil site may wish to pray alone or in a group in churches or in their homes for the same intentions, Ms Cains said.

Opening prayers will take place outside the ACT Health Building, corner Moore and Alinga Streets in Civic at 12pm on Ash Wednesday, February 18. For more information contact Bev Cains on 0418718713 or via email: 345bevc@gmail.com.

Marist priest Fr John Rea to visit Canberra

RENOWNED healing priest Fr John Rea SM will visit Canberra during February.

Fr Rea will spend three days (February 20-22) at St Benedict's Mission Centre in Narrabundah, where he will celebrate special healing Masses and provide a short Lenten retreat.

Fr Rea, who is from New Zealand, was ordained in 1955 and has taught in high schools, worked in parishes, directed the Marist Third Order nationally, and conducted parish missions and retreats.

Fr Rea has ministered in the Pacific Islands, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, the USA, Europe and Australia for more than 35 years. His most recent visit to Canberra was in March 2014.

For more information about Fr Rea's visit, phone (02) 62957879.

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Trish takes up new role with ACBC

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

TRISH Mowbray has been appointed as the Executive Secretary of the Bishops Commission for Relations with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders.

Mrs Mowbray, who was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 2013, told *Catholic Voice* she has always had an interest in Indigenous issues and was excited about her new role. “I feel very honoured to be in this position and I’m really looking forward to learning more about the [Indigenous] cultures and languages and how we can all work together,” she said. “My main goal is to listen and to really get to know what the issues are... as well as asking the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders what can I do for them and how can we support them in the Catholic context.”

Mrs Mowbray said the role would involve supporting the



Trish Mowbray says she's humbled and excited about her new role with the ACBC.

PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Bishops in their work with Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and undertaking and managing projects with the

Bishops Commission.

“It’s also about getting full participation of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders

in the life of the Church and ensuring that their culture is upheld within our Catholic culture as well,” she said.

Having worked with Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory, Mrs Mowbray said there were many gifts Indigenous people could contribute to the Church.

“Their spirituality is so deep and meaningful,” she said. “Another great factor that they offer is their focus on family, and their knowledge of our land and how we can care for the land that we live on.”

Mrs Mowbray will fulfil the new role in addition to continuing in her role as Disability Projects Officer in the Secretariat for Pastoral Life, a position she has held since 2006.

The ACBC has also appointed Susan Rivett as Executive Secretary of the Bishops Commission for Canon Law, and Dr Raymond Canning as Executive Secretary of the Bishops Commission for Doctrine and Morals and the Bishops Commission for Ecumenism and Inter-religious Relations.

SOS! ... Christianity in the Middle East ... SOS!

Moved by the desperate plight of Christians throughout the Middle East, the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) calls on your support to help the region’s beleaguered Christian population.

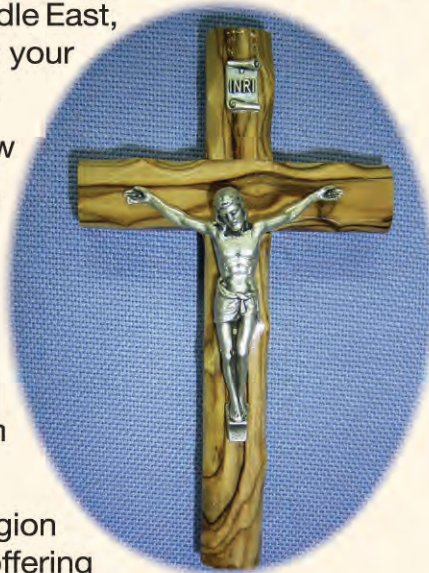
A mass exodus of Christians from the Middle East is now taking place. For some, like the Christians of Iraq and Syria, it is a question of their very survival as they flee the bloody persecution of the militants of the Islamic State (formerly ISIS).

For others, in parts of the Holy Land that Our Lord Jesus Christ knew so well, the proportion of Christians has plummeted from 20% to as little as 1.4% in the last forty years. The faithful now live in fear as increasing poverty and growing extremism threaten the survival of these ancient communities.

ACN is helping to keep faith and hope alive throughout the region by providing urgent aid to priests, religious and lay people, offering subsistence help to refugees and building and repairing Churches and convents. Please help us strengthen and rebuild the Church in the land of Christ’s birth.

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“Nowadays, persecution of Christians is worse than it was in the first centuries of the Church. There are more Christian martyrs now than at that time.”

Pope Francis



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Two new Cardinals from Oceania

BY ANTONIO ANUP GONSALVES
CATHOLIC NEWS AGENCY

AT his Angelus address on January 4 Pope Francis announced the appointment of 20 Cardinals, among whom are two representatives from Oceania: Archbishop John Dew of Wellington, and Bishop Soane Mafi of Tonga.

They will be made Cardinals at a consistory held in the Vatican on February 14.

"We are in the vacation season celebrating the joy of Christmas and the appointment of Archbishop John Dew of Wellington [as Cardinal] is a proud moment and has brought us great joy," Dame Lyndsay Freer, head of social communications at the Archdiocese of Auckland, told CNA.

Hearing the announcement, Archbishop Dew said: "I'm honoured and humbled to be given this new task in my priestly vocation and in representing the people of Aotearoa New Zealand and the region in the global Church."

The Archbishop also noted that "this news is recognition of the Catholic Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and the contribution it makes to the global Catholic family".

Further congratulating Bishop Mafi, the Archbishop added: "I'm delighted to hear that Bishop Soane Mafi of Tonga has also been named in the list; together it is not only great news for New Zealand and Tonga, but for the Oceania region."

Fr Line Folaumoeloa, chaplain for the ethnic Tongan community in Auckland, said it was a tremendous joy and honour to have a first Tongan Cardinal.



