



CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of
BALLARAT



OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY

News around the Diocese

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OUR DIOCESAN COMMUNITY (ODC)

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The stress and gift of lockdown



I am writing these reflections in the midst of the recent statewide lockdown following some new cases of COVID -19 in Victoria. With several meetings postponed, I have had some extra time on my hands and I have taken the opportunity to think about the various impacts of the pandemic. In some ways, the pandemic has brought a lot of stress. In other ways, though, this trying time might bring us some gifts.

One of the first stories I heard of stress during the pandemic came from a grandmother who had been looking after her 8-year-old granddaughter during some days of learning from home. It was early in the first lockdown and most students had switched to remote learning. The girl's parents had asked her grandmother to supervise her for a few hours each day while she worked through her lessons at home. On the first day, all went well. It was something of an adventure to be having school at home. On the second day, the girl was less enthusiastic about the online learning. On the third day, she was missing her classmates. She was finding it hard to concentrate without the stimulus of activities in the classroom. By that stage, the grandmother was struggling to keep the young student focussed. The grandmother told me that, after three days, she started to think about applying for long-service leave!

As far as I could see, teachers and students adapted remarkably well to the demands of remote learning and parents and other family members played an outstanding role in helping the students make the switch to learning from home, but the exercise was stressful. It was challenging for teachers to rearrange their programs so as to keep students engaged without the personal contact of face-to-face classes. It was challenging for students to adapt to learning from home, without the in-person support of teachers and classmates. It was challenging for parents and other family members to supervise children's learning without themselves having teacher training and sometimes while they were trying to do their own work from home. It was no wonder many people felt under considerable stress.

Another group of people who have felt a lot of pressure are owners and staff of various businesses hit hard by the pandemic. I recall a television interview of the owner of a small restaurant. He had lost a lot of business, particularly during the lockdowns. He had kept working with a small staff to provide take-away service but he was worried how long his business could survive. He was concerned for himself and for his staff. His voice grew shaky as he said, "Personally, I'm not coping too well."

The pandemic has affected many people at key moments of their lives. Some have not been able to gather with family for special

Our Diocesan Community - July 2021

birthdays. Some have had to postpone weddings. Some have not been able to visit elderly family members in nursing homes. Some have not been able to visit family and friends in hospital. Numbers of visitors have been limited for patients who have been dying. Sometimes only a few family members and friends have been able to gather for funerals, compounding the sadness of those occasions.

For those of us used to gathering with our parish communities, there has been a sense of loss when we have not been able to come together as we usually would for prayer and mutual support. Some have had to postpone Baptisms and Confirmations and First Communions. When we have not been able to gather for Sunday Mass, people have felt this deeply. Parish communities have done well in providing opportunities for prayer online, but this has not satisfied the yearning to celebrate the sacraments in person, particularly the hunger to receive Christ in the Eucharist.

These are some examples of how the pandemic has brought stress or sadness to people's lives. Many have been feeling the strain. And in this situation, it has been encouraging to see how people have been supporting one another.

There has been widespread appreciation of the work of those on the frontline, particularly staff in hospitals who have put their own lives at risk in caring for COVID -19 patients. Those who have needed to supervise children's learning at home have come to appreciate the work of teachers who supervise that learning day by day. We have also come to realise the contribution of some who might often be overlooked, such as those who serve us at checkouts and those who stock our supermarket shelves. We have come to recognise that many people in their own ways are "essential workers", essential to keeping our community safe and healthy.

In the times of lockdown, people have shown concern for their neighbours, especially those who are elderly or live alone. I was pleased to see a notice on a parish bulletin recently, encouraging parishioners to reach out to people in need. The notice read, "Over this coming week we encourage all parishioners to reach out to their neighbours, family members, friends, colleagues and especially to those that you know who live on their own. For many this circuit breaker lockdown will be challenging and our pastoral care of each is an expression of our faith in the compassionate Christ and belonging to the Body of Christ."

One of the gifts of this stressful time may be that we recognise more clearly how we depend on one another and how we can enrich our life as a community by the care we show. Pope Francis has expressed his hope that we might learn such lessons and take them to heart to build a better future.

"The worldwide tragedy of the COVID -19 pandemic has 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 have realized that no one is saved alone; we can only be saved together. The brutal and unforeseen blow of this pandemic has forced us to recover our concern for human beings, for everyone, rather than for the benefit of a few."

However, Pope Francis also warns of the danger of forgetting such lessons and falling back into old, destructive ways. "All too quickly, however, 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 and 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." (Fratelli Tutti, par 32-35)

The lockdowns of the COVID -19 pandemic have been a kind of enforced retreat, providing us with the gift of extra time to reflect. I hope this will bear fruit in a deeper sense of care for one another. If so, this time of great distress could also be a time that brings a gift of wisdom – wisdom that could enrich our community for many years to come.



Bishop Paul Bird CSSR

Apostolic Letter 'Patris Corde' of the Holy Father Francis

6. A working father

An aspect of Saint Joseph that has been emphasized from the time of the first social Encyclical, Pope Leo XIII's 'Rerum Novarum', is his relation to work. Saint Joseph was a carpenter who earned an honest living to provide for his family. From him, Jesus learned the value, the dignity and the joy of what it means to eat bread that is the fruit of one's own labour.



