



CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE  
of  
BALLARAT



# OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

News around the Diocese

No. 61 August 2020



# COVID-19: PERSONAL STORIES BEHIND THE FIGURES

The Public Broadcasting Service in America has a television program called PBS NewsHour. As with news programs in Australia, PBS NewsHour is devoting much of their coverage to stories about COVID-19. Day by day, there are figures for the number of new cases and the number of those who have died of the virus. The figures for the United States are particularly alarming. As I write, the number of cases is nearing 6 million and the number of deaths is over 180,000. Yet, it is not the overall figures that touch me most keenly. It is a segment at the end of the PBS NewsHour when they pay tribute to a few of the people who have died. These people's families have sent in some photos and a few notes about their lives.



There might be a tribute to an elderly lady who has died in a nursing home. We might see a photo of her as a student at school, a photo from her wedding day, a photo from a family holiday, a photo of her with her children and grandchildren gathered round. The final line might be, "She died last Tuesday. She was 87."

There might be a tribute to a man in his forties who worked as a cleaner at a hospital. We might see photos of him as a little boy on a swing, then as a young man with friends at a party, then in his hospital uniform. The final line might be, "He died last Wednesday. He was 43."

These tributes have brought home to me the personal details behind the figures. They have reminded me that there are very personal stories behind the statistics.

So many people have been affected by this pandemic. At this stage, around the world, there have been over 23 million cases and over 800,000 deaths. In Australia, we have had over 24,000 cases and over 500 deaths. Our figures have risen in recent times, particularly in Victoria.

It is good that we take all the practical steps we can to reduce the spread of the virus. This is a safeguard for our own health and the health of those around us. It is also good to remember those who are affected in various ways by the virus. It is good to remember them and pray for them.

There are those who have contracted the virus. Some have a mild case. Some have to go to hospital. Some need intensive care. It is good to **pray** for those who are suffering and for those who are caring for them.

There are some who have died from the virus. There is the extra sadness that they may have died without their family being able to be with them to say a final farewell. It is good to pray for those who have died and entrust them to God. It is good to pray for those who are grieving, that they might be comforted.

In March this year, we faced the very unusual situation of having churches closed as part of our effort to limit public gatherings so as to reduce the spread of the virus. We were encouraged to stay at home as much as possible. We were also encouraged to pray at home. There were prayers on our diocesan website. Some parishes began live-streaming Masses.

In May, the restrictions eased somewhat so that we could open churches again for Mass, though only with small congregations, first of all for ten people and then for twenty. We were celebrating Mass in the cathedral each morning. I was grateful to have these celebrations, even though the congregation was limited.

In August, we went back to Stage 3 restrictions which means closing our churches again. We continue celebrating Mass via online streaming. In whatever way we gather, we pray as a community in union with Christ and we are able to remember the needs of all the people throughout our diocese.

On March 30 this year, the Congregation for Divine Worship published a set of prayers entitled "Mass in Time of Pandemic". The opening prayer for this Mass mentions some groups who are affected by the pandemic in particular ways – those who have contracted the virus and the health care workers who are caring for them, as well and those who have died and those who are mourning their loss. The prayer also asks for wisdom for leaders of governments who must decide what steps to take for public health. Finally, the prayer asks that we might all have the courage to reach out in love and do what we can together to support one another.

***Almighty and eternal God,  
our refuge in every danger,  
to whom we turn in our distress;  
in faith we pray  
look with compassion on the afflicted,***

*grant eternal rest to the dead, comfort to mourners,  
healing to the sick, peace to the dying,  
strength to healthcare workers, wisdom to our leaders  
and the courage to reach out to all in love,  
so that together we may give glory to your holy name.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.*

*+ Paul Bird CSsR*

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR

## SACRED HEART CHURCH, CULGOA

*The Culgoa congregation welcomed their new priest, Fr James Kerr, who was celebrating his first Mass in his new parish of the Holy Family and the first Mass in the parish since the lock down in Victoria.*

*Fr James is the Parish Priest of the Holy Family Parish Northeast Mallee, which includes Culgoa, Lalbert, Lake Boga, Nandaly, Quambatook, Swan Hill and Sea Lake. Fr James comes to the parish from Mildura and we look forward to getting to know him now that we are able to worship back in our churches.*

*People in the photo from the left are Adrian Meehan (past resident and parishioner of Culgoa), Geoff Hooper, Ursula Walsh, Fr James, Maree Witney, Peter Shirley, Margot Barry at the front, Chris Sewell behind her, Susan Meehan (visiting with her husband), Janine Power and Nick Power.*



*Susan and Adrian from Patchewollock came to visit friends and attend Mass with Fr James, whom they knew from his time in Mildura. Nick and Janine Power have joined the Culgoa congregation temporarily, while their neighbouring Lalbert church is closed due to storm damage to the roof.*

Christine Sewell - Parishioner

## SEASON OF CREATION

The fifth anniversary 2020 was the beginning of the Special *Laudato Si'* Anniversary Year (May 24 2020 – May 24 2021) with the hope that it be a time of grace, a true Kairos experience and "Jubilee" time for the Earth, for humanity and all God's creatures. The Season of Creation is an annual ecumenical celebration of prayer and action to protect our common home. It takes place from September 1 – the World Day of Prayer for Creation – to October 4 – the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. The theme for Season of Creation 2020 is "Jubilee for the Earth". A good time to reflect.

Our Diocesan Community - August 2020

## IN THIS ISSUE

From the Bishop

Culgoa

Southern Cannery Pty Ltd

From the Archives

Thirty Wonderful Years

Plenary Council

Chris Dyson paints Mary MacKillop

Amazing Quilts

Remembering Ray

Face Masks for PNG

Reflecting on learning and teaching during COVID-19

Foundation Update

Introducing donation point touch devices

School News

Innovation through crisis

House of Welcome

A world of opportunity awaits at ACU open day

Saying Farewell

*Laudato Si'* Anniversary

New Principal

Reflection on the pandemic

Parish News

Diocesan Liturgical Commission

### OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY (ODC)

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### 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 November 2020.

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# Southern Canning Pty Ltd

Just mentioning the word 'abalone' seems to create a look of little recognition on people's faces. They have heard of the shellfish from the *Haliotis* genus but really they know little about it. Most people's knowledge will be that it is some kind of a sea slug, that's very expensive that they have never had the opportunity to taste. The flavour and texture are unique and likened to a cross between calamari and mushrooms.

Even people who live in South West Victoria, which is one of the few places left in the world where this fishery still sustainably thrives, would not know that Portland is home to a very successful cannery, sending this exclusive seafood product around the world. Southern Canning was established in 1991 in the beautiful seaside town of Portland to process the 'jewel of the sea' – wild abalone.

Joe and Angie Milani and their stakeholders have grown their business since that time to a highly respected and successful enterprise with products sought after in the best restaurants in China, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and the USA.



Southern Canning is a technology based export company, producing world class, value-added, heat sterilised, canned and vacuum packed wild and farmed abalone, whilst also requiring skilled manual input during processing.

Wild abalone live under rocky ledges, thriving on seaweed and are harvested all year round by licensed divers spending up to a full day on the ocean floor in the pristine cool waters of the Southern Ocean off the coastline of Victoria and South Australia. The Great Southern Reef is a biodiversity hotspot, and Portland also benefits from the phenomenon known as the Bonney Upwelling, bringing nutrient-rich deep ocean water to the surface during November and May every year, which enhances the whole ecosystem.



As it is a high risk occupation, abalone divers harvest during days of low ocean swell when the currents are not so forceful, by levering the fleshy molluscs from their rocky habitat, placing them in bags to load onto the boat where they are crated. The abalone are then transported as quickly as possible to Southern Canning where they are unloaded, weighed, shucked, washed, trimmed, canned, cooked in brine, labelled and packed ready for export. This whole process takes 4-5 days per delivery. The main species are blacklip, brownlip, greenlip and roei.

Farmed abalone is grown onshore following a breeding program in the nursery using fertilised spat from spawning mature abalone. As the brood stock transgress through to the grow-out tanks which are large shallow concrete pools, the aquaculture abalone are washed over by sea water, mimicking the natural wave action of the ocean. They are fed specially formulated fishmeal pellets and are harvested by hand when at the size the market desires, which are smaller in size than the wild species. In Western Australia, two year old farmed abalone is transferred to artificial reefs in the wild for a further two years before harvesting and is known as 'ocean grown'. Since 2005, Southern Canning has been contract processing farmed and ocean grown abalone from Narrawong and Port Fairy in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia.

Southern Canning is also very proud of their efforts to make use of the by-products of the canning process. No part of the abalone is wasted. After the flesh is canned or vacuum packed for export, the shell with its beautiful shiny mother of pearl nacre is sold for various uses including as a finish to swimming pool concrete in the USA and buttons, furniture and jewellery making in Vietnam. The gut is currently taken to a composting facility in Mount Gambier and has recently been assessed and patented as a neutraceutical by the CSIRO, showing anti-inflammatory properties which could potentially help alleviate the pain of arthritis.



Management of the abalone fishery by the Victorian Government over the past forty years has been directed at making the fishery sustainable for future generations. This is in stark contrast to the worldwide depletion of abalone stock.

Protection of the supply was made by introducing quota and size limits to ensure that stock has the opportunity to populate and grow into a mature species on the rocky reefs. Aquaculture Farms are fully sustainable and complement the wild industry to feed the overseas appetite for this health giving, high protein delicacy which contains iodine, omega-3, selenium and many other vitamins and minerals.

In the early days, the abalone fishery was plagued by a 'cowboy' mentality by illegal poachers. In the South West, these operators have been all but eradicated by court action resulting in heavy penalties. Sadly, the rest of the world has not been successful in controlling the decimation of the natural supply in the wild.



Joe's educational background is in Biochemistry specialising in Food Technology and Marketing. Before Southern Canning, he spent many years working in the Fruit Canning Industry in the Goulburn Valley. With over forty years of expertise and experience, he consults to abalone canneries around the world. Angie's role in the business came out of left field with her original career being in Nursing and Midwifery. Raising their family of three children included time fundraising with the Parents and Friends Association while they were at All Saints Primary School in Portland and later at Bayview College, previously known as the Loreto Convent Portland. Over those years, Angie worked in the business during primary school hours and her role developed into full time administrator and business partner.

Even though being in the fishing industry has not all been smooth sailing, the resilient Joe and Angie have provided employment and job security for their hard-working team of Portland locals and are proud of their collaboration with all levels of the industry. This has resulted in a very successful and exciting family business, future-proofing the supply of this sought after delicacy for the world to enjoy long into the future.



## Emergency Relief providing extra support during these unprecedented times

Financial hardship has been one of the challenges that the coronavirus pandemic has presented. To abide by the restrictions, we have been spending more time at home, increasing our utility bills. In many instances, we have had to reduce the number of hours worked, or we have lost employment altogether. For many households, this has added

extra financial pressure to day-to-day living expenses. Emergency Relief has been supporting individuals during these challenging times.

Emergency Relief provides financial or material aid to assist people experiencing financial hardship. The service helps people purchase necessities such as food and fuel, and assists people who may be struggling to pay bills.

Emergency Relief worker Tanya has seen the demand for the service increase. "Since the COVID-19 lockdown commenced, there has been a significant increase in the number of people accessing Emergency Relief, all with different needs and circumstances. Many have been new referrals, people who have not necessarily needed to access this kind of support before."

Emergency Relief workers understand the financial uncertainty and stress that individuals, families and couples are going through, and consider that a key priority for Emergency Relief engagement is a confidential and non-judgmental service.

"It is important that we take that extra time at the beginning of an appointment to understand more about the person and make them feel comfortable as they are experiencing really challenging times."

"For some, it takes only one missed pay before they experience financial stress, or as soon as there is an unexpected expense such as car repairs, which can really affect someone's budget and they then find themselves unable to purchase necessities such as food."

"The benefit of Emergency Relief is it can take some of the financial pressure off, such as providing a food voucher for that week, which is then one less expense someone has to worry about, and that can make all the difference", said Tanya.

If you think Emergency Relief could help you, a member of your family or someone that you know please call 1300 303 988 or for more information please visit our website [www.centacareballarat.org.au](http://www.centacareballarat.org.au).

*Jenny Phillips - Marketing & Communications Officer*

Image: [https://www.123rf.com/profile\\_obencem](https://www.123rf.com/profile_obencem)



## Chris Dyson paints Mary MacKillop

*After Fr Eugene McKinnon noticed that there wasn't a picture of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop in the Immaculate Conception Church at St Arnaud, local artist Chris Dyson decided to rectify this.*

*Chris, who holds a Bachelor of Fine Art and was a former lecturer in painting at the Victorian College of the Arts, found a picture of Mary MacKillop on the internet and proceeded to paint this portrait of her from scratch. He was particularly drawn to this photo because "there is an inner resolve and openness on her face". Chris has managed to highlight the saintliness and fortitude of Australia's first saint, which now proudly hangs in the confines of the Immaculate Conception Church, St Arnaud.*



Noeline Hogan - Parish Coordinator, East Wimmera Parish

## THIRTY WONDERFUL YEARS

After teaching at St Malachy's School Edenhope for thirty years, Chris Heenan was farewelled by students and staff on the last day of term. Chris's association with the school began in 1982 when her first child commenced his schooling, with three other siblings following soon after. In 1988 all four of her children attended St Malachy's School and in 2020 she has two grandchildren currently enrolled.

Chris spent many hours in the library, encouraging a love of books and of reading in our students. Her love of literacy led her to complete several intervention programs, including Reading Recovery and she has thus supported many students in developing their reading and writing skills. We have been very fortunate as a school to have benefited from her wealth of literacy knowledge.



Chris has not only been a dedicated staff member, teacher and friend to many, she has also been an integral part of our Parish Community. Chris was instrumental in teaching staff how to quilt using candlewicking and blanket stitch. She was the instigator of many a quilt as gifts for farewells, new babies or milestone birthdays. Fr Andrew Hayes and Sr Patsy Bourke were two lucky recipients of quilts made by the staff from St Malachy's School, under Chris's guidance.

Due to COVID19 restrictions, celebrations had to be modified. Staff and students met to congratulate and thank Chris for her many years of dedication and service to our school community. The Foundation/Year 1 students presented her with their own version of the Green Sheep - with Chris, naturally, being the green sheep. The younger students were portrayed as different sheep.

Year 2/3/4 students presented a video of all the different tips and tricks for reading Chris has shared with them over the years - how to choose a 'just right' book, sound it out, look at the start, the middle and the end, and ask themselves if it looks right, sounds right, and makes sense. Years 5/6 presented her with an alphabet book, using a play on words and sounds of letters.

A PowerPoint of Chris's thirty year involvement with the school was then shown. As parents were not able to attend the farewell, they were asked to contribute their gratitude and thanks which were included in the PowerPoint. The farewell concluded with everyone singing a blessing song for Chris. We will certainly miss Chris's kindness, generosity and friendship. We hope she can now spend more time quilting, gardening, travelling and riding her bike with Tom. Thanks for many wonderful years and best wishes for your retirement.