Bishop Soane Mafi of Tonga and Archbishop John Dew of Wellington (inset) are among 20 new Cardinals recently appointed by Pope Francis. The pair from Oceania will be officially installed at a consistory held in the Vatican on February 14.

PHOTOS: GIOVANNI PORTELLI; ONLINE

"We thank Pope Francis for acknowledging the universality and diversity in the Church, and for the gift of two Cardinals from Oceania," he said.

Fr Line said the Tongan community has been very active in the apostolate mission of the Church and has given large numbers of missionary vocations who are serving in the different parts of the world.

Bishop Soane Patita Paini Mafi was born in 1961 in Nuku'alofa, the capital of Tonga, a Polynesian island

nation located northeast of New Zealand. He studied philosophy and theology at the Pacific Regional Seminary in Fiji.

He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Tonga in 1991, where he served in parishes and as Vicar-General. He studied psychology at Loyola College in Baltimore, and served as a professor, formator, and vice rector of Fiji's Pacific Regional Seminary.

He was consecrated a bishop in 2007, serving as the Tonga Diocese's coadjutor. He succeeded as its ordinary in 2008.

He is president of the Pacific Bishops Conference, and took part in the Extraordinary Synod on the Family in 2014.

Archbishop John Atcherly Dew was born in Waipawa in 1948, and was educated at St Joseph's School, Waipukurau. He completed his ecclesiastical studies at Holy Name Seminary at Christchurch and Holy Cross National Seminary of Mosgiel.

He was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Wellington in 1976, serving in parishes as well as being the Archdiocesan

youth minister and a chaplain to the Maori community. He also studied at the St Anselm Institute in England.

In 1995 he was appointed auxiliary bishop of the Wellington Archdiocese, and in 2004 was appointed its coadjutor. He succeeded as ordinary in 2005, and in the same year was appointed bishop of New Zealand's military ordinariate.

He is president of the New Zealand Bishops Conference and of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania.

History made as Filipinos flock to hear Pope Francis

PAPAL history was made during Pope Francis' visit to the Philippines where an estimated six to seven million people attended his closing Mass.

"The official number that has been given to us is between six and seven million," Fr Federico Lombardi said, calling it the "largest event of the history of the popes".

In his homily for the January 18 closing Mass in the Philippines, Pope Francis pointed to our identity as God's children, calling for the protection of the family against the numerous attacks that threaten it.

"Sadly, in our day, the family all too often needs to be protected against insidious attacks and programs contrary to all

that we hold true and sacred, all that is most beautiful and noble in our culture," he said.

Pope Francis spoke to millions of Filipinos gathered at

"Sadly, in our day, the family all too often needs to be protected against insidious attacks."

Rizal Park in Manila at the final public event during his January 15-19 trip to the country.

The Mass marked the largest papal event in history, surpassing the 1995 World Youth Day

in Manila with St John Paul II, which drew between four and five million people.

Huge crowds turned out for the Pope's Masses and public events in the Philippines, where 86 per cent of the population identifies as Catholic. In recent years, the island country has struggled with the effects of several typhoons, earthquakes and other natural disasters.

During his apostolic visit, the Pope deviated from his official schedule and prepared speeches – meeting with impoverished children from the streets and going off-the-cuff in remarks to families on the dangers of contraception and redefining marriage.

- CATHOLIC NEWS AGENCY



Pope Francis greets thousands of youth pilgrims at Santo Tomas University in Manila on January 18.

PHOTO: ALAN HOLDREN, CNA

Despite their persecution, Christians in the Middle East are still full of

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE

Archbishop Christopher Prowse joined a delegation of Bishops from Australia in an historic visit to Lebanon and Iraq in December. Here, the Archbishop shares his personal reflections from the experience...

IN NOVEMBER 2014, I had no idea that I would be joining the Australian Bishops Delegation to Lebanon (Beirut) and Iraq (Erbil, Kurdistan region) in the days leading up to Christmas 2014.

Three Bishops representing some of the Eastern Churches (Maronite, Chaldean and Melkite) in Australia exhibited great leadership in November 2014. They motivated the entire Australian Catholic Bishops Conference to declare December 7, 2014 for all Catholic Australians as a Day of Solidarity and Prayer with the embattled Christians of the Middle East. A national collection was to be taken up as well for this cause.

Along with this gesture, a delegation of Australian Bishops was also proposed to personally visit the Middle East in the days before Christmas. I was one member of this delegation.

The delegation travelled to Beirut and Northern Iraq over just one week. So many victims were visited. Many Christian Church leaders were met. The delegation encountered exceptional hospitality and kindness.

They were so happy we had come to be in solidarity with their many fragilities. Upon hearing of the Sydney hostage crisis, they immediately offered their own solidarity with us. This had developed in the hours before we arrived in the Middle East.

I wish simply to recall three major impressions from this short visit. So many experiences and encounters took place. To a certain degree they now seem

claims to the world: "Stop war!" "Avoid new crusades!" "Be martyrs for peace!" He was delighted with the visit of the Australian delegation, remarking: "Many have spoken of the situation in the Middle East, but few have come to support us personally. You are the first such Episcopal Conference delegation to come to Beirut to show solidarity. Thank you!"

Lebanon's population of four million has seen a more recent

is remarkable. Tents, caravans, and apartments are all made available, along with education and health.

One of his priests, Fr Douglas Bazi, greatly impressed me. As his "new" parishioners were offering testimonies to the Australian delegation of their terror that eventually led them to the safe haven of his parish, he was looking on keenly. I was distracted. His non-verbal attentiveness to their sharings, his

vert to Islam, pay a hefty tax, or flee. Ultimately, they chose to leave. However, they could not take anything with them. Punishment was death.