During Catholic Education Week schools across the nation celebrated two hundred years of Catholic Education in Australia. Many schools across the diocese held local celebrations and a celebratory Mass was attended by representative students from thirty schools at St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat, on May 24, the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians. The Mass was celebrated by Fr Kevin Maloney, Vicar General. "We are delighted to be able to gather together to celebrate such an important milestone in Catholic Education in Australia", said Tom Sexton, Executive Director, Catholic Education Ballarat.

The bicentenary commemorates the anniversary of the first official Catholic school in Australia, founded in October 1820 by Irish Catholic priest, Fr John Therry. The school, which Catholic historians believe was located on Hunter Street in Parramatta, taught thirty one students. This school was transferred to the site of the present St Patrick's Cathedral in 1837 and was entrusted to the care of the Marist

200 Years of Catholic Education

Brothers in 1875. Parramatta Marist High School, now located in Westmead and St Patrick's Primary, Parramatta trace their origins back to this first school.

All Saints Parish School in Portland was the first Catholic school to open in the Ballarat Diocese one hundred and seventy two years ago in May 1849, making it the second Catholic school to open in the Colony of Victoria (District of Port Philip). St Patrick's Parish Primary School opened in Port Fairy a short time later in July 1849. As Fr Kevin said in his homily, "In our diocese today, we rejoice in fifty three primary schools and eleven secondary schools."

Over two hundred years Catholic schools have educated millions of young people and today educate one in five Australian students. Today, there are 1,751 Catholic schools educating 768,000 students and employing 98,000 staff. Nearly forty per cent of Catholic schools are located outside of metropolitan cities in regional, rural and remote communities.

Visit the 200 Year Celebration website for more details on the bicentenary: <https://200years.catholic.edu.au>





Prayers for the members to the Plenary Council

The Diocese of Ballarat prayed for their members (formerly known as delegates) to the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia at the Diocesan Mass of the Oils on March 29. The first assembly of the Plenary Council will open in Adelaide in October with a combination of online and face-to-face participation, as uncertainty remains over restrictions on travel and gatherings.

The members for the Ballarat Diocese are Bishop Paul Bird, Fr Kevin Maloney – Vicar General, Marie Shaddock and Felicity Knobel. Also from the Ballarat Diocese is Monsignor Glynn Murphy who is representing the Military Ordinariate and Fr Kevin Lenehan representing the Catholic Theological College.

The Diocesan Plenary Council Facilitation Team, which includes Bernadette Tolan, Sr Veronica Lawson rsm, Bernadette Lynch, Bill Hitchin and Jane Collins, led the prayers for the members. Bernadette Tolan acknowledged the members and invited the gathering to listen to a quote from the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World from the Second Vatican Council. “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts. United in Christ, they are led by the Holy Spirit in their journey to the kingdom of their Father and they have welcomed the news of salvation which is meant for everyone”.

Sr Veronica Lawson invited the members forward and prayed to the Holy Spirit for empowerment and courage for the members and that God grant them the grace to be open to the Spirit leading them through the days of prayer, listening and discernment during the process and gatherings of the Council.

Jane Collins and Bill Hitchin lit a plenary candle for each member which was then presented to them as Bernadette Lynch prayed the following prayer, “May the light of Christ be your guide. We give you these candles which serve as a sign of the Spirit at the centre of our journey, forever burning brightly, inviting us to look beyond the shadow of the now to a brighter future. May the Holy Spirit guide us”.

Marie Shaddock said, “It was a very powerful and moving experience that reinforced the fact that we are representing the whole of the diocese as a “community of communities” as Bishop Paul said in his homily. Standing there as an individual was both humbling yet bolstering in the sense that you were aware of so many other people praying for you. I love my candle, the simplicity and fragility of it and keep it for “special” prayer times when I am feeling the need of a bit more guidance and strength. It reminds me that even in the dark we can still see and be the light”.

Bishop Paul, in a previous announcement of the members, said, “as the six participants from our diocese, I hope we can make a good contribution to the plenary council, I hope we can highlight some of the issues that concern us as a diocesan community. I hope we can also highlight some of the gifts of our diocese and share these gifts with the Catholic Community throughout Australia”.

Members of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia are those who have been called to participate in the assemblies. The members have previously been referred to as “delegates” to the Council. The language of “member” better reflects the status of those called to a Council, as well as the sense that all members are there to represent the People of God in Australia, not just their local Church community. Members are the only people who can vote at the Council assemblies and it is expected there will be around two hundred and eighty members attending.

Year of St Joseph

Pope Francis has published an Apostolic Letter *Patris corde (With a Father's Heart)*, commemorating the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church and proclaiming a 'Year of St Joseph' from December 8, 2020 – December 8, 2021. St Joseph has two feast days on the liturgical calendar. The first is March 19—Joseph, the Husband of Mary. The second is May 1—Joseph, the Worker.

Parishes and schools in the diocese with the name of St Joseph were invited to write a paragraph or two on the significance of St Joseph or a celebration for St Joseph at their parish or school in this Year of St Joseph.

Stories below:

Ask anyone in our small but passionate congregation what St Joseph's in Pirron Yallock is to them, in one way or another, they'll say it's an extension of their family. St Joseph was a family man - a supportive and loving spouse and parent. St Joseph's Pirron Yallock's church community is built on these qualities of love and support and its congregation is a family. Our church was opened in 1907 and members of our community's ancestors were members of the original congregation.

The church was always full, between Sunday Mass, catechism every Sunday after the Mass for the Swan Marsh state school students and visits from the missions every few years. Midnight Mass was a highlight of the church's calendar. The church would be packed to the rafters and it was the signifier that Christmas had arrived to the community's families. St Joseph's Pirron Yallock was home to a Children of Mary group; ladies joined and sat together at Mass once a month, and as brides, wore the Children of Mary blue satin cloak.

