

CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of
BALLARAT



OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

News around the Diocese

No. 62 November 2020

BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL

On Saturday, October 3, the eve of the feast of St Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis visited the tomb of St Francis to launch his new encyclical, *Fratelli tutti*. The title is from a message of St Francis to the members of his religious community. In the opening lines of the encyclical, Pope Francis acknowledges the inspiration he has drawn from his namesake.

“Fratelli tutti”. With these words, Saint Francis of Assisi addressed his brothers and sisters and proposed to them a way of life marked by the flavour of the Gospel. This saint of fraternal love, simplicity and joy, who inspired me to write the encyclical “*Laudato Si*”, prompts me once more to devote this new encyclical to fraternity and social friendship. Francis felt himself a brother to the sun, the sea and the wind, yet he knew that he was even closer to those of his own flesh. Wherever he went, he sowed seeds of peace and walked alongside the poor, the abandoned, the infirm and the outcast, the least of his brothers and sisters. (par 1-2)

In 2015, the Pope began his encyclical on the care of creation with the words of a hymn by St Francis calling on all creatures to be united in praise to God. In 2020 he begins his new encyclical with a greeting of St Francis that highlights the special bond we share with our sisters and brothers in our human family. He then goes on to spell out what this bond could mean for our relationships with those who are near and even with those who are far away. Pope Francis encourages us to nurture the links we have as members of one human community throughout the world. In typical fashion, he puts the message in the form of a contrast: Isolation, no; closeness, yes. (par 30)

The Pope rejoices in the advances of our modern era, such as those of science and technology. At the same time, he laments the harmful divisions between people and the injustices that darken our lives. He prays that the discoveries in the physical world might be mirrored in our discovering the bonds we have with one another. How wonderful would it be, even as we discover faraway planets, to rediscover the needs of the brothers and sisters who orbit around us. (par 31)

Pope Francis started writing this encyclical before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world. However, the pandemic has highlighted some of the key messages he wished to share. The common suffering has reminded us that we are members of a global community. As we recognise that we share a common problem, we might also recognise that we need to work together to find a common solution.

A worldwide tragedy like the COVID-19 pandemic momentarily revived the sense that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person's problems are the problems of all. Once more we realised that no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together. The storm has exposed our vulnerability and uncovered those false and superfluous certainties around which we constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities... revealing once more that we are part of one another, that we are brothers and sisters. (par 32)



The tragedy of the pandemic might have some positive outcome if we can take this lesson to heart. However, the tragedy would be compounded if we quickly forgot this lesson and reverted to former ways that ignored the links between us and focused again just on our individual needs.

All too quickly, we forget the lessons of history, “the teacher of life”. Once this health crisis passes, our worst response would be to plunge even more deeply into feverish consumerism and new forms of egotistic self-preservation. God willing, after all this, we will think no longer in terms of “them” and “those”, but only “us”. If only this may prove not to be just another tragedy of history from which we learned nothing. If only we might keep in mind all those elderly persons who died for lack of respirators, partly as a result of the dismantling, year after year, of healthcare systems. If only this immense sorrow may not prove useless, but enable us to take a step forward towards a new style of life. If only we might rediscover once for all that we need one another, and that in this way our human family can experience a rebirth, with all its faces, all its hands and all its voices, beyond the walls that we have erected. (par 35)

Pope Francis offers a commentary on the parable of the Good Samaritan. He refers to each of the characters in the story – the man who was travelling on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, the robbers who attacked him, the priest and Levite who passed by on the other side, and the Samaritan who came to his aid. The Pope invites us to consider how there is something of each of these characters in each one of us. All of us have in ourselves something of the wounded man, something of the robber, something of the passers-by, and something of the Good Samaritan. (par 69) Recognising this can help us appreciate all the more how much we have in common – both strengths and weaknesses.

The Pope makes a further point from this parable about the value of working together to achieve good results. He highlights the fact that the Good Samaritan did not do everything himself. He enlisted the help of the inn-keeper. The Samaritan discovered an innkeeper who would care for the man; we too are called to unite as a family that is stronger than the sum of small individual members. (par 78)

As he develops the theme of working together as a community, Pope Francis reflects on the role of politics. He observes that people often have a dim view of politics. For many people today, politics is a distasteful word, often due to the mistakes, corruption and inefficiency of some politicians. And yet, he sees politics as a necessary means to achieving the best for society. Can there be an effective process of growth towards universal fraternity and social peace without a sound political life? (par 176)

What is needed is a healthy politics – one that looks beyond the coming election to the long-term good of the community. In the face of many petty forms of politics focused on immediate interests, I would repeat that “true statecraft is manifest when, in difficult times, we uphold high principles and think of the long-term common good. Political powers do not find it easy to assume this duty in the work of nation-building”, much less in forging a common project for the human family, now and in the future.

Thinking of those who will come after us does not serve electoral purposes, yet it is what authentic justice demands. (par 178)

We might not generally associate the word “politics” with the word “charity”. Yet, Pope Francis links the two and speaks of “political charity”. I appeal for a renewed appreciation of politics as a lofty vocation and one of the highest forms of charity, inasmuch as it seeks the common good. (par 180) He gives a simple example. “If someone helps an elderly person cross a river, that is a fine act of charity. The politician, on the other hand, builds a bridge, and that too is an act of charity.” (par 186)

In the course of the encyclical, Pope Francis quotes from documents published by conferences of bishops in various countries. He quotes from the Australian bishops on the subject of communication in the digital world. The Australian document was published last year, with the title *Making It Real: Genuine Human Encounter in Our Digital World*.

The Pope confirms a number of points that the Australian bishops made about the good and bad use of technology. On the one hand, the various communications platforms can be used to exploit people’s weaknesses and in very nasty ways, such as in “digital campaigns of hatred and destruction” (par 42). Yet, they can also be used for great good. The media can help us to feel closer to one another, creating a sense of the unity of the human family which in turn can inspire solidarity and serious efforts to ensure a more dignified life for all . . . The internet, in particular, offers immense possibilities for encounter and solidarity. This is something truly good, a gift from God”. (par 205)

After considering some global questions such as the need for dialogue to resolve international disputes and promote peace, Pope Francis offers a reflection on our lives at the local, personal level. He highlights the value of kindness. Often nowadays we find neither the time nor the energy to stop and be kind to others, to say “excuse me”, “pardon me”, “thank you”. Yet every now and then, miraculously, a kind person appears and is willing to set everything else aside in order to show interest, to give the gift of a smile, to speak a word of encouragement, to listen amid general indifference. If we make a daily effort to do exactly this, we can create a healthy social atmosphere in which misunderstandings can be overcome and conflict forestalled. (par 224)

Towards the end of the encyclical, Pope Francis recalls a meeting he had in Abu Dhabi last year. He met with the Moslem leader, the Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb. They signed a declaration expressing their shared conviction that “God has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and has called them to live together as brothers and sisters”. The Pope compared his journey to Abu Dhabi to the journey of St Francis to meet with Sultan Malik-el-Kamil in Egypt. In both cases, they were meetings across languages and cultures and religions to express a common faith in God as the Creator of all and a common desire for peace among all the members of God’s family.

The final part of the encyclical echoes the invitation made in the opening paragraphs, an invitation to dream together so that we might live together as one family. Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travellers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all. (par 8)

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR



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OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY (ODC)

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The next ODC will be in March 2021.

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Eagle on the Hill



For my husband, Larry Eagle, it was a fairly daunting prospect buying a twenty acre sultana vineyard in Red Cliffs, about twelve kilometres south of Mildura, Victoria.

I had grown up on a "block" and was overjoyed but for Larry, having had nothing to do with growing grapes, he was, understandably, a little worried! But to his credit and with help and guidance from my father, my brother, my brother-in-law and friends, he adapted well and quickly became an excellent "blockie" winning three awards from Sunbeam for being a "supplier of High Quality Dried Fruit" over our twenty-six years living at "Eagle on the Hill".

Giving our three children a childhood in a rural setting, we both agreed, would be great. Having lots of room for riding bikes, kicking a footy, playing netball and cricket, swimming in our above ground pool, running, playing and climbing was idyllic...so our two sons and our daughter tell us! There was also the added bonus of learning how to work while helping mum and dad, whether it was driving tractors, training vines, chipping out the dreaded "puncture weeds", doing extra chores around the house, spreading grapes on racks, cart work or raking fruit out. Drying grapes on "racks" is now an old-fashioned process. It is very hard work and labour intensive but certainly produces a beautiful grade of fruit. The preferred method now is to dry grapes on the vine, known as "summer pruning".

Our children, and of course ourselves, also enjoyed meeting many people from different backgrounds, cultures and countries through our itinerant fruit pickers. Our harvest would begin mid-February and would take somewhere between three to four weeks. The drying period could last until the end of March or the beginning of April dependant, of course, on the weather. Rain is a wonderful, life-giving event, but not so much celebrated when there are many "blacks" (long lengths of black plastic) on the ground with many



tonnes of dried sultanas on them. These need to be rolled in and covered when it rains and is not easy to do in the middle of the night!

Our life on the land has been a wonderful journey. There have been ups and downs, as is the natural way, but we have navigated through with the love, help and support of our parents, extended family and friends. We have celebrated many special occasions and the fond memories will last our lifetime.

With our children attending St Joseph's College, Mildura and our family being part of St Joseph the Worker's Parish, Red Cliffs for the past twenty-five years,

we have enjoyed the benefits of a generous and caring community. My personal involvement in parish activities has overflowed to include my non-Catholic husband's participation in events such as attending special occasion Masses, helping at parish bbq's and tidying up the church grounds, being a facilitator for a marriage preparation program and generally being a wonderful support in my faith connection.

We now begin the next stage of our lives as our property has been sold and we will be moving sometime in 2021. We embark on the very exciting and much anticipated event of becoming grandparents and will look forward to recounting many stories to our grandchildren about life on the "block". We are so blessed to be able to do so.

Diane Eagle - Red Cliffs



THE CORINTHIAN PROJECT



The 'tyranny of distance' has long hindered system wide collaboration across of our expansive Diocese. However, in the wake of COVID-19, and with the need for rapid professional development in digital learning, an inter-zonal partnership was developed to bring teachers and learning consultants together online to plan and develop a shared and consistent approach to curriculum, pedagogy and learning assessment delivery. Much like Paul's letters to the Corinthians, a call to come together in times of great change was put out across the Diocese and the The Corinthian Project was established.

Bringing some thirty-three teachers and ten learning consultants together across all three Zones of the Diocese of Ballarat was a daunting challenge, however, over the past six-weeks, teachers and consultants have worked in mixed teams and planned subjects, coordinated online meetings, produced lessons and created resources for one another to share. This inspiring group have produced an abundance of rich, student focused learning that has received praise for engaging students and families during remote learning. The work the group has done in the midst of a world crisis has been ground-breaking in the education sector and we look forward to seeing where this partnership can go in the future. New schools are most welcome to join and benefit from the shared resources the group has produced. Catholic Education working together.

Joshua McElgunn - Former Principal | St Joseph's School, Coleraine

new approach to governance

In March 2019, following consultation with the priests and many involved in Catholic Education in the Diocese of Ballarat, Bishop Paul announced a new approach to the governance of parish primary and secondary schools in the diocese. This new model for school governance has emerged from a long-term project undertaken by a governance working party of the Ballarat Diocesan Schools Advisory Council (BDSAC). The working party, which commenced in 2012, has developed a model of school governance that will provide consistency and professionalism of governance for parish schools. It will also enable the continued pastoral ministry of priests in parish schools, without them being employers of staff. This latter point was one of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

In line with recommendations of the working party, Bishop Paul established a company limited by guarantee, Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL), and appointed a board of directors to govern parish schools.



During 2020, DOBCEL Board Directors have continued to meet with priests and parish representatives to discuss the transfer of schools to DOBCEL governance on January 1, 2021. Supporting this, the staff of the Catholic Education Office have been providing organisational support for the discussions and finalising the administrative requirements for the re-registration of the fifty-six parish schools.

The DOBCEL Board is grateful for the work that Principals, Administration Officers and Compliance Officers (or their equivalent) have undertaken to ensure that all aspects of their schools' compliance were attended to. They are also grateful to the parish priests and canonical administrators who have worked hard to help ensure the smooth transition.

During discussions with parishes and priests in the last few months, several improvements have been made to the School Transfer Agreement. These include rewording the Agreement to indicate governance authority rather than ownership; the inclusion of DOBCEL's commitment to an ongoing relationship between the school and the parish; the clarification of distributions on the closure of a school which recognises contributions from parishioners as well as education sources; and celebration of the parish's place in establishing education in the parish, along with a commitment to continue this ministry under DOBCEL.

When DOBCEL becomes the governor and proprietor of schools on January 1, 2021, the staff employed in those schools will become employees of the company with no loss of conditions or entitlements. There is



some due diligence that now needs to be undertaken by CEOB on behalf of DOBCEL in order to check that all transferring staff are contracted and paid correctly and to communicate clearly with staff about what the transfer means to their continued employment.