In another example, there was the young Syrian couple with a baby. They came over to greet me at a gathering at Caritas Lebanon, in Beirut. I felt I was meeting a new generation "Jesus, Mary and Joseph". We could only communicate non-verbally due to language issues.

Bishops. He said that the major question asked by the displaced is "Where is God in all this?" He answered by saying that God had never left them in their struggles. He was present in the tents! Having the Holy Family placed in one of their tents generated much devotion and deep Christian hope among the despairing.

In 1914, 14.87 per cent of the population of the Middle East was Christian. In 2014, it is now only 4.8 per cent. It must not happen that we simply allow the place where the birth of Christianity took place to be without any Christians in the future. Let us think and pray long and hard about this unprecedented situation developing in our present times.

As always, God "shouts out" in his poor.

I returned to Canberra feeling the hope and joy of Christmas 2014 had arrived one week earlier for me.

Pope Francis often refers to the "God of surprises". Let Jesus continue to "surprise" us in his beloved poor.

"The young Syrian couple with a baby... seemed so serene and trusting of God in this most precarious situation they had found themselves in. I thought of Jesus and Mary when they had to flee to Egypt with their baby son, Jesus."

"dream-like". However, three impressions remain.

First, there was the meeting of several truly heroic and saintly Catholic leaders. There was, for example His Beatitude Gregorios III Laham, the Patriarch of Antioch and of all the East, Alexandria and Jerusalem of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church.

Although 83 years old, his spirit and energy was youthful and inspiring. His call is for a united Christian voice that pro-

population surge of one-third, with refugees seeking asylum mainly from Iraq and Syria. The pressure this has placed on Lebanon's infrastructure cannot be underestimated.

Archbishop Bashar Warda, the Chaldean Archbishop of Erbil, Northern Iraq, is also a Bishop with much "mud on his boots". His leadership in resettlement options, in collaboration with his brother Bishops, for the internally displaced persons in Erbil, Kurdistan region,

empathy in their every expression, sorrow, and his encouragement made me comprehend this shepherd's great love of his sheep.

Secondly, there was the careful listening and meeting of the refugees or internally displaced persons in Lebanon and Iraq. There were the two elderly Catholic women for example, from Mosul in Northern Iraq who initially refused to leave their homes. The Militants gave them three impossible choices: con-

However, they seemed so serene and trusting of God in this most precarious situation they had found themselves in. I thought of Jesus and Mary when they had to flee to Egypt with their baby son, Jesus.

Finally, in absolutely every place we visited, there was a Christmas crib. So many of the cribs in Iraq were made of tents, just like the ones used in the resettlement camps in Iraq.

It made me recall a conversation I had with one of the



The Australian Bishops Delegation spent more than a week in Beirut and Northern Iraq during December, where they provided spiritual support and humanitarian aid. PHOTOS: SUPPLIED



People, not places, bring the most joy

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

FROM the splendour of Rome to the glamour of Las Vegas, Dominican priest Fr Kieran Adams OP has ministered far and wide during his 48 years as a fully professed religious.

But despite his enjoyable experiences overseas, Fr Kieran says it all pales into insignificance when compared to ministering to the people of God.

"Having spent time in Italy but mainly in Rome and seeing the magnificent churches and basilicas, compared with the people of God, these buildings are just a nice way of putting stones and glass together," he says.

"However, by saying this I do not wish to imply that I don't appreciate and wonder at the artistic talents which God has bestowed on so many men and women through the centuries.

"Even if you're attending to the needs of a newborn baby... you're still part of the building of God, and I think our people need to be reminded of their vocation."

As a child, Fr Kieran was always "intrigued" by religious, and he was particularly impressed by the nuns and brothers who taught him at school.

"I really do owe a great debt to the Sisters of Charity, the Good Samaritan Sisters, and the Christian Brothers," he says.

"I wonder at times whether the Church has fully acknowledged the incredible work that these men and women have done over the years."

In 1959 Fr Kieran joined the Dominican Order to be a brother, and was responsible for cooking, book binding, cleaning, making the habits, and playing the organ for Mass and parts of the Divine Office.

After making his final profession in 1967, Fr Kieran gradually began to consider the priesthood, eventually being ordained 10 years later in Melbourne by Archbishop Frank Little.

He then spent time in Adelaide and Melbourne, before taking study leave for two years in the United States to study for a Master of Arts in Pastoral Theology with a focus on liturgy.

"During the summers, many of the diocesan priests were



Fr Kieran Adams OP made his final profession as a Dominican brother in 1967, before gradually deciding he wanted to become a priest. He was ordained in Melbourne in 1977 and has spent time in various locations since. PHOTO: LOUI SESELJA

looking for assistance so they could get away for their holidays," he recalls.

"So I went to a very quiet, unknown village by the name

Australian accent was a bit mystifying for some of them."

Returning to Australia, Fr Kieran was appointed chaplain to John XXIII College at

foundation community in Australia.

In 1992 Fr Kieran was asked to take up the ministry of confessor, or penitentiary

"Deep down in my heart I always wanted to be a hermit but somehow God has intended for me to move in a different direction where I minister to his people, something I enjoy very much."

of Las Vegas. I spent two summers there.

"The people were very generous and proud of their priests. Of course, the

the Australian National University in Canberra, and later became parish priest of Prospect in North Adelaide – the original Dominican

as it is officially known, at St Mary Major's Basilica in Rome. In two separate stints there, he spent a total of 12 years in the role.

While in Rome, he had the opportunity to meet St Pope John Paul II, a man who Fr Kieran said had a wonderful sense of humour.