Traditionally a working-class, dairy farming area, our church community has changed and evolved as the industry changed. The decline of the small farm into larger-scale farming has seen fewer families and attendees regularly at Mass. However, the church remains as a pivotal part of our small community. Those who remain contribute, participate and support each other in various ways and frequently have a cuppa after our Sunday Assemblies of Word and Communion and catch up on the football and netball results, local and family news.

In the words of Pope Francis, "St Joseph should be marked by the virtues of humility, intimacy with the Lord, and silence and hiddenness together with zeal and hard work to fulfil the Lord's will". St Joseph is important to us as he is who our local church is named after. It is our family church named after a family man, in a community that nurtures and supports its own congregation and the wider community - in homage to our patron saint.

Ruby Manson



Celebrating St Joseph Protector of the Holy Church in Ouyen

On March 19, parishioners of St Joseph's in Ouyen gathered to celebrate the life of our Patron Saint Joseph with Mass, followed by dinner at the Victoria Hotel.

Throughout the Year of St Joseph our statue is lit up to illuminate his particular presence in our parish and as a reminder to us of his virtues and qualities that so often are overlooked.

As part of his litany reminds us, St Joseph is: Mirror of Patience, Lover of Poverty, Model of Workmen, Glory of Domestic Life, Guardian of Virgins, Pillar of Families, Comforter of the Afflicted, Hope of the Sick, Patron of the Dying, Terror of Demons and Protector of the Holy Church – he has so much to offer our world today.

Marie Shaddock



Reflection on *St Joseph*

When I think of St Joseph, I think of a kind, caring and humble man who had tremendous faith and trust in God. *Joseph willingly did what God asked of him, protecting Jesus and Mary in their daily life. He was a great teacher, passing on his carpentry skills to others, and was also a great model of wisdom, faith and humbleness.* It's these qualities I'm sure that drew Mary MacKillop to name her newly formed order after St Joseph. Caring, wise, faithful, humble, protector, teacher.....these are the characteristics of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, the characteristics that all within our school community of St Joseph's are encouraged to aspire to.

Personally, these attributes are very significant to me as leader of St Joseph's School. Remembering that every person is created in the image and likeness of God, it is vital to and protection for all, especially those students and families who are most vulnerable. It that our students are also active in their support of each other, of members of our wider and of the wider world. In this Year of St Joseph, I pray especially that others can see love, kindness and humility through our actions towards others, ensuring that the face of God wherever we go and through whatever we do.

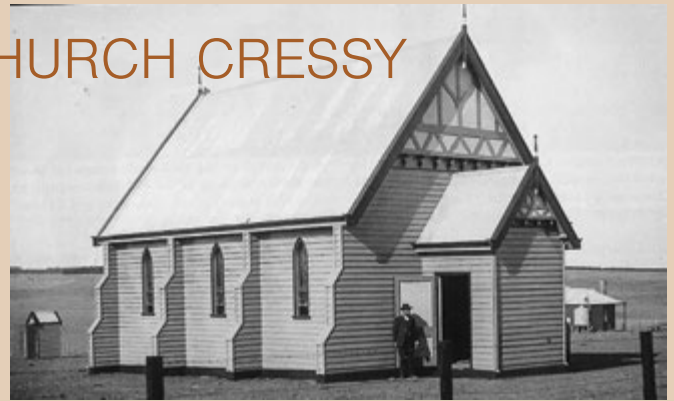
Cynthia Maiden - Principal, St Joseph's School, Hopetoun



model care is important community compassion, is revealed

ST JOSEPH 'S MEMORIAL CHURCH CRESSY

St Joseph's Church has a long history in Cressy. It was the first church built by the Cressy Catholic Community and was opened on September 15, 1912 by Most Reverend Joseph Higgins DD. Prior to the church opening, Mass was celebrated in Cressy when a priest visited or was passing by. The weatherboard church was erected and then refurbished and extended in 1925 and it served the parishioners for many years until the mid-1950s when it was showing its age and in need of replacement.



In 1958, the Parish of Cressy was formed and Cressy, Rokewood, Lismore and Derrinallum were the churches in this parish with Fr P O'Keefe as first Parish Priest. A new presbytery was built at Cressy in 1958, which was funded by the Catholic Community. A new church was also built and took a while longer to be completed. It was blessed and opened on November 13, 1966. This building was also funded by the Catholic Community of Cressy. We acknowledge the generosity of all those in the community who made this happen. In 1995, Cressy became part of the Colac Parish.



St Joseph's has been an integral part of our community. This is where we celebrated the sacraments and where Religious Education lessons were given, this is where our faith was nurtured. It has been a place of joy with Weddings, Baptisms, First Communions and Confirmations being celebrated and a place of sorrow as members of the community were farewelled at funerals. This is a community that gives generously to support the church and each other, with the guidance of all our parish priests over the years.

We are now small in numbers but grateful to have Mass celebrated on the second Friday of the month, after which we share a meal at the Cressy Bowling Club. This is a great opportunity to keep in touch with Fr Michael O'Toole, Parish Priest.

Patricia Mathews - Cressy Parishioner

Photos taken from "God's House" - A history of churches in Colac and District" by Norman Houghton. Cressy Church features on pg 70-71.