It will be important during the next term to finalise the signing of all School Transfer Agreements, undertake the due diligence around the transfer of staff and assist principals in helping their staff to understand the implications of the change of employer.

Bishop Paul is confident that, under its leadership, the new company will provide effective governance for the Catholic Education Office Ballarat and for those schools that are transferred to the company over coming years.

Emma Newman
Catholic Education Ballarat

Photos: Signing at Emmaus Catholic
Primary School, Mt Clear

Season of Creation 2020

The recent Season of Creation, from September 1 to October 4 (the Feast of St Francis of Assisi), is the annual celebration of prayer and action for the environment, during which we are asked to renew our relationship with the Creator and all creation through celebration, conversion and commitment and, as Pope Francis says, to live simply and sustainably, not to plunder the planet's resources but to share justly and respectfully. This year it is a time to consider the integral relationship between 'resting' the Earth and ecological, social and political ways of living and "to restore with justice in mind" (Pope Francis 1st September, 2020).

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Our Diocesan Community - November 2020

The theme for 2020 was "Jubilee for the Earth: New Rhythms, New Hope". As many crises have become apparent throughout the world, the prayer is to heal our relationships with creation and with each other, and to usher in a time of restoration, hope and commitment to radically new ways of living with creation.

This has been the message throughout the Season of Creation from the Catholic Earthcare Convocation, in a series of eight webinar sessions across four weeks. The first three Formation sessions featured Bishop Vincent Long, Chairman of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service; a Franciscan who spoke about his Franciscan eco-spirituality in the light of Pope Francis' encyclical (the charism of Franciscan religious life is based on the sacred relationship with the natural world); Peter Saunders, an Ignatian spiritual director, who spoke about his experience walking in the bush; and Dr Sandie Cornish from the Office of Social Justice and Interfaith perspectives, who spoke on Caring for Our Common Home from the perspectives of the Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish faiths.

The Convocation then featured three very informative sessions on the impact of the world's financial, economic, investment and political systems on our sustainable future. The speakers were Economist Ross Garnaut, lawyer and ecological advocate Bronwyn Lay, Tim Buckley, Director of Energy Finance Studies, John Ferguson, Office for Social Justice, and speakers from Catholic Superannuation and Altius Asset Management. The political and financial imperatives that were discussed helped us understand the constant news around finance and the environment.

The final sessions focussed on how we can act to bring about change, within our families and in the wider community. These sessions included inspiring voices from youth representatives. We congratulate Bernard Holland and all at Catholic Earthcare Australia who brought these wonderful presentations together which can still be accessed online. In our diocese, an online Creation Ignatian Examen included participants from Mildura to Warrnambool and smaller places in between. It was wonderful to connect with people from different regional parishes.

The session that was most affecting, even distressing, was a webinar hosted by the Global Catholic Climate Movement Oceania for Caritas New Zealand, 'Towards New Horizons: Caritas State of the Environment for Oceania 2020'. This was a presentation by young Caritas workers on climate crisis risks to Oceania regions, with graphic images of damage to coastal villages due to rising sea levels requiring migration to other lands, and also showing the damage to local fish populations by sea mining. In a previous webinar, Archbishop Loy Chong of Suva had spoken about the physical and economic damage caused by corporate sand mining to rivers and fish populations in Oceania, as well as to the people who live nearby. This opportunity to connect through digital technology with others in our region and beyond regarding these social justice issues has been a highlight during this pandemic and is hopefully an inspiration for further connection for our parishes.

Sandra Dillon – Catholic Earthcare Ballarat



REMEMBERING A LIFE OF SERVICE



Sr Caroline Deutscher is being fondly remembered as a 'wonderful teacher' who dedicated her life to service. Her funeral was held at the Loreto College chapel on Monday, October 19. Sr Caroline died aged one hundred and one.

She was well known in the Ballarat community for her service in teaching and significant contributions to parish life in the diocese. Recent years marked major milestones for Sr Caroline, with acknowledgement of her eighty years of service in 2018 and celebrations for her one hundredth birthday in 2019. Sr Caroline was born in Portland in 1919 and grew up in the small western Victorian town of Merino. She joined religious life in 1938 at age 19 after completing her early years of secondary school by correspondence, then later as a boarder in Portland. In 1941, Sr Caroline professed her vows as a member of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ballarat.

Sr Caroline dedicated her life to service as a teacher, first in primary, then moving on to tertiary education. She taught at many schools in Victoria, Adelaide and Perth, and retired at age eighty-nine from a position teaching education at Australian Catholic University in Ballarat.

Speaking to The Courier in 2018, Sr Caroline said she remembered teaching large classes with her record a class of one hundred and twenty-five students in Redan after the war. "I loved to see a child growing," she told The Courier. As well as being remembered as a 'wonderful teacher', Sr Caroline is recalled as a 'beautiful lady who enriched the lives of many with her sense of humour and intelligence'.

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Rochelle Kirkham and photo by Brendan McCarthy

LISTEN TO WHAT THE SPIRIT IS SAYING...

The voices in the Listening and Dialogue submissions inspired The National Themes for Discernment, which have served as guides as we went through Phrase II: Listening and Discernment. Catholics all over Australia continue to participate in discerning with prayerful hearts and minds. Discernment will go on indefinitely. We invite you to continue getting together with your community for sessions and sending us your responses via the website. With COVID-19 this has its challenges, perhaps some form of online meeting can be arranged.

A new resource, Reflection Guide for responding to the Thematic Discernment Papers has been developed with the help of the Diocese of Sale, Archdiocese of Brisbane and Archdiocese of Darwin to guide a reflection on the six Thematic Discernment Papers.

The Six Discernment and Writing Groups were tasked with writing papers to bring some major themes and issues into focus. These Thematic papers have been published and can be viewed on the Plenary Council website - www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au

The papers will be central to the preparation of the “instrumentum laboris” or working paper for the Plenary Council, and the agenda for the Plenary Council Assembly.

In the Ballarat diocese we are asking people from around the diocese to write about their feelings on the discernment papers and the first six can be read here:



Felicity Knobel, one of the Diocese of Ballarat delegates to the Plenary Council comments on the discernment paper - **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Inclusive, Participatory & Synodal?**

After reading this paper, what gives you hope?

This paper gives me immense hope for the Catholic Church as we are reminded of the touchstone of our faith and our actions, Jesus Christ. He welcomed everyone, he sought people out, he rose above taboos of society, he offered redemption, he was an advocate and he didn't exclude. He truly was the exemplar of inclusion. Jesus in his ministry set out in no uncertain terms that his church was a forum of welcome and this must be what we are today. We, as the people of this church, are given this responsibility, just as Jesus gave to his apostles and we must meet this challenge. This paper shows that we are more than capable of being that church. There is hope in that we are able to identify the people that need our assistance and that we are already looking at very real ways to assist. We are able to see that our ways can change, we can develop further and that it is necessary. What gives me hope is that we have spoken, that we have listened to one and other and we have a plan.

What do you find challenging?

I love that this paper challenges us. This paper shows how we have fallen short in including and welcoming, however, in our honesty we have set a challenge for our church to meet. The Catholic people have discerned with such honesty and they have looked beyond themselves and truly looked at who is their neighbour? We need to be challenged and we have to work on these challenging topics as a community. We cannot make excuses or say that it is too hard or that it won't work. We know that these challenges are important and that we as a community know that is working towards including and walking with each other as a faith community.

What are your thoughts on this paper in relation to your parish or the diocese as a whole?

St Patrick's Cathedral Parish is an immensely capable, honest and loving community. They showed in the discernment process that they are willing to have tough conversations, to reflect on themselves as part of the Church and to look at ways they are able to move forward. Our parish will meet these challenges with enthusiasm and passion in order to be a welcoming and inclusive community.

Brian Storey, parishioner at St Mary's Murtoa comments on the discernment paper - **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS prayerful and Eucharistic?**

The 'Prioritised Questions and Proposed Changes' in this document are all valid and probably should be implemented. Undoubtedly, the other Thematic Papers will be equally well compiled and with a similar number of worthy recommendations.

My concern is that the sheer volume of suggested changes will bog down the Plenary Council, when it needs to focus on fundamental structural changes. Only when Bishops give meaningful voice to the laity and empower them for leadership in parishes will the church move to "....meet the people where they are."

The implementation of parish and diocesan councils with lawful influence in the decision-making process, will bring about much needed transparency and the melding of ideas from these forums will bring about a church which is more relevant to local needs. Surely the Spirit moves in laity as well as in clerics?

The Plenary Council cannot possibly deal with all proposals, so it is essential that an on-going process of regular review is enacted so that the church can continually re-assess the “....signs of the times..” and thus remain relevant through time.

Once the basic changes from all theme papers are in place, the ‘fine-tuning’ of many issues will flow naturally over time; Holy Orders for Women, the empowerment of laity for weddings and funerals, the inclusion of language familiar to Australians and First Nation peoples etc. (These activities are already being performed and are accepted in the wider community!)

In Section 3 “Formation” this document “calls for.....” many programs to be implemented. Whilst all are commendable, I believe they are a lesser priority which will serve the church better when greater numbers return once they see that serious re-structure is being implemented. I pray the Spirit moves the Bishops to act.

Marie Shaddock, one of the Diocese of Ballarat’s delegates to the Plenary Council comments on the discernment paper - **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Humble, Healing and Merciful?**

After reading this paper and the responses in the submission texts it is difficult not to adopt one of two attitudes: to either throw arms wildly in the air and run, screaming into the night or the temptation to throw the baby out along with the bath water. Neither is helpful. The confrontation of pain and suffering cannot be ignored nor can the fact that as a Church we have the antidote, to the wounds so many have incurred, in the sacraments - the life-giving action of the Holy Spirit.

Pain is something we naturally tend to avoid, it hurts after all, it is confronting and there is so much of it from many different perspectives. Time does not heal wounds, it may bring a numbness, but only healing removes contagion and brings peace. What time does, is allow for those of us in the pews the space to be able to begin to take stock and to process. I find it heartening that we are looking at ways to be humble, healing and merciful to be in fact more Christ-like. Remaining faithful to Christ is the rock on which we are founded and the only way in which we can go forward. We must go back to our roots because it is there that we meet Jesus and there we find mercy and healing.

My parish has suffered the experience of abuse twice, initially by a priest and later by a Catholic teacher. The most extensive damage is of course to the victims, their scarring is physical, mental, emotional and spiritual – their past, present and future are compromised. There are also the families of those abused who suffer their own pain. Then there are those not directly affected, the ordinary church goers. They, along with the families of the abused, are the ones who donated land to raise crops to build the school, that carted the bricks by barrow from the station, that baked countless sponges to fund the church, that still sweat and toil to keep their parish going. They suffer too, because they love the Church – the real Church and their trust was shockingly betrayed; they suffer also with the anger and taunts of those who threaten the Church because they are the Church. They live that, and that gives me great hope.

It gives me hope that our Church in beginning these discussions has demonstrated its desire to engage everyone, without exception. Our bishops have been courageous in facing down the barrel of the smoking gun, which is no easy task; and they are humble men, methodically intent on healing and breathing true life back into the Church in Australia. That ‘life’ is the Holy Spirit – “the personal love of Father and the Son for each other at work from the beginning to the completion of the divine plan for our salvation.” ccc Glossary Our salvation comes from the cross and I am hopeful that crosses of our times will bring about the soul searching of the heart necessary for true humility, healing and mercy.



William Lowry - Seminarian for the Ballarat Diocese comments on the discernment paper - HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS A Joyful, Hope-Filled & Servant Community?

After reading this paper, what gives you hope?

What gives me hope in this paper is the emphasis on the Council as a new impetus for the life of service, grounded in the imitation of Jesus Christ. As the Theological Vision outlines, our relationship to God should be the stimulus for our joy, our hope and life of service, as the ecclesial body of Christ. This paper could aptly take its subtitle from the words of St. Paul, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Cor 9: 7b). My hope is that we as a Church can live up to that moniker, cheerful giver.

What do you find challenging?

What I find particularly challenging within this paper, currently studying for ordained ministry is the point of facilitating lay responsibility within the parish and the broader community. Within the parish context every member needs to be aware of their importance to the life of the community and have their aspirations and concerns heard and respected. How can pastors and parish leadership encourage all the faithful 'to put out into the deep and cast their nets' (Lk 5:4b) in their respective ministries, to be a parish that radiates the light of Christ in the world?

What are your thoughts on this paper in relation to your parish or the diocese as a whole?

My hope is that we as a Diocese don't see the implementation of the aspirations within this paper as simply the work of the Council. Obviously certain proposals must be reserved to the conciliar process, but the Council itself can't strengthen our parish communities to be places of joy, hope and service on its own, that is our responsibility as members of these parishes. I pray we don't let this opportunity slip idly by, and motivated by the spirit of the council we bring the missionary impulse of the Gospel in joyful service to our own communities of faith.