Angela Kealy - Principal

Our Diocesan Community - August 2020



# Farewell to Evan

*Evan has been Principal of Sacred Heart School Casterton since the start of 2015, during which time he has focused strategically on developing a school community that is inclusive, welcoming, caring and compassionate. This has included opening up conversations with cross sectoral education, community organisations and deepening connections with the local parish. As a leader and partner in the Western Trinity School Network, Evan has been recognised in our Diocesan Education Community as a co-recipient of the Catholic Education Week Partnership Award (along with Angela Kealy from St Malachy's School, Edenhope; and Joshua McElgunn, St Joseph's Primary School, Coleraine) and at state level with a John Laing Leadership Award.*

*Audrey Brown, former Director of Catholic Education, visited Evan to say thank you on behalf of the Diocesan Education Community for his contribution as a senior leader, for his commitment to education beyond his own school boundaries and for his leadership within the Southern Zone Principals' Network. We wish Evan and Bec (who has also been a valued and versatile education colleague) every blessing as they move into new roles in a new diocese.*

*Pictured: Audrey Brown (former Director of Catholic Education) presents Evan Wrobel with a farewell gift on behalf of the Diocesan Education Community*



Emma Newman - Catholic Education Office, Ballarat



Initially it was difficult at St Joseph's Warrnambool to see our way around the COVID-19 restrictions, but we were 'woken up' by our Parish Priest, Fr John Fitzgerald, who was sure that with modern technology we would be able to do something to reach out and keep connected with parishioners!

Fortunately, the IT desk in the Church had been updated prior to Christmas. At the time we thought the new equipment was a bit too sophisticated for our needs, but it turned out to be just what was needed for live streaming. So we now stream our Sunday Mass each weekend on YouTube (St Joseph's Church Warrnambool YouTube Channel) with the invaluable assistance of local IT technician, Damian Jones. We are very grateful for his advice and the expertise which made it possible to 'launch' our Mass onto the airwaves.

In order to involve as many people as possible, even though numbers attending the Mass are kept within restrictions, different lectors and leaders of the Prayer of the Faithful are invited each week, as well as a variety of musicians and singers. During two weeks in May, the lighting system in the Church was updated and thus our

## 'WOKEN UP'

Mass was celebrated in the midst of scaffolding, even on the sanctuary. It was an interesting experience, but it worked!

We were concerned that not everyone is able to access the internet, so a team of parishioners was formed to phone members of our community to enquire about their welfare and let them know what was happening in the parish and help them still feel connected. Our bulletin is emailed each week to those on the internet. Hard copies are printed and are available in the Parish Office and in the Gathering Space.

We miss our gatherings as a community and wonder whether things will ever be the same again. We hope and pray there will be a time, in the not too distant future, when significant numbers are able to gather at St Joseph's ... to celebrate our liturgies and enjoy one another's company.

Mary Lancaster - Parishioner



# Plenary Council Papers

From February to April this year, I worked with a dozen people from around Australia to write a paper about the Church as a prayerful and Eucharistic community. We met twice in person and then, when the COVID-19 restrictions came in, we met by videoconference. Most of the group were lay people. We were from different states. We ranged in age from young adults to senior citizens (such as myself). We brought our different points of view but we shared a common interest in the Church, particularly in the Church as a prayerful and Eucharistic community of people.

We were one of six groups given the task of preparing papers on various aspects of the life of the Church. It was part of the process leading up to the Plenary Council to be held in 2021 and 2022. At the same time as we were meeting, five other groups were working on five other papers, focussing on other aspects of the Church's life. The themes for the papers were drawn from the discussions in Catholic communities around the country in 2019, discussions that involved 220,000 people. The six papers have just been published – appropriately on Pentecost Sunday, which is so strongly linked to the beginnings of the Church as a community filled with the Holy Spirit.

Each paper provides some reflections on the topic, notes some challenges and questions, and makes some proposals about how we could grow as a Church community. We can read the papers in full on the Plenary Council website here. Here I offer a few lines about each one.

The first paper asks how God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is missionary and evangelising. The focus is on how we might fulfil the command of Christ, "Go, make disciples of all the nations". How can we share the good news of Jesus in Australia today?

The second paper reflects on the Church as an inclusive community, embracing a great multitude from every

tribe, language and nation. How can we encourage everyone to contribute their gifts to the life of the community? How can we be a "synodal" Church, a community that walks together along the road that Christ marks out for us.

The third paper is the one about the Church as prayerful and Eucharistic. Being prayerful involves being in touch with God in personal and communal ways. In developing our prayer, we can draw on the rich tradition of the Church as well as the inspiration that the Spirit gives today. In being Eucharistic, we give praise and thanks to God, most wonderfully when we gather for the celebration of the Eucharist. Like the first disciples, we recognise Christ in the breaking of the bread and we are sent out from the Eucharist to love and serve as Jesus did.

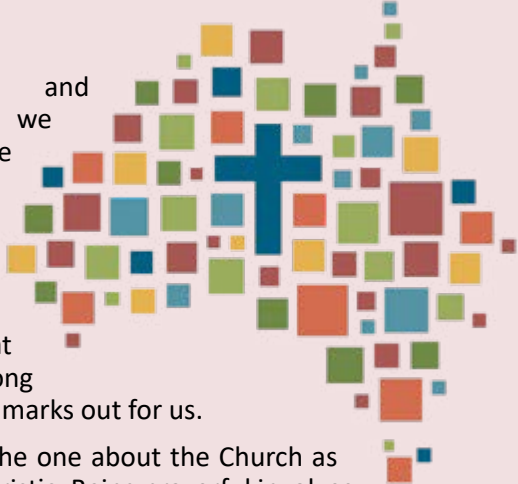
The fourth paper asks how God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is humble, healing and merciful. The paper recalls the Mass that Pope Francis celebrated on Holy Thursday in 2018 in the Regina Coeli Prison in Rome. As is customary on Holy Thursday, the Mass included a ceremony of washing of feet. On that occasion, the Holy Father washed the feet of 12 prison inmates from different cultural and faith backgrounds. In doing so, he was following the example of Jesus at the Last Supper, washing the feet of the disciples in humble service.

The fifth paper focuses on the call to be a joyful, hope-filled and servant community. We can rejoice in the blessings we have in Australia – the great natural beauty, the abundance of resources, and the gift of a generally peaceful society. At the same time, we recognise that there are problems to be faced – problems such as financial pressures, loneliness, physical and mental illness, and the devastating impact of drought, fire and flood. We are called to address such issues in a spirit of hope.

The sixth paper asks how God is calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is open to conversion, renewal and reform. We recognise the call to conversion as a basic element of the gospel. We respond to this call when we acknowledge personal and communal failings and seek to live more authentically as Christ has taught us.

Over the coming months, these six papers will contribute to the framing of the agenda for the sessions of the Plenary Council. The Thematic Papers can be read at <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>

Paul Bird CSSR - Bishop of Ballarat



## Plenary Council Delegates Announced

*Over the last couple of years, people from around our diocese have been meeting to reflect on what God is asking of us as a Catholic community in Australia today. These gatherings have been in preparation for national gatherings that will include representatives from all around the country. There will be about two hundred and seventy people taking part in the national gatherings, including some from our diocese. One of them will be Marie Shaddock, a parishioner from the town of Ouyen in the north of our diocese. Marie is much involved in her local parish community. She is also*



a member of our Diocesan Pastoral Council. Felicity Knobel is from the Ballarat cathedral parish. She teaches at Loreto College. Also nominated from our diocese are the vicar general, Fr Kevin Maloney and myself.

There'll be a further two participants from our diocese, although they'll be attending under different headings. Fr Kevin Lenehan will be there in view of his role as Master of Catholic Theological College in Melbourne. Monsignor Glynn Murphy will be there in view of his service as a chaplain in the Australian Defence Force.

As the six participants from our diocese, I hope we can make a good contribution to the Plenary Council. I hope we can highlight the issues that concern us as a diocesan community. I hope we can highlight some of the gifts of our diocese and share those gifts with the Catholic community throughout Australia.

Paul Bird CSSR - Bishop of Ballarat

## Introducing Marie Shaddock



Marie is a member of the Ouyen Parish, with a history of broad involvement, both formally and informally, in Catholic Church activities.

Marie has also been a partner in family-run small business enterprises, and she understands the pressures many families and individuals face in today's world. Marie is the mother of seven children, who are all now young adults. She is a trained teacher and supported Catholic education in Ouyen with the local parish school until it closed. Marie is truly active in her local parish, she prepares church bulletins and powerpoint presentations for Mass, she organises and delivers the parish sacramental ministry and with others, has instituted regular Eucharistic adoration in the Ouyen church.

The youth of her area are of special interest to Marie and she has run a youth group which incorporated a social justice focus. Marie has also supported young people from the parish by accompanying them to attend national youth gatherings. She has helped to run Lenten study groups and the Alpha course, is active in the CWL and represents our parish on the Sunraysia Regional Assembly. At diocesan level, Marie has been a member of the Diocesan Pastoral Council for the past six years. She has completed a Certificate in Pastoral Ministry from Dayton, Ohio. Her work often involves considerable personal commitment in terms of time spent travelling to events. In our rural and relatively remote area, where people are stretched in many ways, she has been instrumental in helping to foster spiritual growth and in representing Catholics from our local Mallee communities.

**Marie expresses her feelings on being named as a delegate:** I am still getting over the amazement of being accepted as a delegate and I have to say that I am somewhat terrified at the prospect because I feel so inadequate and ordinary. For me the restrictions of COVID-19 have really only made it seem that bit more surreal, because it seems like nothing is happening or changing. The fact that I now keep a journal as part of my commitment to the Plenary process reminds me that this is 'real' and that we are part of a rapidly, changing world in which everything is effected. Whilst life seems to be put 'on hold' I think it is also a great opportunity to further reflect and discern what it is that God wants of his Church here in Australia. The enforced shut-down of our lives at present, allow us to see what may have remained hidden previously - buried by our 'busyness'. I think the coronavirus has helped us recognise what is really important. We can live much more simply, and for many of us it is a matter of getting back to the basics. Our faith has been challenged but only on the surface. Our beliefs remain the same but the ways we live out our faith have been turned upside down or simply taken away altogether.

It is these changes and challenges that force us to take a long hard look at ourselves, how we practise our faith, how we can be nourished by it - and that is not a bad thing. To me that is the essence of the Plenary, taking a long hard look (and listen) to what is really going on and what is needed. I feel humbled and at the same time overwhelmed by being able to be present at something which is really monumental for our country, and which many others will be closely following. This time of restriction has made us more aware of each other, and more concerned for each others wellbeing and it is a real opportunity to open the doors to the Holy Spirit and allow him to show us the way. God always brings good out of a situation.

*"At a time in our Church's history we've not seen before, with the suspension of Masses across the country and around the world, the announcement of our Plenary Council delegates is a source of great joy for the People of God in Australia." Plenary Council president Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB said*

23/3/20

# INTRODUCING FELICITY KNOBEL



*Felicity is a parishioner in the Ballarat Cathedral Parish and is one of the co-facilitators, along with Jillian Hogbin, of the Plenary Discernment gatherings that have been offered for the themes of the Plenary Council.*

*Felicity understands the Plenary process and the importance of listening and discernment. While she has her own views, these are not imposed on others and she is very respectful of the views of others. She acknowledges that as a teacher in Catholic Education and also a parent to young children that you can become focused on issues and areas that are pertinent to your life. Participating and listening in the Plenary process has opened her eyes (and ears) to other facets of the Catholic faith and she feels that she has learnt considerably throughout the process. Working with the Plenary discussion group was an enjoyable experience for Felicity, getting to know people in the parish and especially working with Jillian Hogbin. Not only was she able to discuss and learn, she enjoyed making new friendships within the group.*

*Felicity is currently a teacher at Loreto College Ballarat. She is formerly the Religious Educator Leader at Loreto College and has completed a Masters in Educational Leadership as well as further study in the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project. Previously, Felicity has been the Sacramental Coordinator at St Columba's Parish Ballarat North. Felicity has also worked at both ACU and Federation University and worked for several years overseas in England, China and Vietnam.*

*Felicity's husband Gerard is a teacher also and leader of Religious Education at Penola Catholic College (Broadmeadows) as well as being a member of the Cathedral Parish Pastoral Council. Felicity and Gerard's two children, Jemima and Joseph attend St Patrick's Primary School, Ballarat.*

*With the Plenary Council now in 2021, Felicity acknowledges and understands the predicament of our world at the moment. While the postponement is not ideal, it is also beneficial in the fact that Felicity will have further opportunity to speak to more parishioners throughout the Diocese and take every opportunity to meet with, listen to and further understand other peoples' views.*

*Felicity is incredibly humbled to be chosen in this role and is looking forward to participating and bringing with her the Ballarat Diocese voice on this journey. Felicity is particularly passionate about women in leadership and having a voice in the Catholic Church and within Catholic Education. She is particularly looking forward to bringing these voices to the Plenary Council.*

## The next step on the journey

The two assemblies for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia will now take place in October 2021 and April 2022, following the disruption of the original schedule due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference decided to postpone the opening assembly by twelve months, with it now to be held in October 2021. Adelaide remains the venue for the first assembly. The second assembly will be in Sydney in April 2022.

As part of the ongoing journey for the Plenary Council, work has commenced on the preparation of the *instrumentum laboris*, or working document, for the Council. The working document – or *instrumentum laboris* – for the Plenary Council is the next step on the journey and will provide a constant reminder of the need for deep and ongoing discernment of God's will for the Church, the Plenary Council president Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB has said.

Work recently began on the development of the *instrumentum laboris*, with the document drawing heavily on the first two preparatory phases of the Council journey: Listening and Dialogue and Listening and Discernment. The voices of more than 220,000 people across the country, as well as discernment and writing papers on each of the six National Themes for Discernment, are being considered alongside Church teaching, Scripture, papal documents and a range of other sources – within and beyond the Church – in preparing the *instrumentum laboris*.

Archbishop Costelloe pointed to a national review of parish and diocesan governance, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the COVID-19 pandemic as some of those sources. "It is the task of the *instrumentum laboris* to give voice to all these elements of our individual and communal experience, and deepen the process of bringing them into dialogue with the Gospel and the Church's living tradition," said Archbishop Costelloe.

Archbishop Costelloe is joined on the *instrumentum laboris* writing team by Daniel Ang, who has served on the Plenary Council's executive committee since 2016; Trudy Dantis, the director of the National Centre for Pastoral Research; and



Fr Kevin Lenehan, priest of the Ballarat Diocese and the Master of the Catholic Theological College in Melbourne. Fr Lenehan said the group is trying to model the behaviour and broader vision of the entire Plenary Council. “The *instrumentum laboris* team, like all those ‘walking together’ (synodus) on the Plenary Council journey, works by listening, gathering information, praying and proposing some next steps in the mission of the Church in Australia,” he said. “It aims to offer a useful instrument or resource that can be a stimulus and guide to the communal discernment event of the Plenary Council assemblies in 2021 and 2022.”