The Kolor people had lived in the shadow of Mt Rouse (which they called 'Kolorer') for countless thousands of years before Major Mitchell travelled through and named the area 'Australia Felix' in 1836. Australia Felix (Latin for "fortunate Australia" or "happy Australia") was an early name given by Thomas Mitchell to parts of western Victoria he explored in 1836 on one of his expeditions.

So, having been the Kolor district for a millennia and part of Australia Felix until it became 'Mt Rouse', our part of the Western District of Victoria was already known as Penshurst when the first St Joseph's School was opened here in 1874.

Throughout most of the next century and a quarter, the teachers at St Joseph's have been members of the Catholic laity, although that norm was interrupted from 1944 to 1976 when the Sisters of Mercy of the former Ballarat East congregation assumed responsibility for the school's activities. The school was rebuilt during this time and reopened officially on November 18, 1956.

In sending their children to our school, the parents recognise that they are placing them in a Christian environment where faith is celebrated.

Although it has so far proven impossible to find records of the very early days at St Joseph's, in our imagination, we would dream that in those days as in these, the children were the most significant members of the school community and that they and their school were significant to the community at large, as this story suggests:

It was Jack's 87th birthday. All 'his kids' – every one of the forty pupils of St Joseph's – had crowded around him for the birthday party they had organised for him.

They had sung Happy Birthday and all that was left was for Jack to blow out the candles. But before he did so, as he looked at all the expectant faces around him and with a tear rolling down his face, he said, 'You're my life, kids; you're the reason I get up each morning.'

Stephen Hogan - Principal, St Joseph's Primary School, Penshurst

Celebrating St Joseph's Feast Day



On April 30, St Joseph's School Coleraine celebrated St Joseph the Worker's Feast Day. Children were encouraged to dress up in high-visibility or 'tradie' wear, for example tool belts and hard hats, goggles and earmuffs. We began the day with Mass in the Church with Fr George Kuruvila and he explained that St Joseph has two Feast Days, one in March and one in May.

After lunch, we worked in multi-aged groups to construct different objects. These hand-on activities were; Group 1-Lego and Magnetic Rods - Make a Vehicle; Group 2-Sandpit Challenge - Best Town; Group 3 - Toothpicks - Tallest Tower.

Overall, we have had a fabulous day, celebrating the origins of our Patron Saint, St Joseph, the humble carpenter.

Karl Dwyer - Principal

St Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus

As we celebrate the year of our Patron Saint, it is a good opportunity to think of St Joseph the Worker as someone who reminds us of the value and dignity of work, a right and a privilege to be enjoyed by all.

The year is a celebration of our Patron Saint and what it means for each of us to be a part of St Joseph's College in Mildura – one that is rich in mercy values, providing a pathway to hope and possibility through employment. When it comes to work, we often hear the phrase 'work ethic'. I know that many of our students balance school with part time employment as well as a commitment to sports, volunteering and many social activities.

As we face the trials of the COVID-19 pandemic, and as those with families work to ensure their safety, there is no better time to look to St Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus. The opportunity of employment is currently denied to many so we pray for all those in our community who have lost their jobs or who are currently seeking work. At our time of need, my hope for our community is that we continue to show each other the kindness that we have come to understand of St Joseph - a loving husband and father, a man who worked with his hands, a man who watched over and cared for his family.

Marg Blythman, Principal – St Joseph's College Mildura
This relief sculpture hangs in Reception at the Enright Campus



St Joseph's Churches in Charlton & Banyena, East Wimmera Parish



St Joseph is patron to many causes across the world, most notably to fathers and families as well as carpenters and workers. With St Joseph being a hard worker and the head of the Holy Family, he is arguably the greatest role model to fathers and labourers.

In the East Wimmera parish, we have two churches named after St Joseph, one in Banyena and the other in Charlton. Both built at a time when Australian gold rushes were changing the convict colonies into more progressive cities with the influx of free immigrants.

Banyena, forty kilometres west of St Arnaud, is the church recognised in the recently released film "The Dry". St Joseph's Banyena was built in 1876 using timbers from the local Bolangum Hills. These timbers were carted by bullock teams and it was indeed a labor intensive exercise. The church still stands to this day with some modifications.

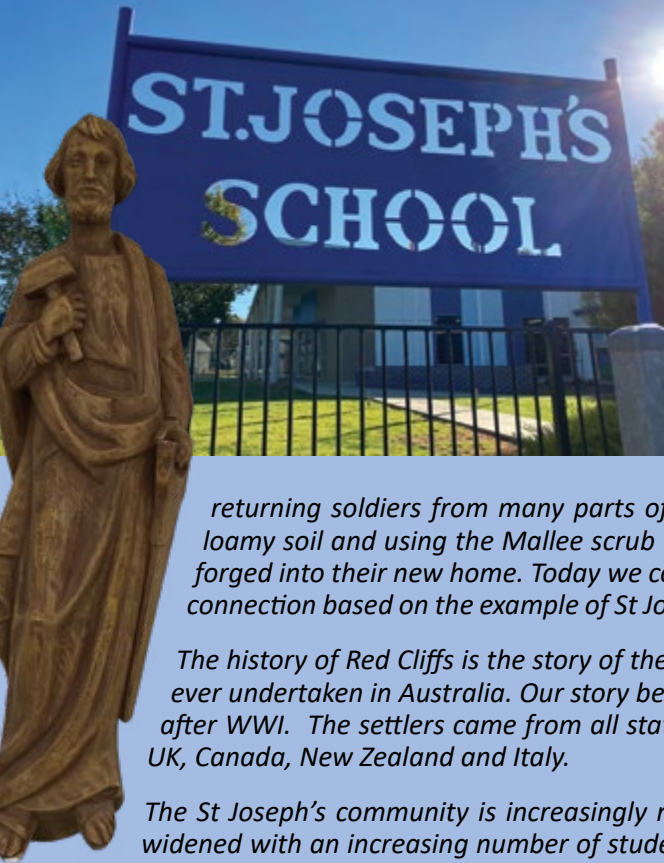
The original church in Charlton was built around the same time as Banyena, although thirty years later the Bishop of Ballarat, Dr Higgins, appealed to the people of Charlton to build a new church and the corner stone was laid in 1907. It was unfortunate that on January 1, 1991 this church was destroyed by fire but has since been replaced by a more modern building which stands in pride of place today.