Kate Andrews, a parishioner at St Aloysius Redan comments on the discernment paper - **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Missionary & Evangelising?**

After reading this paper, what gives you hope?

Our Schools – being present with the school community at Mass and feel their warmth and smiles at the sign of peace. I listen to the way they are learning to have a relationship with Jesus.

A garden where children plant, care and reap the benefits of their labour, caring for creation.

Our school and church are inclusive of other cultures. People of all different backgrounds work to keep our church maintained and our parish alive.

A parish priest who humbles himself to clean the pews during COVID-19. During this time we have found so many ways of being together – Phone calls, daily reflections from our pastoral worker.

People have expressed that during this Pandemic – they have found the peace and beauty of creation, time to connect with family as they are not running off to meetings, sport and the busyness of life.

I gain hope from hearing of people listening and listening again to victims of sexual abuse – their healing is paramount and takes time, and the care of these people is a sign of hope.

What do you find challenging?

Not to be disheartened by the negativity and lack of hope.

To listen with the heart as well as the ears.

From criticising our youth. See the way they live out the message of Jesus, with their helping and caring. Respect and listen to their views.

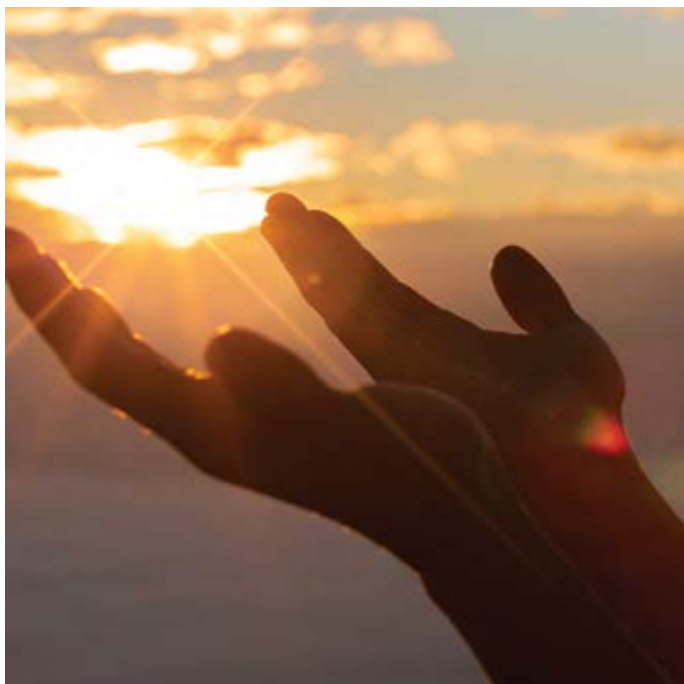
To once again trust in God's healing to make prejudices crumble.

Frank Sheehan – parishioner at St Columba's Ballarat North comments on the discernment paper - HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS open to conversion, renewal and reform?

After reading this paper, what gives you hope?

There is a saying that "hope springs eternal". This article of hope is a response to the Plenary Council and the themes that have been developed from the thousands of contributions to the early call of "what is God asking of the Church in Australia today".

We have to hope that some worthwhile change will be made to bring the Church into the 21st Century and beyond. Life without hope is a description of hell and who wants to go there. From where is the conversion, reform and renewal going to come? It's a massive agenda especially taking account of some conflicting views that have been put forward by the original contributors. We have to hope that the entire Church will submit to the will of the Spirit as spoken by the people of the God.



While recognising the ministry of many wonderful Priests, the past has revealed that a great amount of power rests with the Hierarchy and the general body of the Clergy. The resulting clericalism has been described by Pope Francis as denial of the real role of priests and Bishops. The overall Catholic population have been conditioned over decades to rely on the clergy for their spiritual well-being and their moral compass and now to “buck the system” is foreign to that way of thinking. We have to hope the goodwill that motivated the call for the Plenary Council in the first place will bring radical change to Church leadership.

Over many years the Church has collected a lot of baggage not the least being the response to the contemporary issue of the fallout from the Royal Commission on sexual abuse. But what of reviewing and reforming the teachings, traditions and conventions that have occurred over decades and even centuries?

Contributors called for the modernisation of Church teachings. In this regard has enough attention been given to the massive advances in science from a theological view point? Some people argue that our knowledge of science brings a new perspective and understanding of Planet Earth and its place in the Universe. Should the Church address this issue and does the new understanding of science challenge some of the teachings of the past?

Change is possible for example, we don't have Limbo anymore and we can eat meat on Friday. These were entrenched in our belief system only a few years ago.

What do you find challenging?

Hope is an essential ingredient to the whole exercise of the Plenary Council. There is an in-built cynicism within the rank and file that any call for change from the current Church leadership will result in very little difference, if any. They can't be bothered. However, the opportunity has been given to “the people in the pews”. So they must grab it with both hands in the hope that their views will be heard.

Even if cynicism exists there is still room for hope and where does this hope come from? Firstly the fact that 220,000 people commented shows that there is a deep rooted desire for change in the way the Church has operated in living memory. A concern has to be expressed as to how all the desires for change can be met in a cohesive way. It is a difficult task to cater for all that has been put forward. It is within the parishes and the dioceses where the bishops and priests need to recognise the unrest that exists within the laity. Church leadership and structures have to change. A structural question arises, should we continue with the term “parish”, or should it be replaced by the term “community” that is made up of a number of centres? The Ballarat Diocese has undergone big change in recent times. The term parish as it existed in the past seems to have been undermined. The opportunity exists now for a new look at the structures that will take the Church into the 21st Century and beyond. This will take the establishment of a more synodal Church leadership that takes account of the Spirit as expressed by the 220,000 people of God. The Plenary Council and the “People of God” have much to think about.

Conversion usually means a change of heart or a change of belief. What then is the Church view about particularly controversial questions? For example, allowing Priests to marry or ordaining married men or ordaining women to the priesthood. What of Priests serving on limited tenure in the Ministry? It is our hope that reform will take place in this area of Church life.

Can we hope that a change of heart will take place to the strict conditions that apply to the Church's view of marriage or will the traditional view be upheld? Will we invite divorcees and those who have married a second or even a third time to be reconciled with the Church? Some of these people are totally “brownd off” by the rebuke given to them. The Church should still invite them back with open arms.

In the past controversial issues such as the reconciliation of the LBGQTI+ community have been commented on by the hierarchy. This has resulted in the popular view that they are the Church. If we are to have Church that is open to conversion, renewal and reform then calls from the original Contributors have to be taken seriously. Leadership must be more inclusive and synodal. Surely this is not a vain hope?

The call for changes to be made to the liturgical life of the Church especially in regard to the Mass will test the traditional Hierarchy and rank and file. Changes to the liturgy surrounding the Mass featured strongly in the early contributions. The opportunity has been given to renew the liturgy of the Mass. After all the Mass is a centre-point of Catholic faith. This issue presents as one of the crucial elements for the future of the Church particularly in regard to attracting youth and young parents. They see it as stodgy and unrelated to their everyday lives. The music alone needs to reflect a more modern genre, to have a more modern touch to it. The Sacrament of Reconciliation has also been highlighted in the contributions. The call for the re-introduction of the Third Rite of Reconciliation is another case in point. Any change in these two areas of liturgy will cause consternation in some elements of the Church.

celebrating online

On Sunday, October 18, St Patrick's Primary School in Camperdown celebrated their School Parish Mass online. This Mass coincided with World Mission Day, a special day where we are called by Pope Francis to pray, so it seemed fitting that the school and parish communities tuned in online to pray together.

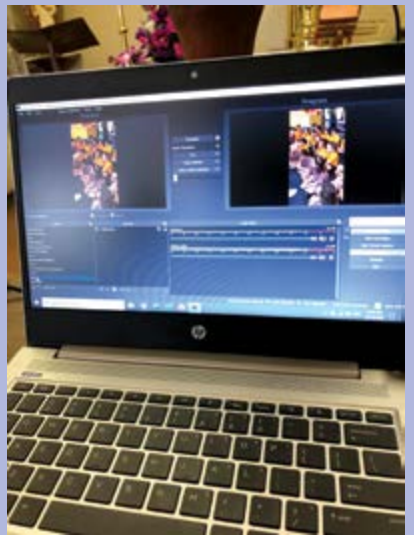
Normally, St Patrick's School hosts one School Parish Mass per term where families are encouraged to attend Sunday Mass and the students lead the ministries - readings, offertory, collection and singing. This year due to COVID-19 and restrictions, Fr Neville Stanislaus had provided his parishioners with an online Sunday Mass on Youtube which was well received by the community.

The first Online School Parish Mass was celebrated during the term 3 restrictions, while the children were remote learning from their homes. Parents sent in videos of their children reading the scriptures and these were put together at school. The second Online School Parish Mass was celebrated during term 4 when the children were back at school but the churches were still restricted by numbers. This time the grade 1/2 students were recorded at school proclaiming the readings and their class members responded. The foundation class also sang the opening and closing songs to Mr Saunders' brilliant guitar playing.

The pre-recorded videos were then inserted into the live Mass on the Sunday and viewed by parishioners and the school community on Youtube. Jarrod Irvine, who is a computer technician, was invaluable with his expert knowledge in setting up the computer program to allow this to run smoothly. On the day, Michael McKenzie and Tracy Hickey were the only two staff members present to run the technology and the live recording of the Mass at the Day Chapel.

This was a creative and innovative way of having the Online School Parish Mass and many families tuned in on the day to view it from the comfort of their own homes.

Tracy Hickey - St Patrick's School, Camperdown



A FANTASTIC FEELING

What a fantastic feeling of joy and elation filled the forty plus parishioners gathered together in the beautiful November sunshine outside St Joseph's Church in Ouyen. Appropriately, it was Sunday and the solemnity of All Saints. It was the day of the Resurrection, the victory of love and hope. It was the celebration of those ordinary people, not listed on any calendar, who triumphed in their ordinariness over the world, that saw our community back together; our first celebration of the Mass as a whole since the start of the COVID-19 lockdowns. We were truly at home - the Church united at the family table at last.

Marie Shaddock - Ouyen





SADLY MISSED

Parishioners of St Anne's Purnim and family and friends from Warrnambool and beyond were shocked and saddened by the

sudden death on May 8 of Margaret Ellen Gleeson, aged sixty-one.

Margaret died peacefully, after being anointed by Fr Lawrie O'Toole, with her ninety year-old mother, Freda, and dairy farming brother, Stephen, beside her.

A parishioner at Purnim for sixty-one years, Margaret was an enthusiastic volunteer sacristan, helping the Church function when weekly Mass ceased. The Easter and Christmas Masses, with their large congregations, were highlights of her year.

Cherished daughter of Freda and (the late) Kevin Gleeson of Purnim, Margaret loved family and farm. Beginning school at St Marcellus Purnim in 1964, she spent eight years in its one classroom with one teacher - four of those years with Sr Adalbert RSM and up to seventy classmates!

Commencing secondary school at St. Ann's College Warrnambool in its centenary year of 1972, Margaret was one of fifty-two girls crammed into St Genevieve's Form One Green.

Leaving school at fifteen, she worked at Fletcher Jones for twenty-nine years. Subsequently Margaret was a part time cleaner for the Mercy Sisters and then at St Joseph's Presbytery for thirteen years. Active on the farm, she had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the Jersey herd and rejoiced in the outdoor life, milking, and rearing calves.

Under COVID-19 restrictions only twenty could attend Margaret's funeral, concelebrated by Frs John Fitzgerald and Phillip Gleeson SDB. Not to be thwarted by a virus, locals assembled outside the Purnim churchyard, standing in front of their cars, honouring Margaret, as the cortege proceeded.

Margaret loved life, farm, church and family. She will be sadly missed.

Suzanne Dooley, with Freda Gleeson and Stephen Gleeson



Our Diocesan Community - November 2020

Retirement



Fr Eric Bryant retired in 2020 after forty-six years in parish ministry. Fr Eric was ordained in Ballarat on May 18, 1974 and was assistant priest in Colac, Portland and Ballarat Cathedral parishes. He was Parish Priest in Hopetoun, Portland, Koroit and Port Fairy and finally in Stawell.

Bishop Paul Bird, in announcing Fr Eric's retirement, offered his thanks to Fr Eric for his service in the various parishes of our diocese and particularly for his years of service in the parish of Stawell. "I ask you to join me in praying for Fr Eric for blessings in this new chapter of his life", Bishop Paul said.

SECOND COMMUNITY HERITAGE GRANT



The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Archives received its second Community Heritage Grant from the National Library of Australia.

In 2016 Diocesan Archivist, Dr Michael Taffe, successfully acquired a Community

Heritage Grant through the National Library of Australia. This grant was to permit a "Significance Assessment report" to be completed on the entire Catholic Diocese of Ballarat Archives collection. Finalised in 2017, the report not only highlighted the importance of early Catholic history in the diocese, but also revealed the significance of this cultural material both at a state and national level.