“It will assist the Council delegates to remain open to the working of the Holy Spirit by shining a light on the urgent questions of Catholics in Australia today, and by challenging the delegates to reflect carefully on the Scriptures and Tradition in order to propose realistic and authentically Catholic ways for the Church at all levels to respond to those urgent questions.”

The *instrumentum laboris* will be finalised in October this year and be considered at the Bishops’ November plenary meeting. It will then be sent to the Holy See, while local work continues on the development of the agenda for the first assembly in October 2021.

Gavin Abraham - Media & Communications Director | Australian Catholic Bishops Conference

## FAREWELL TO AUDREY BROWN

*Audrey’s confident and clear-minded approach in her leadership has been shaped by her faith and ongoing commitment that the students of our diocese deserve a Catholic education not wanting in rigour or excellence but firmly grounded in a Catholic anthropology that recognises the dignity of each person and promotes growth and “fullness of life”.*

*Her tenure as Director has been marked by a number of milestones including the development of the Diocesan Education Vision which has become somewhat of a mantra for the work we undertake; her uncompromising support of victims of clerical abuse and her response to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; and most recently her steady hand at the wheel as we navigate the transition to a new governance model within the diocesan education community. While these and other milestones will provide a legacy of her leadership in the diocese, it’s the relationship and deep care – her resonant leadership – that Audrey has fostered that will be most remembered by those who have crossed her path.*

*Audrey is now working 0.2 as Executive Officer and Company Secretary with Catholic Religious Institute and Ministerial PJP Schools Victoria Ltd (CRMV Ltd), where she is engaging with the RI and MPJP schools and governors at this crucial time in Catholic education (having been formed by Loreto, MSC, Brigidine, Mercy and Marist charisms over*



*the years). Audrey has also recently launched her own business venture, Audrey Brown Consulting, in which she is engaging in project and consultancy work in education, formation and governance.*

*The Diocesan Education Community wishes Audrey all the best and every blessing for the next chapter of her career.*

*Tom Sexton has been appointed the new Director of Catholic Education..*

Emma Newman, Catholic Education Office Ballarat

Photo: Catholic Education Office Ballarat Senior Leadership Team. L-R: Julie Duynhoven (Assistant Director, Business Services), Sandra Harvey (Deputy Director of Catholic Education (Interim) and Assistant Director, System Improvement), Audrey Brown (Former Director of Catholic Education), John Meneely (Director of Catholic Education (Interim)), Ange Jones (Assistant Director, People and Development)

## A REFLECTION FROM AUDREY

**How would you describe your time with CEOB?** The last eight and half years has been one of the most professionally and personally rewarding times of my life.

**Describe your biggest accomplishment in your role as director?** The writing of our diocesan education vision back in 2014 was key to us thinking of ourselves (all sixty-four schools and the Catholic Education Office) as a community. The Vision has been a touchstone for me since that time and we reference it constantly in our work together.

**Did you have set goals when you began as director and have you achieved them? Was the role as you anticipated?** When I met with the selection panel after my appointment, they encouraged me to focus on building connections between CEOB and schools, shaping the school governance agenda and continuing to develop the capability of the CEO for the changing demands of education. All of those items, and so many more, have been part of an ongoing Our Diocesan Community - August 2020

improvement approach for our diocesan education community.

**Thinking about this specific role, what aspects do you think were the biggest challenge for you?** I'm quite an introvert, so I found the relational elements of the role quite challenging until I realised just how welcoming every school community is towards visitors! I think the other challenge was the sheer complexity of system leadership in moving between the needs of students and schools with external pressures (such as the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse), the requirements of governments (such as in the introduction of the Victorian Child Safe Standards) and expectations of the community (such as requiring increased rigour in school governance).



Photo courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, Kate Healy

**What are you proud of?** Always, I'm proud of what our schools, staffs and students achieve in partnership with families.

**Tell us about a time in which you brought change to Catholic education. How did you implement this change?** The last couple of years, we have undertaken an organisational realignment of CEOB in order to meet increasing governance and compliance demands. We tapped into the wisdom of school leaders and external advisors to build a more diverse team with deeper professional capability.

**What are two things you believe Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat is doing well? What is one thing that you think should change?** We're incredibly good at welcoming all who seek to share in Catholic education and in using the resources we have effectively and transparently. The next big challenge is in creating the conditions for every student to be making one year of progress for each year of learning.

**What are your thoughts about Catholic Identity in this climate of Catholic Education?** The story of Catholic education in our parish, diocesan and Religious Institute schools has been all about sharing our faith with students, staff and families in a way that makes sense in the changing context of society. We need the support and witness of a faith community more than ever in such a pluralist world.

**As director, you were a member of other organisations, such as CECV, BAC, NCEC, how does all this fit in with the role?** All those meetings, you mean? It's rather like conducting a fabulously diverse orchestra or leading an organic process of improvement, making the connections between the different parts for the improvement of the whole system.

**How do you see the role of the director in the future?** It is a good time – the right time – to be handing over to a new Director of Catholic Education and Chief Executive Officer of DOBCEL who will bring fresh insights, energy and focus for the new Strategic Directions (Partnering: A Step Further) and new governance approach ahead. I hope they have their running shoes on!

## amazing quilts



*Students from St Joseph's Primary School Hopetoun have been creative with each of them having designed and created their own calico square, with the idea that it would later be made into a quilt to be sent off to another*

*child who suffered the loss of their things in the bushfires earlier in the year. All students took a lot of care to create a square that would brighten another student's day.*

*The Foundation to Year 2 room focussed on line, colour and pattern for their designs and these were assembled into two lovely patchwork quilts. The brief for the Years 3-6 students was that they had to have a handprint included on their patch. The idea behind this was that the hand represented either a 'helping hand' or a 'friendly wave'. A picture that would make someone else smile was also to be included.*

*The completed designs were then passed onto the Hopetoun Patchwork Group and from some beautiful calico squares came nineteen amazing finished quilts. Many thanks to the team of patchworkers who put the quilts together. The completed quilts are being sent to Gippsland to be handed out in a fire affected community.*

Cynthia Maiden - Principal

Our Diocesan Community - August 2020



# CELEBRATING 60 YEARS



*When Fr Pat "Flags" Flanagan was ordained, it was a rarity for priests to celebrate sixty years in the cloth. However, he reached this achievement on Friday, July 24 as he celebrated a career that has seen him serve many parishes across the Diocese. "I'm glad I've made it," he said with a laugh. "I hoped that I would reach the year 2000. I think there are about six priests ahead of me in the Diocese who are all retired, aside from Fr Bill Melican, who is 65 years a priest."*

*Fr Flanagan now calls St Joseph's Parish in Red Cliffs home and said growing up in southeast Melbourne, priesthood was encouraged at school. "The idea of being a priest sort of just fitted me," he said. "It was held up as a very good thing back then."*

*He was ordained at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne, alongside famed community worker and media personality "Father Bob" Maguire. Signing on for the Ballarat Diocese, Fr Flanagan's first posting was at Casterton, where he worked as assistant, before his first stint as Parish Priest in Maryborough.*

*He would later serve at other parishes, including Hamilton, Bungaree, Edenhope, Camperdown and Donald, before ascending north to Sunraysia after the retirement of local priest, the late Fr Frank Monaghan. "I knew nothing about the area when I moved here," he said. "I knew there were red grapes and green grapes. I had no idea Merlot was a grape - I just thought it was a drink."*

*During the early days of his career, Fr Flanagan said he saw the Catholic faith change with the Second Vatican Council. "All the bishops in the world were going over and meeting in Rome," he said. "That brought about a lot of change in the Church and then there started to be a reaction. Now, Pope Francis turned up and he's getting things going again."*

*Reflecting on his fondest moments of priesthood, becoming a scholar was at the top of his list. "I just liked studying and learning things. It's handy when you're preaching because it means you've got more to offer people." Now retired, Fr Flanagan still remains priest in residence at Red Cliffs and supports local priest Fr Matthew Thomas with*

*services throughout Sunraysia. He said that while COVID-19 had put a hold on some of his favoured duties, like visiting local students, he was glad to be able to visit people in their homes. Looking forward, he said his hope was to relocate to Maryborough, but that he was happy to remain in Red Cliffs as a "back stop" for the meantime.*

Article by Teagan Bell and courtesy of the Sunraysia Daily

## NEW LEADERSHIP

Monivae College Hamilton is thriving in 2020 under the guidance of new Principal Mr Jonathan Rowe and new Deputy Principal, Mrs Fiona Mulhall. Mr Rowe says he feels "privileged and blessed to have the opportunity to lead the school into the future".

Jonathan has spent more than six years at the school, where he previously served as the Deputy Principal. "I love this community and I love being part of it, so the opportunity to remain at Monivae and lead the school is a fabulous one for me. The ethos and charisma of this school is just wonderful to be part of," he said. "We talk about being part of the Chevalier family and that incorporates being part of the wider community here in Australia and around the world, and you do feel very much part of that".

Mr Rowe said his focus will be to ensure the school continues to provide wonderful opportunities to its students and commented he has been thrilled to welcome Ms Fiona Mulhall on-board: "It's wonderful to have a female in a leadership role at the school. It's been a long time since that has happened, so we're really excited."

Ms Fiona Mulhall was previously Assistant Principal for seven years at Chevalier College in Bowral NSW. Ms Mulhall's extensive leadership experience and strong passion for Catholic education is the perfect fit for Monivae College and together she and Mr Rowe make a formidable leadership team. Fiona commented, "I love new opportunities, I love challenges, to be able to work with a principal like Jonathan is very exciting."

*Jill Whiting - Community Liaison Co-ordinator*



## CELEBRATING KATHY

Kathy Richie commenced work at St Thomas More School Alfredton in 1981. She began in office administration at the new school after founding Principal, Sr Jacqui McGilp, told Fr Frank Madden that, due to the rapidly growing enrolments at the school, she required administration assistance. Sr Jacqui also told Fr Frank not to send her "a fuddy-duddy". Kathy met with Sr Jacqui who asked if she could type and offered her the job the same day. Kathy worked at St Thomas More School until the end of 2019, and has cherished her role at the school for thirty nine years. Kathy declares that the school became, and is, one of the loves of her life.

Throughout these thirty nine years, Kathy has been totally committed to the students, staff, school community and St Patrick's Cathedral Parish and has always been held in the highest regard by her colleagues, students past and present, the families who have been connected with the school and members of St Patrick's Cathedral Parish. After twenty seven years of part-time paid employment at the school, Kathy dedicated herself to twelve years of voluntary work. In this latter role, she took responsibility for creating, compiling, publishing and distributing the weekly school newsletter. This would often involve Kathy, and her husband Paul, attending school events to capture these significant occasions which would then feature in the newsletter. These events included sports days, family fun days, school masses, assemblies - indeed, any events involving students, including the sacramental celebrations.

Over the years Kathy has been our ever trusty, highly accurate and extremely reliable point of reference for ensuring that all school-based correspondence was 100% correct in terms of spelling, grammar, sentence structure and formatting. She was the go-to person for all staff members and frequently gave students little informal 'mini-lessons'. The ongoing history of St Thomas More School has been a particular interest of Kathy's and because of this she has voluntarily recorded, gathered and archived the life of the school. Kathy has published two editions of the 'History of St Thomas More School' and is presently working on a display of memorabilia to commemorate the school's fortieth anniversary which occurs this year. In addition to the school's history, Kathy has maintained a very keen interest in past students and their achievements and kept the school community informed of these successes. She takes great delight in all their achievements and enjoys sharing these with others as if they were part of her own family. Kathy's personal motto has always been "You need to learn something new each day" and she has, as a 'senior', actively lived this out. This has been particularly evident through her skilful and meticulous use of technology. During her many years of service, Kathy has experienced immense change in terms of office tools. She commenced working on a manual typewriter and using a Roneo machine for printing. Fast forward almost four decades and we saw Kathy conclude her service by demonstrating her expertise with Microsoft Publisher and wi-fi printers, whilst never losing her skill at taking accurate notes in shorthand.

When people are asked "What comes to mind when you think of Kathy Richie?" the most frequent responses referred to the warm and authentic welcome that people received (often as their first point of contact with the school) through a very genuine cheerful manner via the phone or face-to-face at the front desk. Kathy has always been someone who puts others first and always sees the best in people. She goes about her life in a very humble and selfless manner, and has always been a true ambassador for our school motto: "With God first, we will live, learn and thrive". The St Thomas More community has been truly blessed to have their lives enriched by Kathy Richie.

*Trish Caldwel & Jean Crafter - St Thomas More Catholic School Staff Members*



## Marvellous Achievement



*Recently, we recognised the marvellous*

*achievement of Ann Munro who has worked at St Patrick's School, Nhill for thirty years. Ann commenced her employment here on June 19, 1990. For the past thirty years she has worked diligently in the roles of School Secretary and Administrative Assistant. Ann has also been the Parish Secretary for many years and provides a strong link between the school and the parish as the Parish Representative on the School Advisory Council.*

*Ann provides a wealth of knowledge on the history of both the school and the*

*parish. During her thirty years on staff, Ann has worked with twelve principals and more than thirty teachers.*

*Ann said, "One of the great privileges during my time at St Patrick's School has been meeting the families when they enrolled their children at school. In my earlier years, I will never forget the great support I received from Ray McCluskey and Brian Buckle from the Catholic Education Office Ballarat. I have worked with great principals and teachers and still enjoy my one day a week at work. I might add that I have also had the pleasure of seeing five of my ten grandchildren attending this school".*

*Kingsley Dalgleish – Principal  
Our Diocesan Community - August 2020*



## Learning and tradition remains at the heart throughout COVID-19

*With the challenges of COVID-19 disrupting on-site learning over the past months, keeping the Loreto College Ballarat community spirit alive and our students' learning as the priority has been our key focus and very much at the heart of all we have been doing.*

*Staff, students, past pupils and other College community members have well and truly taken up this challenge, utilising technology, innovation, hard work and creativity to keep education and traditional events happening and to make them more special than ever.*

*The annual College Walkathon, one of Loreto's most cherished fundraising events, was held virtually, with the alternative theme 'Coping with Covid' directing the event's costume competition, which saw entries inspired by a variety of ideas, from the Tiger King documentary through to lifesavers.*

*The 4EK Lap of the Lake, for Meningococcal awareness, in memory of past pupil Emma-Kate McGrath, was completed this year with the added participation of the*



*wider Loreto community, turning Lake Wendouree into a sea of purple, the colour of Meningococcal Australia.*

*Along with these key Loreto events, weekly fitness videos were filmed and posted online for students and staff to complete in isolation and our annual Mother's Day Mass was also streamed online for the Loreto community, keeping connections strong throughout this unprecedented time.*

Shona Hendley - Communications & Digital Marketing Officer

## FOSTERING SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

The St Pius X Community in West Warrnambool recognises that all students learn in different ways, which has never been more evident than during the recent period of remote learning. We endeavour to find ways to cater to the unique learning styles of all the students in our school. Last year the school was fortunate to receive funding from Brophy Family and Youth Services to support the implementation of a variety of programs, including regular visits to the Men's Shed. In 2020, these initiatives have expanded to include *Hands on Learning*.

