



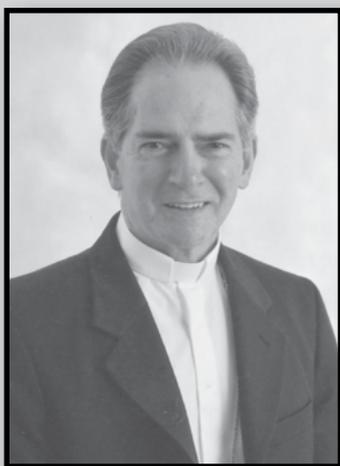
CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of
BALLARAT



OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

News around the Diocese

No. 57 March 2019



A COUNCIL FOR AUSTRALIA

Over the past ten months, people all around Australia have been meeting to share their thoughts on what they see as important issues for the Church in our time. They have been looking ahead to an Australian Plenary Council that will be held in 2020-2021. They have considered what topics the Council should address.

Launched on the feast of Pentecost 2018, the first stage of the Plenary Council process has been dedicated to listening and dialogue. By the time this stage ended on March 6 this year, around 70,000 people had become involved. They had expressed their views in writing, either individually or as members of groups. A team at the National Centre for Pastoral Research is now analysing the submissions to see what key themes have emerged. These themes will be announced at Pentecost this year (June 9) and will form the basis of further discussion leading to the framing of the agenda for the first session of the Plenary Council in October 2020.

Hardly anyone living today would remember the last Australian Plenary Council. It was held in 1937, over 80 years ago. Yet, meeting to address important issues has been part of the life of the community from the very early days of the Church. In the Acts of the Apostles we find an account of a council held in Jerusalem just twenty years or so after the death and resurrection of Christ.

Most of the first followers of Christ were Jewish. However, the gospel quickly spread to people of various nationalities (the Gentiles) and soon there was debate about whether those Christians who were not Jews should still be bound by all the demands of the Jewish law. For example, were they bound to be circumcised? Were they bound to observe all the Jewish regulations about what foods they could eat? In the Acts of the Apostles we read that “the apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter” (Acts 15:6). There was a lengthy debate. The final speakers were Peter, Paul, Barnabas and James. They came to a consensus that the Gentiles should not be required to observe all the Jewish regulations. They believed that the Holy Spirit had guided their decision. In a letter to the Gentile Christians, they wrote, “It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials” (15:28). Their plan of action received “the consent of the whole Church” (15:22).

In this council in Jerusalem, we can see elements that would become regular ingredients in the life of the Church in the following years. When facing questions that needed to be resolved, members of the Church have often followed the lead of those first Christian communities. They have met together to consider the matter. They have held a council of some kind. There has been prayer, calling on the Holy Spirit for guidance. There has been debate – frequently vigorous and lengthy. Finally, the leaders of the community would sum up what they saw as the key points that had emerged in the debate under the influence of the Holy Spirit. They would propose a plan and call on the whole Church to put the plan into action.

As the centuries have passed, there have been gatherings large and small, addressing issues for a local community or for a region or for a whole country or even for the Church throughout the world. A gathering involving a region or province is called a “provincial council”. A gathering involving a whole country is called a “plenary council”, bringing together the “plenary” or “full” complement of the dioceses of a nation. The gathering planned for Australia in 2020-2021 is such a national or plenary council. A gathering involving representatives of the Church from all around the world is called an “ecumenical council”. The largest such council in history was held in the 1960s in St Peter’s Basilica in Rome.

On January 25, 1959, Pope John XXIII announced his plan to convoke the church’s twenty-first ecumenical council. It would be the first such council in 90 years. It would be the first since the council held at the Vatican in 1869-70. The new council would also be held at the Vatican and came to be called “Vatican II”. After nearly four years of preparation, the council opened on October 11, 1962.

In his speech at the start of the council, Pope John gave thanks for the blessings that councils had brought throughout the ages. “The councils – both the twenty ecumenical ones and the numberless others, also important, of a provincial or regional character which have been held down through the years – all prove clearly the vigour of the Catholic Church and are recorded as shining lights in her annals.”

The Second Vatican Council brought together more than 2,000 bishops from around the world as well as clerical and lay advisors and observers. Pope John spoke of the qualities the participants would need if the council was going to bear the best fruit. “This requires of you serenity of mind, brotherly concord, moderation in proposals, dignity in discussion, and wisdom of deliberation.”

With the encouragement of Pope John and then of Pope Paul VI, the Council took up a wide range of topics concerning the life of the Church and the life of the whole human family. The first document to emerge from the discussions focussed on liturgy, as the source of the Church’s energy and the summit towards which the Church’s activities are

directed. Other documents highlighted the mission shared by all the members of the Church, as well as the particular roles of bishops and priests. Still other documents examined the links between the Catholic Church and other Christian communities and members of other religions. Various documents addressed issues of concern to society as a whole. It had been less than twenty years since the end of the Second World War and the horrors of that war were still vivid in the minds of those who attended the council. So it was understandable that they took up questions of war and peace.

As the Second Vatican Council addressed key issues of the Church in the world of the twentieth century, the Plenary Council of 2020-2021 will be an opportunity for us to address key issues of the Church in Australia in the twenty-first century. In the lead up to the Plenary Council sessions, we all have a chance to contribute by praying that the Holy Spirit will guide us and by sharing our views on any topics we see as important. As we do so, we might recall Pope John's recommendations about the qualities that make for fruitful exchange. May we be blessed with serenity of mind, brotherly and sisterly concord, moderation in proposals, dignity in discussion and wisdom of deliberation.

God bless you all



Paul Bird CSsR - Bishop of Ballarat

AWAKENINGS



2019 sees a new direction in the way Religious Education is taught across Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Ballarat. This new direction responds to the current landscape in which families and Catholic schools operate. The Awakenings Religious Education Curriculum has been supporting the faith education of students in Catholic Schools in the Ballarat Diocese for over ten years. A reshaping of this curriculum continues this support while recognising the complexity of the world in which the students navigate their lives. An informed

religious response to the questions of life often competes with influences coming from media, peers and other aspects of the modern culture in which students live.

Effective religious learning occurs in a supportive setting which recognises and celebrates difference through respectful listening and dialogue with others. In this setting Catholic beliefs and teachings are presented as viable options in the student's quest for fullness of life.

John Meneely, Deputy Director of Catholic Education

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OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY (ODC)

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



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

EDITORIAL BOARD

Sr Geraldine Mugavin, Mrs Julie Boyd, Ms Kate Lawry, Ms Fiona Tonkin, Dr Susan Crowe, Mrs Bernadette Lynch, Fr Adrian McInerney, Mrs Jane Collins.

The next ODC will be in July 2019.
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THE YEAR BEGINS



As over six hundred principals and staff from Ballarat's Primary and Secondary Catholic schools, the Australian Catholic University and the Ballarat Catholic Education Office gathered in St Patrick's Cathedral, the noise grew from a whisper to a gentle roar. The sound of these school communities gathering after their summer break to celebrate the beginning of the 2019 school year with Mass, presided over by Bishop Paul, was exciting and heart-warming to hear.

The theme of the Mass this year was 'Listen with the Ear of your Heart' and as

Bishop Paul, Fr Kevin Maloney (VG), Fr Peter Sherman and Fr Anthony Nagothu entered the Cathedral, the members of the Assembly raised their voices in a joy-filled rendition of the well-known hymn "The Summons".

Bishop Paul's homily spoke on the value of listening deeply, because by listening deeply, it will be possible to hear the wisdom of God. The Gospel of Matthew says "Blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear". Bishop Paul encouraged us to have our eyes open so we can see the light of God, and to listen with the ear of our heart so that we will hear God's message.

Bishop Paul recognised and blessed all who are an integral part of the educational mission of the Church in the Diocese of Ballarat as they commit themselves to this special role. Each school and college from the Central Zone along with a representative from the University and Education Office was presented with a copy of the Gospel reading that was proclaimed during Mass. Bishop Paul invited schools to reflect upon this Gospel reading during the 2019 school year.

Thanks go to all in Catholic Education Ballarat who prepared the celebration and to all who ministered to the Assembly through music, song, proclamation and distribution of the Gospel reading.



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

NEW PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN CENTACARE AND BALLARAT RSL

Centacare have recently welcomed a new partnership with Ballarat RSL to assist young veterans and their transition into civilian life through the Supporting Younger Veterans Program. The collaboration was enabled after receiving a Department of Veterans' Affairs grant that was presented to Centacare and Ballarat RSL by Federal Member for Ballarat, Catherine King.

The initiative will support the veterans' and their families' transition into civilian life and will generate awareness of the services and supports that are available for the recently discharged.

Federal Member for Ballarat, Catherine King said, "Too long these veterans are left to struggle alone and often they are unable to overcome these challenges alone, with too many facing relationship break down and tragically, suicide. I look forward to these two strong organisations - Centacare and the Ballarat RSL - building a strong

relationship which will support many veterans into the future, helping them to overcome the challenges that come with returning into civilian life".

The support offered will include housing, employment, relationship counselling, family and parenting services and mental health services. A strong emphasis throughout the program will be on promoting general health and well-being, enhancing the young veterans and their families lives.

Jenny Phillips - Marketing and Communications Officer



BLESSING OF THE RIVERS

Following the initiative of Rob Rowley, a farmer from the Western District, people from across Victoria responded to the call for healing, repentance, hope and change at the Blessing of the Rivers ceremony at the junction of the Darling and Murray Rivers in Wentworth NSW on Saturday, February 16.

Shane Howard and his sister Adele RSM reached out and pulled the non political event together within three weeks. Adele contacted Sunraysia Mercy Sisters Carmel Setford and Helen Nolen, members of Ballarat Catholic Earthcare. Together with Shane and Sunraysia identity Deb Bogenhuber, they drew the strands of the ritual together.

Readings, prayers, reflections and lament were all part of the ceremony before the ritual blessing and symbolic action of pouring of waters.

It was most moving to see the line of people young and old, and hear each water source named before being poured into the river. Waters came from Cairns, Carnarvon, Wilcannia, Menindee, Swan Hill, Kings Billabong, the Dandenongs, various places in Sunraysia...even from St Brigid's Well in Kildare Ireland.

For further information see: <https://www.mercyworld.org/newsroom/hundreds-turn-out-for-the-blessing-of-the-rivers-ceremony/>



Helen Nolen rsm

L-R: Mercy Sisters Emma Llewellyn, Chris Coughlan, Adele Howard, Carmel Setford, Helen Nolen and Sylvia Williams

For the past thirty-five years the Lake Bolac Catholic Ladies Auxiliary have been supporting the Sneha Bhavan Education and Health Centre in Bangalore, India. This Mission was established by a German Order – The Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus – and cares for young mothers, their babies, families and educational needs. Over the years, we have raised and forwarded in excess of \$10,000. Our donations are always gratefully received and put to good use. In early times money was raised through street stalls, silver circles and luncheons. In more recent years a “Big Morning Tea” allows our generous congregation and friends to donate to the cause. From the beginning of our involvement the Sister in Charge, Sr Gottfrieda, has been our contact. Sr Gottfrieda is now in her nineties, in poor health, but still very interested in the Centre where she has spent the past forty years.



Indian Mission Project

be away only a short time. Sr Jacinta passed away shortly after Sr Gottfrieda's arrival in 1979. The Indian Mission was in grief and turmoil following Sr Jacinta's death. Sr Gottfrieda stayed on to assist – and India became her home.