Recently, the archives were once again successful in obtaining a grant through the National Library of Australia. This funding will allow for the completion of a "Preservation Needs Assessment" report. When finished, the report will reveal the current condition of the entire archives as well as the additional collections which it contains. The document will also give recommendations towards how the collection should be stored and maintained in the future. Written by a highly qualified conservator, the "Preservation Needs Assessment" report will give vital information towards how the archives should maintain its large portraits, library books, furniture and one of the biggest vestment collections known in Australia. The document will also provide direction in how this collection should be properly stored so no environmental damage is caused to this material once the archives have been relocated to 5 Lyons Street in the coming years.

Dr Samantha Fabry - Diocesan Archivist

DIAMOND JUBILEE REMINISCING

Fr Patrick J Flanagan reminisces on sixty years as a priest:

I had been a priest of the Ballarat Diocese for about ten years when Fr Dan Boylan, one of our great Irish priests, said to me, 'I knew you were going to be a priest when you were a little kid at St Patrick's College'. Looking back after sixty years as a priest, I can't actually remember a time when I didn't want to be a priest. I won't go into how I came to be a boarder at SPC Ballarat when I hadn't yet turned eight, or how I came to be a priest of the Ballarat Diocese when I came from Melbourne, but I can say that St Patrick's College encouraged in me a deep devotional life, centred on the Mass. Brother Jack Healy, early on, encouraged my aspiration to be a priest. I was a pretty clever kid, dux of my class, most years. My teacher in grade six was a Brother McCarthy - one we called 'Chips'. He told me once that, with the gifts God had given me, I had to be a priest. I accepted that, and not reluctantly.

I was ordained on July 24, 1960 and in December that year I was posted to Casterton as curate to Fr Bill McGrath. The Casterton parishioners were very, very good to me. A priest's first appointment is very important. It can make or break him. I could not have asked for better. I was there only fifteen months when I was transferred to Hamilton. I was appointed to Hamilton twice as an assistant and later I became their pastor.

The leadership among Hamilton parishioners was extraordinary. I think that some of that leadership was due to Fr Tom Linane. He established a very workable form of Adult Education which included not only the Hamilton parish but also parishioners from Penshurst, Coleraine and Balmoral. Hamilton had outstanding converts, too, again great leaders in the parish. As well, there was a large sprinkling of Dutch migrants - some among them formed a Catholic Scouts group in Hamilton, and then Catholic Girl Guides. A choir led by a Dutch immigrant Bill Schlagecke, with some other Dutch and Australians, used to sing a Gregorian Chant Mass on the first Sunday of each month. They sang the Chant beautifully. There were Ukrainians and Poles, too, enough Ukrainians for a Ukrainian chaplain to come to Hamilton two or three times each year to preach a short Mission and celebrate Mass in the Ukrainian Rite. My parish priest there was Fr Bob Dunworth, a great character. I got on well with him. There was also a senior curate, Frank McKenzie. He had been a priest seventeen years at that stage, with no prospect of having his own parish. This was very frustrating for him and for all who had to endure such a long wait - some were curates for more than twenty-five years - before they would have their feet under their own table. Later, Frank would be my Parish Priest in Camperdown for a year and we got on quite well.

I spent the winter of 1964 in Bungaree. I had forgotten the existence of chilblains, from which most of us suffered in St Patrick's winters. The winter at Bungaree brought them back. In 2011, when Bishop Connors asked me if I'd like to retire to Ballarat, I said to him, 'Peter, look me in the eye',



and then I just said, 'Chilblains'. He remembered suffering chilblains in his winters at Assumption College, Kilmore.

From Bungaree I was sent to Fr Bill McMahon at Camperdown. I would be there nearly four years and when I was moved, I cried my eyes out. There was a concern in the junior secondary part of St Patrick's School as science was not taught. The Sisters used to tell parents that the children didn't need to do General Science. They were correct in that, because Physics, Chemistry and those subjects in year 11 started from scratch, wisely presuming that the pupils had forgotten anything they had learnt. However, some parents were transferring their boys to Camperdown High, where the curriculum included General Science. I was quite disturbed about Catholic boys not going to the Catholic school, so I asked Fr McMahon if I might take on teaching General Science at St Patrick's. He consented. I began to teach General Science and I came to love it and the love of astronomy, geology, chemistry, physics, cosmology and biology is still with me.

When Bishop Mulkearns came to Ballarat as co-adjutor bishop (an auxiliary bishop is a helper, whereas a co-adjutor will be taking over as bishop of the diocese when it becomes vacant), the implementation of Vatican II was under way. At this time, the diocese was implementing new ways, one of which was the priest's council. I was elected as one of the two priests representing the Southern Zone. From my experience with Catholic Secondary Education in Camperdown, I was able to advance arguments for amalgamating the junior secondary schooling in the area. Bishop O'Collins acted reasonably quickly to put Catholic education on a new footing and appointed Peter Teggelove, a teacher at Donald High School, as Director of Catholic education. The Bishop asked me where I thought the Regional College should be situated. I answered promptly, 'At Cobden. Cobden now has a Technical school and there are school buses running to Cobden from all over the place'. It was also, importantly, neutral territory. This sound piece of advice was not acted upon and I guess that was because there was no way of paying for it. State Aid to Catholic schools was still in its infancy. As Archbishop Daniel Mannix lay dying, Bob Menzies, Prime Minister at the time, communicated to him that he had decided that the government would build a science block in every secondary school in Australia. Unless you count allowing Catholic kids on the school buses as State Aid, the science blocks were the first state funding for Catholic schools since education in the Australian states had become free, compulsory and secular back in the 1870s.

Starting May 1968, I had another stint in Hamilton of nearly five years and that was great, especially when

Fr Peter Murphy arrived as my fellow curate. A rift had developed in the parish, and, to heal that rift and bring the parish together again, we held a Redemptorist Parish Mission that lasted the whole of Lent in 1969, which was successful.

Three Redemptorists, Fathers Mick Timbs, Peter O'Donnell and John Murray, aided by Fr Frank O'Farrell and myself, had activities going, involving every part of the parish, right through Lent of 1969. It concluded with a Palm Sunday march from the City Oval to Botanical Gardens where we celebrated the Mass. Many of the activities the Mission initiated were on-going. I began writing a weekly column for the Hamilton Spectator. I also became part of a Methodist-Catholic dialogue, which was my initiation into ecumenism.

To my mind, looking back, the heart of St Mary's Parish during my second stint there was St Mary's Football Club. Under 13s, under 15s and under 18s all played on Saturday. Most of us went to watch them all. The bonding between the families of those children became the heart and soul of the parish. My deepest disappointment when I returned to Hamilton as Parish Priest twelve years later was to find that had all stopped.

I went to Maryborough as assistant to a delightful Irish priest, Fr Tom Scanlan, at the start of 1973. When he retired after Easter in 1974, I became his successor. The Brigidine



sisters taught at St Augustine's Primary School, and as well, had a very well-staffed co-ed Secondary College, with very low fees but few students, only 34 in 1973. The

Brigidine Sisters were of the opinion that they could no longer staff the Secondary College with so few pupils. Fr Peter Claridge, my predecessor there as assistant, and Wendy Leaver, the wife of the Anglican Canon John Leaver, were discussing this over coffee one morning when Wendy came up with a new idea. Why not several churches combine to run an Ecumenical Secondary College. Canon Leaver ran with the idea. When I arrived in Maryborough, the Bishop, with agreement from Fr Scanlan, appointed me to help the Catholic parish think through the Ecumenical College proposal, to decide whether they as a Parish would support the venture. I actually spent homily time over four Sundays presenting to the parishioners the pros and cons of the proposal, with lots of take-home notes. Eventually the parish said yes, as did also the Anglican, Methodist and Church of Christ Parishes. Thus was born, commencing in 1974, the first Ecumenical School in the world.

Once Fr Tom Scanlan retired back to Ireland, I received an assistant priest and the first of these, Fr Charlie Fiscalini, a Redemptorist, was the hardest working priest I have ever known. This included hard physical work to keep his weight down. He and I worked together on building concrete paths. He had, as his responsibility, St Augustine's Primary School, Avoca and Amphitheatre. His work in

Avoca meant that eventually the existing St Kevin's Church was too small. The Parish agreed to build a new church at Avoca. Charlie didn't live to see the new St Kevin's. He became Parish Priest at Birregurra in 1977 and died from a brain tumour a year later. His successor, Kevin Arundell, organised the building of the new St Kevin's, Avoca. Kevin was also the diocesan director of in-service training and brought to our diocese a number of top scripture scholars. Late in 1979, I read in Annals Australia three articles by Cyril Connolly MSC on John's Gospel. They showed how John built his Gospel around the great Jewish feasts. John's Gospel came alive for me and that awakened in me a desire to know all the Gospels more. The opportunity to teach myself the scriptures came when I was transferred in July 1982 from Maryborough to the much easier parish of Edenhope. While fulfilling my responsibilities to the Edenhope parishioners I also did a power of study. I was in Edenhope only two years and three months. I did more study in that time than in the previous twenty years.

In later years, when Fr John McKinnon was director of in-service training, he asked me, over three years, to have a day with the priests in each of the zones taking them through the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John. Eventually I wrote a book on Mark's Gospel, which aimed to help people see that inspired writing as a whole story, rather than as a lot of unconnected bits and pieces. I might mention here also that the Editor of Light, the then Diocesan Magazine, invited me to write articles for it. So I became the 'Back Page' of Light until, after a few years as Parish Priest of Hamilton, I surrendered that job. It was taken over by Fr Michael Linehan.

AND FINALLY I gained a reputation for making parishes come alive. As an instance of this, I made a trip from Hamilton to Coragulac to visit Fr Paddy King, who was dying from cancer. He told me, 'You should not have gone back to Hamilton. You have a gift that other parishes should benefit from'. I don't know what this gift is. Sr Pius Fiscalini RSM told me when I was leaving Edenhope that my enthusiasm guaranteed that I'd be appreciated anywhere. Perhaps that's part of it. I don't know. Before I took up my appointment Bishop O'Collins gave three instructions: 1. Visit all of your parishioners. 2. Don't prepare your sermons. 3. Play Golf.

Instruction number 2 I never followed. I always have prepared my sermons and the older I've got, the more preparation I have undertaken. Has that contributed to making parishes come alive? *Instruction 3* I tried to follow, but eventually gave it up as a bad job. I've always lacked coordination and believed I was no good at most sports, and that I have felt was a deprivation. *Instruction 1* though, until about half-way through my time in Donald, I have fulfilled assiduously. It helped that my mother impressed on me the importance of visiting all parishioners. My aim was to visit every home at least once a year. For me, it is imitating what Jesus said about the Good Shepherd, 'I know my own, and my own know me'. Perhaps that helped parishes come alive. The Anglicans used to have a saying, 'A house-going priest means a church-going people'. Such is the shortage of priests that visiting parishioners in their homes is not listed now among a priest's duties.

(Full article can be read in the diocesan e-News (Edition 93 October 8 2020)
Second Photo: Courtesy of the Sunraysia Daily, Teagan Bell

SAFEGUARDING IN THE DIOCESE

The Diocese has a strong, public commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable people. It has a dedicated Coordinator for Professional Standards as well as a Professional Standards Consultative Panel and the Bishop's Advisory Council to monitor and implement the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. Parishes have appointed a Parish Safeguarding Officer.

The Diocese has implemented the Victorian Child Safe Standards and responded to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Examples of the diocesan response to recommendations made by the Royal Commission include the development a Safeguarding Implementation Plan and a training framework for clergy and diocesan employees. The Diocese is also in the process of updating the diocesan website to ensure that the safeguarding materials are more visible.



The main vehicle by which the Diocese is responding to the recommendations of the Royal Commission is the implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS). The NCSS have been developed by Catholic Professional Standards Ltd (CPSL) and are closely based on the ten standards recommended by the Royal Commission. The Diocese was the first Diocese in Australia to participate in a CPSL Audit against the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. The audit report is available on the CPSL website.

As recommended by the CPSL auditors, the Diocese has prepared a Safeguarding Audit Implementation Plan. The Diocese is continuing to implement the recommendations of the CPSL audit.

The Diocese is also in the process of establishing a new Diocesan Safeguarding Framework. The Framework and all supporting child safety documents and information sheets will be incorporated in a new safeguarding section of the diocesan website. The Framework will help to ensure that all the relevant safeguarding information will be readily available to any person but particularly to parishes, including in relation to the induction of volunteers.

In response to the CPSL audit, the Diocese has undertaken the following actions in the past twelve month period;

- *A new Statement of Commitment;*
- *A revised Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Safety Policy;*
- *A revised Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Code of Conduct.;*
- *A revised Working with Children and National Police Check Policy with the need to obtain a WWCC card and/or Police Check determined on the basis of risk;*
- *A new training framework.;*
- *A new child focused complaints handling policy;*
- *Improved visibility of safeguarding documents on the diocesan website.*

With the assistance of Catholic Church Insurances, the Diocese is implementing new online training courses consistent with the training framework. The Diocese also provides face to face training. The Diocese distributes updated materials and other information about safeguarding to all parishes. This include newsletters received from CPSL and the National Council of Churches in Australia.