Through these programs, students have developed friendships and practical skills. They have also explored ways to use recycled materials to create new things and improve our school environment. As a school community we are never sure what will appear from the shed next! From garden beds to murals to hookey boards and land yachts made from recycled cans. The projects are wide and varied.

Whilst working from home, students were able to engage members of their family in helping them to create their projects and sent in constant updates on their progress. The *Hands of Learning* and Men Shed's programs are definitely helping children to connect more with their local environment and to explore how materials can be repurposed. St Pius X is grateful for the support we receive and the passion of Mrs Adele Webster in leading these programs and look forward to a time when we can once again connect in real life with our friends and the Men's Shed.

Stacey Atkins - Deputy Principal



# REMEMBERING RAY

In the late 1970's, after a career in banking, Ray McCluskey opted for a change in direction and joined the Catholic Education Office Ballarat as an Administrative Services Consultant. This marked the beginning of over twenty years of service, during which Ray skilfully guided the financial affairs of Catholic Education in the Ballarat Diocese during a period of immense change and development. Ray served under three Directors, Peter Teggelove, Therese Power RSM and Larry Burn. Over the years, Ray would have travelled close to a million miles visiting schools and parishes across the Diocese, meeting with Parish Priests, Principals, School Administrative staff and School Boards.



Catholic Education at that time was vastly different from the system we know today. Towards the end of the 1970's, the system was in the middle of a transition, during which lay principals and teachers increasingly replaced religious staff. Resourcing was extremely tight, particularly in relation to staffing, with large classes, no specialist support, and virtually no funding available for capital works. The Catholic Education Office, which was a very small organization, could provide only minimal support. In most cases Parish Priests, as the responsible authority, had direct involvement in parish schools, particularly in the areas of finance and the recruitment of staff.



Ray would recall that often the first request to the newly appointed Administrative Services Consultant was to meet with a Parish Priest who, in the Priest's own words, "needed a little help with sorting out the school finances". On arriving at the parish, Ray was handed a cheque book and nothing else. This was the sum total of the school's financial records. To make matters even more interesting, not all the cheque butts were fully completed. Quite a shock for a man whose training in the banking systems was based on accuracy, record keeping and accountability.

Not deterred by this initial experience, Ray set about developing more appropriate processes and structures at both school and Diocesan levels. Early in his time, the first awards for teachers and principals were formulated, Catholic Education unions began to emerge and the development of a more consistent and equitable distribution of resources across the system occurred.

One of Ray's great achievements was to convince school communities to contribute to the Diocesan Schools Shared Responsibility Account (DSSRA). In the 1980's there was some increase in Government funding for recurrent expenditure but there was no immediate prospect of large amounts of Capital Funding becoming available. Despite the fact that the amount of discretionary funds existing at school level was generally meagre, with Ray's encouragement schools agreed to pay a levy which went into a Diocesan pool (DSSRA). Schools then made applications for funding for capital projects. The continuation of this system for many years meant that school buildings could be upgraded continually.

Ray also quickly identified the need to develop professional skills among the administrative staff, particularly in financial administration. In the early 1980's most of the staff in these roles were initially employed to carry out receptionist responsibilities such as greeting visitors, answering phones, typing the school newsletter and, most importantly, looking after students who were feeling unwell or otherwise distressed. The financial part of the role consisted of rather basic bookkeeping. Many schools had a parent or parishioner with a financial background appointed as a volunteer School Accountant. Through gentle but firm and supportive persuasion, ignoring claims of 'I can't possibly do that', Ray led a development of the role into the computer age and the taking on of quite complex financial challenges. Today the role is often viewed as a Business Manager position.

One of Ray's last challenges before he retired was to support schools in responding to the introduction of the GST with a minimum of fuss and drama. Ray also recognized that the School Administrative Officer role was a stand-alone position in the school and as a consequence could be a quite isolating and lonely experience. He encouraged Admin. Personnel to develop networks across neighbouring schools which facilitated problem solving and mentoring. The biannual Ballarat Diocesan Administration Conference was always a highlight both professionally and socially!!

That Ray was so successful in leading these changes should not be surprising. The secret lay in the manner in which he approached people. He was always respectful, calm and gentle - and yet uncompromising about what needed to be achieved. His vision was clear and his expectations high. He never made people feel they weren't up to the task or that their questions were silly. In his early days when the system had many young and inexperienced principals, his mentoring of them was invaluable. He always acknowledged that his expertise and experience was in finance: 'You're the educators, you determine the priorities, my job is to resource them'. Throughout all of this his sense of humour served him well.



On his retirement Ray had many plans. More time with family, travelling with his wife Mary, Great Victorian Bike Rides, gardening and golf were among them. What he didn't plan for was a diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. This disease may have curtailed much of his physical attributes, particularly his verbal communication, but did not diminish his determination and love of people. He explored many innovative treatments of the disease including deep brain stimulation. He was an active member of the Ballarat Parkinson's Support Group, and became a very supportive friend to a number of sufferers of the disease. As the health challenges became bigger, Ray and Mary were amongst some of the early residents of Mercy Place Ballarat East, and they both became much loved members of that community. Mary died in February 2019 leaving a huge sadness in Ray's heart. Again Ray faced life as it was and continued to be involved in the life of Mercy Place. He even had an article published in the Ballarat Courier in October last year about his vegetable garden. However, Ray died peacefully on the 15th of March, 2020. Because of the restrictions surrounding the conduct of funerals, a private family burial was held on March 31st in Ballarat. A celebration of Ray's life will be held at a later date.

Twenty years on from Ray's retirement, it is easy to assume that the resources and facilities, the working conditions and salaries, the policy structures and procedures of the Catholic Education Office Ballarat have always existed. However, it is only through the skill, commitment and vision of the 'Catholic Education Giants of the past' such as Ray McCluskey that we have the modern, well-resourced and totally professional Catholic Education system that exists today. Well done, good and faithful servant. We salute you, Ray.

Vin Dillon

Top photo: Courtesy of the Ballarat Courier

#### Julie Duynhoven writes:

Ray was a wonderful man and a great mentor to me. He was a valued and highly respected employee of the Catholic Education Office Ballarat until his retirement twenty years ago. Ray provided administrative support and financial advice that was greatly appreciated by all Catholic schools within the Ballarat Diocese. School finance staff would have fond memories of his A3 'front and back' budget worksheets (in days before excel), covered with his beautiful hand-writing. He was very patient and he had the most courteous and gentle nature. After retirement, Ray's friendship continued with many of his colleagues and he will be sadly missed.

#### Sue O'Keefe offers the following:



It was my privilege to work with Ray for over 30 years, first as my supervisor while I was at a school and then as a colleague during my time at the Catholic Education Office. I have many wonderful memories of Ray. To me, his biggest asset was his skill with people. He loved to be around people, talking and sharing his vast knowledge of finance and the Catholic Education system as a whole. He was a gentle caring man, a great listener and a very supportive boss. I have fond memories of our many road trips when Ray would tell stories, listen to whatever problem you wanted solved and talk about life in general. He left big shoes to fill when he retired to enjoy a life of travelling, but unfortunately retirement didn't go as he had planned for him and Mary. RIP Ray, you will be missed by so many of the finance and office staff in the Diocese who had the pleasure to know you.

## TOOLS SYMBOLISE REBUILDING

*Even though presently we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, early in the year bushfires ravaged our state.*

*Vinnies volunteers in Ballarat collected tools to take to people affected by these fires in East Gippsland. Ballarat volunteer Alan West said, "It was the thought of those poor people affected by the fires heading back to their properties and trying to work out where to begin when their possessions might be all gone or damaged that prompted the collection. It's a small thing, but having a rake or a shovel again might give them that little impetus to make a start."*

*Alan and another volunteer, Kevin Elliot, drove the load to Traralgon where the tools were handed over to Vinnies volunteers there to distribute where needed in the fire-affected areas. Alan adds, "We also want to make sure that any money raised is spent at hardware stores in fire towns so that it helps local businesses get back on their feet, too."*

*It will be a long and challenging road to recovery, and perhaps even longer with pandemic isolation and restrictions but we are here for the long haul, every step of the way.*

Renae Scholte - St Vincent de Paul Society



# FACE MASKS FOR PAPUA NEW GUINEA

In Term 2, Mercy Action Group students at St Joseph's College Mildura took part in a Young Mercy Links project by making face masks to be distributed to villagers in Papua New Guinea.

According to one of the Sisters of Mercy, Sr Margaret Ryan, the villagers are in great need of face masks to assist with protecting themselves and others: "(St Joseph's College students') help would be so much appreciated. You may know the situation in PNG. The villagers sleep around the fire in the centre of their thatched homes at night, use a pit toilet, have no running water, eat with their hands or a spoon if they are lucky, have poorly supplied aid posts for their health needs, distant district hospitals on rough roads, and only five ICU beds in PNG for 7 million people. Most of those people are young, not many elderlies survive to ripe old age."

Heralding the call, our Mercy Action Group students rolled up their sleeves and asked our senior students to help produce reusable cloth face masks. The college funded the project by purchasing the cloth and elastic for the students to then take home and make the face masks in their own time. Some students, not used to sewing, approached their grandmothers to assist them. While students were able to help our neighbours in PNG, they also got to spend some valuable time learning from their grandmothers. Over two hundred masks have been made by our students and sent to Sr Margaret Ryan to go to villages in PNG.



One of our St Joseph's College senior students, Jorja Arthur commented: "Over the past few weeks, I have been working on a project through the Mercy Action Group making face masks for the people of Papua New Guinea, as they face a large shortage. I started by trying to make the masks by myself. I had been assured that the process was quite self-explanatory and that I should have been able to pick up on the process quite quickly after the first one. However, I found it all to be a little more complex than first proposed, so much so, that I had to bring in reinforcements - My Nana. She has been working with me now for the past few weeks, pushing me to work more independently. Although I believe I have picked up on a few key

skills with the sewing machine, I still very much needed her guidance. Overall, it has been rewarding doing something that enables me to help others. I have also enjoyed the opportunity to spend more time with my Nana and learn more from her which has been the most rewarding part."

Tracy Aston - Admissions and Communications Manager

## CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHINGS OLHC School Warrnambool East

*We practice, and endeavour to make explicit, Catholic Social teaching here at Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School community, Warrnambool East. The 'See, Judge, Act' method, developed by Belgian Cardinal Joseph Cardijn, encourages us to explore our understandings of and beliefs in our Catholic Social Teachings as we respond to various social issues presented to us.*

*Our Catholic teachings are the basis of what we see, judge and act upon, and this makes our social action and justice program reflective, informed by experience and awareness-raising.*

*We concentrate upon the following:*

**CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME; SOLIDARITY; The COMMON GOOD; SUBSIDIARITY; HUMAN DIGNITY; and a PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR**

*The COVID-19 epidemic has impacted on the way some of our year five and six students have viewed vulnerable members of our community. In some cases, it has also changed their perspectives on themselves. Whilst they have been home learning, students have been reflecting upon the life of a person experiencing loneliness and safe shelters for all. These can be viewed on the OLHC School website <http://www.olhcwarrnambool.catholic.edu.au/catholic-social-teachings--olhc.html>*

*The organisations that we are currently drawing upon to enhance our program are :*

*St Vincent de Paul - Mini Vinnies;  
Caritas Australia;  
Catholic Mission;  
Warrnambool and District FoodShare; and  
Lyndoch Living*

*Other local organisations - including Warrnambool City Council and Wannon Water - also provide support in our ongoing outreach initiatives.*

*Our program includes immersion and awareness-raising activities enhancing the mission of our school.*

Anna Schlooz - Social Justice, OLHC





## FISHING EXCITEMENT

I have, once again, had the pleasure of taking the grades 5 and 6 children of St Joseph's Primary School Warrnambool fishing as part of their water safety and awareness program. While some are already keen anglers and others have never been fishing before, they all get right into the day, and their smiles and excitement as fish start biting make all the preparation worthwhile. A lot of the success and enjoyment can be put down to the specific place where we fish, the Hopkins River bridge. However, much of the enjoyment also arises from the sheer pleasure budding young anglers get from fishing itself.

Kids are happy just to catch fish, and in our preparation we need to make sure our fishing spot is a place where bites are plentiful even if the fish are not very big. While the fish don't have to be from a prestigious species, having a variety of species is always another good way of keeping children's interest. Even a mundane catch like a toadfish can be a source of great delight to youngsters.

Use of basic berley (or fish food) is important in helping attract fish. As stated earlier, getting plenty of bites equals plenty of interest, and berley is a key factor in holding fish in the general vicinity. Just looking down at a school of baitfish cruising around the berley is entertaining, even if the fish themselves are too small to catch. A mix of stale bread and tuna oil works well and the kids enjoy distributing this as much as the fishing.

When they fish off the bridge, there is no need for the kids to be proficient casters. In fact (as we keen anglers all know) fish often hang close to shade and structure, so simply opening the bail arm, and dropping the bait straight down, is perhaps more effective than casting well out. The fish will have enough access to shade and deep water to keep them biting through "gentlemen's" hours. Many spots only fish well at certain tides or low light times, but it can be difficult to convince novice anglers that they need to be up at, say, 5am.

Comfort and safety are another two key points. With guard rails on either side and a dry clean deck to stand or sit on, the bridge certainly beats being on a muddy or sandy bank. As well as reducing the danger of unintentional swims (for angler and tackle), such an environment makes it easier to keep the tackle both tangle- and dirt-free...ready for when a fish jumps on.

It is useful for novice anglers to remember to fish as light a line as possible and to use quality terminal tackle, especially sharp hooks. Fresh bait, sharp hooks and light lines often see fish just hook themselves, an important factor to consider with an angler with novice level skills. Constant tangles are no fun, nor is hooking a decent fish and losing it to gear failure. The tackle used should allow the children to fish as effectively and as hassle-free as possible.



I've been running such programs with our school now for over 20 years. Not only is it great to see the look of excitement on the kids' faces as they release their first fish back into the water on the day. It's awesome now to see so many ex-students still enjoying this great past-time in their later life. I frequently come across many of them who still fish and still remember the day they went fishing at school.