Although a similar start to Banyena, Charlton also has a Catholic school attached to it. St Joseph's Primary School began in 1895/96 and classes were held in the church during the week. The four main classrooms of the present school were built in 1959, and more rooms were added in the 1960/1970's. The school is still in operation and values the role of St Joseph in its teachings.

Throughout St Joseph's Banyena and Charlton's 145-year history, they have played a central role in the life of local families. They have been the place to celebrate both joyous occasions and to join together to support each other during times of loss and difficulty. Fittingly a suitable association to St Joseph the Father as well as St Joseph the Worker.

Noeline Hogan, Parish Coordinator - East Wimmera Parish





RED CLIFFS

When the foundation stone for St Joseph's Primary School, Red Cliffs was laid by the Right Reverend D. Foley D.D. Bishop of Ballarat, on January 15, 1933, we can only imagine the excitement it created for the burgeoning Catholic Community in the Soldier Settlement town fifteen kilometers from Mildura.

St Joseph's Primary School has always been inspired by the example of St Joseph the Worker, Patron of the Universal Church, which is fitting given our multicultural heritage. Red Cliffs was formed by returning soldiers from many parts of the world, who worked hard on the land, growing crops in the red loamy soil and using the Mallee scrub to build the growing vineyards and township of Red Cliffs, which they forged into their new home. Today we continue to embrace that hard working heritage and strong community connection based on the example of St Joseph, who worked tirelessly to provide for and protect the Holy Family.

The history of Red Cliffs is the story of the largest, and probably the most successful, soldier settlement scheme ever undertaken in Australia. Our story began in 1918 just as the first Australian Diggers were being repatriated after WWI. The settlers came from all states of Australia, but also from other allied countries including France, UK, Canada, New Zealand and Italy.

The St Joseph's community is increasingly multicultural. In recent years the cultural diversity of our school has widened with an increasing number of students from a wide range of countries including Cambodia, China, India, Burundi, The Philippines, Thailand and Tonga. These students and their families have brought with them their faith and culture which has enriched us in many ways. As Patron of the Universal Church, Joseph is here for, and protector of, people of all nations.

The Red Cliffs community is a community that values work. Many in our community toil the earth, build, grow and make in the way that St Joseph did. St Joseph earned an honest living to provide for his family. Like our families, he valued the dignity and joy of what it means to provide for those you love and to enjoy the fruit of one's own labours.

St Joseph is often called "most just," which means, among other things, he excelled in the virtues. At St Joseph's we explicitly teach the virtues alongside the Awakenings RE Curriculum. The virtues are taught explicitly most days through guided play. Our Behaviour Management systems are rooted in these virtues. The school is committed to developing Student Engagement, Well-Being and Behaviour Education through student Self-Management and clear instruction on the virtues. We embrace a virtues-based approach that underpins our Catholic school culture. We are truly blessed to have Joseph as our Parton and continued to be guided by his presence in our community.

Naomi Kennedy - Principal

Flores de Mayo

On Sunday, May 2, Sacred Heart Parish Mildura celebrated the yearly Filipino Festival of Flores de Mayo (Flowers of May). As May is the month for Mother Mary, in the Philippines young children offer flowers every afternoon until the last day of May. It is also our way of offering thanksgiving to farmers after they have harvested their crops, and so we continue this tradition here in Mildura.

We were most grateful to Fr James Kerr who returned to Mildura and celebrated this year's festival as part of his farewell Mass - a blessing for us all.

Anita Naray



Celebration of Service to CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL) was delighted to recognise and celebrate thirty years of dedicated service to Catholic Education for twenty-eight staff from across the diocese at a celebratory dinner on Friday, May 14. The contribution and dedication of these staff has played an important part in shaping the lives of our future generations and will resonate positively for many years to come. As we work together in partnership to achieve our vision of pursuing fullness of life for all in God's presence, we acknowledge their contribution to the partnerships between families, schools, parishes, local communities and DOBCEL.