Pastoral Response

Over the years the Diocese has met the counselling costs of each Complainant to the Towards Healing process and continues to do so, although in recent times few Complainants are choosing to engage with the Diocese via the Towards Healing process.

Usually a request for pastoral support comes when Towards Healing is contacted by a survivor or his/her psychologist seeking counselling support. Some of these requests are from survivors whose complaints have been resolved, sometimes many years previously. Requests also come from solicitors on behalf of their clients.

The Diocese met with the Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) in the last year to explore how the Diocese is best able to assist victims of childhood sexual abuse. Bishop Paul formed the view that CASA is the Ballarat organisation most closely connected with the survivor network and approved the donation of \$300,000 to CASA to assist it in the support of survivors of child sexual abuse.

The Diocese will continue to respond to requests for pastoral support and to seek ways to engage with survivors and their representatives about the provision of support. The Diocese endeavours to be flexible in its thinking in this important area and, as best it can, respond in a manner that meets the particular and immediate needs of survivors.

Michael Myers - Coordinator for Professional Standards

Our Diocesan Community - November 2020



"THE WORLD IS CHARGED WITH THE GRANDEUR OF GOD."

Gerard Manly Hopkins

It was of little surprise to me that in the early stages of lockdown, Bunnings, garden supply and flower shops did a roaring trade. In the midst of suffering, uncertainty and grief, the human desire to seek consolation in the natural world and things of beauty is profound. As we welcomed Spring, in our inner and outer worlds, and embraced the church's Season of Creation (1 September – 4 October), we were invited to marvel at the beauty and promise of our school gardens and grounds.

Places form us. We are intimately connected to certain places; they shape and nourish us. That our founding Sister in Australia, Gonzaga Barry, should name her annual magazine 'Eucalyptus Blossoms', when other Irish religious sisters were clinging to symbols of acorns and flourishing oak trees, attests to her connection with her new land with its distinct shades, textures, forms and light. The early gardens at Loreto Mary's Mount were varied, including a rockery, greenhouse, arbours, grottos, vegetable gardens, flower beds shaped in a heart and the letter M and 'a soft green croquet lawn, bordered by beds of bright flowers'. Some plots were tended by different student groups, or sodalities, and Gonzaga Barry used various flowers and plants as metaphors for the goal of education, the virtuous life and

something of God and heaven in the balmy air' (EB Dec 1887).

While the gardens in our schools are places of profound beauty, they also shape our perception of what is important in life and of value to our community. Our grounds people exhibit a profound sense of hospitality as they shape and hone welcoming spaces of light, colour and elegance. Our school gardens are homes to symbols of our First Nations people, Judeo-Christian and Loreto traditions. They offer respite to the stressed, connecting pathways between classes, meetings and appointments, shade for prayer and reflection and space to remember those who have gone before us. Our school grounds remind us that our Loreto community and network comprise all living things: worm farms, homes for birds, insects and other small creatures, veggie patches and herb gardens, sculptural art forms. Our gardens are a witness to God's loving creativity, God's grandeur, and the diversity and interdependence of all creation.

Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si* that all is a gift and we are humble stewards of this abundance.

Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others...the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us. *Laudato Si* 159

Our gardens inspire gratitude, encourage sustainability and direct our hearts to our loving Creator. Let us give thanks for the tremendous skill and creativity of our grounds people as they tend and transform simple spaces into places for play and imagination, learning and encounter, repose and renewal.



Anne Muirhead – Loreto Ministries

Images: Gardens at Loreto College Ballarat

Readers connected with Loreto College Ballarat may like to subscribe to Loreto Australia's quarterly publication Loreto Networker <https://www.loreto.org.au/news>

LEADERSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Catholic Education Ballarat extends a warm welcome to the following interim principals who commenced in term 4:

- Ms Kate Plush, interim principal at St Joseph's School, Coleraine
- Three interim principals at Sacred Heart School, Mildura, who will share the role across the term: Ms Loretta Thompson, Ms Jacinda Deacon and Mr Ryan O'Callaghan

New PRINCIPAL

St Patrick's Primary School Stawell welcomed Chris McAloon as its new principal, commencing at the beginning of Term 4.

Chris has been a teacher at St Mary's Primary School Ararat since 2015, most recently as Co-Deputy Principal and Learning Diversity Leader.

Prior to his time in Ararat, Chris has had a varied and rich involvement in different educational settings, including as a senior education officer at Hopkins Correctional Centre Ararat, a classroom teacher at an indigenous community school (Milingimbi School in the Northern Territory) and an English as a Second Language Teacher in Taishan High School in China.

Chris succeeds Michelle Hogan, who has been interim principal at St Patrick's since Term 1, taking the position after Liz McIntyre's resignation earlier this year.

Chris is well qualified for the position and is looking forward to a long and fruitful association with the school community. We congratulate him on his appointment, thank him for accepting this new career challenge, and wish him every blessing in his leadership of the St Patrick's Primary School Stawell school community.

Emma Newman - Catholic Education Ballarat



On Sunday, October 4, the Ballarat Diocesan Social Justice Commission hosted a Zoom webinar, launching the 2020-2021 Bishop's Conference Social Justice Statement 'To Live Life to the Full, Mental Health in Australia Today'. The statement offers information on how we can care for our most vulnerable during the pandemic. It encourages faith communities, governments and each one of us to make mental health a priority.

Bishop Paul Bird introduced the Statement and summarised its contents, which highlighted the vulnerabilities in Australia. Bishop Paul outlined the challenges faced by those seeking help for mental ill health, and the human and financial costs involved. He reminded participants of how Jesus suffered psychological distress while also offering care and healing to others.

Graeme Davy-Watts (Manager of Centacare, Mildura) talked to participants about the availability of mental health services in Australia today and what solutions-based supports, services and programs are available to parents and families for preventing mental ill health. Graeme shared strategies for maintaining mental health using positive psychology and focusing on personal strengths, connecting with others, being active, continuing to learn, being aware and helping others.

The webinar helped participants to understand the issues around mental health, and empowered us to reach out, encourage hope and bring fullness of life to those we love and care for. Participants attended from various areas in regional Victoria.

If you wish to receive a copy of Graeme's handout from the webinar, contact Dr Rachel Smith at social.justice@ballarat.catholic.org.au

With the installation of a bronze statue of Catherine McAuley in the reception area of St Joseph's College Mildura, the vision of how best to represent the history of the college continues.

The idea for this bronze statue has been beautifully realised with the assistance of College Heritage Officer, Mrs Belinda Gemits, and of Mr Kyle Carrington, who built the plinth for the statue. It provides a welcome and welcoming addition to the area and serves as a reminder to everyone - staff, students, families and the Sunraysia community - of our heritage and history.

Thank you to our Principal, Marg Blythman, pictured with Fr Matt Thomas, for organising this elegant addition and for undertaking the planning that went in to our very own reminder of how far Catherine's vision has come.

Article first printed in the Harvest Magazine, 2020

A VISION FOR HISTORY





NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat is delighted to welcome Tom Sexton as the new Executive Director of Catholic Education, which incorporates the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) and Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB). One of Tom's first priorities in this role will be supporting the Board in transitioning parish schools to a new model of governance over the coming months.

Having served in Catholic education for over thirty years, predominately in the Diocese of Sandhurst, Tom's leadership and experience will greatly enrich Catholic education in the Diocese of Ballarat. He began his career in Catholic education as a teacher for seven years, followed by four years as a principal. Tom then commenced at Catholic Education Sandhurst where he was an Education Officer for two years, before returning to a principalship for a further nine years. Tom then returned to the Catholic Education Office Sandhurst where he was Assistant Director for Planning and Resources for eleven years. In 2018 Tom began work as an independent education consultant working across Australia.

Tom's varied experience in the Catholic education system has given him an in-depth insight and understanding into the needs of small rural schools through to large regional colleges. He has been involved in the Enhancing Catholic School Identity project and has served on various Diocesan, State and National education committees. Tom has also completed his Masters of Business Administration, Diploma of Teaching, Graduate Diploma in Education and Certificate in Surviving Disruptive Technologies.

Tom is actively involved in his local parish community and local community. He and his wife Ann have five adult children and are looking forward to becoming involved in the local Ballarat community. (Tom pictured with Bishop Paul Bird and Ann, his wife)



Tom is looking forward, when conditions allow, to visiting each parish and school community in the diocese. In Tom's own words: "It is a privilege and an honour to have been appointed Director of Catholic Education for the Diocese of Ballarat. I am very excited by the opportunity to lead Catholic education within the Diocese. I look forward to meeting and getting to know the community as together we continue to provide quality Catholic education across the Diocese."

Catholic Education Ballarat warmly welcomes Tom to this important leadership role in Catholic education in the Ballarat Diocese and look forward to working with him for many years to come.

Emma Newman - Catholic Education Ballarat

KINDNESS CHALLENGE

During Remote Learning 2.0, St Patrick's Primary School Camperdown students participated in the Kindness Art Challenge. The challenge was to create a piece of art using images or words that spread the message of kindness and brought sunshine into the lives of others. Children could use any materials they liked and were very creative in their chosen medium. They then sent their photos into school and the creations were absolutely amazing, with a strong theme of kindness which was very heartwarming.

Children used a variety of mediums including clay, playdough, plasticine, baking, canvases, painting, drawing, charcoal, lego, writing, other languages, recycled materials, cards for others, prayer jars, stickers, rocks and singing. Wow - what an array of clever children!!

There were many stories of children sending their creations to relatives or friends and having rich conversations with their families while doing their artwork. Here are some of the children's messages: kindness costs nothing but means everything; be kind; love each other; kindness - sprinkle

that stuff everywhere; kindness matters; it's cool to be kind; in a world where you can be anything - be

kind; be a rainbow in someone else's cloud; and sharing is caring. The stories even included the word 'kindness' written in many other languages and our school motto of 'deeds, not words only'.

These art pieces were then shared with all the children, their families and our school community. We sure do have a lot of kind children with big hearts and they have certainly brought sunshine and smiles into the lives of many other people. We truly are blessed and grateful.

Michael McKenzie - Principal



KEEPING THE FAITH!

When I was a little girl growing up in Beechworth, life was a mystery. I had no idea what lay ahead, where God would lead me, what I would do, who I would meet, and to be honest, I didn't really think much about it. However, as I have grown older and reflected on the past sixty-nine years, I must admit I could never have predicted any of it. It has been an exciting life that only God could have planned, with all its ups and downs, bumps and bruises along the way. One thing I do know, though, is that God gave me strength when I needed it and gifts to help me fulfil His plans.

I grew up in a happy, faith-filled family home where priests were frequent and welcome visitors. I am thankful that, through the wonderful example of mum and dad, my faith, like theirs, has always been strong but often tested!! Our family never missed Mass or any Church celebrations. If there was Benediction, Exposition, a Mission, Confession, or a Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, they too were on our calendar. The Rosary too was said regularly at home, despite it being abandoned on several occasions when we kids would get the giggles over the silence of the prayers. My friends were of mixed ethnicities because, after the war, many families migrated from the Baltic States to Beechworth. These were my first memories of and encounters with different cultures, but all were accepted and welcomed, an experience I would relate to in later years.



In 1972 I met a wonderful man, a giving, caring man whose family, church and community were foremost in his life. John's parents

were migrants. His mum came from Italy when she was thirteen and his dad, as a four year old from England. This experience with migrants would hold us both in good stead for what lay ahead. We were married in 1974 and by 1978 our lives were perfect. We were growing pheasants on a wildlife park and had been blessed with a little boy and girl. That dream-filled life, however, was shattered late one Saturday afternoon in 1980, when our little two year old daughter was killed in a farm accident. This wasn't supposed to happen to us, not our little girl. How would we ever keep going? We had to, though, for the sake of four year old Simon, and our newborn daughter Sallie, who was born two weeks after the accident.

In 1983 we left Gippsland and, with our growing family Simon, Sallie and Laura, we moved to Nhill where John had been appointed General Manager of a commercial duck-growing company, Luv-A-Duck. I agreed to go for twelve months as I was, or thought I was, a city girl and didn't want to live five hours journey from our families in Melbourne. I found times very tough, but had to trust that all would work out, and that for some reason the move was meant to be. Both John and I believed that we were fulfilling God's plans for us. Thirty-seven years later I admit I was wrong. God was in charge of this plan!!

We were thrilled to welcome Daniel in 1985, our only child born locally in Nhill and we agreed our family was complete. By 1992 we were in the fortunate position of being able to fulfill the kids' dreams by traveling to America. With them all growing up so quickly, we agreed this would be a memorable time spent together and the highlight of our family time. Little did we know what lay ahead!