A PowerPoint presentation of Lake Bolac and surrounds created much interest. Lots of photos were taken, questions asked and information gained for those present. Karola was returning to India and was happy to take a parcel of lovely hand sewn children's clothes (made by a local seamstress), plus a generous cheque, back to the mission. It was a great experience for those of us who were able to attend the gathering and to know that our continued support is so worthwhile.

Helen Smith -Treasurer

President Leanne Breen, Karola, Treasurer Helen Smith, Sr Mary MSC, Sr Carmel MSC

HELPING WITH THE COST OF 'BACK-TO-SCHOOL'

As St Vincent de Paul was winding down its 2018 Christmas Appeal, they were starting to think about what it could do to assist families with 2019's 'Back-to-School' costs.

"For many families 'Back-to-School' is an expensive time. They have just managed the costs of Christmas and school holidays. In 2017, St Vincent de Paul's North West Central Council spent more than it has in the past on education expense relief," said Marie O'Brien, President of the North West Central Council. "Anecdotally we are expecting at least a 25-30% increase in 2019 as the perfect storm of power and education cost increases hits family budgets. A couple of principals have indicated that school excursions could be impacted as farming families deal with fencing and other assets replacement to ensure income."



L-R: Carole Simmons, Ballarat Regional President, Marie O'Brien, St Vincent de Paul's North West Central Council President with Bishop Paul Bird

To assist, the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Foundation, through its Bishop's Charitable Fund, has entered into a three-year partnership with St Vincent de Paul with \$50,000 of cash support for each of the next three years. "These funds will be directed to educational support within the North West Central Council which aligns closely with the boundaries of the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat (which in turn extends over about half of Victoria), and as far as practical would be targeted towards uniforms and shoes, books and excursions," said Mr Andrew Jirik, the Diocesan Business Manager and Foundation Secretary.

Andrew said that if we were to visit the St Vincent de Paul Society's website, we would see that while, for many families across Australia, heading back-to-school is a time of excitement, new clothes, bags and packaged lunches, increasingly there are families who struggle to make the budget stretch as they are forced to choose between providing daily necessities for their children or school supplies.

In a 2017 report, *Back to School – The Real Cost*, St Vincent de Paul pointed out that in 2015, both the State and Federal Governments cut funds that were to assist families with back to school costs. The 2017 school year however was the first time families found themselves having to fund all schooling costs (uniforms, books, fees, IT equipment, camps, excursions) as both the Federal Government education allowance and the Victorian State Government education maintenance payment ceased. The report went on to say that although the Victorian Government provides some financial assistance for camps, excursions and sports (\$125 for primary school students and \$235 for secondary school students) and State Schools Relief can assist with part of uniform expenses (either summer or winter uniform and shoes, but not sports' uniforms), the only other avenue for those parents who struggle with sending a child to school for the first time, particularly at the start of secondary schooling, is to turn to charities such as the St Vincent de Paul Society for assistance.

Andrew said this partnership with St Vinnies is one of the first longer-term arrangements the Foundation and the Bishop's Charitable Fund is hoping to establish within and for the Diocese.



AN AMAZING MILESTONE!

Dorothy O'Reilly turned 105 on February 22, 2019. She was born in Petersborough, South Australia 1914. She married in 1935, aged 21 and had two daughters. Dorothy moved to Daylesford five years ago to live with one of her daughters and is still very independant. She is a very dedicated Catholic and attends Church every Sunday morning. During Sunday Mass on February 24, Fr Gary Jones celebrated Dorothy's 105th birthday with the rest of the parishoners and presented her with flowers.

Photo: Dorothy, holding flowers, is seated next to her daughter at Mass on February 24.

CELEBRATING A CENTURY

Sr Caroline Deutscher IBVM celebrated one hundred years on February 4, 2019 with Loreto Sisters, family and friends.

Sr Caroline grew up in Merino, boarded at Loreto Portland for her secondary schooling, after which she joined the Loreto Sisters in Ballarat. Sr Caroline taught at St Aloysius Redan, All Saints Portland and St Joseph's Lyons Street as well as in Melbourne and interstate. She was on the staff of ACU Aquinas and was active in the Cathedral Parish. Sr Caroline retired in Ballarat.

Sr Caroline celebrated eighty years of religious service in April 2018. Congratulations, Caroline. Thank you for your ministry.

Sr Denise Desmarchelier IBVM



CRUCIAL TRAINING A REALITY

An emergency simulation for paramedic students allowed Ballarat Police a chance to run through the force's new Active Offender Response recently, giving us a very real reminder of what occurred in the Bourke Street attack earlier in the month.

This is the second year Victoria Police have been involved in the major disaster exercise at Australian Catholic University, Ballarat Campus. Ballarat's Superintendent Jenny Wilson said it was important police get as much practical training experience as possible and having other emergency services on scene helped make the exercise as real as possible. "I think it's all on our mind, what happened in (Melbourne's) CBD. What it means for us in a regional area is our members today had elements of a real scenario."



Victorian Chief Commissioner Graham Ashton told media in the wake of Bourke Street, all police had undergone "active shooter" training so first response police were able to confront terrorists rather than wait for special teams or "cordon and contain".



In the ACU exercise, an active gunman had hit students with a car and fled, shooting, into a nearby building. Explosive devices were also detonated in the campus quadrangle. Police were assessed and given immediate feedback in the training scenario. State Emergency Services, Ambulance Victoria, Country Fire Authority, The Alfred and Ballarat Health Services staff were also involved as final year nursing-paramedicine students worked through the mass casualty scene.

ACU Associate Professor Helen Webb, also an Army Reserves Captain, said in reality emergency services worked together and having professionals now using Ex Code Black for training reinforced the importance of this training. "Our students have an opportunity to work alongside emergency services for real," Associate Professor Webb said. "We know with previous incidents in the world, the best outcomes in emergencies are when service personnel know each other."

Preparations for this scenario have been six months in the making. More than two hundred people, including volunteer alumni, were involved in bringing the situation to life. ACU Campus Dean Bridget Aitchison said the scene was so graphic because mass casualty events were increasingly a reality. "One of the issues in a crisis is you don't know how you're going to respond in the moment," Professor Aitchison said. "...They can make mistakes here without lives at stake."

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Melanie Whelan and pictures by Lachlan Bence

STUDENT AWARDED THE SPIRIT OF ANZAC PRIZE

Ben Wright, a Year 10 Damascus College Ballarat student, has recently been awarded the Premier's Spirit of ANZAC Prize, from a field of more than four hundred applicants from Victorian Schools. Ben will join a group of twenty-two students to visit Vietnam and Singapore this April, where he will undertake a once-in-a-lifetime tour of these two countries.

Ben recently received the prize from the Minister for Veteran Affairs at an award ceremony held on Thursday, February 14 at the Park Hyatt, Melbourne.

This prize was open to Year 9 and 10 students currently enrolled in a Victorian school, where students were required to firstly attend a group interview in Melbourne at the Shrine of Remembrance, and then to submit an entry that addressed one of the three topics selected from WWI, WWII, the Vietnam War or more recent conflicts.

For his written submission Ben chose the first topic, which asked applicants to "explore or represent the perspectives and experiences of Australians in war." The subject of his report was the lesser known war location of Mesopotamia (now Iraq) during World War I.

Ben said that one of his passions is flying, and that he was delighted to find that the Australian involvement in Mesopotamia in the Great War was exclusively aeronautical.

"One of the key factors I wanted to show in my entry was the perspectives of people who were in combat and how their attitudes towards war and what they were doing changed as time progressed. To convey this I created five diary entries to provide a realistic view of a pilot in Mesopotamia. I chose the diary format so I could get inside the head of my character and his attitude towards the war," he said.

During his research, Ben visited the RAAF Base Williams at Point Cook in Melbourne, which is an extensive museum with lots of information and artefacts as well as many full sized aeroplanes.

"The main point of my entry is to alert people to the fact that during the First World War, Gallipoli and the Western Front were not the only places where Australians fought and died, and that the war was just as bad in those other theatres. I feel as though Mesopotamia is somewhat forgotten in the shadow of Gallipoli and the Western Front and I hope that my work will remind readers that the 'Spirit of Anzac' is found just as much in distant lands as in better known places."

Brendan Bawden, Damascus College teacher, has also been chosen to go on this trip, as he is one of three chosen teacher chaperones. The group will depart for Vietnam and Singapore on Sunday, April 7 returning Wednesday, April 17. The prize includes accommodation, food and flights, meaning Ben will only need to pay for his spending money.

Sarah Boswell - Leader of School Development



Exploring Science

St Aloysius Parish School Redan Year 1/2 students had a wonderful time at Federation University Ballarat exploring science.

Gearing up in mini lab coats for a hands on science experiment, the children well and truly immersed themselves in their 'force and motion' lesson ... and in softdrink! Lucky the lab coats were waterproof!

Thank you to Federation University for hosting such an informative excursion. Thank you also to the parents who were able to help out on the day.

Michael Kennedy – Principal

PRACTISING SKILLS

The Loreto College Ballarat VCAL program teaches real work skills and the students have been practising their skills making and serving coffee from the Hunter Coffee Van, the St Patrick's College Ballarat and Loreto College VCAL co-creation.

The vibrant little van currently sits proudly in the Loreto Indigenous Garden Courtyard and comes to life for special occasions such as Valentine's Day, where students and staff were treated to drinks and treats prepared and served by the highly capable team of students.

One of their next projects is participating once again in *Plate Up Ballarat*, where they will have the opportunity to share a new food creation in the successful regional event.



Judy-Ann Quilliam - Director of Marketing and Development

CHAMPION OF THE COMMUNITY

Buloke Shire Council announced its Australia Day Award winners at its inaugural Australia Day Eve event held in Wycheproof on Friday, January 25.

Alison McClelland, Citizen of the Year, had her amazing contributions to the Buloke community acknowledged by winning the prestigious award.

Alison is Administration Officer at St Mary's Primary School Sea Lake and has given many years of service to the Sea Lake community. She has been a long time contributor to the Sea Lake Off Road Club, filling the pivotal role of Secretary for the Mallee Rally. She is also the Chair of Advance Sea Lake and it was through this position she launched one of Buloke's great success stories. With Alison's efforts and those of the Green Lake Committee, water has been returned to the popular lake. This undertaking cannot be underestimated. The lobbying and crafting of the successful campaign was arduous but ultimately satisfying for Alison, and importantly, for the whole community.



"Alison is a champion of her community. Hard working, passionate and determined, when you think back across the last 12 months in Buloke Shire and all that has been achieved, Alison is central to a lot of wonderful outcomes. Seeing water returned to Green Lake has brought so much joy to so many people and without Alison, the lake bed would probably still be sitting dry right now. Alison is always looking to broaden the economic and social base of Sea Lake and despite her busy lifestyle continues to move the town forward," said Mayor Cr Carolyn Stewart.

Congratulations Alison, well done.

Article courtesy of the Buloke Shire Council, Travis Fitzgibbon, Manager Customer Engagement



Our Diocesan Community - March 2019

WELCOME

The Redemptorist Order is sponsoring five newly ordained Priests to work in our diocese for this year. The aim behind this endeavour is to give them further practical experience working in parish settings. We welcome

them to the diocese and wish them well. Fr Vincent Pham CSsR - Cathedral; Fr Vincensius Lolo (Lovin) CSsR - Redan; Fr Mark Chia CSsR - Maryborough; Fr Son Nguyen CSsR - Ararat; Fr Doan Nguyen CSsR - Hamilton

L-R: Chris, Fr Doan, Bishop Paul, Fr Lovin, Fr Son, Fr Vincent, Fr Mark

Plenary Council 2020 in Terang and Mortlake

An initial meeting in the parishes was held where we introduced the concept of the Plenary Council and what it was all about. This meeting was well attended and led by visiting priests. There was little structure suggested at this stage but it was obvious many parishioners had concerns, although tentative and guarded in their opinions at this first gathering. Discontent, fear and grieving were obvious.