Mark Gercovich - St Joseph's School Warrnambool



## STEAM CENTRE

*St Brigid's College Horsham have completed their newest building venture that sees an architect designed, purpose-built STEAM Centre become a highlight feature of the College. STEAM education involves integrated learning across Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. The College is expanding their teaching and learning program to ensure the College continues to meet the needs of current and future students. Building an even better St Brigid's College is an exciting project and the new STEAM building project heralds a bright future for the College. With construction recently completed, the centre will be home to Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics subjects that empower students to investigate*

*the world and complete inquiry projects. It gives them the opportunity to pose questions and use and develop their problem-solving skills. They will use knowledge they have gained in their years at our Horsham primary schools and junior years at St Brigid's College, along with expert help from local industry to work on problems that surround them locally, nationally or globally.*

Rhiannon Abernethy - School Development Officer

# Reflecting on learning and teaching during COVID-19

*It has been a tough time over the past months. There is no denying that. In Australia we are generally not used to living with such uncertainty, unpredictability and lack of control over our choices.*

*The complex nature of working from home whilst supporting children to learn from home, and in some instances, caring for preschoolers and infants at the same time, is a juggling act worthy of the cleverest magician. For many the dining table has become an open-plan work environment where on-line video conferences are held, where GoogleClassrooms meet and where glue sticks and crayons, laptops, work phones and workbooks all reside.*

*Throughout all of this my overwhelming sense is one of pride and deep respect for the positivity and trust in each other that permeates our school community. We have had our fair share of tough times at St Alipius and we have never shied away from what that asks of us. COVID-19 has presented us with another opportunity to respond with love rather than act out of fear. For as St John tells us: 'There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear.'*

*I'm almost overwhelmed by the creativity of staff and families and students; by the commitment to working together to get things done; by the capacity of our staff team to make adjustments to learning that suit the needs and circumstances of students and families; by the hours of additional work that staff choose to do because they love their students.*

*This isn't the start in formal education that we planned for our Foundation students, nor is it the career start we wanted for our graduate teacher - or any of our staff and students for that matter. What we do know is that life doesn't often follow the path that we plan and that the more flexible, adaptive and agile we can be, the greater joy we find in the twists and turns, in the detours and unexpected destinations that life offers us.*

*We are learners at St Alipius. There are so many lessons to be learnt here. We have learnt to trust our belief that staying connected is primary - and that it is possible without being in the same room. We have learnt new ways to creatively use technology; for fun, for communication, for structuring learning for research and information sharing. We have learnt anew, how important it is for teachers and students to play to their strengths rather than perform to a schedule.*

*We have learnt so much from our faith. Not being able to celebrate the Easter liturgies was tough and yet the message of New Life in Jesus sustains us. Even the tiny seed knows that in order to grow it must be dropped in dirt, covered in darkness and struggle to reach the light. We have learnt more about positivity and perspective taking and being grateful.*

*COVID-19 has presented us with limitations and possibilities. We are blessed that we get to choose which mindset we take. The limitations imposed now open for us a wealth of possibilities. I am blessed to be able to live and learn within the St Alipius community during this time.*

Eileen Rice - Principal, St Alipius Parish School, Ballarat East



When we began the process of students learning from home, I was confident that we had a solid plan for remote learning. I felt great reassurance and gained confidence from the leaders at my school that we were on the right track with our plan and that the students will continue to experience rich learning that was based on their needs. Even during a time of crisis such as this, I started to feel excited by what the term might bring. The entire school staff touched base via a video conference to connect with each other on a professional and personal level. I remember looking over my notes and my plan and thinking to myself... 'Well, here we go then'.

The airtight plan that I originally set changed almost immediately. There were aspects of the schedule that needed to change and there were other facets that I didn't foresee at all. I expected students to be very keen to start their work, but what blew me away was their enthusiasm

to send their work through almost immediately. The natural teacher in me had an urge to respond to every single piece of work instantly that I received from the students. After all, this is generally what we do in the classroom, so why should it change just because we are learning remotely? Secondly, if I didn't respond instantly, the students may not feel like they are able to continue their work. Worse still, they may lose motivation and become despondent. After a few days, I realised that this way of reacting without a set plan was not sustainable.

As a team, we developed a plan of action over the next few days where we would portion our time out. Among other things, a portion of the day would be dedicated to giving feedback to students. Another portion would be planning for what we will teach, and some of the day would be dedicated to connecting live with students. I have learnt that communication with families and students is critical





that are scheduled during the day by including a step by step guide that students can follow and refer back to throughout the day. On top of that, I have introduced different characters into the videos, a range of (painfully unfunny) jokes, some riddles, and some ideas for outdoor activities. I have encouraged the families to send clips of their own children engaging in some creative activities and outdoor experiences, which I have included in my morning video. Regular breaks are strongly encouraged throughout the day to ensure students can enjoy some quiet time either by themselves or with their families, and learn new skills around the house. In addition to this, our team has introduced a 'Virtual Recess' component of the day where students can interact with each other via a chat forum. This is a daily half hour session that is monitored by the teachers. It has been a great pleasure of mine personally to see the worries and anxieties that students had about remote learning, slowly turn into an exciting and enjoyable experience for them.

I felt that I learnt a year's worth of lessons in a few months! To say this experience has been a challenging one would be an understatement. Our ability to handle life's challenges is a measure of our strength of character. We will continue to refine our practice and consolidate our routines to make online learning as effective as possible, as we draw closer to that magical day when we are finally back in the classroom teaching these brilliant children again!

*Michael Marshall - Teacher, St Alipius Parish School*

during this time. If you introduce a new concept or idea, it is crucial to keep the families and students up to date. I found videos to be the most effective and time efficient way to communicate. This way, the families and students don't have to read document after document and they feel a sense of connection. I have also made a point of making my morning videos to the students as entertaining and interactive as I possibly can! I feel that if I can find a way to get the students to log on in the morning, they will have more success in getting their work done.

In my morning videos, I attempt to alleviate some of the anxieties that the students may be feeling on a daily basis. I ensure that I cover the expectations and the work tasks

*I must say this experience is fast becoming my favourite kind of lifestyle. It has allowed us more family time and is proving to be a unique opportunity to teach and interact with our children like we have never been able to before. Using the school curriculum as a guide, I have tailored this to create my 'hands on' learning program. Our days have a routine, however this is always subject to life and its many obstacles, with three children of different ages at home and parents who come and go from their ever changing work regimes.*

*We start with some exercise followed by some sit down formal learning such as reading writing, mathematics, history, and geography or life skills! Our afternoons often consist of outdoor activity, craft, exploring, building, music or playing. This is generally teamed with lots of discussion, photos, reviews of some sort and involved experiences. The children have set up a Ballarat East Exchange shop. This needs daily maintenance and has proven to be a very useful learning tool, promoting an important sense of community and togetherness.*



*We have gardened, recycled and discussed ways of caring for our environment. When the children were asked to think of ideas to be sustainable in our world they came up with a poo powered car!! Apparently they learnt about this at school! I was very impressed and they are still laughing about it now! We are sending letters to friends and family across the country and world and tracking destinations on maps. The children are planning on opening a home restaurant. They will be responsible for preparing, serving and entertaining us, I am looking forward to a romantic night in and have been promised a disco and dancing - I can't wait!*

*With a one to one home teaching style it has been ideal for providing our children with extra help in tasks they have previously struggled with. Our scheduled life just did not offer time for this important factor. The gift of time has been invaluable in our house and I feel our children as well as us as parents are thriving because of this time. I am hoping our children will look back over their pandemic experience with fond memories. I dare say we will struggle to go back to a fully scheduled routine but we will always remember this time as a special moment in our family, where we made significant changes to the way we live for the better and developed a connectedness we would never had experienced if not for the pandemic.*

*Tammy - Parent, St Alipius Parish School*

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Zoom, meets, hangouts, Covid, Isolation...is it just me or has anyone else's vocab changed? I tend to be a bit of a worrier, so I am surprised that remote learning hasn't been more of a hassle. It turns out that my teachers had been preparing me for this for a long time without really knowing it. As a year 5 student I have now been using Chromebooks for

I'm getting used to the new way of communicating through technology to see my friends and teachers with the bonus of being able to go on my trampoline and ride my bike at recess and lunchtime! If I'm stuck on something I can email my teachers for help and I can also have small group meetings with a teacher and a couple of other kids that are finding the same thing tricky so we can work it out together.

Our *Peaceful Kids* program has been a highlight to remote learning, also being able to see my teachers doing funny videos and impressions, especially Grandma Gertie singing 'Let it go!' It was hilarious.

Staying safe by staying at home overall hasn't been so bad but I look forward to seeing and playing with my friends in real life. Believe it or not, I also miss the sounds of movement and just being part of a busy classroom! Stay Safe!

learning for more than two years! Plus my teachers were very thorough in explaining to us what to expect and how to access our timetable and activities at the end of last term.

Sienna - Student, St Alipius Parish School

## Reflections from East Wimmera

*Since the isolation and restrictions were put in place, we have been celebrating liturgies in the East Wimmera Parish via the Zoom App from my presbytery office which has been converted into a temporary place of prayer. Knowing that parishioners are sharing in their faith is rewarding, as Zoom allows interaction with the congregation before and after the Mass. It is uplifting to hear people from different parts of the parish greet one another. Tough times call for an acceptance of change and Noeline Hogan has done a great job as our co-ordinator in helping people connect. The determination of parishioners to overcome their fear of technology and embrace the new normal has been outstanding. A downside is that some elderly parishioners are not able to join because they do not have any IT mastery. Personally, not having to travel so much each weekend has also been a bonus for me. My thanks to the many people who are supportive and grateful for what we are sharing.*

Fr Eugene McKinnon, Parish Priest

*Since our tentative and somewhat scratchy beginnings, we have quickly adapted to tuning in for Sunday Mass through Zoom. Approximately one hundred parishioners are joining in the Zoom Mass each Sunday with Fr Eugene McKinnon and the word is spreading! Zoom reaches people in all the towns and districts of our parish and beyond. It has been a true silver-lining for former parishioners and even for overseas friends to join in our Masses. As well as allowing this technology to bring us together, it is saving Fr Eugene from many kilometres and exhausting hours of travelling. Not all parishioners are able to access this new technology however, and for them the easing of restrictions will be a blessing, but for the moment we are doing the best we can. No-one is game enough to predict precisely what our future will look like but we genuinely hope that this new growth, this new life will be seen as yet another glorious chance for us to share the gospel of our Risen Lord.*

Annette Gilmour (Donald)

*I think the online forum for Mass is an excellent idea. For me it ticks three boxes. It is the only option for spiritual nourishment in this time of crisis. It has introduced the use of Zoom which has extended communication within the East Wimmera Parish; and it produces a wonderful sense of community that we have never been able to share as a parish before. Thanks to Father Eugene and Noeline Hogan.*

Margaret McRae (St Arnaud)

*Zoom Masses have been a steep learning curve for many - the first week was Fr Eugene and one participant with him to voice the replies but we have graduated to readers from the different communities plus some beautiful music organised by Brenda Doran from Birchip. In Charlton, we advertise the Masses on the community newsletter, plus we had Fr Eugene send an Easter message which we placed on the Charlton Neighbourhood Facebook page. St Joseph's now has an email contact list of approximately half our parishioners and we keep in contact with monthly church newsletters. People have made comments such as "it is nice to have Fr Eugene saying Mass at this time" and "I really feel like I belong to East Wimmera Parish not just Charlton". Thank you to Fr Eugene, Noeline Hogan (Parish Administrator) and others who enable us to celebrate the Easter Liturgies and Sunday Masses.*

Anne Kenny (Charlton)







## MERCY WINDOW ILLUMINATES SACRED SPACE

A beautiful stained-glass window commemorating the long history of the Sisters of Mercy in Sunraysia has been added to the Cecilia Room at the Mercy Campus of St Joseph's College Mildura. Designed by St Joseph's College Art Teacher Andy Higgins, the window incorporates a Mercy Cross, the mighty Murray River, and a colourful Sunraysia landscape in a brilliant contemporary arrangement.

More than just brightening a room, the stained-glass art illuminates minds by reminding the college community of the lasting links between our Mercy founders and Sunraysia, our home. The window is the latest addition to the Cecilia Room and part of a larger renovation to create a sacred space suitable for class liturgies and reflection. In the first stage, an altar, the Stations of the Cross, and other items of religious significance were added so that Year 8 students could utilise the room for Religious Education classes.

Later this year, the year-long renovation project will be completed with the addition of an etched panel from one of the original Twelfth Street Mercy Convent doors. The panel will be fitted into a heritage door painted in the iconic red of the House of Mercy on Baggot Street in Dublin, Ireland.

We thank Andy Higgins and everyone involved in this project which has brought beauty and a sense of history to a sacred space within the Mercy Campus.

Tracy Aston - Admissions and Communications Manager

## SERVICE TO THOSE MOST VULNERABLE

Each week, for a number of years, the local Uniting Church community and the broader community of Camperdown have hosted a community lunch. Each Wednesday this lunch provides a hearty smorgasbord with warm food and warm companionship to up to 30 residents of the area. Along with other schools and service groups in the community, Mercy Regional College students and staff are assisting with the preparation and provision of food for the community. The menu is varied and cooked either at the school or on site at the Uniting Church Hall. The large chalk board is filled with the day's menu and some meals are also packaged as take-home fare or delivered to those who may need some comfort and support but are unable to attend. Over the past few years both the VCAL students and Social Justice Teams have regularly been on the roster, but lately there has been a renewed focus on senior students in Years 11 and 12 who take turns at rendering this outreach to the regulars who attend.

Sadly, in this time of lockdowns and physical distancing measures, the Community lunch has been put on hold. However, Mercy Regional College's initiative in taking on the preparation of the meals for the duration of these restrictions provides a solution. The wonderful members of the Uniting Church Community lunch organising team then deliver the meals to homes around the town, offering a kind chat and some delicious meals to the regular family of locals who are missing their weekly gathering time and conversations.

Principal Ms Sharon Gillett has used this opportunity to engage support staff from the Food Technology Faculty and the school canteen to cook the meals in the school's



industrial kitchen, thus providing meals for the community and a sense of connectedness for the staff who have different responsibilities at this time when schools are empty of students and staff.

Finally, the most important aspect of this new initiative is the opportunity for our Catholic school to continue to serve the wider community and those most vulnerable at this time.

Jo Saunders – Mercy Regional College, Camperdown

Photo: Staff of Mercy Regional College Di Beard, Nicola Fletcher and Wendy Gleeson prepare hearty winter meals

# CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BALLARAT FOUNDATION

(incorporating the Catholic Bishop's Charitable Fund)



The Foundation was established in 1986 to raise funds to assist the Bishop fund the pastoral needs of the Diocese of Ballarat. The Foundation has its own constitution and Committee of Management and operates as a distinct entity from general diocesan finances. Over its thirty four years of operation the Foundation portfolio has grown substantially.

The objectives of the Foundation are:

- to financially assist the diocese in its mission to grow Christ's kingdom here on earth;
- to financially assist the charitable works of the diocese; and
- to provide for relief, support and comfort of those suffering from disadvantage within the diocese, including unemployment, low income, age, physical or mental disability, language difficulties or social or economic isolation.