The 30 year award recipients were:

- Terry Brennan – St Augustine's PS, Creswick
- Matthew Byrne – Damascus College, Ballarat
- Patricia Caldwell – St Thomas More PS, Alfredton
- Lisa Donovan – St Patrick's PS, Camperdown
- Clea Forrest – St Columba's PS, Ballarat North
- Olga Fox – St Francis Xavier PS, Ballarat East
- Maria Grace – Lumen Christi PS, Delacombe
- Caroline Grist – Trinity College, Colac
- Anthony Haley – St Mary MacKillop College, Swan Hill
- Marie Harney – Our Lady Help of Christians PS, Warrnambool East
- Clare Kavanagh – St Patrick's College, Ballarat
- Anne Kerr – St Pius X PS, Warrnambool West
- Mark Leary – St Mary MacKillop College, Swan Hill
- Margaret Lyttle – St Francis Xavier PS, Ballarat East
- Carmel McCormick – Catholic Education Ballarat
- Kate Nunn – St Mary's PS, Sea Lake
- Sonia Opie – St Joseph's College, Mildura
- Suzanne Prendergast – St Brendan's PS, Dunnstown
- John Richards – St Patrick's College, Ballarat
- Sandra Rosenow – Loreto College, Ballarat
- Tom Sexton – Catholic Education Ballarat
- Leesa Sharkey – Trinity College, Colac
- Jennifer Stapleton – St Colman's PS, Mortlake
- Graeme Stewart – Trinity College, Colac
- Matthew Summers – Marian College, Ararat
- Cait Wilson – St Mary's PS, Colac
- Therese Winter – St Brigid's PS, Ballan
- Sharen Wolfe – Damascus College, Ballarat

Diocesan Leadership Awards

The 2021 Diocesan Leadership Awards were presented to three outstanding educators in our community at a celebratory dinner. These awards recognise the exemplary service, leadership and innovation of each awardee, and are an acknowledgement of their demonstration of one or more aspects of the Diocesan Education Vision.



L-R: Cheryl Pefanis, Josh McElgunn (representing the Corinthian Project), Eileen Rice, Tom Sexton (Executive Director of Catholic Education Ballarat)

The Partnership Award

- For commitment to and facilitation of partnerships within the education, parish, diocese and/or local community that enhance learning for students.
- For ongoing witness to partnership in Catholic education and active presence in the education, parish, diocesan and/or local community.
- For promotion of Catholic education as partnership in local and/or extended community.

Recipient of this award is The Corinthian Project Team. COVID-19 provided many educational challenges in 2020, not the least being the adaptations needed for remote learning. The Corinthian Project offered a focused, coordinated and collegial plan for schools working in a remote learning environment. This project invited educators to question their practice, to work collaboratively in the shared mission of the Church, and to give of their wisdom and experience for the betterment of the wider diocesan education community. It began as an answer to the challenges presented by remote learning, but will continue to provide a sense of community engagement for teachers in Catholic primary schools in our diocese. The presentation of this award to the Corinthian Project Team recognises the many educators from across the diocese who were behind the inception, promotion and facilitation of this initiative.

The Catholic Leadership Award

- For leadership that provides active witness to God's presence in the education, parish and/or diocesan community and that enhances the education community's Catholic identity.

- For excellence in leadership around Religious Education, spirituality, liturgy, religious art, social justice, the founding charism, evangelization and/or ecology.

Recipient of this award is Eileen Rice, Principal of St Alipius Parish School, Ballarat. As Principal, Eileen consistently provides active witness to her faith through her authentic leadership and promotion of inclusive practices. She will respectfully challenge concepts or ideas and will stretch people's thinking to enable a broader and deeply considered perspective on important matters, always grounded in and faithful to the Catholic ethos that underpins the school. For her, relationships within and across the school community underpin the true meaning of "Catholic", an openness to and invitation into God's presence.

The Fullness of Life Award

- For leadership that leads to fullness of life for colleagues and/or students.
- For excellence in education, staff formation or

professional learning, student learning and/or educational innovation.

- For demonstrated commitment to evidence-based practice in education.

Recipient of this award is Cheryl Pefanis, Deputy Principal of Trinity College, Colac. Cheryl is an outstanding educator and leader in the Trinity College, Colac community. Cheryl's service and commitment to others achieving fullness of life was particularly noted during the period of remote learning last year. Trinity College and the town of Colac was impacted significantly as a result of COVID-19 and it was at this time that Cheryl's care shone. She kept the community updated and informed and provided pastoral care to staff, students and their families, while supporting a newly appointed Principal to the school. This award recognises the abundance of life promised through the mission of Christ and it is for her willingness to ensure others are cared for, even if this is at a personal cost to her, that makes Cheryl a worthy recipient.

Emma Newman - Marketing and Communications Officer

Commissioning of Parish RCIA Team



The Ballarat East Parish commissioned seven new RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) Team members at both the St Alipius Ballarat East and Ss Peter & Paul Buninyong communities on the weekend of May 1 & 2. Over three months, a process of formation by former coordinators preceded the commissioning. The "Parish Handbook for The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults", together with the lived experience of previous team members of the RCIA process, provided the basis for the formation process.

The new team is fortunate to have Sr Kathleen Moran rsm as a support person who will accompany the diverse and talented members of the new team, made up of representatives from both communities.

On May 19, nine new inquirers gathered with the team to embark on the process of discernment and exploring the Catholic faith. In the coming months Fr Jorge and the team will invite parishioners to participate as catechists, sponsors and welcomers, complimenting the team by nurturing and supporting candidates and catechumens whilst growing and renewing their own faith within the community. The RCIA is an exciting journey for the whole parish as it opens itself up to welcome those who want to share in the Catholic journey.

L-R: Sr Kathleen Moran rsm, Sharon Williams, Susan Begbie, Jo-Anne Bond, Danny Williams, Dallas Wilkinson, Kevin Wilkinson

Kristen Murray and John Clonan

St Pius X and St John's farewell Fr Michael

Bishop Paul Bird joined the parishioners of St Pius X, West Warrnambool and St John's Dennington to celebrate Fr Michael Linehan's final Mass as parish priest at the end of last year. Many visitors from surrounding parishes also joined Fr Michael to celebrate his many years of devoted service and wish him well in his retirement.