Some parishioners had also taken the opportunity to travel to Ballarat and Warrnambool for further information delivered by expert speakers on the matter. They came back to the parishes with renewed determination to delve deeper into the hearts and minds of our faith community.

On the weekend of December 3, 2018 parishioners of St Thomas' Terang and St Colman's Mortlake were informed of our intention to drive the Plenary discussions in our parishes. Fr Gerry had spoken previously indicating the nature of the Plenary Council and our invitation to be part of it.

Lay people organised and made detailed announcements at each of the weekend Masses, making clear that all were welcome, particularly those who were distanced or apart from the Church. All were urged to contribute. Every opinion and question would be accepted, listened to and discussed. Forms for leaders and participants were left in the foyer for parishioners to sign up and they were all contacted for preferences and suggested group involvement. Some parishioners chose to do their individual submissions and a couple indicated they were having discussion with immediate families as Christmas was a good time to catch up and talk of contemporary issues.

We set about planning a gathering in the Pub on December 12 as we thought Advent gave impetus for spiritual focus and a good reason to come together. The Pub Pot and Parma was advertised on our newsletters and in the local newspapers to reach as many as possible. We would gauge how to resume and organise our gatherings in the new year leading up to Ash Wednesday as a result of this initial social and serious occasion.

Early February 2019 we resumed our planning, working out a time line leading up to Ash Wednesday. In it we indicated our cut off time for all group responses and the date the team were meeting to put together our final responses.

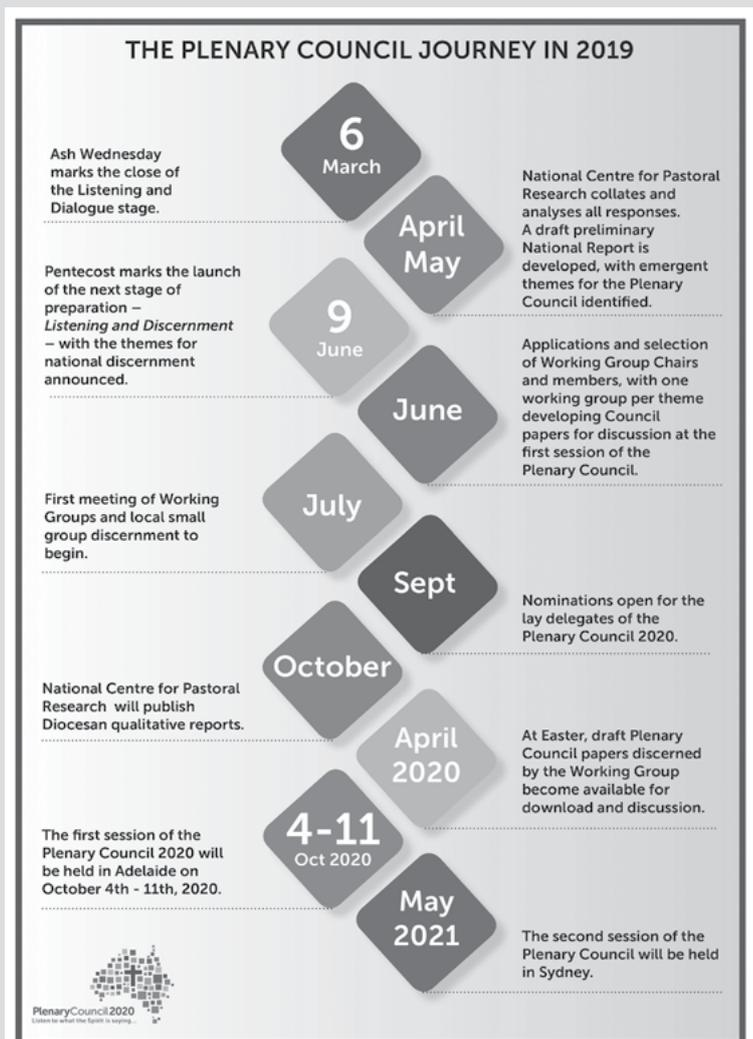
We took this listening and dialogue for the Plenary Council very seriously. We saw this opportunity as an important means of having a say in the future of a Church we have been nourished by, have invested in spiritually and materially, and have tried to pass on to our children. We have also been deeply hurt and dismayed by the actions and lack of action taken by those in authority. Things have to change and the will to do so must be harnessed and strengthened.

We urge the Council to have courage and trust in the Spirit of Change who must be listened to, in and through the people of God.

In all approximately one hundred people actively took time to make submissions collectively or individually and one hundred and seventy-five mass goers contributed to our survey.

We wish to thank our Parish Priest Fr Gerry Prunty who has supported all of our efforts and maintained a sensitive presence during this active and interesting time. We also thank our faith community for entering in to the spirit of the council, contributing by praying, discernment, dialoguing, listening, commenting, writing and allowing themselves to be caught up in the movement and inspiration of it all.

May the work continue.



Marie Ewing, for the Plenary team St Thomas' and St Colman's

Photo: The process from here courtesy of www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER: SLOVENIA

Every year the worship service focuses on a different country and a specific theme. The 2019 country was Slovenia and the theme was 'Come Everything is Ready'.

And indeed everything was ready at Sacred Heart Church in Mildura.

Over seventy women and men gathered from our various faith traditions to sing and pray together in solidarity with our sisters and brothers from Slovenia. We were blessed to experience some of the rich culture of Slovenia through the wonderful contribution of our Slovenian parishioners and their partners from neighbouring countries including Croatia. Jozika Gerden gathered a band of willing helpers to share their story of joy through adversity, in their customs and traditional dress, artifacts, music, handcrafts and food. The Monaghan Centre was abuzz after the service with the sumptuous spread.



Helen Nolen rsm

Top: Daniela and Jozika beside the display
Bottom: Rosemarie and Edward Zalec, Agata Tonc and Barbara Gerden

COMPLIANCE OF STANDARDS

The Diocese of Ballarat is taking part in an audit by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) which will be conducted in May.

Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) is committed to fostering a culture of safety and care for children and vulnerable adults. This is done through three main strategies:

- Setting the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards for use across the Catholic Church in Australia.
- Supporting Catholic entities to develop the knowledge, skills and capacity to implement appropriate safeguards through the provision of training, policy development and advice.
- Auditing and publicly reporting on compliance by Catholic entities with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

CPSL is a company established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. In effect, the audit of the Diocese will assess compliance of the ten national standards which provide the framework for Catholic Church entities to build child-safe cultures and to advance the safety of children across the Catholic Church in Australia.

The Diocese will follow an audit schedule which includes completing the Entity Demographics for the Diocese as well as a Self-Assessment of Compliance for Diocesan entities (including parishes) and a Declaration of Assurance and Compliance (for regulated entities such as Education and Centacare).

CPSL will review the documentation and provide the Diocese with a document request for evidence to support their self-assessment.

CPSL will also visit the Diocese including parishes and conduct interviews to look at compliance. As part of the fieldwork for the audit, it is anticipated that the auditors will visit ten parishes. It is probable that the parish visits will involve interviews with the Parish Priest, members of the Parish Leadership Team and the Parish Safeguarding Officer; review of documents; and testing, which will include looking at evidence that safeguarding policies and practices are being applied by the Parish.

The audit results will be published. More information on CPSL can be found at this link - <https://www.cpsltd.org.au>

Michael Myers - Professional Standards Co-ordinator, Catholic Diocese of Ballarat.

DISCERNMENT

A great message from scripture for us is that of discernment and this is especially so for the Diocesan Archive. We know that over the past fifty years in particular, it has often been difficult to access diocesan documents. Today our archive is bound by Canon Law, Church regulations, state and federal laws to retain all documents whether hard copy or electronic, between authorities and subordinates relating to specific areas of life and administrative decisions.

Not only Australian standards but Vatican guidelines highlight the necessity to have a professionally qualified archivist/records manager. This is why, in Australia, it is necessary that such persons carry the acronym ASAAP after their names with the final AP indicating that they are accredited by the national Society of Archivists. It is the responsibility of an archivist to discern what is relevant to carry the story of an organisation and a people into the future, warts and all.

At the beginning of the year, we issued a call through the parish bulletins for interested people to nominate for the Diocesan Historical Commission. This was followed in e-News by a brief article on how we see our role at the archive and where the Historical Commission supports the archive. Thanks to a great response, we should be able to open the collection up to view for more people via the diocesan website or Victorian Collections. Watch this space!

Many items have been on loan to galleries including the National Museum in Canberra, National Gallery of Victoria, regional galleries and many church exhibitions over the years. This demonstrates the way in which we practice our stewardship of the material culture of the Catholic community across the region. It also allows us to share this legacy for the wider community's understanding of our Catholic culture and the work of creative artists such as Thomas Gaunt.

Examples from the archive which have been on display are:

- The 19th Century Red Cloth-of-Gold-vestments exhibited in Melbourne and Ararat Art Galleries in 2000 & 2005; and
- The Gold Chalice presented to Bishop Foley from the parishioners of Terang 1916, exhibited in the National Gallery of Victoria in 1985.

There are also the humble but equally important items made by local parishioners from across the region such as the embroidered chalice cover from Daylesford in the 1940s, or the embroidered and hand-painted stole from Watchem in the 1930s.

Supporting all these objects is a vast archive of documentation recording the story of the people from Werrimul in the north-west to Fairhaven in the south-east of the diocese. This collection is about far more than objects, as this diocese nurtured the lay apostolate and the National Catholic Rural Movement in Australia in the first half of the twentieth century and following Vatican II.

Michael Taffe - Diocesan Archivist & Secretary Ballarat Diocesan Historical Commission

JOY SPREADING CONTINUES

Joy Spreading continues! A small group of young adults again gathered at the Lake View Hotel in Ballarat on Friday, February 22, for an open and informal conversation with Bishop Paul Bird. The topics we discussed included the call to vocation and becoming a bishop, finding peace in life and reflecting on what motto would best describe ourselves. The group were particularly engaged when the Bishop spoke about pastoral care as a key part of his role.

He also spoke about travel which has been a significant part of his earlier work as a Redemptorist and now as a bishop, both within and outside the diocese. The evening concluded with food and general socialising. For all event dates and other information, please keep your eyes on the diocesan website. Ballarat Youth & Young Adult Ministry is committed to supporting young people across the diocese in their journeys of faith.

Patrick Kennedy, Youth and Young Adult Ministry Project Worker



A NEW MODEL FOR GOVERNANCE IN CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Following consultation with the priests and many involved in Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat, Bishop Paul Bird is pleased to announce a new approach to the governance of parish primary and secondary schools in our diocese.

The new model for school governance has emerged from a long-term project undertaken by a governance working party of the Ballarat Diocesan Schools Advisory Council (BDSAC). The working party, which commenced in 2012, has developed a model of school governance that will provide consistency and professionalism of governance for parish schools. It will also enable the continued pastoral ministry of priests in parish schools, without them being employers of staff. This latter point was one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

In line with recommendations of the working party, Bishop Paul has established a company limited by guarantee, Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL), and appointed a board of directors to govern those parish schools where no priest is available for active governance and those parish schools where the parish priest elects (on behalf of the parish) to transfer responsibility for governance to the company. The inaugural chair of the DOBCEL board is Ms Tracey O'Neill.