During 2019 nearly \$600,000 was distributed to and throughout the diocese. 2019 saw the continuation of a number of longer term partnerships:

- St Vincent de Paul to assist families with their back-to-school costs (\$50,000 per year for three years);
- The Christian Emergency Food Centre which operates out of Horsham (\$10,000 per year for five years). This year saw additional support being provided by the CEFC to farming families impacted by the drought;
- The St Patrick's College Chris Yeung Fund which supports families impacted by men's mental health (\$5,000 per year for five years); and
- St John of God Hospital in providing \$60,000 (per year over two years) in seed funding to establish a home based palliative care program.

Another longer term partnership initiated in 2019 was with Centacare to assist with establishing a counselling service in Ouyen (\$30,000 per year for three years).

Other major grants approved in 2019 included:

- \$69,220 to Mercy Place in Ballarat to buy a bus for its community;
- \$50,000 to the Damascus College Bright Futures scholarship fund;
- \$26,700 to the newly established East Wimmera Parish to assist with its transition;
- \$25,000 to St Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal; and
- \$10,000 to St Joseph's College Mildura Paddock to Plate partnership with the Sacred Heart Parish Kitchen Program.

Smaller grants included: the sponsorship of a parishioner to be trained to volunteer overseas with Palms Australia; financial assistance to the Warrnambool Parish Open Space project; and financial assistance for some of our youth to attend last year's Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Perth.

## Supporting the Foundation:

The Foundation relies on donations to build its investment reserve to fund its activities. You can assist by making a donation or a bequest via your will. Please contact the Diocesan Finance Office for more details, ph: 03) 53 377 111, email: [finance@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:finance@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or by post: PO Box 576, Ballarat Vic. 3353

## Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Archives - Moving forward!



*The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat maintains one of the most significant religious collections in the state of Victoria. Whilst COVID-19 has caused many restrictions to occur and has resulted in the archives to close its doors, the care of this collection continues. Over the past months, the archives have been gradually prepared for their future relocation. As part of this process the archives are currently being examined for any environmental or insect damage as well as, cleaned, catalogued and packed. Some of the unique collections which have been discovered or rediscovered*

*during process, includes the "National Catholic Royal Movement (N.C.R.M) Tape Library". Originally established by Fr Bob Markey in 1954, the "N.C.R.M. Tape Library" grew from a "need and an opportunity" to promote and support Catholics within regional Victoria. Furthermore, Fr Markey also believed through recording N.C.R.M lectures, presentations and specific Parish events numerous oral histories would be preserved. Topics of discussions included the Vietnam War, South East Asia, Communism, Refugees and Migration, as well as Spiritual Talks, Christian and Social Orders, and others areas of interest. Over the next few months, some of these tapes will be converted to a digital format not only in an attempt to preserve these original histories but to allow for greater access by parishioners and future researchers.*

Dr Samantha Fabry, Diocesan Archivist

Our Diocesan Community - August 2020



# INTRODUCING DONATION POINT TOUCH DEVICES

*In an environment where cash is in a steep decline, St Mary MacKillop Parish Western Border has decided to install Donation Point (Tap) devices in all our parish churches with the aim of maintaining continued levels of donations to the Priests Support Collections (Presbytery or First Collection).*



*The graph left taken from the Reserve Bank of Australia website highlights the rapid decline of cash transactions leading up to 2019. This decline has accelerated during the COVID-19 times because of the reluctance of retailers to accept cash payments and because of a higher uptake of Tap and Go technology by our older generations.*

*The Donation Point devices have been sourced through the Ballarat Catholic Development Fund and are as simple to use as plugging into power. The value of the donation can be set by the Parish at any time and in our instance, we have set this at \$5 per tap. If someone wants to donate more then they simply tap their card more than once.*

*While the donation point devices come at a financial cost, we have had no hesitation in investing in eight units to date to ensure we stay ahead of the cash decline curve. We have decided to allocate these devices to the Priests Support Collection due to it being currently entirely made up of cash donations. We have also focused heavily on moving our parishioners' stewardship (Planned Giving) donations to direct debit and credit card. This then keeps the two collections clearly separate. I would highly recommend that other Parishes take a good look at the Donation Point devices along side other giving technology that might become available!*



John Hockey – Parish Manager

*If you are interested or would like more information please contact Sharyn at the Catholic Development Fund on 5337 7127. The office also holds a tap & go device that can be hired out for events or you are welcome to trial it in your church if you wanted to try before you buy!*

## Innovation through crisis

The COVID-19 pandemic threw many of St Patrick's College Ballarat's best laid plans into disarray. A series of major events had to be cancelled at a moment's notice, creating much disappointment in the community. There have been far too many events cancelled or postponed to list them all, but they include:

- The Annual St Patrick's Day Mass, Assembly and OCA luncheon;
- Edmund Rice Day activities, including the annual Walkathon;
- The joint St Patrick's College – Loreto College production of Matilda;
- The 2020 Year 12 formal;
- Year level reunions;
- The Year 10 Work Experience Week;
- Many school camps, excursions, sporting and music events; and
- Planned tours to Darwin, England, Japan and the United States.

There would not be a student at the College who has not been left disappointed at some stage by the cancellation of an event that they were dearly looking forward to. However, in times like these, the College has sought new, innovative ways to fill the void left by cancelled events. In some cases, a re-imagining of how we could

replicate events in an online world has injected new life, new thinking and greater involvement. Some of these innovations will continue to be embedded in the College calendar for years to come.

Following is a list of some of the highlights:

### Student Council videos

Always looking for ways to ensure the student body remained connected and passionate, the 2020 Student Council has been exemplary in the ways they have created a series of fun, quirky videos to keep the fire of school spirit burning. In particular, they deserve commendation for recognising early in the lockdown that their classmates needed some fun injected into their daily routine. The concept of a Funky Hair Day, where staff and students were encouraged to wear their hair in whatever crazy style (or colour) they desired was a great success. Similarly, fun videos to celebrate Mother's Day, and another to welcome the return to the classroom, also brought much-needed laughter to long days in front of a computer. The Student Council also arranged a sombre ANZAC Day video, which was shown to all students, to ensure this important day was not forgotten. All Student Council videos were posted to the College Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/spcoca](https://www.facebook.com/spcoca)

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## St Pat's Has Talent

Traditionally held on Edmund Rice Day each year, the annual talent quest was in danger of becoming another cancellation in 2020. However, once again the power of the video online came to the fore, with students encouraged to record their entries and submit them online for public judging. This requires great courage so it was fantastic to see fifteen quality entries, ranging from Lego building to piano recitals to sports challenges to drum solos, published on the College website. More than five hundred people then voted to support their favourite act. Congratulations to Year 12 students Chad Cartledge, Harry Johns and Archie Pollard (pictured below), whose band Spa Adventure took out the top prize, narrowly ahead of Year 7 drummer Riley Irvin and Year 12 solo act Alex Byham.



## Weekly Sports Challenges

One of the risks of the lockdown was that boys would spend an inordinate amount of time sitting in front of a computer and would have neither the opportunity nor the inclination to expend some energy. Recognising this, the College's Head of Sport, Ms Tina Benoit set about the task of issuing weekly sporting challenges, prompting boys to

film themselves completing the task set and sending in their recordings to see how they match up against their peers. Challenges included demonstrating trick shots in sports such as tennis, golf, basketball, soccer and football – with videos published on the College Facebook page each week. It proved a great avenue to showcase the many talents our students possess while also encouraging them to continue practicing their well-honed skills.

## Windows of Hope

The first week of May was a particularly challenging time in our community. We were all still adjusting to the rigours of online learning, the weather was turning bleak and we were missing out on celebrating Edmund Rice Day – with its annual walkathon and activities. We needed a reason to feel positive so the College Mission Team led an inspired *Windows of Hope* campaign, asking all members of our community to take a photo of their own personal "window of hope" and to share their visions with the community. Once again, we were delighted with the buy-in from the community and were thrilled to be able to publish many inspiring images to provide some bright moments in a tough time.

## Looking ahead ...

As the school year continues, and social distancing restrictions remain in place, there is still much uncertainty lingering over many key events. We don't yet know, for example, what this year's Valedictory Dinner or Thanksgiving Mass will look like. We can't plan an Annual Celebration Dinner for the Old Collegians Association, or an SPC in Concert, or a Herald Sun Shield campaign. What we can have faith in, however, is our ability to innovate, to keep the spirit strong and to re-imagine creative ways to ensure that 2020 becomes memorable for some inspiring reasons as well as for their heartbreak it has wrought.

*Paul Nolan - Director of Community Development*

## House of Welcome

*Ballarat resident Mary Bukjiok says the support she received from community groups and kind individuals helped her live happily in the town after migrating from South Sudan fifteen years ago. The mother of eight moved to Ballarat in 2006 and lived in Wendouree for five years before moving to Melbourne for her child to attend university. Ms Bukjiok returned to Ballarat last year and found help 'everywhere she went'. Connecting with staff and education programs at the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre helped her secure work in aged care and feel welcomed as a valued member of the community.*

*Refugee support group, House of Welcome and the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Centre have provided opportunities for support. Ms Bukjiok said it would have been difficult to feel a part of the community in Ballarat without that assistance. "People look after each other. You get help everywhere in Ballarat. I love to be in Ballarat," she said. House of Welcome hosted a high tea as part of Refugee Week in an effort to raise funds to continue offering support to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers like Ms Bukjiok. House of Welcome director Carmel Kavanagh said the funds raised would help the group purchase food vouchers, small household needs for families and organise social afternoons for socially isolated people and new arrivals to Ballarat. The group also offers support with Centrelink, the immigration department, the court system, housing stress, clothing, bedding and assistance to pay utilities. "The social outings give people confidence they are going to be accepted in a wider community," Ms Kavanagh said. "We try to engender friendship and through friendship we give assistance, which brings the confidence to the people then to circulate among different people in the community and feel accepted." Ms Kavanagh said House of Welcome's fundraising had been affected by COVID-19, as large fundraising events had to be cancelled. She encouraged those interested in making a donation to call 0401 175 045 or email [annekav1234@gmail.com](mailto:annekav1234@gmail.com)*



Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Rochelle Kirkham and photo by Kate Healy

Our Diocesan Community - August 2020



## A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY AWAITS AT ACU OPEN DAY

For anyone considering applying for university, attending a campus Open Day is a must. Open Day provides the best chance to get a real sense of what your future university life will be like. In keeping with current government public health restrictions, ACU 2020 Open Day was held as three national events in virtual format, which will

then be supplemented by smaller on campus events and tours later in the year (subject to the easing of restrictions). Future students were able to access the same information they would get at a physical Open Day - though it was a virtual experience. ACU offered a combination of pre-recorded informational videos on our disciplines and study areas, live webinar-style sessions with accompanying chat, and additional chatroom features for prospective students to ask questions and access support.

Students were able to tour campuses and facilities virtually, and ACU showcased student support services, international opportunities, and other services of the university. Non-school leavers and postgraduate students were also able to access information to help them in their decision-making journey towards university study. It was the perfect opportunity to gain personalised advice and get all your questions answered. Not only do you graduate with excellent employment prospects from ACU, but also with the knowledge and understanding to make the world a better place by your presence in it.

Future students could also find out more about ACU's range of pathway and entry programs. If you were worried about achieving the entry requirements you need, these programs, which include Foundation Studies, diploma and certificate courses, will help you gain entry into a range of ACU undergraduate degrees. Year 12 students had the chance to find out more about the ACU Guarantee program, which allows them to gain entry to ACU based on their Year 11 results. This program opened in August for 2021 applications, with offers later in the year - although you must still complete your Year 12 exams to qualify.

ACU Ballarat Campus Dean Professor Bridget Aitchison said, "ACU's Ballarat campus is unique. Here, students get the full experience of a national university as well as the community feel of a small campus where everyone knows each other. On this campus, you are a real person here; not a faceless number. Your lecturers will know you, and you will know them. When you leave your studies at ACU, you are equipped for more than just excellent job skills. You are equipped to go out into the world and make a difference to it. Not only do you graduate with excellent employment prospects, but also with the knowledge and understanding to make the world a better place by your presence in it. That's the ACU difference."

ACU Open Days were held on Saturday, August 29 and September 5 and 12, 9am to 3pm. For more information contact us via the ACU website, email [askacu@acu.edu.au](mailto:askacu@acu.edu.au) or call 1300 275 228.



## Farewell to Joshua McElgunn



Josh has been a teacher and leader in the Diocese of Ballarat for fifteen years and has been Principal of St Joseph's School Coleraine since the beginning of 2014. During his time in

Coleraine, he designed and oversaw the construction of a completely new school, introduced Professional Learning Communities in partnership with the Western Trinity schools network, and developed a whole school approach to family engagement that was a key factor in the doubling of the school's enrolment in five years.

Our Diocesan Community - August 2020

Josh has been recognised in our Diocesan Education Community as a co-recipient of the Catholic Education Week Partnership Award (along with Angela Kealy from St Malachy's School, Edenhope; and Evan Wrobel from Sacred Heart School, Casterton) and at state level with a John Laing Leadership Award. He has been a generous and willing colleague, contributing with enthusiasm as Chair of the Southern Zone Network, member of the Principals Advisory Group and member of the Catholic Education Office Ballarat System Design Leadership Team. Audrey Brown, former Director of Catholic Education, visited Josh to thank him on behalf of the Diocesan Education Community, to congratulate him on his new appointment and to wish him every blessing for the road ahead. Joshua is taking up an appointment as Principal of St Therese Catholic Primary School, Torquay from the start of Term 4, 2020.

Emma Newman, Catholic Education Office Ballarat

## REFLECTION - *LAUDATO SI'*

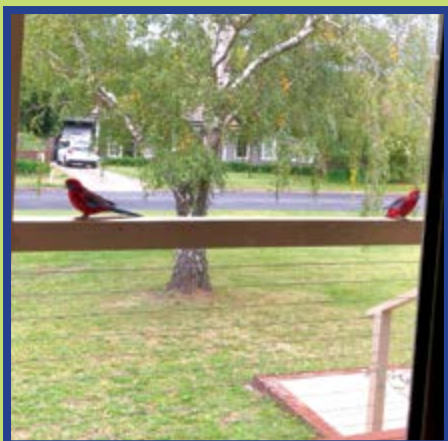
Our liturgical celebration of Ascension this year coincided with the fifth anniversary of the publication

of Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical on Care of our Common Home, *Laudato Si'*. People of faith across the globe engaged in a week of remembering and rededicating themselves to the care of the earth and of all that inhabits the earth. We have been invited to make this year a special *Laudato Si'* anniversary year.