Bishop Paul presided at the Mass and Fr Michael delivered the homily. Referring to the example of holiness furnished by Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Fr Michael paid tribute to the parishioners he has served these past seventeen years: "In trying to express what I think it is to be holy, or belong to a holy family, I'm thinking about some of the people I know around Warrnambool. I am thinking of some of those who you can rely on when something needs to be done. I'm thinking about those people who are good for a casserole when a neighbour is sick. I'm thinking of people who drop in and out of Mary MacKillop Chapel to say a prayer, if they happen to be passing. I'm thinking of those who are well known both in Church life and in civic life. They are the holy ones, and we would do well to take a leaf out of their book. It is easy, of course, to map out a program for others. I hope I may eventually attain some level of contemporary holiness myself, and as I fade into a quieter life, I ask your prayers that by God's grace, I might eventually look more like the sort of person I'm trying to describe".

Following Mass there was a morning tea and presentation facilitated by Chris Nolan, Chairperson of the Parish Finance Committee. Mary Cain, on behalf of the Parish Leadership Group, congratulated Fr Michael on his years of service in West Warrnambool and Dennington. "We will miss Fr Michael's thought-provoking homilies". Ray Ahearn spoke on behalf of the Parish Finance Committee, recognising Fr Michael's support and involvement during his time as parish priest. Bishop Paul paid tribute to Fr Michael's long service to the Ballarat diocese, not only in parishes, but also in the establishment of the Ballarat Diocesan Family Welfare Service, which later became Centacare Ballarat and now CatholicCare. In his retirement, Fr Michael lives privately in Warrnambool, and is generous in offering his priestly services throughout the southwest region.

Simon Hogan - Parishioner

Our Diocesan Community - July 2021



Nursing Home Visits

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School Murtoa junior students visited Dunmunkle Lodge in Minyip on Tuesday, May 11. One of the student's major community service projects is to visit the residents of the Stonehaven and Dunmunkle Lodge Nursing homes. The senior students visited Stonehaven.

Having students travel to the nursing homes gives them the opportunity to learn to be comfortable with people of all ages and provide companionship to the elderly. It is also about teaching them Christian service and ministry and how to reach out to others. It is about them looking out of themselves instead of looking in. This special experience was beneficial for both the students and residents, especially considering that Mother's Day was around the same time as the visit.

The students related the Our Lady's history story, also showing the residents a "then and now" photo which demonstrated how the school had changed between 1963 and 2021. The students sang a "Song for Mum" and gave gifts that they had made to all the residents.

Cathy Grace, Principal

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*Sister
M. Monica
Butler*
RSM

Born

August 23, 1927
Birchip, Victoria

Religious Life

Entrance

June 8, 1945

Reception

January 6, 1946

First Profession

January 3, 1948

*Places of
Mercy Ministry*

Birchip
Ballarat East
Edenhope
Montlake
Penhurst
Wychebrook
Dunmunkle
Timboon
Sebastopol
Manangatang
Donald
Mercy Place, Ballarat

Catholic Women's League of Victoria
Ballarat Diocesan Catholic
Women's League

*Entered
Eternal Life*
April 15, 2021

*Sister
Mary Monica
Butler* RSM

23/8/1927 - 15/4/2021

May she rest in peace

pastoral planning in the diocese

In February 2014, the diocese published a booklet "Looking Forward: A resource for pastoral planning in the Diocese of Ballarat". The booklet included reflections on our mission as a Catholic community, data about the diocese and ideas for future development. This document is a work-in-progress, evolving to meet the changing circumstances in the diocese.

Baptism leads us into the People of God giving us rights and responsibilities within the Catholic community. We are not just consumers of a sacred product, rather we are community, a family of sisters and brothers in baptism, who have been given a variety of gifts by the Spirit in order to become more fully the Church.

Those associated with pastoral planning have tried to be faithful to the Vatican II concept of the People of God. Leadership and ministry are a shared responsibility. Discernment for change is facilitated successfully within an environment where respectful dialogue and listening occur. All participants need to have an appreciation for our Catholic tradition expressed through love of God and neighbour.

Through meetings and other discussions over the years, we have come to see new ways of working together. For many years clergy have been attached to more than one parish. The parishes centred on Ballarat, Mildura and Warrnambool, now actively co-operate in the areas of planning, sacramental programs, finance, and management. Amalgamation of parishes around Horsham, Swan Hill, Western Border and East Wimmera areas are underway or have been completed and they are celebrating new forms of management respectful to past traditions.

There are currently twenty-three priests in parish ministry working in forty-one parishes. Just over eight thousand people attend Mass each weekend. The diocese has an average of seventy-six Masses per weekend and a total of one hundred and five churches in operation. Over the next five years the number of clergy is expected to remain the same while the participation rate for those attending weekend Mass is expected to fall. There is still uncertainty over COVID-19 and its overall effects on church life.

Today, we are members of a distressed Church, viewed as having lost its way and its vitality. In these difficult times we recognise that responding to the signs of the times is essential. Structures and practices that served us in the past may have little or no value for today's ministry. Now is the time to experiment with ideas and evaluate the outcomes. Parishes have demonstrated that the sharing of resources, personnel and programs is beneficial on both an economic and a practical level. As a Church community we are part of a cultural reality that is ever changing and we are called by God, and our tradition, to love and care for our societies, offering insights in a Christian context. The Church has a rich and varied tradition and our administration is meant to be associated with the present realities, supporting the efforts of the diocese and parishes in their mission of proclaiming the gospel.