The board of the company will report directly to Bishop Paul as the bishop of the diocese and as the member of the company. The board will replace the Ballarat Diocesan Schools Advisory Council in the roles of developing and recommending diocesan education policy. Day to day management of the schools governed by the company will be delegated to the Director of Catholic Education, supported by staff of the Catholic Education Office Ballarat (CEOB). Principals will continue to have the appropriate delegations to lead and manage their schools and their staff, supported by the Director of Catholic Education and CEOB staff.



DOBCEL Board: Anne Pekin, Terry Harney, Helen Weadon, Fr Peter Sherman, Tracey O'Neill, Stephen McArdle, Sr Berenice Kerr, Fr Andrew Hayes, Bishop Paul

Our Diocesan Community - March 2019



THE LORETO YEAR OF SINCERITY

Loreto College has its foundation in the gospel of Jesus Christ and is proud to be part of and contribute to the larger Catholic community. Loreto College ensures that our students, staff and the Loreto Community never lose sight of our role in this region and the reach of our global footprint through the Loreto Mission and Values that guide our distinctive Loreto Education. To this day, the Loreto Values - Felicity, Sincerity, Verity, Justice and Freedom - remain the pillars at the heart of a Loreto Education. Each year in turn, one of the Loreto Values is celebrated throughout the entire year in prayer, education and action. By the time a student graduates, the Loreto Values are deeply instilled in their hearts, guiding our past and present students as they take their place in the world.

The Loreto Value for 2019 is Sincerity. Our students proudly wear the Sincerity badge on their blazer lapel (presented to each student and staff member at the Opening School Mass) as they learn and embrace all that Sincerity means. Led by the staff, College Co-Captains and Student Senate, the Sincerity badge and prayer become an anchor for celebration throughout the year.

In the spirit of Mary Ward, who encouraged us to "be such as we appear and appear such as we are", Loreto students learn that sincerity in communication and relationship with others is an essential characteristic of personal integrity. The mutual trust and appreciation that build on sincerity, the ability to celebrate without envy the achievements of others and the capacity for loyalty are qualities of genuine friendship. Everyone in the school community shares in this pastoral responsibility which involves knowing, accepting, respecting and encouraging each student as an individual and modelling a consistency between words and actions. (Loreto Schools of Australia Mission Statement).

Judy-Ann Quilliam -Director of Marketing and Development
Student co-captains for 2019, Tessa Canny and Hannah Augustine

Seminar Days 2019

St Joseph's College Mildura holds year level Seminar Days as a component of our Religious Education Program. Mr Chris Doyle from Karis Ministries in Sydney conducted the Year 11 and Year 9 Seminar Days; Mr Scott Darlow led our Year 12 and Year 10 students for one day each; and Dr Tony Finn conducted the first Seminar Day for our Year 12 students.

These Seminar Days aim to give students the opportunity to commence the year at St Joseph's College as year level groups, with time to reflect on the key beliefs and practices of the Catholic Tradition, the values of our College and personal values of the students in regard to relationships and a range of issues. These days provide a chance to build a sense of community within the year level groups and to ensure that 2019 is a time of mutual support and respect for each other. Students were given the opportunity to further develop their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic vision of social justice and the challenge that this brings to us as a community and as individuals.

The Seminar Days were an excellent opportunity for all of the different year levels to commence 2019 as a group, building a sense of community and support that will be of enormous value over the year. All students participated in the Seminar Days with a positive attitude and a willingness to make the most of the experience. The program provided time for personal reflection and group interaction.

Hannah Files-Burke - Personal Assistant to Deputy Principals



Diocesan Finance Council Scholarships

In 2018 the Diocesan Finance Council established eleven new scholarships (one for each of the Catholic Secondary Schools in the Diocese) which are to be awarded to a Year 10 student, moving into Years 11 and 12, who has demonstrated leadership potential and student advocacy, community involvement characterised by actions for justice, and consistent academic application reflective of a commitment to study.

The recipients of these inaugural awards in 2018 were: Hayley Little, Marian College; Emmanuelle Blythe, Loreto College; Jack Sampi, St Patrick's College; Hayley Wason, Mercy Regional College; Meg Nelson, Trinity College; Tahlia Mottram, Monivae College; Rachelle Ough, St

Brigid's College; Pathama Wankhuan, St Joseph's College; Jude Skewes-Clinton, Damascus College; Tynan Connellan, St Mary MacKillop College; Caitlin Garner, Emmanuel College.

Andrew Jirik - Diocesan Business Manager

St Patrick's College's recipient, Jack Sampi with Headmaster, Mr John Crowley

FAREWELL BUT NOT YET

Amanda Smith finished her full-time role as Pastoral Services Consultant on February 17. So that there can be some continuity while a new employee is being sought, Amanda will be continuing one day a week until the end of May supporting the key areas that she works in. Amanda thanks all those who have contacted her following the announcement.

Bishop Paul mentioned in his announcement that Amanda is going to work with the University of Divinity. She will be executive officer for a new Strategic Goal that the University of Divinity has initiated. The Goal is named 'Responding to the Royal Commission' and its aim is "to resource the churches and religious orders and Australian community to make effective and comprehensive responses to the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional

Responses to Child Sexual Abuse." The University of Divinity is the leading institution in Australia for the formation and education of people for formal ministry. The University comprises eleven Colleges from different Christian denominations. The Colleges are supported by thirty partners, including churches, their dioceses and religious orders. Through research and engagement, this Strategic Goal aspires to support the University's partners to make a full, effective and life-giving response.



As mentioned, Amanda is not saying farewell quite yet and looks forward to being with the diocese part-time for the next couple of months. Her email address and phone numbers remain the same. We wish Amanda well in her new role.

HEALING A NATION THROUGH EDUCATION

In January, six teachers from the Diocese of Ballarat embarked on a mission to Myanmar as part of the ongoing Myanmar Project, jointly supported by Catholic Education Ballarat and Catholic Mission. This is the third occasion that a group of teachers has spent time working with trainee teachers, educational leaders and other Church leaders in Myanmar.



This trip was a gift to us as educators. Through sharing our craft, we continued our professional growth. Through travel to Myanmar, we discovered a generous community with a passion for education that inspired us. Through working closely with others, we were given the gift of new friends. We learnt about a turbulent history, we learnt appreciation and simplicity, we learnt love and empathy, we learnt from each other and we even learnt something about ourselves as members of the universal Church.



Each group, although in different parts of Myanmar, experienced a graciousness and generosity that were an absolute delight. We all met with students who were open to and receptive to new learning.

For those who have made donations to Catholic Mission, we saw your dollars well spent. We saw new buildings at the foundation level. We saw schools where there were none before. We saw graduate teachers receiving more comprehensive training. We saw commitment, compassion and a burning desire to make a difference and possibly life long change.

The people of Myanmar are extremely proud of their new schools and we, as a diocese, can feel proud of the small contribution that we are continuing to make in supporting them on this brave and critical endeavour.

Samantha Meerbach and Stacey Atkins

Top: Samantha Meerbach in Moby

Bottom: Kathryn Lynn and Shahne Wilkinson in Hakha



GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION

"I'll meet you at the airport next Saturday so you'll get to the dance at the Vic!" With these words, Ed Carmody farewelled his daughter Margaret at the Melbourne Airport enroute to Pennant Hills, Sydney, as she left Coragulac to enter the

Sisters of the Good Samaritan Novitiate. The date was February 2, 1966. Fast forward to January 8, 2019, and with great joy family and friends of Sr Margaret gathered at St Mary's Church Colac to celebrate her Golden Jubilee with a Mass of Thanksgiving, hosted by Fr Michael O'Toole.

Mass was concelebrated by nine priests with Bishop Peter Connors the main celebrant and Fr Patrick Mugavin preaching the Homily. Sr Margaret's grandnieces and grandnephews proudly participated in the Entrance and Recessional Processions, as well as presenting a lighted candle to each of the fifteen Good Samaritan Sisters who were able to be present.

Fr Michael then invited Sr Margaret and the Sisters attending to renew their vows together. For the reflection

'The Rose' was sung by Danila Kavenagh and Jamie McGuane, niece and nephew of Sr Margaret, and on behalf of the family, Danila thanked those assembled for sharing Sr Margaret's journey and celebration.

Family and friends travelled from Melbourne, Shepparton, Ballarat, Hamilton, Geelong and Cororooke, and with the members of St Mary's community enjoyed a wonderful celebration and the hospitality provided and served by St Mary's Catering Ladies and The Farmer's Son.



50th Anniversary Celebration

In 2018, St Joseph's Parish Red Cliffs celebrated fifty years since the consecration and dedication of our church. A special banner was made and placed on the altar representing fifty years of Faith, Hope and Community.

The day began with a special Mass celebrated by Bishop Paul Bird, Fr Michael McKinnon and Fr Pat Flanagan. During Mass, Tim Lewis led the music beautifully as usual, along with the amazing Marimba Band students from St Joseph's School.

Following Mass the congregation, as well as many visitors, were treated to a delicious luncheon in St Joseph's Primary School Hall, catered for by Grace Brizzi. The Hall was decorated with gold balloons and a large display of memorabilia from the past fifty years, creating a nostalgic talking point. Everyone was treated to some lovely entertainment from the Religious Education children of Irymple South Primary School, under the guidance of Dianne Eagle, followed by the amazing voices and cultural dancing of the Mapapalangi family.

The beautiful anniversary cake was made by our parishioner Mrs Njegovan and was cut by Bishop Paul, along with Sylvia Orr, a long serving parishioner and mother of the first baby baptised in our Church.

Many thanks to everyone who attended and to those who assisted in any way in making this such a special occasion.

Cheryn Cavallaro



STUDENT LEADERS MASS 2019

A tradition that has been an annual feature of College Life since Bishop Connors came to Ballarat was held again on March 5 with Fr Peter Sherman standing in for Bishop Paul Bird. The student leaders of the Catholic Secondary Colleges in Ballarat - Damascus College, St Patrick's College and Loreto College, gathered at St Patrick's Cathedral on the day before the beginning of Lent to acknowledge their role in their colleges. Fr Peter challenged the school leaders to follow Jesus' witness and to reach out to those most in need this year. He especially recommended that young leaders offer support to those who have emotional difficulties. He asked the students to be aware of and to be proactive in informing students about the significant mental health resources in our schools and in Ballarat.

The ceremony was a simple celebration of the Mass, moving from the font where we recalled our baptismal commitment in a Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling, to the lectern and the proclamation of God's Word and finally around the altar for Eucharist. The launch of Project Compassion was conducted after communion and before the final blessing with the assistance of Caritas Ballarat Diocesan Director, Sue Searles. At the dismissal, Fr Peter blessed the Ashes that would be used by the colleges in Ash Wednesday ceremonies the following day. After Mass, Fr Peter joined the students in the garden of the Cathedral for the traditional Shrove Tuesday pancakes.

Tony Haintz - Assistant Principal, Damascus College

Joy+



Joy+, a diocesan-run Catholic Youth Festival as part of the Year of Youth, took place in late 2018 at St Patrick's Cathedral and Hall, Ballarat. The event was very well received, with much faith and energy on display throughout the day!

Bishop Paul Bird opened with a lively Q&A style discussion with the young people present. This was followed by some uplifting and original music performed by Genevieve Bryant and her band. Special guests, Sam Clear and Sr Elizabeth Young then engaged participants in workshops focusing on enhancing prayer life and spirituality.