"Everything is connected": that is the theme for the celebration of the fifth anniversary of *Laudato Si'*. Everything is connected: witness, for instance, the "digital neural network" (Jeremy Rifkin, *The Green New Deal*, St Martin's Press, 2019) that enables so many of us, in this time of pandemic, to engage in webinars and diverse means of effective communication. Even Earth's distress and the Lukan Ascension Narratives are connected as read at this time. At least that's the hope. Earth's distress is the distress of everything and everyone in the planetary home that comes from the Mystery that is God. Earth's distress, the cry of fragile Earth and the cry of fragile people, to evoke the language of *Laudato Si'*, is compounded right now by the experience of pandemic.

Never have we been so conscious of our interconnectedness within the human community. Never have we been so conscious of our connection with other Earth beings. As evolutionary biologist Jemma Geoghegan of the University of Otago tells us, "looking at the genome of...the virus that causes COVID-19 — it is clear it has signatures that are closely related to other viruses that are present in wildlife." <https://www.abc.net.au/news/science/2020-04-09/how-did-coronavirus-start-where-did-bats-get-covid-19-from/12132312> (Accessed 1/05/20). At the same time as we wonder about viruses crossing the species barrier, we become more and more conscious of our human need to access and to be cared for by Earth's elements, Earth's produce, Earth's beauty and Earth's life-sustaining and life-restorative properties.

We are often called upon to be Earth's stewards. The emphasis in that call is on human care for Earth. We are becoming more and more aware that Earth stewards us more than we steward Earth. Other-than-human earthkind are our co-custodians. Earth cares for us with food and clothing and sustenance and healing resources and so much more-and we need to care for Earth with increasing urgency, given the destruction our kind has already caused.



The first reading for the feast of the Ascension invited us to revisit the teaching of Jesus of Nazareth recounted in Luke's first volume - all that he did and taught "from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen" (Acts 1:1-2). Luke refers readers back to all that Jesus did and taught. What comes to mind for me in this context are his words to the disciples: "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten in God's sight?" (Luke 12:6). Ecological biblical scholar Michael Trainor comments: "God is unalterably in solidarity with these creatures as God is in perpetual communion with Earth. These sparrows, like all animals and plant life, organic and inorganic matter that constitute the planet are valued eternally by God irrespective of the disrespect and treatment they receive from humans" (About Earth's Child, 180-181). I keep thinking about this since pandemic time has become, in part, bird watching time for me. The birds in my garden are endlessly fascinating. I look

at them, at their habitat and their feeding habits. I give thanks that they, like us, are in God and God is in them. I often ponder the words of Mary Tinney RSM "We care for what we love". These words have become a mantra for me. The gospel makes it abundantly clear that Jesus loved and loves Earth as God loves Earth. The Lukan Jesus was reiterating the insight of his Jewish forebears of course: God saw all that God had made and declared it good.

When Jesus leaves his disciples, they keep looking up to the heavens until they are reminded that their mission is not to keep looking up nostalgically, but to remember that he will come again-and again and again in those who lay down their lives for the sake of the whole Earth community. Sometimes we too need to be reminded not to keep looking nostalgically to the heavens or to outdated solutions to heal our troubled planet. As part of the anniversary year, Catholic communities across the globe are asked to join a grassroots movement to work toward "total sustainability" over the next decade, "a path that would include carbon neutrality, simpler lifestyles and divestment from fossil fuels" <https://www.ncronline.org/news/earthbeat/vatican-office-invites-church-journey-total-sustainability-next-decade> (Accessed 17/05/20).



There is still time to create a renewable energy-powered world and to save life on this planet, despite our failures in the past. We can do it if we heed the wisdom of the climate scientists and the proponents of a circular economy. We make of our whole lives, even retrospectively, what we opt for as our future.

Veronica Lawson RSM





*A completely unforeseen and surprising outcome of COVID-19 is our Zoom Christian Meditation Group. A dream of mine for some time now, I only became brave enough in March this year to ask a few people in my town of Gordon whether they'd be interested in being part of a Christian Meditation Group. One friend in particular – Sr Kathleen Moran rsm – joined me immediately in sorting times, having our first meeting in our local church and designing a few words to describe ourselves in the parish newsletter. Suddenly, though, we were in lock-down and our first meeting became also our last.*

*With some trepidation three of us held our first meeting on zoom and despite interference that sounded like chattering canaries, we managed to maintain twenty minutes of silence together after listening to the voice of John Main address us from the World Christian Community for Meditation. Since then we have grown in numbers to nine members and have twice weekly meetings. Our members*

*are mostly locals, yet we represent all denominations and have a couple of members who join us from Torquay and Adelaide. We are still refining our format but members agree that there are a few essential elements that have become loved by all of us. These include the centrality of twenty minutes silence, the focus on the experience rather than theorising about it and the fact that the meetings are over in about forty minutes. Most surprising to all of us is the fact that we are not at all sure that we will ever want to move to being a group that meets 'in the flesh' even when restrictions on meetings loosen. We love the freedom and ease of meeting through zoom and will probably maintain this format even if we gather occasionally for longer, possibly more social meetings.*

*Spiritually speaking, we all bring different experiences and backgrounds to our group. Some of us are new to the John Main tradition and some are more experienced meditators. What we all find, though, is that the support and motivation of belonging to a group brings new consistency and perseverance to our prayer life. There is a lovely delight in the feeling of sharing this intimate, often private, part of our lives with other people in our community and to know that we are taking the journey with companions who are all searching for a way of finding a deeper connection with God.*

*A final note to say that our group is just one of many World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) Groups, some of which meet in other places in our diocese. For more information please go to <https://wccmaustralia.org.au>*

Miranda Brockman - Gordon Parish

## NEW PRINCIPAL

Following the retirement of Loreto College Ballarat's longest serving Principal, Judith Potter, at the end of Term 2, Loreto College warmly welcomes newly appointed Principal, Michelle Brodrick. Michelle is the thirty-first Loreto College Principal/ Head Mistress since it first opened in 1875 and is looking forward to working with parents and carers, families, staff and the extended Loreto and Ballarat Diocese community. Michelle is no stranger to Ballarat, having grown up in St Arnaud and attending university at Aquinas College before commencing her career in Catholic education in Yarrowonga and Seto, Japan. Michelle's previous two appointments were in Geelong as Assistant Principal at Clonard College, an all-girls school and St Joseph's College, an all-boys school where she was Deputy Principal. Michelle first experienced Loreto College whilst at university on teaching rounds and has always admired Ballarat and the College from afar. "It's been a while since I lived here and it's wonderful to be back. I have seen the growth and development that has taken place and is continuing to take place as Ballarat firmly establishes itself as a city of choice for many Victorians," Michelle shared.

Michelle sees great challenge and opportunity in the current climate in which she takes over the helm of the College. In what would have taken years to plan, schools have had to do in days and weeks. Despite this they have adapted and have shown that they can learn to do things differently, be innovative and agile. Michelle has seen students become more responsible for their learning and also come to learn that they have agency in all of this. "We have seen disruption and change like never before in education where in an incredibly short period students, staff and families have had to adapt. When we are faced with such adversity, we are challenged to act differently and to think differently. Mother Gonzaga Barry (founder of Loreto schools in Australia) certainly knew how to deal with challenges and she seemed to instinctively anticipate the needs of her time. One of the most pressing needs is our ongoing obligation to be looking out for each other – our class members and friends, our teachers, our staff, our families and community. We know that many people have been struggling and we have to be even more compassionate towards and considerate of others." Since her appointment, Michelle has been overwhelmed by the sense of pride and value in a Loreto education that has been expressed to her by all she meets and looks forward to overseeing the future plans for the College. "We should all be proud that we are a part of the great history of Loreto College Ballarat."

Judy-Ann Quilliam - Director of Marketing and Development

# Diocesan Liturgical Commission

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the first document produced by the Second Vatican Council in 1963, directed that each diocese is to have a Liturgical Commission. "By way of advancing the liturgical apostolate, every diocese is to have a commission on the sacred liturgy under the direction of the bishop." (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, par 45).

## BALLARAT DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSION

This Commission is an active group in the diocese and undertakes the following tasks:

- Advises the Bishop on liturgical matters.
- Keeps abreast of the liturgical situation in the diocese.
- Promotes liturgical development in the diocese.
- Liaises with Parish Liturgy Groups throughout the diocese.
- Provides diocesan and regional seminars and workshops in liturgical issues and practice.
- Liaises with other Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and the National Liturgical Council.

## MEMBERSHIP AND MEETINGS

Membership of the Commission includes the Bishop and representation from priests, religious and laity from throughout the diocese. Membership is for an initial term of three (3) years. The Commission meets at least five times per year.

## ACTIVITY OF THE COMMISSION

- Assumes responsibility for Diocesan Liturgical Celebrations – The Rite of Election as part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and Children, the Chrism Mass (Mass of the Oils), Episcopal Ordinations, Ordinations to the Priesthood and Ordinations to the Diaconate.
- Provides support for other Diocesan celebrations, including funerals for Diocesan Clergy.
- All works of the Commission are undertaken at the direction of the Bishop of the Diocese.

## SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

The Commission provides the following resources to assist parishes in their liturgical life:

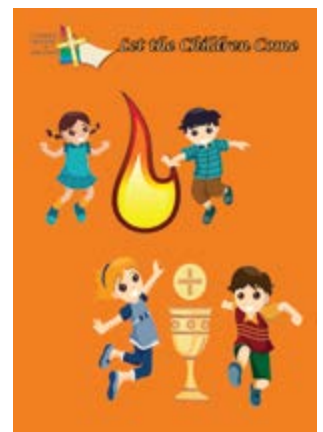
Sacraments of Initiation for Children Policy Statement

Catechetical Resources for preparing children for Sacraments:

Reconciliation: Forgiveness Is (Junior), Turn Around (Senior), Let the Children Come Series: Confirmation, Eucharist, Combined Confirmation & Eucharist, Parent Handbook, Catechist Handbook, Diocesan Sacramental Certificates for: Sacraments of Initiation for Children (tri-fold certificate), Initiation of Adults and Reception into the Church.

Sacramental stoles and accompanying symbols for the Sacraments of Initiation

The above resources are provided for Ballarat Diocesan parishes only. Catechetical resources are available to purchase through the Pastoral Ministry Office (orders to be collected from the office). Sacramental certificates, stoles and symbols are available to purchase through the Catholic Development Fund.



## POLICIES & GUIDELINES:

Altar Servers; RCIA in parishes, Diocesan, Cathedral and Episcopal Liturgies, The Use of Visual Display Systems in Liturgical Celebrations, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, Manual for Lay Leaders of Sunday Assemblies of Word and Communion, Provision of resource material for Sunday Assemblies of Word and Communion (available from the diocesan website), Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament, Pastoral Care & Funeral Ministry, Funeral Ministry resources (available from the diocesan website), Proper Care and Use of Holy Oils, Ritual for Closure of a Church (available from the diocesan website), Proclaiming the Liturgy of the Word (available from the diocesan website), The Sacrament of Penance for Children (currently under review)

Copies of diocesan policies and guidelines have been distributed to all parishes. Additional copies are available from the Pastoral Ministry Office. All policies, guidelines and other resources are available from the Members area of the diocesan website [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au). Registration is required to access the Members area and is available to those in the Ballarat Diocese via the website.

## LITURGICAL FORMATION

The Liturgical Commission has undertaken a continual program of liturgical formation, offering workshops for ongoing education in various centres throughout the diocese. The Commission has offered formation for: Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion; The Order of Christian Funerals; The Ministry of Lector; Liturgical Music; Sunday Assemblies of the Word with Holy Communion; Scripture and Liturgy, Music in the Liturgy; The Use of Visual Display Systems in the Liturgy; Rite of Christian Initiation of Adult.

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** Ballarat Diocesan Liturgical Commission, C/- Pastoral Ministry Office, PO Box 576, Ballarat Vic 3353. Ph. 03 5337 7159. Email: [liturgy@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:liturgy@ballarat.catholic.org.au)



# CELEBRATING ST PAUL

On June 26, St Paul's Primary School Mildura celebrated the feast day of St Paul. St Paul is one of the most influential saints of all time. He travelled far and wide, preaching and teaching about Jesus. St Paul wrote many letters, which make up a large proportion of the New Testament in the Bible. As a school named after St Paul, we commemorate and celebrate his memory each year. The day began with a liturgical celebration in each unit, followed by a range of activities and then a shared lunch, provided by the school. Students wore casual clothes, suitable for physical activity so that they could participate in all activities.



The first activity for the Foundation and Junior Units was the 'Working Together in Love' Art Activity. Students created their own mini-canvas, with a visual representation of St Paul's teaching about love. All canvases were collated to create a 'Working Together in Love' mural for the School Hall. The Middle and Senior Units' first activity was Tabloid Sports, led by our Senior Unit PLAY leaders. Students rotated through different activities within their class groups.

At lunch time, the Student Representative Council (SRC) organised a school disco in the School Hall. Students were invited to participate in the disco, with each unit having their own time slot. Lunch was provided, with students enjoying a pie, pastie or sausage roll.

After lunch the activities were reversed with the Foundation and Junior Units enjoying Tabloid Sports, led by our Senior Unit PLAY leaders and the Middle and Senior Units participating in the 'Working Together in Love' Art Activity.

Later in the day, students engaged in activities planned by their classroom teacher, followed by a Virtual Assembly. Thank you to all for the organisation and participation in a great celebration of St Paul.

Maria-Stella Blagus – St Paul's Primary School Mildura

## Sophie's social impact

Damascus College Ballarat Year 9 student Sophie Busuttill is striving to make a difference in this time of extreme hardship, through the Western Bulldogs Leadership program, where she builds skills in leadership, teamwork, communication and resilience. As a part of the program, Sophie was encouraged to create a 'social impact project' – a self-guided project that combines a passion with helping to make a difference in the community. Sophie recognised the impact of COVID-19 on youth mental health and she decided to aim her project at supporting the non-profit youth mental health organisation, Headspace.

Sophie said that she wanted to combine her love of art and helping others, so she decided upon selling handmade, painted clay pins for \$12 on social media, donating \$2 from every sale to Headspace. "I originally started making clay pins for fun. I thought they were like cute little friends that you could wear that they might bring a smile to other's faces, so I decided to try selling them while donating to Headspace," she said. "During these challenging times, looking after one's mental health, especially for young people, has become more important than ever. I hope that this raises awareness for Headspace as they do such fantastic work to help support young people's mental health every day." The Western Bulldogs Leadership program has helped Sophie build her skills such as teamwork, communication and resilience. It has also taught her a lot about empathy, and why people set goals and

start organisations to help the community. "These things really stood out to me, as I could see the process of how someone went from wanting to help create a change, to putting in the hard work to accomplish that," she said.



Sophie's favourite subjects at Damascus College are Visual Communications and Art, as she aspires to work in the art industry as a character designer or storyboard artist. "During times of isolation and remote learning, some of the best things you can do to take care of your own mental health are simple things that make you happy, like going outside, doing some exercise and taking moments to breathe or meditate. For me, I love to take time to draw, play my guitar and talk with my friends and family." Damascus College continues to promote positive mental health and well-being throughout remote learning, remaining committed to supporting our students to be their best, through providing access to staff, technology, counselling and support services, as needed.