"Once a year the Pope would come to Mary Major's on the feast of the Immaculate Conception and we would all one by one go up and introduce ourselves," he said.

"When it was my turn, I went up and said 'Santita' (which means 'Holiness'), Australia'. He looked at me and said fairly loudly 'Canguri', which means kangaroos.

"I think one of the highlights over those 12 years was having the opportunity to see so much of Italy, it's a most extraordinary place."

But while he has many fond memories from his time overseas, Fr Kieran says he is just as happy ministering to the needs of local Catholics.

"Going to Rome and meeting the Pope was great, but I also gain joy seeing families who attend Mass each week; especially when mums and dads come up with the little ones for a blessing at Communion," he says. "It is just marvelous. Ministering to families complements the priestly vocation.

"Deep down in my heart I always wanted to be a hermit but somehow God has intended for me to move in a different direction where I minister to his people, something I enjoy very much."

With bases in most of Australia's capital cities, the Dominicans are well-represented throughout the country, and Fr Kieran says the order is doing reasonably well in regards to vocations.

"We're delighted when there's interest in the Order," he says. "We're dealing with a very different world from when I came... but I think there's an upsurge of interest in [religious life] again."

Fr Kieran strongly believes that the consecrated life is still relevant today, but stresses the importance of understanding the complementarity of religious life and lay vocations.

"When we speak of consecration I believe the term applies, in the first place, to all who make a decision to live the Gospel, whether it's as a single lay person, a spouse and parent, or a religious or priest," he says.



Josephite Jubilarians grateful for God's blessings

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

JANUARY was a special month for three Josephite sisters in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, as they celebrated their Golden Jubilee of profession.

Sr Ann Steenbergen RSJ, Sr Colleen Howe RSJ and Sr Bernadette Mary Walsh RSJ were all professed together on January 12, 1965 at Our Lady of Fatima Church in North Goulburn, and the trio celebrated the milestone with 26 other Josephite sisters in Sydney recently.

Reflecting on their 50 years of religious life, the sisters expressed gratitude to God, as well as a hope for the future.

Sr Ann, who is a part of the Temora Mission, said there had been many highlights of her time as a Josephite.

"My joy in religious life has been my involvement with people and children and being part of their life," she said. "There are ups and downs and challenges in all walks of life, but I have found my life challenging and fulfilling and would make the same choices again."

The sisters recalled fondly the day of their profession, with Sr Colleen admitting it was both a nervous and exciting time for different reasons.

"It was a great day," she said. "Yes, I was a little nervous, as we really didn't know what we were committing ourselves to, however it was exciting to be entering into the next stage of religious life and of course we enjoyed having our families present for the occasion."

Sr Colleen said reaching the milestone provided her with a chance to look back at how God has assisted her throughout her religious life, while looking forward with hope to the future.

"I am well, happy, enthusiastic, energetic, and intend to continue this way for a long time to come," she said.

Sr Bernadette Mary, who has worked in both the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn and the Wagga Diocese, said she has enjoyed



From left to right, Sr Bernadette Mary Walsh RSJ, Sr Colleen Howe RSJ and Sr Ann Steenbergen RSJ. The three sisters reached their Golden Jubilee of religious profession in January, joining 26 other Jubilarians for a special celebration in Sydney. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

teaching, motor mission work and parish work greatly.

"Through these ministries I connected with many people who enriched my life," she said. "I have been with people in the many highs and lows of their lives, and for this I feel privileged and honoured."

But the work of a religious sister also brings challenges, Sr Bernadette Mary said.

"Some of the challenges were living in isolated areas, having to travel long distances and often being away from the convent for days at a time during motor mission days," she said.

Sr Colleen said she was most grateful for the opportunities she has had to work with people of the Archdiocese, adding that there has been a lot of change during her time as a Josephite.

"We have experienced tremendous changes in the Church and society over the past 50 years and it is a continuing challenge to remain positive, enthusiastic, energetic, personally fulfilled and contented," she said.

But the three sisters remain committed to the cause and say they are looking forward to continuing to serve God in religious life for as long as possible.

"I hope that more and more people will be drawn to and respond to our God of love," Sr Colleen said.

"I hope to be the best person I can be, to be happy and contented and to help others in anyway possible."



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AUSTRALIA

Popes present the same message, just differently



FOLLOWING FRANCIS

BY DEACON MATT RANSOM

SOON after the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI, almost two years ago, our office received a phone call from a kind journalist from a well-known publication. The writer was asking for our thoughts on this remarkable event. I had the opportunity to discuss the incident and other interesting aspects of Benedict, the Catholic Church and faith in general. At one point in the conversation, the reporter asked in an animated way whether, with a new Pope, our Church might update some of its teachings and values to bring it more into line with our current world. Gently, I said “No, of course not”. I suggested that, “Perhaps there might be a change in personality, focus, the method of communication, cultural background or spirituality, however the message stays the same!”

And this is exactly what we have seen.

The contemplative, academic Pope Benedict made way for an extravert, ‘cut through’ Pope Francis. Both men are known



Pope Francis welcomes Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI back to the Vatican at Mater Ecclesia monastery on May 2, 2013, where Benedict will live during his retirement.

PHOTO: L'OSSEVATORE ROMANO / ANSA

to be deeply prayerful, kind and visionary, however the differences mentioned above, and the needs of our time, warrant a different type of leadership. Nonetheless, the message stays the same.

Archbishop Georg Ganswein, who still works closely with both Pope Francis and Pope Emeritus Benedict, told Catholic News Agency, regarding these differences, that the Pope is not the successor of his

predecessor, but the successor of Peter, and so the differences of personas is quite normal. In the same article, the Archbishop mentions the closeness of both men stating that before any international trip Pope Francis

visits Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, noting the good relations between the two and how Pope Francis is carrying forward Benedict's vision.