Genevieve and her band also ran a workshop in St Patrick's Cathedral, preparing a number of talented young local musicians to join her and the band members in the music for the 5pm Feast of Christ the King Mass. This culminated in a beautifully rich liturgy celebrated by Fr Justin Driscoll and the Cathedral parish community.

Dinner was then served back at St Patrick's Hall as everyone spent time socialising and catching up, before Sr Elizabeth Young led a reflective session centred on stillness and intentional prayer. The quiet atmosphere was deeply moving. Genevieve and her band then masterfully amplified the mood with songs of worship and thanksgiving to finish the night, evoking joy and praise and yes, even some dancing!

A big thank you to all who came to participate, to the presenters, the musicians and the support crew. Pope Francis' recent World Youth Day homily reminds us to place a strong emphasis on ministry to young people, calling them 'the now of God'. Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Ministry will continue to support young people across the diocese by facilitating communication and networking opportunities, as well as assisting with youth events in various parishes.

Patrick Kennedy - Youth & Young Adult Ministry Project Worker

START OF SCHOOL



Thank you to all students and their families who attended the recent Start of School Mass at St Patrick's School, Nhill. What a great celebration we had and what a fantastic way to welcome our new students and their families to our school. We thank Fr Peter Hudson for his reflection and his welcoming of students and staff to a new school year. A huge thank you also to the families who brought morning tea to share and for all the students for fulfilling your roles so capably.

Kathryn Bendall - Principal
Photo: Ant Toet

Monivae College Hamilton was pleased to welcome back former Principal, Father John Mulrooney MSC (right), to celebrate the Opening Mass on February 13, 2019.

He was joined by Fr Patrick Mugavin and Fr Doan Nguyen from the St Mary MacKillop Parish Western Border. Mrs Terrielynn Groves, Principal at St Mary's Primary School Hamilton, was also in attendance to help the Monivae College community celebrate the beginning of the year.

All Year 12 Leaders had formal roles within the Mass, fulfilling their roles admirably.

Chloe Boyle - Marketing Co-ordinator



Final Mass in SPRINGDALLAH



The final prayers have been said, the last communion has been shared, and now Springdallah's 121-year-old Catholic Church has closed. Bishop Paul Bird celebrated Mass with parishioners attending from across the state – many had grown up in the area, and wanted to return one last time. The church was sold at auction last year, after the parish decided it was surplus to its needs and is expected to become a residence.

Fr Justin Driscoll, who is the Administrator for the Ballarat, Linton, and Beaufort Parishes, said the remarkable altar and the rest of the furniture would go to other churches in the area. "The Stations of the Cross, for instance, will go to the church at Linton, because these ones are better than theirs and the altar will go to a little religious community in Greendale," he said.

"This church hasn't been used regularly on a Sunday for decades – the parish of Linton doesn't need the number of churches it did and people are much more mobile, they have access to other church communities."

Basil Murphy lived south of Springdallah, in Cape Clear, and remembered a 60-strong congregation when he was a child. He put together a list of old families he remembered growing up with, and said he was surprised at the turn out, seeing people for the first time in 30 or 40 years as well as plenty of family members. "We all grew up there, it's a sad occasion, but it's one of those things where there's no one there now, so something's got to be done about it," he said. "It's been there on its own for a number of years. It's a solid brick building and it was the pride of the Linton parish when it was built back in those days."

The original church at Springdallah – also known as Derwent Jacks or Happy Valley – was made of wood. It burnt down in 1896, allegedly after a swagman camped too close, but a fundraising campaign, and help from other denominations, put together enough money to build a replacement within eighteen months. The church was officially opened on October 17, 1897.

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Alex Ford

The Catholic Mission Annual Children's Mass was held at St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat with student representatives from host schools Emmaus Primary School Mt Clear and St James Primary School Sebastopol taking a leadership role. Thank you to the students and teachers of these schools. The students carried out their various ministries in a respectful manner and the choir led those present with much enthusiasm.

Thank you to the teachers and students from each school who were able to be present, to pray for the children of the world and for each other. Prayer was also offered for the missionaries who died during the past twelve months in service of others. In their memory, candles were lit for the twenty-three known missionaries and for those who are not known. Fr Justin Driscoll celebrated Mass, sharing his wisdom with those present on the Beatitudes, and on the relevance of scriptures to life today and how it relates to the work of Catholic Mission.

CATHOLIC MISSION CHILDREN'S MASS

The focus of the Mission was "Healing a Nation through Education". Catholic Mission, in partnership with the Catholic Church in Myanmar, is supporting the construction and renovation of schools to ensure access to a quality education, even to the remotest part of Myanmar.



Late last year, Fr Lucas Tha Ling Sum from Hakha, Myanmar visited Ballarat and spoke with children and teachers in schools. Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat is actively supporting teachers in Myanmar, in a partnership with the Episcopal Commission for Education and Catholic Mission. During January 2019, six primary school teachers from the Ballarat Diocese travelled to Myanmar in their own time as part of this partnership to continue supporting the training of teachers with their training modules.

Thank you for your support of the work of Catholic Mission. It is through your prayers and financial support that Catholic Mission can assist these and many other children to receive a basic education, providing hope for a brighter future.

Sue Searls - Ballarat Diocesan Director for Catholic Mission

Our Diocesan Community - March 2019

CELEBRATING PASTORAL CARE WEEK

Both Ballarat Health Services and St John of God Healthcare Ballarat held events to celebrate Pastoral Care week in October last year. The staff of the Spiritual Care Centre at Ballarat Health work collaboratively with authorised Church Visitors from the Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran and Uniting Churches.

St Patrick's Cathedral Parish Ballarat employs Tracy Sillekens part-time to offer pastoral care to Catholic patients in the Hospital and their families, many of whom are from across Western Victoria. As well, Cathedral parishioners Heather Myles and Dorothy Ludwell visit Gandarra Palliative Unit, the Peter Heinz Rehabilitation Centre, Talbot Place and the Steele Haughton aged care facilities.

An ecumenical service of thanksgiving for Chaplains and visiting church volunteers was held in the Chapel at St John of God to pray for all involved in the pastoral services at the Hospital. This included the pastoral care staff, volunteers who minister holy communion, denominational Chaplains and Authorised Church Visitors. Following the liturgy, morning tea was served to all.

Fr Justin Driscoll



Top: Pastoral Care staff of St John of God Ballarat
Right: L-R: Yvonne Beaston with Tracy Sillekens

SS MICHAEL & JOHN'S FEAST DAY

It is very common for a Catholic school to be named after a saint. At Ss Michael and John's school and parish in Horsham, we are lucky enough to have two patron saints. St Michael the archangel and St John the evangelist are the two saints who have been chosen as patrons for our school and parish. This dates back to 1876 when Fr John Doyle Sullivan became the first parish priest in Horsham and named our parish after his original parish in Dublin, Ireland.

While it is an honour to be named after two such distinguished saints, our school has not had the opportunity to celebrate their saints' feast days as other schools do. Obviously St Michael (September 29) and St John (December 27) have separate feast days, both of which fall in the school holidays.



In 2018 we decided as a school that we needed a feast day to pay homage to our saints. So we created our own special day. October 11 became the first ever Ss Michael & John's Feast Day. We celebrated with a prayer liturgy, learnt about our patron saints and shared our lunch together as learning communities. The teachers also provided a treat for each of the students.

The highlight of the day, however, was the Ss Michael and John art competition. Each student was challenged to create an artwork depicting both St Michael and St John in the one artwork. Countless artworks over the centuries have depicted both of our saints, but never together. Our students were challenged to create something unique.

Our overall winner was grade 6 student Sean McDonald. His prize was to have his artwork enlarged onto canvas and displayed permanently in the foyer of our school. Year level winners were also announced and now have their artworks proudly displayed in each of their learning communities.

We will now look to continue this tradition at Ss Michael and John's in the years to come. Most importantly, the students now have a greater understanding of the history of our parish and the lives of the saints after which our parish and school are proudly named.

Michael Rowe - Deputy Principal



FAREWELL AND THANKS TO BILL SLATTER

The Diocesan Principals' Dinner on November 7, 2018 provided an opportunity for our education community to farewell Bill Slatter, who has retired after almost forty years in the service of Catholic education.

Bill started teaching in 1979 and held teaching and leadership roles in Warragul and Ballarat before taking on deputy principal roles at St Paul's College Ballarat and Presentation Regional College Moe. He was Principal of Marian College Ararat from 1999 to 2008 and was appointed to the role of Educational Consultant Secondary in 2009.

In paying tribute to Bill, I commented that his service to senior leadership in the Diocese of Ballarat has been significant. As an Educational Consultant, he has been held in high esteem by principals, school governors, members of councils and boards and office colleagues because of the quality of his work and his ability to

listen and provide advice with wisdom, patience and respect. Bill's way of leading has always been mission-focused, grounded in practical experience and highly-principled.

I also acknowledged Bill's leadership on behalf of the Diocese of Ballarat at state level, his work in the development of leaders within and beyond our diocese and his commitment to working alongside the leaders of Religious Institutes and Public Juridic Persons who govern schools. We are richer and more effective as a diocesan education community because of Bill's leadership and he will be greatly missed as he steps into retirement.

Audrey Brown - Director of Catholic Education Ballarat

Bill Slatter's support of Diocesan secondary principals has been lauded in the lead up to his retirement at the conclusion of 2018. Bill has been a great supporter of Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat. For the last eleven years he has provided support to the eleven secondary Catholic principals. Bill's role has been critical to the education of the 6,000 secondary students across the diocese. He has drawn on his experience as a principal of Marian College in Ararat and his senior educational roles at St Paul's in the Diocese of Sale. Bill is a proud Boort boy on the edge of the diocese and he has been an extraordinary presence in the regional and rural Colleges. It has not been uncommon for Bill to traverse the state from Mildura to Colac or Swan Hill to Warrnambool to attend Board meetings or provide principal support. Bill has walked with our secondary communities through some of our most confronting and challenging issues, and his years as an educator and educational leader means that there are very few challenges he has not encountered.

Bill has been relied upon for being incredibly well informed, sensible and non-judgemental. His joviality and his ability to maintain empathy for the dignity of each individual have always been appreciated by those he has supported. He has demonstrated a great passion for the best educational outcomes for the students of this diocese and his leadership has always been grounded in his strong faith and practice. As a Diocesan community we acknowledge Bill's wonderful contribution as principal and system leader. We thank his wife Annette and Bill's children for their generosity in enabling Bill to fulfil his vocation. It has been a great vocation and we wish Bill well in retirement.

Matthew Byrne - Principal, Damascus College

Bill pictured with Sandra Harvey, Assistant Director: System Improvement in Catholic Education Ballarat

SISTERS OF MERCY JUBILEES

"We can never say 'it is enough,'" said Catherine McAuley, the founder of the Sisters of Mercy. When one looks at this photo of these Sisters who celebrated the Jubilee of their Religious Profession in October 2018, one wonders how much would be enough! In total these Sisters of Community South B have given 670 years of service to many people in many places in various ways and one could go so far as to say that they still do this in keeping with their age and stage in life.

Five celebrated their Platinum Jubilee, two their Diamond Jubilee and four their Golden Jubilee. Of the eleven, nine were able to gather in Ballarat to celebrate with Mass followed by a meal. The two unable to be with us were certainly remembered.

We thank God for these Sisters and their lives of commitment to the Gospel and the legacy left them by Catherine McAuley.

Geraldine Mugavin RSM



L-R: Madeline Duckett (50 years), Mary Bennett (50), Angela Caine (60), Fran Readman (70), Lis Teggelove (50), Marie Vagg (60), Mary Madden (70), Marie Davey (50)
Front: Monica Butler (70).