On our return life soon resumed as one would expect with work and school. However, that normality was to be short lived. Our faith was once again tested in 1994 when Simon suffered life-threatening injuries in a single car accident. Wasn't losing one child enough, dear Lord? After three months in a Melbourne hospital,

he finally came home, but the next sixteen years would see him and us challenged in so many ways.

We suffered yet another tragedy in 2004. I wondered if I would ever scramble out of the depths of despair or grief again when Daniel, who was now also eighteen, died in a motor bike accident. We could not help but ponder, "Where the hell was God in all this?" As he was the youngest, I had always relied on Daniel to be there for me. Now he too was gone! I had to dig deep to keep going, to find God and to move on once again, for the sake of my family. Following this terrible loss, Simon endured further surgeries to improve his mobility, and it soon became apparent he had become addicted to pharmaceuticals, both benzodiazepines and opioids, and soon all our lives were out of control. This led us to begin our campaign for a Real Time Monitoring system for Pharmaceuticals. The dispensing of such addictive drugs was not monitored in 'real time', nor did prescribing doctors have any way of knowing what a patient was taking, when or how much. The lack of such information proved fatal for many.



It was a bittersweet moment when, in 2018, the Victorian State Government introduced 'Safe Script' in all dispensing locations to prevent further deaths caused by the misuse and abuse of these highly addictive and harmful drugs. Sadly, this was too late for Simon as, after sixteen brave and courageous years, he succumbed to the disease of addiction, dying of an accidental overdose of oxycontin. Simon was thirty-four and he left behind a grieving family, particularly his little eight year old daughter Maddie.

God does work in mysterious ways, and this became obvious through

Our Diocesan Community - November 2020

the story of the Karen Refugees. When John heard about them in 2009, he felt he was being guided by God to help them. His role at LAD also came into play as they were looking for additional workers at this very time, and the Karen could fit the role perfectly. I hoped God would find another couple or town to accommodate this plan as this was going to be a huge challenge for us and the town. To cut a long story short, God won!

We are now ten years on from that pivotal moment and, as well known by many throughout Australia, the Karen Story has been a huge success, thanks to many in our community and probably to God's guidance and help along the way. The two hundred or so, who now call Nhill home, are employed by over eighteen other businesses. It has been a win for them and for the township of Nhill! Interestingly, they first moved to Nhill the weekend Simon died. What



was God trying to tell us??? Yes, my life has been challenging and I have been challenged many times, but the memories of the happy times and my faith have helped put life into perspective. I have been blessed with John, my loving husband who, of course, has shared my journey for the last forty-six years. Sallie and Laura have married wonderful men and, together with our five grandchildren, they are the blessings that make life worth living in our now time.

As I have said so often to so many 'This life is not the important final one, but it is how we live this life that determines our final reward!' Like Mother Theresa or St Mary of the Cross (Mary MacKillop), who are my moral compasses, I have tried my best to live my life for others, as God

wants us all to do. "Love Thy neighbour" is the fundamental principle of Christian living and peace everywhere on earth. If I want to be reunited with all my loved ones, I am prepared to live my life accordingly.

God has woven a beautiful tapestry through my life, but only 'He' knows the beauty hidden within. I am looking up at the underside of that tapestry and can only see the loose threads dangling everywhere. Despite trying to put it all together, to see an image of my life and to make some sense of it, I continually grapple with what it all means. Thankfully, through it all, I have kept my faith. It has sustained me throughout my life. I believe that God walks beside me to celebrate the joyous happenings in my life and to support me in my sadness. I am so grateful for that because I could not have done it alone! I am so thankful for all the blessings I have been given.

Margaret Millington - Nhill



Mission Day 2020 - COVID Style!

With so many limitations imposed by COVID-19 St Brendan's Primary School Coragulac wondered if their Mission Day would happen, but once again it was amazing. We started with a Liturgy in the Church - our first time in there since March! Led by the children we were reminded through scripture, song and prayer of the important role of Mission as a Catholic Community. The children read out their own personal mission statements which were inspirational and reminded us of the importance of giving, caring and supporting those in need. Next came stalls, face/nail painting (with gloves of course!), horse and train rides. The traditional Ghost House provided value for your \$2.00

investment! Our traditional Cake Auction went virtual with school and parish families providing delicious baked goods that could be bought with a donation.

Mission Day has been a long and strong tradition at Coragulac and while we missed having our parents, former students and our community there with us, we had a very successful fundraising day, lots of fun and a sense of gratitude for the many blessings we have living in this community.

A student's Mission Statement: Mission Day means to me a day to give to the less fortunate an opportunity to live a bit more fortunate. This year we are raising money for Cambodia. Cambodia is a place where people have been through hard times and who are poor. We need to raise money for Cambodia for many reasons, they are struggling and this year would be an absolute nightmare for them! In Australia we are very lucky, knowing we have somewhere to sleep at night, knowing that there is going to be something to eat for breakfast, lunch and dinner and knowing we have a shelter to go home to. Cambodian people desperately need our help. If we know we can help them then we need to, instead of just standing around! Mission Day is an opportunity for us to not only have fun but to help those who need our help. The Cambodian people have suffered from the landmines and many other things. We may not be able to give them a forever home or an education but every dollar we make and donate means so much to them. Every dollar counts and this Mission Day is not going to be like others because of COVID. Parents won't be able to come, past students won't be able to come and our community won't be able to come, but at least we are still able to have Mission Day and help those in need. Together we can raise money for the Cambodian people and hopefully be able to make them smile and brighten their day when they receive the money.

Liz McGuane - St Brendan's Primary School Coragulac



During the time of home learning, you may have noticed some little villages popping up over nature strips and neighbourhoods! During the first lockdown, rainbows and teddy bears in home windows helped keep spirits high, but now you are more likely to find wooden spoon gardens as an inventive way of keeping people connected during times of social isolation.

On the return to school in Term 3, children at St Francis Xavier East Ballarat noticed some bright and friendly faces inside the front gates of the school! These crafty creations were made during onsite learning by the children of essential workers as a way of providing a joyful welcome back to school. The Villa Village boasted fantastic creations such as cartoon characters, fairy tale princesses and footy players.

Very soon more and more families wanted to create their own masterpiece to join in the fun so they were invited to grab a spoon, some textas, material, pipe cleaners

and googly eyes to make their own colourful handcrafted spoon characters. St Francis Xavier Spoonville is growing each day!

Teachers have found Spoonville to be a simple and inclusive way of helping children feel connected to the school community. It helped the children explore their creativity, while at the same time bringing joy to others. Morning school drop-off became a time to explore new additions to the garden and a lovely distraction for children feeling a little anxious after such a long period away from school.

The concept of Spoonville began in the United Kingdom and has blossomed in Victoria, with over 240 Spoonville sites across the state. Although Spoonville may appear as a seemingly innocent child art project, it has also served as an initiative to support children's mental health, by helping them feel more connected to their community, spreading joy, and entertaining families on their daily walks.

Christine Meneely and Jane Clarke

CAPTURING THIS MOMENT IN TIME!

During virtual schooling, Year 9 Photography students at Emmanuel College, Warrnambool have been busy taking many photographs at home as part of their coursework! Students were asked in their first task to document the times we are living in during isolation and COVID-19. They had to organise photo shoots within safety guidelines at home to show their lives during the pandemic and were asked to shoot a wide range of shots, exploring many different angles and uses of light, before editing their final series using Adobe Lightroom Classic. Students learnt from tutorial videos posted on Google Classroom and had to complete their editing at home independently. It was so exciting to see so much photography happening at home!

Reflections from some students:

Duke Bermingham: *This series tells the story of how I have to stay inside with my family. I am happy because all my photos turned out good and I like all the edits.*

Meg Matthews: *I am really happy with my series of photos of our life during COVID-19 and I think it will be really interesting to look back at these memories in the future. If I were to complete this task again, I would definitely*



cont. next page



take MORE photos, as I realise that it is so much easier to get lots more good photos and options. Overall, this was an interesting and enjoyable task to participate in!!

Cooper Miller: My favourite tool in Adobe Lightroom Classic is tone curve and playing around with the grain. I believe my editing was a success as I got a lot of photos edited in many different ways. I am happy with my series because it has a lot of things that happened during COVID and will allow me to reflect in 10 to 15 years about what happened during these times.

Evie Dalton: This series tells the story of my life in isolation as it shows my dogs and going for walks with them. I am definitely happy with this series as I got to take some really good photos of a time that we will always remember.

Bridie King: This series tells the story of my life during isolation, and you can see that most have included my pets. This is because my life during quarantine has mostly rotated around them. I am mostly happy with this series. I wish that I was able to get more pictures of people, but other than that I am happy about how this turned out.

All students worked well on this task and I am sure will look back on these photos in years to come as a reminder of the times we went through in 2020.

Ms Maggie Hill - Emmanuel College, Warrnambool

SPC Undertakes Energy Efficiency Initiatives

St Patrick's College Ballarat is moving towards becoming a more sustainable school with the recent installation of solar panels and additional LED lighting at the College. The College has now installed approximately three hundred and six solar panels, which enhances the energy efficiency of the school. Approximately two hundred and seventy-four solar panels were installed on the roof of the Senior School Wilding Wing and thirty-two solar panels installed on the roof of the College Boarding Precinct by Middy's Electrical in September.

The College also expanded the use of energy efficient LED lighting with approximately two hundred and forty-six LED lights installed in the Wilding Wing. The College use of LED lighting is saving over one hundred tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions.

LED lighting now represents forty-five per cent of all light fittings used by the College, with a number of key areas around the College also utilising one hundred per cent LED lighting, including the Boarding Precinct, Whelan Food Centre, Year 12 Study Centre, the Waterford Wing, Chapel and O'Malley Gym.

St Patrick's College Business Manager, Mr Andrew Ballesty, said a recent Energy Efficiency Review, conducted by the College and supported by Edmund Rice Education Australia, identified simple efficient measures that could reduce its environmental footprint. "We are thrilled to deliver on our commitment to sustainable design and efficiency. The installation of solar panels and expanded use of LED lighting not only reduces the College's energy costs, but more importantly contributes positively to the environment by reducing energy use and carbon emissions," Mr Ballesty said.

The College plans to continue rolling out environmentally friendly initiatives with a commitment to sustainable design in future projects, including the planned Multi-Purpose Centre which will feature solar panels and LED lighting.

Rachel Bryant - Marketing and Development Officer



CELEBRATING 30 YEARS COVID-19 STYLE!

Many of the best laid plans for 2020, all over the world, came undone at the seams when COVID-19 entered the picture: birthdays, holidays, planned trips overseas, anniversaries, Year 12 celebrations...you name it! For our staff at Lumen Christi Primary School, Delacombe, excitement and plans had been building throughout 2019, in anticipation of our thirtieth birthday celebrations in August 2020. Fast forward to March 2020 and it was becoming increasingly doubtful that any 'big' plans we had envisaged would even be possible. New plans continued to be reworked, modified and cancelled once again over the ensuing months. Moving forward again to late July, it seemed certain, or as certain as things could be in these 'unprecedented' times, that even gathering together as a community would not be possible: visitors were still not allowed onsite, whole school gatherings were not allowed, and the children and families, who would be a large part of this celebration, most probably would be at home for learning.



At the beginning of Term 3, amidst a very uncertain climate, we began to film parts of our liturgy, as a backup plan, while we still had children at school who could be involved in this preparation. Our Parish Priest, Fr Kevin Maloney, happily jumped on board by providing a beautifully recorded homily, while our Principal, Murray Macdonald provided inspiring messages. We also instigated a 'virtual choir' recording of our school song 'Living in the Light of Christ'. Luckily our foresight paid off, as by Week 4, when we should have been celebrating our school's thirtieth birthday, everyone was in lockdown again.

So how did we finally acknowledge and celebrate our thirty years on Lumen Christi Day? As a staff, we celebrated a day early, 'socially distanced', as we gathered to prepare for round two of Home Learning. On August 6, Lumen Christi Day, we were able to share with our families our beautifully presented and pre-recorded liturgy, as well as release the recording of our school song. Our families and the wider community just loved it! You would have thought it was all planned to perfection! Lumen Christi Day 2020 will certainly be a day to be remembered in years to come!