Perhaps we can see the similarity of message, and difference in personality in the challenge that Pope Benedict gave to Church leaders in Freiburg, 2011. In that discourse, he addressed the Church's penchant to “become self-satisfied, settle down in this world, become self-sufficient and adapt herself to the standards of the world”.

In a similar challenge to Church leaders in December last year, Pope Francis ‘cut through’ any ambiguity regarding what he hoped for. He said, regarding this area, that it is like the disease of worldly profit and exhibitionism: when the apostle transforms his service into power, and his power into goods to obtain worldly profits or more power.

A new successor to St Peter, the same message, said differently.

And so my discussion with the thoughtful journalist ended agreeably as we both hoped for new life to spring forth in our Church. And it appears that this is so!

“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it,” (Matthew 16:18).

ENTERTAINMENT

Forgiveness despite great suffering shines through in *Unbroken*

Film Review by Fr Peter Malone MSC

UNBROKEN is based on the life story of Lou Zamperini, son of Italian migrants to the United States, who went on to acclaim at the 1936 Olympic Games, winning a gold medal in distance track, then becoming a bombardier in World War II, and later, a prisoner in Japanese prisoner-of-war camps. While the narrative of the film ends in 1945, Zamperini had another almost 70 years of life, dying as late as 2014.

This film is almost four films in one, the director (Angelina Jolie) showing a talent for an aerial warfare film, a sports film, a lost-at-sea film and a prison camp film. This means that it is quite demanding on the audience, an invitation to share in the continuing hardships of Zamperini (played by British actor Jack O'Connell), especially in the camps.

While the film is set in the United States and Japan, most of it was made in Queensland.

The film opens with a close-up of a group in a bomber,



Unbroken chronicles the incredible events in the life of Lou Zamperini, an Olympic hero and, later, a prisoner of war. PHOTO: ONLINE

going on a mission to destroy a factory, set upon by Japanese fighter planes; before showing the detail of the role of each man, the approach to the target, letting the bombs go and the drama of a crash landing at the airbase on return.

The aerial action is interrupted by flashbacks to Lou's childhood, a cheeky and problematic child, from a fervent Catholic

family (with a sequence of a homily by the parish priest about creation, the dark in the light, and being faithful to commitment). Fortunately, Lou's older brother, Peter, a runner, takes Lou in hand, trains him, overcomes his low self-image and encourages him so that eventually he is chosen for the 1936 Olympic team. A winner, he has achieved a goal and

developed his better self.

After this, the film moves into the lost at sea drama, three men surviving a crash into the ocean, over 45 days on life rafts, with few rations, trying to keep their minds active in conversation and fishing, despite being surrounded by sharks and being strafed by a Japanese plane. This is a close-up of the will to live, endurance and survival.

But there is still more demanding narrative. Zamperini and his friend, Phil (Domhnall Gleeson) are captured. The sequences are in the prisoner-of-war camp in Tokyo and then the prisoners are removed towards the end of the war to work on the wharves, loading coal. Life in the camp, its highs and lows, are brought vividly to life.

Woven into the screenplay are issues of belief in God, the role of prayer, the nature of faith, and pledges to God for commitment after survival. The experiences of Zamperini dramatise the power of the human spirit, and its indomitability in the face of suffering.

Information is given at the end of the film – including the fact that Zamperini went back to Japan after the war, worked towards friendship and reconciliation, and that forgiveness is all important.

Fr Peter Malone MSC is an associate of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting.

Following Jesuit footsteps in Argentina



POSTCARD FROM BOSTON
BY FR FRANK BRENNAN SJ

THIS month's Boston postcard comes from Argentina. Over Christmas I travelled there with fellow Jesuit Fr Michael Kelly SJ. We arrived in Buenos Aires, which used to be described as the Paris of the South. It is a city of magnificent boulevards and grand public buildings from a past era.

In 1900, Argentina was more prosperous than Australia. Now there is much poverty. Decades of military rule and incompetent governments have cheated the ordinary people of a lot. The Buenos Aires opera house is one of the best in the world. When Pavarotti performed there in 1987, he told a press conference: "There is a problem with the acoustics in the building. They are perfect". The opera house has recently been fully restored at a cost of US\$100 million.

We followed two sets of Jesuit footprints – one set from the 17th and 18th centuries, and the other from the 20th century. The first were the footprints of the Jesuits who came to put a buffer between the Spanish and Portuguese colonisers and the native people. The second were the footprints of Jorge Bergoglio who is now Pope Francis.



Fr Miguel Petty SJ and Fr Michael Kelly SJ at the door through which many people disappeared during the 1976-1982 war in Argentina. It was during this time that Jorge Bergoglio was in charge of the Jesuits based in the South American country. PHOTO: SUPPLIED

Anyone who has seen the movie *The Mission* knows that the Jesuits did remarkable work in South America protecting the native people (the Guarani) from the depredations of the colonisers, especially the Portuguese who wanted to enslave them. Between 1609 and 1768, Jesuits from throughout Europe came to run the 'Reductions', which were like small towns for the natives being provided with security, education and spiritual care. The headquarters for this operation was in Cordoba. We stayed in the old Jesuit house there which had

been built in the 17th century. Our host was an English Argentine Jesuit Fr Miguel Petty SJ. Like his father and grandfather, Fr Miguel had been sent away to England as a boy to attend Stonyhurst, a Jesuit college. His father used to import Leyland buses to Argentina. Until recently, Fr Miguel was the rector of the Catholic university in Cordoba.