Our Diocesan Community - March 2019

CATHEDRAL PARISH EXPO

On the weekend of November 17 – 18, the Cathedral Parish Ballarat hosted a Parish Expo that was held in the Cathedral Hall. Facilitated by the Parish Pastoral Council all groups, ministries and organisations within the Cathedral Parish were invited to participate. The aim of the Expo was to celebrate and appreciate the ministry of so many within the Cathedral Parish and to inform parishioners of the scope of the mission of the local Church. Almost forty exhibits formed the Expo with much creativity evident in the displays, which were open to parishioners to view in the hall after each of the four weekend Masses. After the 6.30pm Saturday evening Vigil Mass, the St Patrick's Choir performed on the stage in the hall, much to the delight of those in attendance.

A commitment was made by those who prepared each of the exhibits to provide printed information about their group, ministry or organisation, and to have at least one person from that group present to answer questions and provide further information. The response from parishioners was overwhelmingly positive and the Expo provided many parishioners with the opportunity to meet and talk over a cuppa. The groups included our YESS (Youth Every Second Sunday), Alpha Adult Faith Formation, Sacramental Preparation, Life in the Spirit Charismatic Prayer Group, Liturgy team, Finance Committee, Family

Groups, Cathedral Environment and Precinct group. Many ministries were also present; the RCIA, Communion to the sick and homebound, Pastoral Care and Choir. Other organisations represented at the expo included the three Parish Primary Schools – St Patrick's, St Thomas More and Siena - as well as Loreto College and St Patrick's College, St John of God Hospital, St Vincent de Paul, Catholic Women's League, the Mountain of Praise, Young Vinnies, the Legion of Mary and the Christian Life Communities (CLC). The Parish Pastoral Council invited responses to the Plenary Council preparatory questions, and encouraged those present to use the Plenary process to reflect on what God is asking of us in the Cathedral Parish at this time.

Amongst the positive feedback received by the Parish Pastoral Council, Geoff Brodie, Mission Director at St Patrick's College, wrote in their College newsletter "We may have started the weekend unsure of the meaning and value of the Expo, but left in no doubt. We need to be reminded what a difference the Church is making in so many areas of life. Witnesses to our faith are on the ground every day, offering assistance to whomever needs it. Friendship with Jesus motivates people to make the world more human. Friendship with Jesus is most richly lived in families."

Fr Justin Driscoll, Administrator

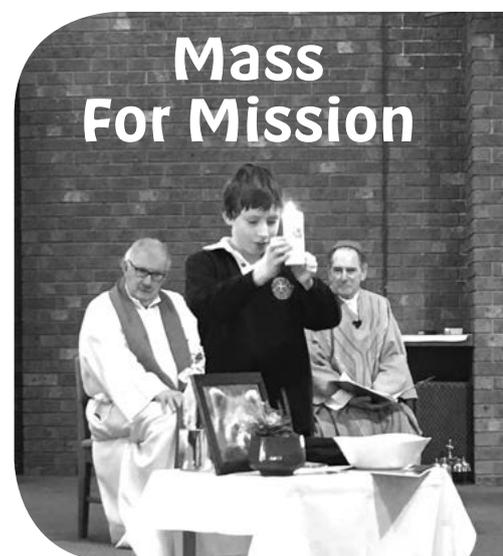


We were pleased to welcome Bishop Paul Bird to St Pius X Primary School, Warrnambool West to celebrate Mass in November last year. The focus of our Mass was Mission. Bishop Paul encouraged us to look beyond, to new horizons. His homily was in the context of our Mission Day observance.

Members of our school community responded generously on this day to the invitation to bring a second hand book to assist in the building of a library for a school in Myanmar. Our action was inspired by the theme of Catholic Mission this year: Healing a Nation through Education. After Mass, all classes completed some learning about Myanmar and had the opportunity to meet Bishop Paul as he made his way around the classrooms.

The school was fortunate to have Ms Irene Ho visit us prior to this day. Irene currently works in Myanmar in the area of teacher education. The children of St Pius X recognise the impact that their books can have on an education system trying to imagine a new future. We thank Bishop Paul for his visit as well as the parents and other family members who were able to join us for Mass.

Joe Ewing – Principal



FRED HOLLOWS HUMANITY AWARD RECIPIENT

Ss Michael and John's Primary School Horsham Grade 6 student, Ella Officer, was a recipient of a Fred Hollows Humanity Award presented on Monday, November 12, 2018 at a special ceremony in Melbourne. The award recognises Year 6 students who follow in Fred's footsteps by making a positive difference in their community. As stated by the Fred Hollows Foundation, the award 'celebrates students who show compassion, integrity and kindness in their everyday lives, just as Fred did'.

Ella was presented with a highly commended award after being nominated by Principal Andrea Cox due to her outstanding efforts towards compassionate acts of kindness. This year, Ella jumped on board with the Lions Recycle for Sight program and initiated the collection of prescription glasses in Horsham. Working in collaboration with Specsavers, 1070 pairs of glasses were donated which equated to a retail value of \$212,130. The glasses donated were forwarded through the Lions Club to be distributed to those in need in third world countries. Last year, wanting to make a difference for children battling cancer, Ella raised and donated over \$4,000 to the Variety Club of SA and cut her long locks to assist the Wigs for Kids program.

Principal Andrea Cox said she chose to nominate the School Captain to recognise a young person who thoughtfully performs such selfless acts of kindness. "These acts come straight from the heart rather than for personal satisfaction and exemplify all the principles of catholic social teaching."

The entire school community of Ss Michael and John's Primary Horsham is exceptionally proud of Ella who is a wonderful role model and inspiration to fellow students. The outcome of her nomination was well deserved recognition of a young person who embodies all the values this award celebrates. As Ella humbly accepted her award, she told her school community that she simply believes that we should all work hard to take care of each other and be the best that we can be.

It serves as inspiration to all of us that such a young person can understand that human life is sacred and that the dignity of all people is important. Perhaps we can use this example to know that we can all aspire to work towards this moral vision and aim to pursue random acts of kindness. As Ella importantly says, "it's the little things that can make a big difference".

Angela Watson – Media and Marketing Officer



Ella with her Father Tim and Mother Rachael

A World View Of Christmas

Making a Scene at Christmas visited Canberra in 2017. Last year Making a Scene at Christmas went on the road again travelling to new venues and meeting new people.

In November we visited the very cosmopolitan suburb of Flemington in the Archdiocese of Melbourne and we celebrated the First Sunday of Advent in Colac. Fr Michael invited the people of Colac with the words: "In an era when we are aware of multiculturalism growing in Colac, it is great to see how a story can be presented and shared in different cultures and ways of life."

Making a Scene at Christmas is a display of three collections of nativities owned by Fr Andrew Hayes, Kay Paton and Fiona Tonkin. The collections come from all continents (and one nativity has visited Antarctica). There are nativities from South America that are made from recycled chip packets and another that is made from machine gun bullet casings that have been hammered flat. There is a magnifying glass to help people see the smallest details. We find that people who have come from other countries are excited seeing nativities from their part of the world. One man from Ghana was delighted to see two nativities from his home country, but thought the nativity from Kenya was nicer.

When people see the way that the Christmas story is told in different parts of the world, they wonder what the nativity would look like if it was set in Colac/Hamilton/Flemington. If it were set in Colac, it might have dairy farmers, not shepherds! One group of three ladies called in for ten minutes and stayed for two hours! The school children were taken through the story, and around the world, some looking at third world countries which use recycled materials and environmentally friendly construction materials.

We met with the school children and visitors in Hamilton in December who were enchanted to see the collection. We are taking expressions of interest for visitation in 2019.

Fiona Tonkin

Our Diocesan Community - March 2019

A wise person once said: "A long time ago I used to have a life, until someone told me to create a facebook account". Now facebook may not have a great deal to do with 30th anniversaries, but in relationship to time it does – who can believe thirty years have passed since the St Columba's Ballarat North Family Groups began under the auspices of the Passionist Order. When we look through the 'old' photos of the early days, it seems everybody looked so much younger and brighter and energetic, and yet the more recent photos stand out because of the wisdom, gentle smiles and caring eyes that look back at us.

It was appropriate that the Saturday evening and Sunday morning celebrations in October were part of the parish Masses because we see ourselves as a significant contribution to the parish community.

In reporting on the history of our group there are too many names to mention, but credit needs to be given to all the original leaders who gave the movement such a strong and enthusiastic beginning that today we have six groups with one hundred and thirty-three participants.

PASSIONIST FAMILY GROUP ANNIVERSARY

Special thanks to Frances and Michael Sullivan, members of the Victorian and Tasmanian Leadership team, who came to celebrate with us.

To all those various leaders and participants who have come together regularly to celebrate the good times and listen to the sad times, the parish says thank you, and may you continue to enjoy each other's company, even if it is on facebook.

Denis and Shirley Edgar



Our Diocesan Community - March 2019



Catholic Earthcare Ballarat

Bernard Holland, the new Director of Catholic Earthcare Australia, travelled to Ballarat to meet with Catholic Earthcare Ballarat to introduce himself and discuss how his services might be utilised within this diocese. He was interested in knowing more about the group itself and what the group does and plan to do.

Catholic Earthcare Ballarat is made up of members who are passionate about ecology and sustainability. The group discuss, plan and advocate about how Australian Catholics, and all people, can actively promote Care of Our Common Home (Laudato Si – Pope Francis).

The group meets bi-monthly at the Mercy Centre in Victoria Street, Ballarat East. One member represents Catholic Earthcare Ballarat on the Ballarat Diocese Social Justice Commission.

Jo Rix, Sandra Dillon and Sr Veronica Lawson rsm

L-R: Sandra Dillon, Jo Rix, Sr Veronica Lawson, Kathleen Leonard, Frank Sheehan, Kate Lawry, Bernard Holland, Susan Crowe, Anna Schlooz.

MINYIP UPDATE

The Minyip congregation is going well under the guidance of Monsignor Glynn Murphy. For Christmas we took Mgr Glynn to dinner after the 6.00pm Mass and we all enjoyed a very social evening with good food and fellowship.

Towards the end of last year we lost a number of our parishoners who will be sadly missed.

Our Church has also been used for funerals from other religions as well as our own, as the Anglican Church is closed.

Margaret Murphy, Secretary of St Patrick's Church Minyip
Photo: Google maps



130 YEARS OF BRIGIDINE LIFE AND MINISTRY IN ARARAT

2018 marked one hundred and thirty years since the first Brigidine Sisters arrived in Ararat on November 14, 1888. Earlier in that year, Bishop Moore of Ballarat recruited a small group of Sisters to help with education in Ararat. The pioneer Sisters, who generously volunteered to form the Ararat community and serve the people in that town, were from two convents in Ireland. Three came from the Abbeyleix community (Mothers Gertrude Kelly, Josephine Clancy and Paul Barron) and two from the Goresbridge community (Mother Cecilia Synnott and Sister Mary Malachy Byrne).

In mid-September 1888, they sailed on the SS Ormuz from London along with six Nazareth Sisters, Redemptorist Priests, Holy Ghost Fathers and some Diocesan priests all destined for the Ballarat Diocese. The Loreto Sisters offered hospitality for the Sisters for a few days in Ballarat. The Sisters then travelled to Ararat and their first home was in the presbytery graciously given over by Fr Meade until the convent was built.