Fr Kevin's Homily on the day perfectly encapsulated the beginnings of our school and linked this to our School vision statement "We are called to Shine the Light of Christ in the world!" *"Today we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the school...and back when it was beginning there were three people that were quite significant. One was Barry James who donated the land for the school that we have our buildings on today. The other one was Fiona Tonkin, the school's first principal and the other person was Barry Ryan, who was the Parish Priest. Both of these people had vision and they let their light shine because they were able to envisage what it might be like to have a school here in Delacombe, and so, because of their vision, and their ability to live out their vision in their lives, they were people who started a wonderful organisation. Today we have people still part of this organisation, who are letting their lights shine in various ways. So all of you, as pupils here at this school, need to remember to let your light shine in the same way they let their lights shine so many years ago."*

Leonie Leviston - REL, Lumen Christi, Delacombe

Cataloguing the Catholic Diocese of Ballarat archives



The Catholic Diocese of Ballarat archives has always had some form of cataloguing system. The earliest known catalogue consisted of a leather-bound ledger dating from 1906. Although it is unclear who created this catalogue, it does give us an insight into the operations of the diocese and its many parishes during the early 20th century. Over time a card catalogue system was introduced in the archives by Fr TJ Linane. Officially appointed as the historian of the diocese by Bishop Mulkearns in the 1980s, Fr Linane played a key role in researching the history of the diocese from the mid-19th century to the late 1980s. By 2004, archivist Dr Michael Taff acquired the computer catalogue system Tabularium V.2. By 2019, almost eight thousand documents had been entered into the catalogue. Although useful towards maintaining a list of the archives, the Tabularium V.2 catalogue became outdated with approximately 0.6% of the entire collection being entered into the software. As a result of this, a new system has recently been purchased called ArchivEra. Not only does ArchivEra have the ability to catalogue archives but also the library collection, photographs, rare vestments, audio, film, portraits and other religious items which exist in this collection. Over the coming months the archivist will be working closely with the Lucidea team and the ArchivEra software in an effort to make the catalogue fully operational by early 2021.

Dr Samantha Fabry - Diocesan Archivist
Our Diocesan Community - November 2020

SUPPORT OUR PARISHES



CDF Pay For Parishes

In April this year as the early consequences of COVID-19 restrictions started to take effect, Andrew Jirik, Diocesan Business Manager initiated CDF Pay for Parishes that would allow parishioners to make online contributions to their parish for one off or scheduled regular stewardship payments or contributions to the presbytery accounts for priest support. The initiative was overwhelmingly supported by nearly all parishes. The program has now been running for a few months, while churches have been in lockdown, and is seeing an increase in use by many parishioners. Please see below for an insight to how it is accepted and used by one of our Parishes.

Since June 15, 2020, parishioners of Sacred Heart Church, Mildura have been able to access the new CDF pay online portal. The Parishes of Merbein and Red Cliffs soon followed. Initially, all Parishes were setup with the option to either contribute to the first and/or second collection. This was soon followed by the special collections, like the Holy Land collection. CDF Pay has been a great initiative and could not have come at a more opportune time given the state's crisis with COVID-19 restrictions.

In the beginning all transactions were transferred to the parish accounts and at the end of each month I was required to transfer the correct money to the presbytery account, a very tedious and time consuming task. I suggested that perhaps CDF pay could create a unique portal just for the first collection and so the online portal of Sunraysia was created just for this. I also created a spreadsheet for the contributions which I update every two weeks, keeping a monthly printed copy for Reckon & PACS (financial and parish) purposes.

If parishioners find this process a little daunting they often call or email the Parish Office where I will gladly help them out. I wasn't quite sure about this new online portal at first and thought it would be time consuming, however after some early teething problems I do find this a great and most convenient option for parishes and parishioners.

Carmel Russo - Parish Secretary Sacred Heart, Mildura

If you are interested in using CDF Pay for Parishes please talk to your parish or follow the links on the diocesan website or <https://ballarat.cdfpay.org.au/>

WRITING ON THE CARDS AS SCHOOL SENDS LOVE



Students at St Mary's Primary School Swan Hill warmed the hearts of fellow students and healthcare workers in Melbourne doing it tough during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kate Quin, School Principal, said students across the school created seven to eight hundred cards over the span of two weeks. The cards were filled with messages of hope and positivity for the students and teachers, also acknowledging the "great work" they are doing this year.

Kate said the gesture followed the Josephite message and saying of Mary MacKillop: "never see a need without doing something about it". "It shows the students what they can do to make a difference and cheer up someone's

day," Kate said. "We never know how a simple gesture could make a positive difference to others."

"When speaking to friends and colleagues in Melbourne since the announcement they would return to remote learning, we realised how concerned they were about the morale of staff and students," Kate said. "It made our staff think about what we as a school could do to make even a little difference."

Kate said the schools who received the cards were selected at random and that some students have also chosen to create cards for health care workers in metropolitan hospitals in Victoria, who were experiencing fatigue and anxiety.

"What was also unexpected was the ripple effect," Kate said. Many of the schools have contacted St Mary's - phoning to share their appreciation, sending back letters, videos, photos of the cards on display and mentioning the school in remote assemblies. In some cases, principals even made a video of thanks and sent it to the school to use.

Article courtesy of the Swan Hill Guardian.
Text and top photo by Lillian Altman

"THE DRY" STARRING FR EUGENE MCKINNON

One afternoon Fr Eugene McKinnon, Parish Priest in the East Wimmera Parish, received a call from someone who wanted to look at St Joseph's Church at Banyena, 40km's west of St Arnaud. He suspected someone wanted to be married there instead was surprised to hear that a production company was looking for a church for a film they were going to make. The film was to be based on Australian author, Jane Harper's novel, "The Dry".

The synopsis of the story is of a small country Victorian town in the grips of a devastating drought. The central character, Aaron Falk, (Eric Bana) is coming "home" to attend the funeral of his best friend Luke who, along with his wife and child, have tragically died under suspicious circumstances. Luke's parents want the truth and no-one in the town is beyond suspicion.

The director, Robert Connolly, rang Fr Eugene and asked if he could play the role of the pastor in the film and if he knew of any parishioners who would be willing to play extras. Mr Connolly also needed an organist for the funeral scene, so Anne Walsh from Donald was invited to be part of the production as well.



On the two days of filming in Banyena, a large production crew built up the site to look like the scene described in Jane Harper's book. Fr Eugene's cue, as written in the novel, was one line: "The fat old padre made his way to the lectern and began the funeral."

The Director asked Fr Eugene to conduct the funeral scene as a priest would and begin in his normal style. Hours later, after many takes and after the other extras had departed, he was still repeating the same introduction as camera angles were assessed and re-adjusted. It was suggested to Fr Eugene that if he wanted to give up the priesthood he could easily get a job as an actor!

Several months later, there came a call to join Actor's Equity and be a member of the cast. This meant re-recording his words in a studio in Port Melbourne to remove extraneous noise from the background (passing traffic) and to add sound effects to the dialogue such as music. The movie's release in Australia, previously scheduled for August 27, is now likely to be in early 2021.

Noeline Hogan – East Wimmera Parish

Photos are from the parish archives, not from film production; images from the actual film have been embargoed until the release of the film early next year. Top: Fr Eugene saying Mass in the Birchip side chapel Bottom: St Joseph's Banyena church frontage

FROM THE MURRAY TO THE SEA FIGHTING CANCER ON TWO WHEELS

Jim Waight, Education Officer in Religious Education at Catholic Education Ballarat has much to be grateful for. In November 2019, he was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma (a form of blood cancer) Since that time he has had six cycles of chemotherapy and is now undergoing maintenance treatment for the coming two years. This treatment has controlled the disease and he is now in remission.

Inspired by the words of Mary MacKillop to "Never see a need without doing something about it" Jim and his cycling team – Jimmy's Licorice Allsorts are participating in the Murray to Moyne Cycling Relay that is travelling the length of the diocese on the 27-28 March 2021. Through their efforts they are raising funds for The Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute (FECRI) in Ballarat, the only regionally based cancer institute in Australia. While reflecting on his cancer journey Jim says "I think we've all been touched by cancer in some way. I am benefiting first hand from the work FECRI do. Every dollar raised helps

their team continue to research better ways to treat this disease, and ultimately the survival of someone's loved one." The team has a goal of raising \$20,000 for cancer research.

"The support we have received so far is incredible and so appreciated" said Jim. "We thank all our sponsors and are grateful for their encouragement."

For further information see the team website and social media pages at:
<http://jimmysallsorts.com.au>
<https://www.facebook.com/jimmysallsorts>
<https://www.instagram.com/jimmysallsorts/>



LORETO GRADUATION COVID-STYLE

There is no doubt that 2020 has posed some challenges for us all. Perhaps one of the groups most impacted in the secondary school setting are the graduating Year 12 students.

COVID-19 restrictions have prevented this year level from experiencing many of the final year and graduation traditions of those who have gone before them. However, it also provided a unique opportunity for schools to revise some traditions and create something new and unique.

Loreto College Ballarat decided that the much-loved traditional flower crowning and candlelight Mass had to go ahead in some format. So it was decided to film a liturgy that combined these traditions in COVID-style. The initial concept grew into a full-blown production that included every single student being crowned by their parents or special people individually in the beautiful Loreto Chapel. After this, groups of fifty students at a time were filmed in a stunning candlelight walk through the gardens and gates of the school.



Led by Director of Faith and Mission, Mrs Felicity Knobel, it required an epic production to pull the whole liturgy-filming together and to include these special traditions, but one that was well worth the effort. Students, families and staff delighted in the unique opportunities that this once-off event created and in the video that they will cherish forever. The Class of 2020 will forever be remembered for their creativity, adaptability and resilience, and for forging ahead with new ideas.

Judy-Ann Quilliam - Director of Marketing and Development



Sock it to Poverty

Engaging our heads, hearts and hands in Mission

On October 30, the St Patrick's Primary School Port Fairy Mini Vinnies leaders hosted the yearly Socktober Mission event.

What is a sock ball? A sockball is a soccer ball constructed out of recyclable materials such as plastic, cardboard, plastic bags and of course, socks! We also used a lot of string to compact the soccer ball.

On the day of the event, each class was led by the Mini Vinnies leaders who had six activities set out. These included soccer tiggly, soccer ten pin bowling, weaving, goal scoring and kicking into a hoop. All of these activities included using a sock ball as well as soccer balls.

Why were we using sock balls?

We were using sockballs to recognise kids in other countries like Cambodia who can't afford real soccer balls. Kids in Cambodia make their own soccer ball from recyclable materials. We informed each class before their Socktober session and made them aware of our focus: it's important to remember the challenges faced by other children all around the world.

Sarah - Student

MERCY DAY 2020

Initially planned as a whole day of activities which included celebrating Mass, 'Mercy's got Talent' and some fundraising stalls to raise funds for Mercy works, the 2020 Mercy Regional College Camperdown Mercy Day was turning out to be a new and exciting day in our calendar. In the hope of beginning a new tradition by celebrating the name of our school and the origins of ISMAPNG (Institute of Sisters of Mercy Australia and Papua New Guinea), we hoped for an exciting day, and thought that the biggest difficulty we would face would be inclement weather.



How wrong we were, as COVID-19 restrictions began to influence our planning and preparation. A very positive aspect was the formation of a planning team comprising a number of liturgy coordinators and heads of Religious Education at a variety of Mercy affiliated schools across Australia. This group had a number of zoom meets where ideas were developed - just in case we needed to share resources or create collaborative resources for our schools' liturgies.

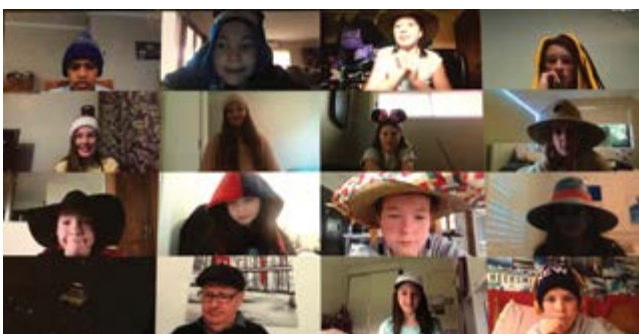
Many of these ideas, particularly the suggestions that we live-stream and pre-record aspects of liturgy (such as music and acknowledgement of country), then took on a life of their own as we planned our MRC Mercy Day under the cloud of a second round of restrictions. Family packs were sent to families with tasty samples of tea, coffee and hot chocolate. Also in the nurturing 'Mercy Day packs' was a copy of the Mercy Blessing as a fridge magnet, an invitation to the online liturgy, a book mark with a quote from Catherine McAuley and a special card to hold in a family selfie. This way the families could send in photos of themselves as a 'Mercy school family' and be part of the final song and photo montage in the liturgy.

Staff were asked to show the live-stream as part of their own google class at 11.30 am and other community members had access to the link via our social media platforms. Our school Director of IT became a director and a key part of the planning. In an effort to make the liturgy interactive, each family received a 'prayer of the faithful' page to write a little prayer for someone in need of encouragement or support at this time. During the prayers of intercession, the students and their families were encouraged to consider whom they might personally pray for and say these prayers quietly in their own hearts.