He took us to a couple of the old farms which the Jesuits ran 300 years ago to provide produce for the Reductions. He also took us to the building where many people "disappeared"

during the dirty war between 1976 and 1982. Detainees would be taken through a door just across a laneway from the Cathedral in the centre of the city. That building now houses the archives that document the disappearances.

From 1990 to 1992 after he had been in charge of the Jesuits in Argentina, Bergoglio moved to Cordoba. He stayed in a small room close to street traffic, out the back of the old Jesuit house. He mostly kept to himself during this time.

Then he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of Buenos Aires.

He started a whole new life, not having much to do with the Jesuits whom he had led during the difficult time of the dirty war. There had been a lot of tension in the Jesuits about how best to live committed to faith and justice in a Catholic country where almost everyone, including the military, were Catholic.

Whatever of past differences, the Jesuits with whom we stayed are proud of our new Pope and pleased with all that he is doing to make the Church truly universal, and not just European. I asked the well-educated 30-year-old daughter of one of Fr Miguel's friends: "What do you think of Pope Francis?" She replied: "I really like him. He wants to help the poor. He reaches out to everyone. He is very human. He does nice symbolic actions". I then asked: "What did you think of him when he was the Archbishop of Buenos Aires?" She answered: "I don't know. I didn't really know anything about him then".

In 2005, Jose Maria Poirier, a leading Argentinian journalist wrote a profile of Bergoglio asserting that nobody knows what Bergoglio thinks and that "he can move pieces along with the best chess player". That is a metaphor I heard oft repeated in Argentina by both Bergoglio admirers and critics.

The supreme chess player is now occupying the See of St Peter, and as the Vatican curia discovered at Christmas, we are now in no doubt about what he is thinking and where he is wanting to take us.

Stand up for the truth, no matter what the cost



GOING DEEPER
BY SHANE DWYER

POPE Francis' honeymoon period with the world's media may now be over. He has, in the eyes of some, committed the unforgivable sin: he has dared to question whether free speech is the only value that requires our collective consideration. He has wondered whether respect is of equal importance.

In light of recent terrorist attacks, even raising this question has caused a furore. It has also revealed an interesting irony

– that in defence of the absolute right to free speech, there are those who require the Pope not to have said what he said. Even the proponents of free speech understand that free speech is not an absolute.

One of the accusations levelled against the Pope is that, in the eyes of some, he is suggesting that the employees of Charlie Hebdo had what was coming to them. That his words could be misconstrued in this fashion brings into focus the very problem the Pope is highlighting – that in our dealings with one another we need to refrain from making assumptions, deliberately provoking one another for the sake of a story, or ridiculing one another's beliefs in the name of entertainment. That is to say, the Catholic Church, the Muslims, the Jews... whoever it is, deserve the same courtesy

that the Pope is affording to the world's media. In spite of intense provocation, he has not called into question anybody's integrity, made assumptions about what is motivating them, or ridiculed them.

Proclaiming our faith is going to involve a refusal to participate in the world's popularity contest.

In taking his stand the Pope took a difficult path and, as a result, he has exposed himself to the taunts of those who do not want to hear what he has to say. He has also sent an interesting message to Catholics: that proclaiming our faith is going to

involve a refusal to participate in the world's popularity contest. There will be times when speaking the truth (or even asking a question) will cost you the good will of those who were once your friends.

The truth can be spoken without setting out to make fun. In fact, it is best spoken directly, simply and with respect. If we fail to proceed in this way, our words will at best fall on deaf ears, and at worst, they will provoke offence. This is something that we, as men and women trying to live out our baptismal commitment, need to be aware of. Our vocation is to reveal Jesus Christ to the world. Like Jesus himself, we are to speak the truth in love, and we are to be prepared to suffer the consequences for doing that.

The truth we speak of here is the whole truth as revealed

in Jesus Christ. When it comes to the truth, it is very easy to edit out those things we do not agree with or which make us uncomfortable. The Pope is experiencing this tendency at the moment. When his words and actions could be interpreted as consonant with the values of the West, he was considered to be the great champion. Now it is recognised that he also wishes to question the assumptions underlying Western culture. As a result he is being painted as out of touch and ridiculous. And yet, his message has never changed – he remains solely intent on proclaiming the love and truth of Jesus Christ to the world – no matter what the personal cost.

Shane Dwyer is the senior coordinator of faith formation and spirituality in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.



Clockwise from top left: St Francis Xavier College Captains, from left to right, John Sharp (Captain), Ali Wijnen (Captain), Vanessa Lavis (Vice-Captain) and Josh Halliday (Vice-Captain); Marist College Captains, from left to right, Clem McManus (Vice-Captain), Jeremy Manuelpillai (Captain) and Josh Freeman (Service Captain); Merici College Captains Rose Mackay (Vice-Captain), left and Grace Cooper (Captain), right; Lumen Christi Catholic College Captains Joseph Molony and Georgia Sheedy; Hennessy College Captains Lauren Jenkins and Jacob Cummins.





Left, Daramalan College Captains Tiarnie Haridemos and Adam Neou; top right, St Edmund's College Captains, from left to right, James Dimarhos (Captain), Ben Gisik (Vice-Captain), Nick Overall (Vice-Captain) and Fraser Doverty (Academic Captain).



Above, MacKillop College Captains Adrian Thomas and Abigirl Maminimini; middle, Trinity College Captains, from left to right, Emily Spackman (Vice-Captain), Jordan Brooker (Captain), Matthew Cudaj (Vice-Captain), Jack Caldwell (Vice-Captain), Hannah Cummins (Vice-Captain) and Stefan Geriakos (Captain); left, St Clare's College 2015 Leadership Group.