Schools began the following year offering a wide variety of subjects. Times were hard and they were a long way from home but the generosity of the Parish Priest and the people was amazing and greatly helped them settle in. The Convent was built and school rooms extended as student numbers grew. At the same time many young women came from a wide area of Western Victoria wanting to join the Sisters. By 1900 the community numbered twenty Sisters. In 1900, a small group of Sisters went from Ararat to begin a new community in Maryborough and later, in 1920, another group went to Horsham.

The Parish celebrated with a special Mass and shared a luncheon to mark these one hundred and thirty years of Brigidine life and ministry in Ararat. In his homily, Fr Andrew Hayes spoke glowingly of the place and role of Religious Sisters in the Church in Australia. He spoke of their enormous historic contribution to setting up the Catholic Education and Catholic Health systems in Australia as well as their bold initiatives in other areas especially in recent years. He said that Religious Sisters in Australia are "tough, brave risk-takers" who are vital to the life of the church in this country. He spoke, in particular, of the Brigidine Sisters and their compassion and boldness in supporting refugees and asylum seekers, fair trade choices and the need to address issues of people trafficking. Fr Andrew was also very thankful for the support of Sr Maree and Sr John in the Parish of Ararat.

Several visitors including the Victorian Leader of the Sisters, Sr Anne Hill, four other visiting Brigidine Sisters, Loreto Sister Denise Demarchelier, Horsham visitors and others were able to join the parishioners in a delicious shared luncheon. Following the luncheon, Sr Jacinta spoke of our need to 'keep the music playing'. She stressed that all of us, both parishioners and religious, need to hold the heritage that we have received dearly and carry it forward into the future in the spirit of St Brigid, strong in our convictions yet gentle in our relationships. A cake was cut and shared to honour the occasion.

Sr Maree Holt csb



Srs John, Jacinta and Maree cut the cake.



NEW LEARNING SPACES

Lumen Christi Primary School Delacombe celebrated the official opening and blessing of eight refurbished flexible learning spaces on November 22, 2018.

Bishop Paul Bird blessed these engaging, inviting, bright spaces that were funded through a capital grant and school funds. Senator Jane Hume officially opened the learning areas on behalf of the Federal Government. This important project ensures that the students have excellent facilities.

The official opening and blessing ceremony was an opportunity to be thankful for what we have been able to achieve as a school community, confident that we have an outstanding learning environment for our children.

Murray Macdonald – Principal
Our Diocesan Community - March 2019



Mountain of Fun Run

The Mt Warrenheip Mountain of Fun Run was first held in March 2008. It is the major annual fundraising event for St Brendan's Primary School, Dunnstown. We endeavour to make it bigger and better than the year before. In 2019 we celebrated our 11th Mountain of Fun Run. What an achievement!

Not only is the Mountain of Fun Run about running/walking it is also about community. The whole community comes together to either participate or volunteer. It is for everyone and everyone is included, young or old, fast or slow. Everyone is welcome at the Mountain of Fun Run.

We are extremely proud of the Mountain of Fun Run and the many volunteers and sponsors who support our event year in, year out. We could not achieve such amazing results without everyone's support.

More than \$8,000 was raised at this year's race. The money from the fun run goes to small projects around the school, including updating technology used by pupils. Mountain of Fun Run organiser Elle Dash said while the hot weather had put a few competitors off, the enthusiasm from the 330-strong running crowd was "fantastic".

"It really is a massive support for our school and great for the community," she said. "It was a lot hotter than last year, so we added in some more water stations, but everyone still had a great time. It's a really fun atmosphere with lots of families and plenty of different faces this year."

"Given we're a small school of twenty-two students, that money raised is crucial to make sure each child gets their own IT equipment." Ms Dash said the event couldn't be held without the support of the school's Parents and Students Committee and the whole community.



www.mountainoffun.com

Article (part) courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Jolyon Attwooll and Ashleigh McMillan; pictures by Kate Healy and Chris Taylor

We have had more than 75,000 people engage in this first stage of preparation for the Plenary Council: Listening and Dialogue. It has been a sacred time of sharing stories with one another of our journey of faith, of how we experience God in our lives and our experiences and hopes for the Church. Lana Turvey-Collins - Plenary Council Facilitator

REFLECTIVE GARDEN OPENING

St Malachy's School Edenhope had a very successful opening of the Reflective Garden with about fifty people attending. There was great debate about where to congregate as the forecasts was for storms in the evening – do we go indoors or outdoors - with indoors finally winning.

There were a number of guests in attendance, including Bishop Paul Bird who has contributed financially to the building of the Reflective Garden. He has been very supportive of this project from the moment of its inception.

Fr Patrick Mugavin, Canonical Administrator of St Malachy's School and Fr John Corrigan were also in attendance as was our former Parish Priest, Andrew Hayes and former Parish Leader Sr Pam Barlow rsm. We thank them very much for their commitment to attend the event.



Jess Sambell, School Advisory Council President, began the Liturgy with an Acknowledgement of Country. Principal Angela Kealy welcomed guests and provided some background information as to how and why people felt there was a need for a garden. The evening was about acknowledging past failings of the Church, reflecting on the healing of the present and looking to a future of hope where all children can feel safe, protected and loved wherever they are, whoever they are with and whatever they are doing.

Rosie Rokebrand read a letter from Rosemary Nolan about her thoughts on the bravery of the victims in coming forward to ensure this never happens to children again. Her thoughts were, "May we never forget the heinous crimes committed against children here, throughout the Ballarat Diocese, Australia and the world. May we remember the victims and their families and acknowledge their bravery in coming forward to reveal the truth. May they understand why I have supported a reflective garden in their honour even though they are unable to go back to places that bear horrendous memories. Now and in the future, may we remember that our children are much safer because of the bravery of the victims. I hope St Malachy's Reflective Garden is a reminder that children are the most precious gift and we will protect the children of this parish and support those who endeavor to prevent child abuse on all levels. As Nelson Mandela said 'There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.'"

Fr John read Mark 8:22-25 about the blind man being healed by Jesus. Bishop Paul reflected on this reading in his homily saying that healing can take a long time, as it did for the blind man and our victims and survivors of abuse. His final reminder was that we need to care for all children, keeping them safe. Community members read the Prayers of the Faithful and Fr Patrick Mugavin led a Litany of Healing Prayers for children. The weather turned fine so we were able to wander from the Music Room to the garden and around it as Bishop Paul blessed us and our garden. Fr Andrew sang a reflection song about the many ways in which children have not been treated well over time - taken from unmarried or single mothers, Indigenous families, sent from England to Australia and abused. The Liturgy concluded with an African Blessing, 'Walk tall, walk well, walk safe, walk free and may harm never come to thee'.

I would like to thank Bishop Paul for being part of our community healing journey and for financially supporting the Reflective Garden. Thank you also to Chris Carter and Tim and Rosie Rokebrand for their huge contributions to the building of the garden, Cam Colley for the metal logo and Mark Cross for his assistance in plant selection.

Many thanks to Fr Andrew for his continued support of acknowledgement of past failings and Fr John, Fr Paddy and Sr Pam for their support of the Reflective Garden. Thank you to staff, school families and the Parish Council for being involved in the journey. Also thanks to Evan Wrobel (Sacred Heart Primary School Casterton Principal) for joining us to offer his support. All the support was greatly appreciated and we hope that these small steps forward will in time help others.



Angela Kealy – Principal

FAREWELL TO FR FRANK

Late last year, the parish community of Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree gathered to say farewell and thank you to the founder of the Wendouree West Exodus Community, Fr Frank Smith CSsR. The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Paul Bird CSsR, and Fr Frank's family and members of the Redemptorist Order were present as well as his many friends, a number of whom travelled considerable distances to attend.

Fr Frank came to live in Wendouree West in 2004. He quickly made it clear that his focus would be on empowering local community members to identify, use and develop their own particular giftedness. Regular formation and the centrality of prayer and reflection were features of what was offered to the community. Evidence of the success of this approach is that in recent years, as Fr Frank's health deteriorated, the Leadership Group and the various ministry teams within the Exodus Community have continued to operate. The Saturday lunch drop-in, which can often have an attendance in excess of forty local community members, the family, children's, women's and men's camps, the after school homework program, the monthly Eucharist and the visitation program all have continued despite some substantial operational challenges. Malcolm Burns from the Exodus Leadership group thanked Fr Frank on behalf of the Wendouree West Community.

Fr Frank did not confine his ministry to Wendouree West. He was a much loved member of the OLHC Parish Community, often presiding at Sunday Masses and on other sacramental occasions. His Redemptorist training meant that his homilies were always engaging, informative and challenging. The Chairperson of the Parish Pastoral Council, Mario Cordioli, noted the influence of Fr

Frank in assisting the PPC to develop into a mature and influential leadership group. "The Council was never allowed to dwell for too long on buildings and budgets but Fr Frank always challenged us to return to our core purpose of the message of Jesus" Mario said.

Fr Frank, for a number of years, was a member of the Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission. Again he was most insistent that the Commission meetings always had substantial components of prayer and formation. Fr Frank was also a key member of the organising groups for the Social Justice forums that were conducted around the Diocese.

The Parish and the Exodus Community presented Fr Frank with an orthopaedic chair. The chair was presented with the hope that "you are able to relax in it maybe doing some praying and meditating, reading, perhaps even to have a nap but most important of all to watch your beloved West Coast Eagles win the premiership!!" What a prophetic statement, given this was two weeks before the Grand Final.

The occasion concluded with traditional hospitality provided by the OLHC Parish community.

Vin Dillon – OLHC Parish



Assembly and like all similar parishes the numbers have dwindled over the past twenty years however, more recently it seems numbers are growing. Bernadette acknowledges that this was facilitated by the ability to maintain current Mass and Lay Led Rosters. Since arriving in Beaufort, Fr Sajan Matthew has settled in well and is an active member of Parish Council. He is helping in many ways.

To conclude, Bernadette paid tribute to all current and past parishioners who over the years have done so much to both serve and preserve the Parish of St John the Baptist. "Over the years our Church functioned because of various committees such as Parish Council, Liturgy Group, RE Classes and the Altar Society. We wouldn't be who we are today without them! Today we are holding our own, but with fewer committees and less people. We are a small, active faith community with a long history, who today continue to welcome all to share in the celebration of Mass and the Sacraments in our Church.". Bernadette also said a special 'thank you' to Fr Justin Driscoll, who for several years now in his role as Administrator, has been a great source of strength, advice and affirmation of the Beaufort community.

Photo: Bishop Paul with the Parish Pastoral Council includes Maurice Barwick, Gail Hall, John Jess, Gabrielle Brennan, Bernadette Franc and Fr Sajan

Advent and Nativity in Ballan

This beautiful Nativity Scene at St Brigid's Ballan was arranged through the work of various parishioners.

First came the request that the Nativity scene be put up at the beginning of Advent. It soon became clear that the statues for the scene were stored on fairly high shelves in a parishioner's shed – so someone strong and safe on a ladder was needed. The first volunteer's trailer was too small for the frame of the stable, so the helpers could only transport the statues and the light set. The rain started to fall. The second volunteer was called. He arrived with a covered trailer - then realised someone had left an enormous exercise machine in it. Together all the volunteers managed to carefully manipulate the three big parts of the stable into the space beside the exercise machine and close the cover, just as the rain began to fall more heavily.

The volunteers arrived at the gathering space and quickly put together the frame with the help of one person's great expertise with electric screwdrivers.

As the original builder of the stable was injured, one of the volunteers stayed behind to wait for her to come after work so they could put everything in place together. Another parishioner came to join them. She cleaned up - and spent some quiet time in prayer.

Each one did their part - and the result brought lots of joy to all who saw it - especially the school children!