Sarah Boswell - Leader of Development

## FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL **LAUDATO SI'**

Bishop Paul celebrated Mass for the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* and his homily can be read below:

In approaching the fifth anniversary of the encyclical *Laudato Si'* which was published on May 24 in 2015, Pope Francis' has encouraged us to take time to reflect on the message he published five years ago.

Pope Francis has nominated this week leading up to the anniversary as *Laudato Si'* Week, as well as inviting us to make this year a special *Laudato Si'* anniversary year.

The full title of the document is **"Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* of the Holy Father Francis on care for our common home."** Pope Francis begins his message with these words: **"*Laudato si', mi' Signore*",** Praise be to you, my Lord". He is quoting from a poem by Saint Francis of Assisi, giving praise to God for the wonders of creation. This is how Pope Francis starts his encyclical.

**"*Laudato si', mi' Signore*",** "Praise be to you, my Lord". In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common

home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. "Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces varied fruits with coloured flowers and herbs."

Pope Francis is recalling the message of Saint Francis of Assisi who had a vivid sense of how we are related to the world around us. We sometimes speak of the people around us as our brothers and sisters, members of God's family. Saint Francis of Assisi took this further. He saw the whole of creation as one great family, created by God. He spoke of Brother Sun and Sister Moon, Brother Wind and Sister Water. We are linked with the people around us and with the whole of creation as brothers and sisters in one family.

When he spoke in this way, Saint Francis of Assisi was echoing passages in the Scriptures that give praise to God for the whole of creation. We had some verses along these lines in our first reading. The prophet Isaiah gives praise to God, "who created the heavens and stretched them out, who

spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it." "Sing to the Lord a new song, God's praise from the end of the earth! Let the sea roar and all that fills it, the coastlands and their inhabitants."

The Scriptures teach us to give praise to God for the whole of creation. They also teach us to care for creation. In the text we heard from the gospel according to Saint Matthew, Jesus speaks of God's care for creation. "Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them . . . Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. This is how God clothes the grass of the field." As God cares for creation, so we too, as children of God, are called to care for creation in the way we live our daily lives.

God has given us the world around us to be our common home. May God guide us in our care for creation so that creation might be the beautiful common home that God intended.

Bishop Paul Bird CSSR

## FOCUS ON **LAUDATO SI'**

St Alipius Parish School Ballarat East has chosen to make 2020 a year when we focus on Pope Francis' call for us all to 'care for our common home' in his encyclical *Laudato Si'*. Kirsten Murray, a generous and talented artist and St Alipius parishioner, has gifted our community with an extraordinary mural which celebrates God's presence in the local bushlands. Kirsten worked over a 12-month period transforming a tired old brick wall into a celebration of the wonder of God's presence in all creation.

Our students now walk through doors surrounded by images of life and beauty and are reminded every day to accept Pope Francis's invitation to 'Discover God in all things'. Some of their comments can be read below:

This exquisite painting makes me think of the beautiful bush after the rain, with all the animals doing what they do without fear of being hurt. 'Discover God in all things' is a message of empowerment! It reminds me that God is in everything we do. *Emma Reed*

This elegant painting of the Australian bush makes me think deeply of the traditional owners of the land, the Wadawarrung people. The





artwork shows the beautiful gum trees and all that crawls, climbs, jumps, or flies through the magnificence of God's creation. The message of it is to 'Discover God in all things'. This painting looks so realistic and alive, it looks like any of the animals could jump out at me at any second. Spectacular! Amazing! Thought-Provoking! Inspiring! *Grace Vermont*

This painting shows the majestic gum trees, remarkable animals and unique plants. I feel like I could reach in and touch them. "Discover God in all things!" This quote makes me feel warm in the heart. This painting makes me think that we should take things slower and take more notice of what's around us. When you notice the small things, it's empowering! *Aoife Lewis*

"Discover God in All Things": Nature knows everything - from the sulphur-crested cockatoos in the tree-top canopies to the worms underground keeping the Earth healthy. Nature is another name for God and that is why we need to care for everything. We can't ever make anything as good as what God has created. *Judah Pelly- Gray*

When I look at this mural, I think of peace. I think of harmony. I think of life. "Discover God in All Things", so that when things seem bleak, there are signs of hope and rebirth and new life wherever we look - especially after the recent bushfires. *Jack Storey*

*Eileen Rice - Principal*



## JJAMM Week

What a fabulous (mostly) online JJAMM Week celebrated this year! JJAMM is an acronym for St Joseph, Julian (Tenison Woods) and Mary MacKillop. It is always wonderful to celebrate the Josephite charism and the legacy of Mary MacKillop in JJAMM Week. Before restrictions, we had a 3-point basketball shootout between four Year 12 students and staff. The staff proved a little more accurate and scored more points!



A return to remote learning meant our other planned activities had to be shuffled around a little bit. Our Feast Day Mass was the first celebration with our new parish priest, Fr James Kerr. This was a prerecorded Mass, shown in homerooms on Wednesday. A lovely reflection from Sr Rita Malavisi RSJ was included in the Mass. Sr Rita is a past teacher of St Mary's Primary School (when St Mary's was on the south part of this site). We were so fortunate to have her share a beautiful letter written by St Mary MacKillop. Her words are still so relevant for all of us today as we continue to be challenged by the current restrictions. "Let us work together and bear with one another". Our MacKillop community has such a strong spirit of working together and helping each other. We are so fortunate!

Everyone's pJJAMMa's were worn on Thursday! And the HOT DONUTS were eaten!! Thanks to Dave and Tina for cooking these for the staff and students on-site and for some staff to do a click and collect! Friday's Walkathon had to look a little different

this year as well. A huge thanks to Mr Joyce who had organised a new track for us to walk/run. All staff and students were encouraged to complete a "virtual walkathon".



We also had a bit of fun playing "Where's Mary?". A small wooden Mary totem was hidden around the school for students to find. She was found in the Canteen on one day and then in online classrooms throughout the rest of the week!

Alison Wright – Director of Mission  
St Mary MacKillop College Swan Hill

## OLHC's new award-winning learning space



Prior to the commencement of online learning, students at Our Lady Help of Christians School (OLHC) in Wendouree had been enjoying their new award-winning learning space. "Our original intention was to transform our building into a flexible, welcoming and aesthetically pleasing environment for our students to learn and flourish. I can safely say that our school community heartily agrees that the project has achieved this outcome," says Ms Leigh Bradshaw, Principal of Our Lady Help of Christians. "We were pleased to appoint a business from our local community as our builder – WM Flynn. This was particularly significant because Peter Flynn was a student here at Our Lady Help of Christians," says Ms Bradshaw.

The project won two awards in the 2020 Melbourne Design Awards – a Gold Award in the 'Architecture – Public and Institutional' category, and a Silver Award in the 'Architecture – Education' category. The redevelopment has been made possible through funding from the Australian Government's Catholic Capital Grants Program and was completed in 2019, however COVID-19 restrictions have delayed an official opening.

Our Lady Help of Christians students and teachers are looking forward to returning to their new learning space after COVID-19 restrictions are eased, and to celebrating its opening in due course.

*Media Contact: Emma Newman, Marketing and Communications Officer, Catholic Education Office Ballarat*

## St Mary's Café



*St Mary's Parish Ararat have opened St Mary's Café during the lockdown. The parish has employed a chef who lost his job due to the lockdown. For two days each week Mike has been cooking up a storm*

*with volunteer parishioners delivering care packages to parishioners and others who have been isolated in their homes. For many it was simply a welcome knock at the door and someone saying a quick hello and then a welcome night free of cooking. As well, parish dynamo Joyce Clery*

*has been working with the Ararat Rural City to tick all of the boxes including obtaining a take-away licence, so now the parish is selling lunches to the neighbouring school staffs and other locals. Joyce says, "The kitchen is a busy place, with the take-away lunches and dinners and the care packages. Parishioners have even been donating food to be turned gourmet."*

*St Mary's Café is looking a bit different during this second lockdown. We will have handmade meals to a tried and tested recipe from Fresh Food Fast Company #freshfoodfast. These soups and evening meals will be frozen for convenience and can be pre-ordered and collected on Thursdays and Fridays in the Parish Centre. This time around, profit from the Café will go to the Ararat Emergency Relief Team. This is a collaboration of combined churches, Ararat Emergency Relief Team and the Ararat Council. We are also making masks, lots and lots of masks, to give to those who need them. We're doing our best to reach out to those in real need here in our community.*

*Fr Andrew Hayes – Parish Priest  
Our Diocesan Community - August 2020*



## MRC Vinnies Winter Sleepout

*This year's annual Mercy Regional College Winter Sleepout was somewhat different for the South West Regional Secondary School in Camperdown. On Thursday, June 18, about seventy Mercy Regional College students, staff and family members stepped out of their comfort zones and took part in the annual Vinnies CEO Winter Sleepout. The aim of this event was to raise awareness of homelessness and raise much needed funds for the Vinnies Winter Appeal.*

*This year's event was different to other years in that the sleepout was completed from our own homes (our floors, couches, cars or backyards.) Participants logged in to a live event which was broadcast all over Australia and hosted by TV personality, Dr Andrew Rochford. The broadcast shared heartfelt stories about some people who have experienced homelessness, the resources that have helped them move forward, and the ways in which we can help make this happen.*

*As a school community we reached our fundraising target of \$1,000. In addition to this night, on June 12 the school hosted a Sports Colours Day where the students were encouraged to wear the colours of their favourite sporting team. On this day the students also donated a gold coin. Half of the funds raised were added to the Vinnies CEO Winter Sleepout and the other half were donated to the local Vinnies stores in our school communities. As a school, we raised over \$500 between the two campuses.*

*"In true mercy spirit", a wonderful joint effort was shown between the school based Sports Colours event and the virtual Winter Sleepout night.*

Melissa Brisbane - Social Justice Coordinator,  
Mercy Regional College



Yes, it is a 'long haul', especially for our older parishioners who greatly value the Eucharist weekly and who are a core group faithful to daily Mass. In the Warracknabeal Parish I celebrate the Eucharist daily and let parishioners know that this occurs, encouraging their 'spiritual communion' with each sacrament, even though they are physically separated currently.

## THE LONG HAUL

I send out emails of faith/spiritual resources to a list across the parish regions (Rainbow, Hopetoun, Beulah, Warracknabeal, Minyip communities). Initially, I included a Catholic 'resources' page for the internet – including live-streamed Masses from around Australia, and also from Pope Francis. Some 'regulars' who do not have computer access get week-end 'letter box drops', containing the Sunday Scriptures, Faith reflection and other topical articles.

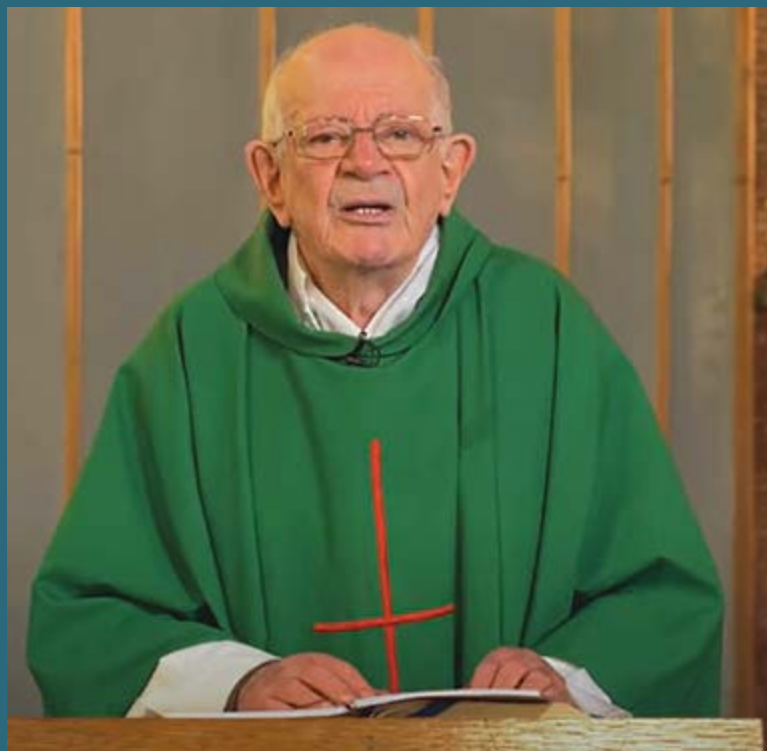
The size of our churches is a blessing, because this will allow the normal worshipping communities to 'spread out' for each Mass and adhere to social distancing health precautions when re-opened. Shrinking rural populations retaining original church structures may end up being an advantage some city parishes may not have, coming out of COVID isolation. Thanks, of course, to the sacrifice of past generations, who built those churches.

There is a 'grieving' for not being able to gather, worship and identify with our faith. Masses when resumed will be occasions of great joy and a reminder of the absolute sacred right of freedom of religious expression and worship, embedded in Australian society, yet not to be taken for granted.

In our two primary schools, the teachers and staff are doing a great effort of ministry – guiding home-based education while also providing a secure and nurturing school environment for those children (from day-to-day) who do not have a parent able to be at home with them, due to work commitments. The co-operation (across the diocese) of school staff, children, families and the Catholic Education Office Ballarat resourcing is a powerful ministry to our young in a time of social upheaval. It 'anchors' them to a positive community in the midst of isolation. Well done, all!

Mons Glynn Murphy - Parish Administrator,  
Warracknabeal





The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all around the world and we pray for peace and hope in this very difficult time and ever-changing landscape. It is a time to look at the opportunities that are possible. As Fr Justin Driscoll said in an article published in the Diocesan e-News (Edition 272, May 21 2020) "This is an opportunity to RESET... Perhaps because life is slower, there is a spaciousness that fosters deeper reflection and contemplation, and I've been seeking to make the very best of the gift of having more time. Isn't that what we have so often desired? So what could it mean for .... our Church to RESET? To reset is "setting, adjusting, or fixing something in a new or different way. COVID-19 has already reset us. We are all adjusting and are learning to be more adaptable. Reflection on our practice of ministry and our way of being Church is always needed, but challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic we are asking with greater depth and sense of urgency what is essential to us, essential to our identity as the Church, the People of God, the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit?"

**Photos:**

*Front cover: Abalone, Southern Cannery Pty Ltd, Portland. Back cover: 1. OLHC Wendouree new learning centre 2. Fr Patrick Flanagan celebrating his 60th anniversary of ordination 3. Fishing in Warrnambool 4. St Alipius Parish School Mural focussing on Laudato Si'*

We are a community of communities from the Murray to the sea. Inspired by the Gospel and nourished by the Eucharist, we follow the example of Jesus and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, reaching out in joyful and humble service, caring for all of God's creation, growing in love day by day and looking forward to life with God forever.

Vision Statement for the Diocese