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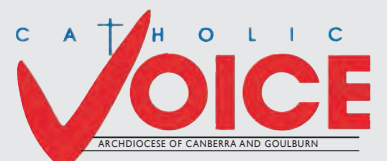
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Written entries are invited for the March issue to: Catholic Voice, PO Box 7174, Yarralumla, ACT 2600, or email ed.voice@cg.catholic.org.au by February 15. Entries which are accepted are free, courtesy of sponsorship by the Catholic Development Fund.

Archdiocesan Coming Events

MUSIC RETREAT

WEEKEND: At St Clement's Retreat and Conference Centre, Galong NSW from Friday, February 6 to Sunday, February 8. The retreat's theme is 'Restore My Spirit' and will be presented by Sr Carmel Pilcher RSJ and Sr Timothy Monaghan RSJ. Singers, instrumentalists and all interested in music for liturgy are invited to come away for a weekend to pray, rest and explore music in liturgy. This is an opportunity to explore music resources, workshop issues, network with musicians and singers from other parishes, learn new music, develop support for people with fewer resources, pray together and be renewed. Contact: Retreat Coordinator, St Clement's Retreat and Conference Centre, Galong, NSW, 2585, email: info@stclement.com.au, phone: (02) 6380 5222, fax: (02) 6386 7353.

MASS FOR LAWYERS:

You are invited to the St Thomas More Forum's Mass for lawyers. Archbishop Christopher Prowse, together with the St Thomas More Forum, invites lawyers and associates, their families and friends to this Mass on Sunday, February 8 at 11am at St Christopher's Cathedral, Furneaux St, Forrest. A section of the Cathedral will be cordoned off for those wishing to attend. To register, email forum@stthomas-more.org.au

ST VALENTINE'S DAY

PARENT INFORMATION SESSION:

John Shay from the Diocese of Cairns will host an information session for parents on speaking to your children about sexuality on Tuesday, February 24 from 7pm to 8.30pm at the Rheinberger Function Centre, corner of Loch and Weston Sts, Yarralumla. Cost by donation, with tea and coffee provided. Mr Shay is a married father of four who is an accredited Family Life Educator who holds a bachelor's degree in Community Welfare and a Master's degree in Theology. John is the manager of Natural Fertility Services Cairns, and is also on the board of Fertility Education Australia, as well as being on the executive of the Australian Council of Natural Family Planning (ACNFP). John has a background in community welfare, youth mentoring, adult discipleship training, evangelisation, motivational speaking, leadership development and faith formation.



MASS: The Parish of St Thomas the Apostle, Kam-bah invites all to celebrate the love, romance and joy of Christian marriage with a St Valentine's celebration Mass on Saturday, February 14 at 6pm. Mass will include a renewal of marriage promises for married couples, and a special blessing for engaged couples. Everyone is welcome. Mass will be followed by an informal meal out together at a local club. Just turn up for the Mass, but please RSVP if you would like to join us for dinner to Elizabeth (6231 9219) or Trish (6231 8468 ah).

HEALING DAYS: Fr John Rea SM will be in Canberra for the following events at St Benedict's Mission Centre, Narrabundah: Friday February 20 at 5.30pm: Healing Mass and prayer ministry. Saturday February 21 from 10am-3.30pm (registration required): Lenten retreat; talks and Mass (Greg Collins Wing). Sunday February 22

at 7pm: Charismatic Healing Mass and prayer ministry. Registration (9.30am-10am) cost: \$25, concession: \$15. Please make cheques/ money orders payable to St Benedict's Parish. Address: Fr John Rea's Retreat PO Box 55, Narrabundah ACT 2604. All enquiries/registration: (02) 6295 7879 (Mon-Thurs 9am-3pm).

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER:

Start the New Year off with a bang! Spend a weekend with your spouse at a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend. The peaceful setting of this weekend enrichment is a great way to rekindle the romance in your marriage. Weekend date: 6-8 March at Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville, NSW. To apply contact Ardell and Bill Sharpe, phone (02) 4283 3435 or email wsharpe@bigpond.net.au. For more information about Worldwide Marriage Encounter,

visit www.wwme.org.au.

PILGRIMAGE TO MARY MACKILLOP PLACE NORTH SYDNEY:

Wednesday, March 11, coach departs from Holy Trinity Church, Curtin at 6.30am; and from St Joseph's Church, O'Connor at 7am. For bookings from Canberra and Goulburn phone Judy and Joe Mewburn on (02) 6254 6202.

REGULAR EVENTS

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:

St Benedict's, Narrabundah, Monday 8am-10pm, Tuesday 12pm-10pm, Wednesday and Thursday 1pm-10pm and Friday 7am-Saturday 8am. All welcome.

AMICUS: Support & friendship/social group for widowed, separated or divorced Catholics; regular activities on second and fourth weekends. New members welcome. Inquiries:

Asylum seekers: a way forward

The two articles published previously proposed six measures that, if adopted, would provide a more compassionate and realistic response to people seeking asylum in Australia. This last article outlines four other measures that the Archdiocese's Catholic Social Justice Commission (CSJC) considers should be taken.

ASYLUM seekers who arrive in Australia by boat after the previous Government's announcement of 19 July 2013 but had embarked before that date or up to a week after should be treated under the rules that applied before 19 July 2013. The former group could not have been aware of the policy change before they embarked, and many of the latter group might well have been confused at best.

Asylum seekers who arrive in Australia as their first port of call (whether by sea or air) should be processed onshore. If they are found to be refugees, they should be granted Australian residency in accordance with Article 31 (1) of the Refugee Convention.

The Government should meet its election commitment to work with regional partners for the creation of a "comprehensive Regional Deterrence Framework" that includes an undertaking by Australia to double its humanitarian intake as specified in the first article.