Therese Winter



CATHOLIC MISSIONS

PHILIPPINES IMMERSION 2018

On December 7, 2018 four Year 12 students from St Joseph's College Mildura, along with twelve students from St Francis Xavier College Beaconsfield, led by Catholic Mission, travelled to Cebu for a Philippines Immersion as an alternative Schoolies Program. Students were accompanied by their respective teachers; Paula Cox, Liam Doherty, Rachel Macdonald and Vithiya Sat Hiavan. During the 10-day program, students were involved in the service learning activities of making village paths and garden beds, gardening, tutoring and general community work in the Philippines, while they were immersed in the culture and traditional life of the country.

The program offered an opportunity for 'solidarity learning' requiring students to engage as equals, form relationships and learn from each other. One of the aims was for students to return with new found friends, a broader vision of the mission of Jesus and the work of the Church and a commitment to that mission to reach out and give life. While students developed an understanding of the work of Catholic Missions, they deepened their own faith and spirituality and re-affirmed their commitment to building a more just and peaceful world.

Full story is published in the March edition of the Diocesan e-News on the website - www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Hannah Files-Burke - Personal Assistant to Deputy Principals



HOUSE OF WELCOME



The Annual Garden Party fundraiser for refugees/asylum seekers and vulnerable people was held on Sunday, November 18, 2018. Over eighty people enjoyed the smell of roses amidst the sunshine, whilst partaking of afternoon tea, watching Irish dancing and listening to a dynamic guest speaker, who spoke about his work on the island of Nauru. The weather was warm and umbrellas gave people enough shade so they could watch the children singing or wander amongst the stalls of cakes, plants and other goods. Many also participated in the mini auction or chose a lucky dip.

The major competition was drawn at 4pm and the winner of this wonderful three night family holiday to Victor Harbour in South Australia was Maureen McPhail.

The funds raised will assist local families, as we at the House of Welcome work in conjunction with other agencies to provide material and other relief. Many thanks to those who patronised this event and congratulations to the many volunteers and donors who made this day so successful.

Carmel Kavanagh – House of Welcome Ballarat



LIBRARIAN'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Southern Zone Catholic Librarian's Professional Development day was held in the library at Monivae College Hamilton on October 17, 2018. As always the day was full of enthusiasm, camaraderie, learning some laughter and the making of new friendships. The day is always wonderfully facilitated by the amazing Marg Sinnott from Emmanuel College, Warrnambool and Anne Doody from the Catholic Education Office, Ballarat. As

a group we meet four times a year in different libraries around the zone.

The group is a network of Catholic schools, as well as some government and independent schools. At this meeting there were participants from Dunkeld Primary School, Good Shepherd College Hamilton, St Mary's Primary School Hamilton, Emmanuel College Warrnambool, Mercy Regional College Camperdown, the Hamilton and Alexander College, Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree, St John's Primary School Dennington, Colac Primary School and of course, Monivae College. It is always a pleasure for Monivae College to host these days.

The day was a great opportunity for us to share practice. We focused on updating and improving school library documentation and on developing depth and stronger curriculum links to what we offer in support of the learning and teaching programs in the schools.

Anne has left Catholic Education to work with Growth Coaching International, and we wish her well. We will continue to strengthen our practice through regular network events.

Maryanne Gustus - Head of Library, Monivae College



Project Compassion shows water insecurity

Children in Ballarat take for granted the ability to turn on a tap and have clean water flow out, but the eyes of Emmaus Primary School Mt Clear students have been opened to the plight of those in developing countries where clean water is a luxury. Grade five and six students heard first hand from Zimbabwean Caritas Co-ordinator, Super Dube, about the water challenges facing his country.

The country is in the grips of a devastating drought with many areas having little access to clean water even when it does rain. As a child, Mr Dube was forced to drink contaminated water, suffered malaria and walked 5km to and from school every day - something the Emmaus students took time to comprehend.

Mr Dube is touring Australia as part of Project Compassion, Caritas Australia's annual fundraising and awareness campaign during Lent. "We normally send reports to Caritas Australia about the work we do but what I realise when you come in person and share stories face-to-face with children, the feedback you get of how much they appreciate the gravity of the challenge we face back home is much more, as opposed to them reading a report," he said. Mr Dube said most children assumed secure and clean water was only important for drinking, but it was so much more. "Water is not just for drinking, but it is important in terms of other development initiatives ... it's about food security, sanitation and more."

About 600 million people across the globe lack access to clean water and 2.3 billion people have no basic sanitation, according to Caritas. In Africa alone, a lack of water means women and girls need to collectively devote 40 billion hours a year to walking to collect water. Friends Dana and Bessie said, after hearing Mr Dube's talk, they were going to start a campaign called Drink Bottle to somehow send clean water to Zimbabwe. "I learned how much poverty there is in the country and how lucky we are to have what we have here," Bessie said.

"A lack of clean water disrupts the education of young people and robs communities of income and food, which is hard to comprehend - even in a country like ours which is feeling the burden of drought," said Caritas Australia spokesman Richard Landels.

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text and photo by Michelle Smith
Photo: Emmaus Primary School students Dana, Liam and Bessie with Super Dube from Zimbabwe

LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Chloe Farnsworth and Hamish Robertson, College Captains of St Mary MacKillop College Swan Hill, accompanied by Alison Wright, Director of Mission, attended the annual JJAMM Leadership Conference in Sydney from February 16 - 20. Chloe and Hamish spoke to the College Assembly about this experience:

For those of you who need a refresher, JJAMM stands for Joseph, Julian and Mary MacKillop. Every year the Sisters of St Joseph's hold a "JJAMM" conference for Josephite school leaders and their teachers around Australia and New Zealand. This conference explores the role these three important figures played in the formation of our schools and allows leaders to interact with a whole reach of like-minded people. We first stayed at the Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney and then travelled to the Saint Joseph Centre in Baulkham Hills. We were joined by twenty-seven other Josephite school leaders and their teachers. We identified Mary and Julian's leadership qualities and the significance of their work. It was a unique and humbling opportunity that saw us develop skills that would help the two of us grow as leaders.

Over the five days, we gained insight into what it means to be a leader of a Josephite school. We took part in many icebreaker games which allowed us to get to know the other leaders. During the conference there was a large emphasis placed on social justice and the effects our societies have on matters such as asylum seekers, homelessness and poverty. To raise awareness, we formed small group and presented a mock protest to the rest of the leaders. We created posters and pledges to assist us create awareness. Our days were fast paced, allowing us to share loads of fundraising ideas with other leaders, which we were excited to bring back to school. It was an incredible experience that motivated us to be better leaders and become more aware of our Josephite identity.



Alison Wright, Director of Mission
Our Diocesan Community - March 2019



LAY MINISTRY FORMATION DAY IN BALLARAT

The Diocesan Lay Pastoral Ministry Program held one of its two annual Reflection and Formation gatherings in November 2018 in Ballarat. Fr Shane Mackinlay was the guest presenter, leading the main session of reflection. He drew on Pope Francis' 2018 *Gaudete et Exsultate* (Rejoice and be glad) which focuses on the call to holiness. The group engaged with the session in a very positive way. Bishop Paul Bird also attended to present subject certificates to participants and congratulate them on their successful studies. Additionally, there was discussion about their study experience and involvement in lay pastoral ministry, and the group shared lunch together. The feedback on the whole day was affirming. The opportunity to reflect on the Pope's inspirational words in the *Gaudete et Exsultate* session was particularly appreciated.

The Lay Pastoral Ministry Program is open to people involved in any aspect of lay pastoral ministry in the diocese, either in parish life or other ministry. The Program provides the opportunity for formation through low cost online study with Dayton University. Many subject areas are available including units on the sacraments, scripture, youth ministry, liturgy, leadership, RCIA, social justice, pastoral care and bereavement ministry. Subjects are studied one at a time in a five week long 'study cycle'. There are six study cycles each year. You can study one subject or more and you can start at any of the cycles. It is two and a half years since Ballarat Diocese started the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program and in that time, twenty-three lay ministry participants have completed sixty-five subjects and the level of engagement with those subjects is very solid. One person has completed an overall Lay Pastoral Ministry Certificate and several more participants will complete their Certificates this year. Additionally, Catholic Education Ballarat has set up a pilot program as part of the Diocese's partnership with Dayton, to enable a cohort of diocesan teachers to study online subjects in a dedicated group. If you are interested in participating, there is more information about the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or email amanda.smith@ballarat.catholic.org.au

*Amanda Smith, Facilitator,
Lay Pastoral Ministry Program, Diocese of Ballarat*

Our Diocesan Community - March 2019

Ballarat Diocesan Pastoral Support Group

Once again a very happy and successful assembly of our Ballarat Diocesan Pastoral Support Group took place at Halls Gap from October 21 - 24, 2018. This year, the group of twenty-one welcomed some new faces; Gary and Betty Heinrich from Horsham and Marie Morgan from Warrnambool. Members enjoyed the comfort and tranquillity of the Pinnacle Holiday Lodge with our hosts Barry and Mimie. (They tell us that we have been coming for 13 years!!)

Our introductory session was led by Sr Maree Holt csb and this was a chance for all to introduce or re-introduce ourselves. The evening concluded with some reflective prayer prepared by Geraldine Malady and Mary Lancaster. On Monday, we were privileged to hear from Sr Mary Coloe, a Presentation Sister. Sr Mary is Associate Professor of New Testament at the Yarra Theological Union in Box Hill. She spoke to us on aspects of the Gospel of John. Her topics included – What is 'good' about Good Friday?; Women deacons in the early church; and handling a church in crisis. Participants were encouraged and challenged and learnt much from Mary's presentations. We appreciated her gift and skill in imparting her knowledge. Tuesday morning was a time to make plans for our gathering in 2019 after which members then worked on proposed submissions to the Plenary Council from this group of Pastoral Support in the Diocese.



We thank our Bishop, Paul Bird, and the CDF for supporting us in this venture. Thanks also to Pauline Books and Media for their continued support and also to Catholic Church Insurance for providing tote bags, notepads and biros. We thank God for this time of learning and reflection, a time of appreciation for one another and a source of encouragement as we endeavour to move forward on our faith journey, reclaiming our baptismal identity and mission. Where better to gather than in the beauty of Halls Gap!!!

The gathering closed with prayer time where we remembered and thanked God for the blessings received in our time together.

Clare Arundell - Colac



With the Listening and Dialogue phase of the Plenary Council now complete, the National Centre for Pastoral Research will continue the deep listening process, conducting a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the submissions received and, using best-practice research methods, will identify key themes that have emerged. In May, the Bishops Commission for the Plenary Council, the Plenary Council Executive Committee and the Facilitation Team will work together with the National Centre for Pastoral Research to finalise the National Themes for Discernment.

Those themes will become the focus for the Listening and Discernment phase, which will begin from June 9, and will be the foundations for the Plenary Council agenda. More information about the Listening and Discernment phase will be available in the near future. One of the key aspects of the Plenary Council 2020 is prayer. We ask you to continue to pray the Plenary Council Prayer at Masses, at meetings and at home. This can be found on the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Photos:

Front cover: Stained glass window at Sacred Heart Church, Mildura

Back cover: 1. Joy+ Festival 2. Diocesan teachers off to Myanmar 3. Monivae College Hamilton Faith and Service Captain Erin Munros 4. ACU at the Cathedral Parish Expo

We are the Catholic church of the Ballarat Diocese. We gather in the name of Jesus from the Murray to the Sea in interwoven faith communities. Spirit-filled, we celebrate and share our journey; reaching out to nurture all God's people.

Vision Statement for the Diocese