Some aspects of our liturgy were real time, such as a blessing by Fr Gerry Prunty and the Prayers of the Faithful. Our music was in clips which were pre-recorded, and some aspects of the liturgy were collaborative pieces such as the 'Door of Mercy' poem by Sr Mary Wickham, the Mercy Blessing, and the acknowledgement of country. The liturgy was live streamed via Youtube, and was very well received with many staff, students and parents making comments on the positive aspects of being together whilst being apart. Sadly, it also reminded us of the fun times we had in Term One and how we have missed so many special events. We finished the day with the thought that the restrictions are not forever and we have a strong sense of hope. The 2020 Mercy Day Liturgy was a success due to great teamwork and a sense of confidence in our mission to bring the message of Christ into our school and invite our community to share the message freely and comfortably in their own homes. Our Mercy Day liturgy became a story of innovation, celebration and collaboration at its best. We will continue to use these skills and improve on our planning and preparation for more live-stream events in the near future, including both Year 12 Graduation and our Induction of school captains for the coming year.

Mrs Jo-Anne Saunders - Mercy Regional College

WONDERFUL WEDNESDAY



To add a little smile to everyone's face and give the children something to look forward to during remote learning, St Joseph's Primary School Warrnambool introduced 'Wonderful Wednesday' during Term 3. 'Wonderful Wednesday' gave the children a chance to dress up, wear crazy hair or perhaps even stay in their PJs, and have a bit of fun.

"This was a great idea! Nice to have something fun and interesting for the kids ... and easy for the parents!!" was just one of the many comments we received from our families.

Thanks to families who embraced Wonderful Wednesday.

Michael Gray – Principal

Our Diocesan Community - November 2020



Café DMAC

On Monday, October 26 the 'Café DMAC' Coffee Van was officially launched with a small event organised by Damascus College VCAL students and staff, to showcase the new-look van. Staff and students in attendance enjoyed slices and cakes to celebrate the occasion.

Several years ago, Damascus students and staff discussed the idea of a school coffee van, where the group visited a large coffee roasting business in Melbourne to gain insights into the world of coffee – from growing to selecting to importing

to roasting. It certainly opened their minds to this multi-billion dollar industry, and answered the questions that when we buy a coffee there is so much that goes into producing that cup.

Students researched various styles of coffee vans – those that were already set up, right through to the idea of buying an old caravan and fitting it out themselves. All the while the students were gearing themselves with the knowledge to take their ideas to the next level.

Around two years ago, Damascus College purchased a van which had the essentials to begin the venture of providing coffee to the students and staff. Staff member, Tom Inverarity took up the role of upskilling a core of students to make and serve coffee and for the later part of last year staff member, Shaun O'Loughlin took the reins and established a regular operation providing coffee and slices.

It is the hope that the next phase will see us operating the van at off site school events such as the swimming sports and athletic sports, thus giving greater exposure and providing the students with the opportunity to obtain a skill set that is highly transferable.

Staff would like to express thanks to the leadership of Damascus College for supporting these endeavours, former VCAL Applied Learning Coordinator, Tom Inverarity for giving the venture a solid start, the on-going leadership of our present Applied Learning Coordinator, Belinda Dwyer, Shaun O'Loughlin, Neale Thompson and Matthew Hallowell for continuing the work, and, of course, our students for rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck in to the job at hand. Well done to all involved.



Damascus College Ballarat

Remembering



We remember Sr Cathy Dean, a Sister of St Joseph who worked in the Mallee Parishes of Ouyen, Sea Lake and Swan Hill in the 1990's. Cathy was born in Bairnsdale and attended primary and secondary school there where she was taught by the Presentation Sisters. On leaving Nagle College, she trained as a Mothercraft Nurse at St Joseph's Babies Home in Broadmeadows. She worked briefly at St Vincent's Private Hospital and later at the East Gippsland Hospital in Bairnsdale. Cathy was also a lay missionary with the Pallotine Fathers in Tardan for two years as a House Mother to Aboriginal girls. When she left Western Australia, she worked in the library at Nagle College, Bairnsdale before entering the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Following Novitiate in Sydney, Cathy returned to Victoria to the Broadmeadows community and studied a Diploma of Ministry at the National Pastoral Institute.

Cathy lived in Altona, Werribee, Ouyen, Swan Hill, Sea Lake and Cranbourne working either in Parish or in Pastoral Care. She led the parishes of Ouyen and Sea Lake in the late 1990's through a transitioning process while these parishes awaited an appointment of a priest. Further study gave her a CPE qualification and a Bachelor of Social Science (Pastoral Studies) before she was missioned to Peru. In Peru, Cathy spent much of her time living and working with the women of the Pueblo in Pitumarca, a small community in the Andes. On her return to Australia, Cathy touched many lives through her ministries at Mary MacKillop Aged Care, Hawthorn East, Footscray, KooWee Rup/Packenham and Numurkah/Shepparton. Cathy was a member of the 2019 Chapter Planning Team and a Chapter delegate. She moved back to Hawthorn East in early 2020 to take up her ministry as an elected member of the Vic-Tas Regional Leadership Team. She died unexpectedly in July following a short illness. Rest in Peace, Cathy.

<https://www.sosj.org.au/in-loving-memory-of-sr-cathy-dean-20/>



ZOOMING THROUGH PREP

In a normal year, Preps celebrate the milestone of their first one hundred days of school. In this crazy COVID-19 2020 where nothing has been normal and they haven't been at school anywhere close to one hundred days, the Prep students of St Alipius Parish School Ballarat East enjoyed a different celebration - zooming through prep.

Having done much of their first year of schooling remotely, the school decided to celebrate the achievements of its youngest pupils. "We've been doing lots of things and the main focus of our day is around rebuilding relationships because they've missed out on such a big part of that time at school," said Prep Teacher Nicole Carter.

"It's following back over teamwork and celebrating all the friends that we have made and working with new people." Achievements in school work were celebrated alongside personal achievements at home. "We started part of our day by talking about all the things we had achieved and highlighted that to them. When they come to school they think they have to learn to read and write and count but so much other learning takes part before that happens so they can learn to read and write. We also talked about all the things they learned at home, things they might not have achieved if they had been at school all day - like learning to ride a bike with no training wheels, making their own sandwich for lunch ... and one little person said their colouring in at school didn't look like that before."

The school's Prep Students decorated t-shirts, played games with balloons, made hats, coloured in, watched a movie and shared a (COVID-safe) lunch together. "As hard as it's been it's been a good learning experience as well for the kids so we are celebrating being together and back at school with that lens on."

*Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Michelle Smith and photos by Kate Healy.
Photo: Owen, Lyla and Flynn, 6, enjoy the playground and time spent with friends back at school.*

TEACHERS IN TRAINING

Sacred Heart Primary School Mildura students gained an insight into the workforce at the school's first work experience day held recently. Staff roles at the school were randomly allocated to twelve Grade 6 and two Grade 5 students from the Core Student Leadership Team, who shadowed staff to learn the ins and outs of their daily tasks.

Deputy Principal Jacinda Deacon said she hoped the program would promote responsibility and selflessness. "We originally planned to have a partnership with Princes Court Homes in the first term where students would shadow nurses and co-ordinators," she said. "But then one student, during remote learning, thought it would be great to do it at the school and so that's how this came about." Ms Deacon said it was interesting to see how students perceived their roles.

"At the start I videoed them about what they thought they would be doing and then we will be videoing them again to see what they actually did", Ms Deacon said. "A lot of them were really quite unsure about what their role involved." She said with positive feed-back from staff and students, the program would be held again next year.

Grade 6 student Ziggy was shadowing Deputy Principal Ryan O'Callaghan and said it had been a fun morning. "It's been a really good experience," he said. "So far we've gone on yard duty to check on teachers and to see if people are doing the right thing. It was fun to tell people not to run, especially my brother. My favourite part so far was when I got to send out an alert to parents on the school bag app. Other students should definitely do this next year."



*Article courtesy of Sunraysia Daily, text by Teagan Bell and photos by Ben Gross
Top: Sacred Heart Deputy Principal Ryan O'Callaghan with Grade 6 student Ziggy*

Our Diocesan Community - November 2020

WORKING THROUGH COVID-19

Sharyn Simpson - Assistant Manager

CDF: I have been working from the office throughout COVID-19. The



best thing about being in the office is that I have been really busy and have had lots of contact with precinct staff and customers, day to day working life has been pretty normal for me. At least it has kept me off the streets! The challenges about working in the office have been managing phone calls, customer visits, work distribution and all the other office fun stuff. And trying not eat through the day to keep myself entertained. I've tried to look after my wellbeing by going for a walk at some stage during the day or a walk after work weather permitting. Keeping a positive outlook and to keep in touch with the people I would normally be seeing. I miss seeing people, just sharing your thoughts, funny stories, or hearing their stories, it is just the day to day stuff you miss the most. We are usually so connected and supportive together and it has been very strange to lose that temporarily. We are lucky that our connections are so strong and they will endure this time apart. Just like everyone else, I'm looking forward to things going back to normal, not COVID normal, I want boring old 'normal'. Being able to decide and have choices and not being controlled by restrictions is what I am hoping for! Also not spending so much money on takeaway coffee.



Bishop Paul Bird: I usually work mostly in the office and occasionally at home. However, since the early days of the pandemic, when restrictions started, I have been working from home more than usual. Some days I have been working completely from home. This has been mainly when I have had a series of Zoom meetings to attend which I have found convenient to attend from my home office. The best thing about working from home is the quiet. Since I live by myself, there are no interruptions if I am responding to emails or writing talks or joining in meetings online. Without others around and without scheduled appointments, there is the challenge to keep to a regular timetable and keep focussed on work when needed. One help to wellbeing has been to have a mix of work and breaks, including going out for fresh air and walks. It has also been helpful to mix work at home with work in the bishop's office. I miss the company in the office when working

from home, with the opportunities to meet and talk in person, as well as the occasional birthday morning tea and the occasional shared lunch. I am looking forward to more frequent times together in the office and meeting more people in person. Beyond work arrangements, I am looking forward to being able to celebrate Mass together again in our churches. I am also looking forward to the indoor swimming pool opening again so that I can resume my regular swims.

Sonia Walker - Clergy Health & Wellbeing Coordinator

I started working from home in late March, soon after Lockdown Episode One began. During this time, I wasn't moving around the diocese at all, so the mornings were a little gentler and not as hectic, especially as the regular school run/dash became obsolete. Once I was able to return to travelling further afield, it was great to just be able to get in my car, drive to my destination and return straight home. I think I saved at least an hour off my day just by doing this. It's been great! Phone coverage has been challenging, but I very quickly managed to find several nooks and crannies that have a strong signal that won't disappear mid-call. Not having that early morning school rush has been a blessing. I've taken that saved time to do my thirty minutes of treadmill (which I would otherwise do in the evening) before hitting the desk or going to my first appointment. In a few ways, working from home has been a little less stressful. I've made a point of calling in to the diocesan office at least once a month. I've also maintained good communication with my fellow Clergy Carers in other Victorian dioceses and others throughout Australia. When I wasn't able to do home visits, it was of great importance and a priority to keep in regular contact with the clergy through email and phone calls. Although working from home has been a happy experience, I have missed having my own work space and will welcome heading back to my office at the appropriate time. I think it's important for the clergy (and others) to know where they can catch up with me when I'm not on the road travelling around the diocese. I've also missed having the freedom to just pop into a colleague's office to say hello. It would be great to get back to pre-COVID-19 normal but I think that's not likely to happen any time soon.



As students were sent back into remote learning at the beginning of Term 3, families at St Brendan's Primary School Coragulac were very fortunate to receive the most thoughtful care packages from neighbours, Thomas Carr College - the Good Samaritan Campus.

Debbie Van Es works as the cook for the College and worked very hard to put all of the packages together. Debbie then drove new Principal, Leanne Eastman, all over the countryside to deliver them. Leanne really enjoyed the day, seeing

much of the district and meeting many of the families for the first time along the way.

It was quite the adventure with many missed turns, a close confrontation with a couple of alpacas and also gate-crashing on a cow that was in the process of giving birth. Leanne had lots of stories to share with the family that night! We would like to sincerely thank Thomas Carr College for their kind gesture.

Gracesyn Perrett - St Brendan's Coragulac



Hope!! According to the Oxford Dictionary: Hope is a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen. With the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a lot to hope for; the hope that whatever normal is in the future, we place people at the forefront and look at the inequalities that exist in our society; the hope that the people who have been affected physically by COVID-19 find themselves recovered; the hope that families who have lost loved ones can receive some peace, knowing their loved ones are with God; the hope that out of all this the changes that can happen are for the best for all. Pope Francis hopes that we will "be profoundly shaken by what is happening all around us." He says if we recognise that we are one family, then our response must be "to eliminate inequities, to heal the injustice that is undermining the health of the entire human family!" Pope Francis encourages "political leaders to work actively for the common good, to provide the means and resources needed to enable everyone to lead a dignified life and, when circumstances allow, to assist them in resuming their normal daily activities." We live in hope.

Photos: Front cover: Vines in Red Cliffs. Back cover: 1. Eagle on the Hill, Red Cliffs. St Francis Xavier Primary School, Ballarat East Spoonville 3. Zooming through Prep at St Alipius Parish School, Ballarat East. 4. Parishioners in the shade at St Joseph's Ouyen after Mass celebrated outside.

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