Measures taken to "stop the boats" should be presented to Parliament for scrutiny. This would go some way to alleviating the widespread concern felt about the development and implementation of existing policy.

To conclude, existing policy on asylum seekers is inhumane and costly. This, and the preceding two articles, outline a path that the Commission considers to be more moral and realistic.

Len, phone (02) 6299 6606; Pat (02) 6292 1631, Enid (02) 6296 5592.

GOOD SHEPHERD PRAYER GROUP:

Meets Wednesdays 7pm-9.30pm, parish room, St Peter Chanel's Church, Yarralumla, ACT. Rosary, charismatic praise and worship, teachings, testimonies, prayer ministry, intercession and fellowship. Inquiries: Susanna, phone 0419 902 293, Neda 0415 266 019, Gabriel 0432 082 642.

HOLY SPIRIT SECULAR FRANCISCAN

FRATERNITY: Third Friday of the month, 7.30pm, St John Vianney's, Waramanga. Secular Franciscans try to follow Christ in the footsteps of St Francis. Inquiries: Tony, phone 0407 072 139, Frank 0400 793 260, email sfo@fastmail.fm.

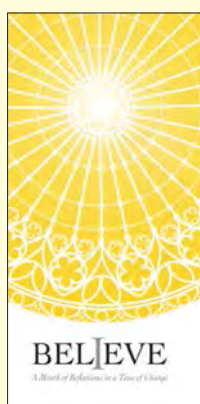
MINISTRY TO THE NEWLY MARRIED:

A mentoring program for newly married couples, just married, or soon-to-be married. Contact Catharina and Graham and Debbie and Brian, phone (02) 6231 3389 or 0414 878 167, email: mmm@grapevine.com.au.

SUNG SOLEMN MASS

Mass using the Roman Canon with Cantor support for parts such as the Kyrie and Sanctus and classical hymnody from The Catholic Hymn Book is offered each Sunday at 11am at St Joseph's Church, O'Connor. The Mass includes a longer sermon that focuses on the Lectionary texts.

For more information, contact Rev Dr P A McGavin, University of Canberra Catholic Chaplain: drpamcgavin@bigpond.com



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Former Hennessey Catholic College student Isaac Smith celebrates winning the 2014 AFL premiership with fans. PHOTO: QUINN ROONEY / GETTY IMAGES



In the space of just a few short years, Isaac Smith's gone from Catholic schoolboy to AFL hero

BY MATTHEW BIDDLE

FIVE years ago, Isaac Smith was an unknown country footballer about to start a university degree in sports management.

Today, he's in an elite group of AFL footballers who have won two premierships, having been an important part of Hawthorn's back-to-back flags in 2013 and 2014.

But the 26-year-old hasn't let success and fame get the better of him, remaining true to his Catholic upbringing and holding fast to his beliefs and values.

The former Hennessey Catholic College student comes from a strong Catholic family, and his father, Wayne, has been involved in Catholic education for more than 30 years.

As such, Isaac was educated at several Catholic schools, as the family moved between Young, Temora and Cootamundra.

"Both mum and dad, probably mum more so, had a very strong faith, and we were brought up with all the Catholic values," he said.

"My faith has obviously shaped the person that I am today and the values and morals that I live by. As long as I can keep living like that I'll be happy."

The Hawks wingman says he's most grateful for the upbringing he had and the faith formation he received, both at home and at school.

"My family still live pretty strongly by those values and that way of life and I believe it's a great way to be," he said.

"So I'm very happy that I was brought up in that kind of family and that type of schooling, and that all the people who probably surrounded me in my life were of the same thought."

Isaac's dad says the Catholic faith has always been very important to the whole family.

"Isaac has a very, very heavy commitment, but I'd like to think he's been influenced by his mother and father in terms of our faith," Wayne says.

"We always said to him that your faith's important, and he knows that very much. He usually says a prayer before he goes on the field... and he has a deep spirituality."

Wayne, who is currently a

deputy principal at Padua College in Victoria, says Isaac and his three sisters have a particularly strong concern for matters of social justice.

"Christ never judged people and he met people where they were at, and that's something that we've really instilled in our children," Wayne says.

For Isaac, living his Catholic faith on a daily basis through his actions and the choices

kids out there I believe can have a huge positive influence."

While some elite level sportspeople have raised concerns over being held up as role models, Isaac says being in a position where people look up to you presents a great opportunity.

"If you can be a positive influence on their life then that's a great way to be," he says. "You probably only have to change one or two lives and that filters

in a sporting environment and you've got to be able to forgive and you've got to be able to move on," he says.

"Being in a sporting environment, especially a team environment, just speeds up the process of those values."

The fame and media attention that comes from playing at the highest level hasn't bothered Smith, who says he still lives the same lifestyle he did prior to being drafted by the Hawks in 2010.

"It's a big change, and life takes you and pulls you in different directions, which is pretty fun and interesting at times, but I wouldn't say when I get home it's changed too much," he says.

"Throughout life everyone changes... but I believe that my morals and my values have stayed the same and I'll just keep trying to live like that."

As for the future, Smith says he intends to keep riding the wave of success and enjoying both football and life.

"Life's too short to not enjoy it, so hopefully we can keep winning premierships and keep being positive role models in the community," he said.

“My faith has obviously shaped the person that I am today and the values and morals that I live by. As long as I can keep living like that, I'll be happy.”



- Isaac Smith

he makes is of the highest importance.

"Everything I do has been based around those values and morals of how I want to live," he said.

"To be a good person and an honest person and to be a strong role model for a lot of

down and it grows and grows."

The talented left-footer says he always loved football and wanted to play at the elite level, but he also believes sport is, as Pope Francis once described it, "a noble vocation".

"You've got to be pretty open and honest when you're