On-going formation for leadership is important, especially as new structures and circumstances introduce a new cohort of leaders. Following repeated calls from Pope Francis, clergy are moving away from management and focusing on the sacramental and spiritual. There are parishioners with management skills who are happy to help out. Some of the larger new parish structures are now able to employ part-time managers. Such changes enhance the concept of a People of God in the Church and give us new opportunities.

I head-up a group established by Bishop Paul, known as the Pastoral Planning Panel (the other members being Mark Bromley, Jane Collins, Justin Driscoll, Anne Eskdale and Andrew Jirik). We are more than happy to receive suggestions and to assist regions or parishes in future planning.

Fr Kevin Maloney - Vicar General/Diocesan Pastoral Development Coordinator



Remembering the ANZACs

The students of St Joseph's School Hopetoun gathered on Friday, April 23 to commemorate ANZAC Day and pay tribute to all men and women who have served our country. The solemn service was led by senior students, with the junior students laying flowers in memory of those who have lost their lives in war and peace keeping missions.

During the service, students had the opportunity to share some memorabilia of family members who have served our country. "It is important for us to remember the ANZACS who fought in World War I and all other wars", explained Parker Hallam. "By commemorating all of the ANZACS we will keep their spirit alive and ensure they are always remembered for their sacrifice", added Max Roberts. "They deserve to be acknowledged for serving our country and guaranteeing our freedom", declared Isabella Huf.

Cynthia Maiden, Principal

THE EAST WIMMERA ZOOM MASSES CONTINUE ON



The year 2020 was a challenging time for all of us. Some parishes had no Masses during COVID-19 lockdowns, some parishes live-streamed and then there were the Masses broadcast on TV.

We are lucky at East Wimmera Parish in North West Victoria, as we have been able to attend Zoom Masses thanks to Bishop Paul encouraging parishes to think outside the square to offer Mass to the people. Our Parish Priest at the time, Fr Eugene McKinnon, took this on board and developed the option of a Zoom Mass that his parishioners were able to watch from their homes.

In his stead we have been fortunate to have Fr Gerry Prunty joining our parish in January, replacing both Fr Eugene and Fr Jim McKay, to become our only parish priest. Fr Gerry has a big

load with seven church communities with whom to celebrate Mass, six nursing homes, three schools plus pastoral care duties, as well as overseeing parish administration across approximately 12,000sq km.

As a result, we are continuing to broadcast our Zoom Masses from Birchip and St Arnaud to our church communities for whom Mass is unavailable on the first and second Sundays of the month. We also have plans to Zoom our Mass from Donald and Charlton on the third and fourth Sundays of the month.

Some church communities have already begun to gather in their church, rather than in their homes, to participate fully in our Zoom Mass. This enables them to receive communion and contribute to the presbytery and parish plates. We are currently doing an audit on our equipment in our churches so that all centres can receive quality broadcasts that engage and encourage parishioners to gather together into the future.

If anyone would like to become a part of these Zoom Masses, please contact Noeline Hogan, Parish Coordinator, ph: 0476 617 976 or email at eastwimmera@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Ride-A-Thon Success

St Michael's Daylesford Mission Student Leadership Group wanted to raise as much money as possible for the "Jimmy's Allsorts – Fighting cancer on two wheels" Murray to Moynce cycling event on March 19. (<http://jimmysallsorts.com.au>) Funds were then donated to the work of the Fiona Elsey Cancer Research Institute.

To raise as much money as possible, children asked local businesses to sign-up to sponsor them for every kilometre they rode, ran or walked as a school community. Many school families also contributed sponsorship. Honest Egg Co provided egg and bacon rolls to keep us nourished and we were very lucky with the weather. We have been able to confirm and pass on the final amount of \$4663 to Fiona Elsey Cancer Research.



The Student Leadership Group would like to acknowledge and thank the support of the following businesses: Bendigo Bank, Biggins and Scott, Daylesford FNC, Monaghan's Plumbing, Evolution Plastering, Sweet Decadence, Red Rooster, Boomerang Holiday Ranch, Frangos, Daylesford Chicken, Coles, Griffin Concreting, Springs Medical, The Royal, EKO Day Spa, That Bargain Place, Bruty Farming, Continental House Hepburn, SK Purtell Electrical, Daylesford Seafood Bar, Passing Clouds, Sault, Nick Andrew Construction, Fell's Electrical, Bruty Cabinetry, Istra Smallgoods.

Leah Monaghan - St Michael's Primary School Daylesford

An amazing job!



was invited to attend the assembly by the St Aloysius Missions Team (Molly, Maya, Noah and Brandyn) who presented her with a huge collection of winter socks. These had been donated by families late last term as the Mission Team organised the 'Sock Hop Disco'. What a wonderful initiative! Lorraine was delighted with this effort by the students and families and suggested that a number of homeless people wear two or three pairs of socks each day in order to stay warm. She congratulated the children for reaching out and being generous in their yearly donations to people in our community who need assistance. She loved the idea of the 'Sock Hop' as it reminded us of the comfort of warm socks. Lorraine also commented, "It is great that you guys have some fun too".

Lorraine was also excited to hear of the initiative of St Aloysius' Year 3 and 4 students and staff who have been working this year on growing and donating herbs from our Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden that are then made into delicious meals for the Soup Bus. We thank Bev Baxter (Year 3/4 Teacher and Mission Team leader) for guiding our Mission Team in their work this year. Great job everyone.

Lorraine reminded us that having a good education is vital for everyone and encouraged the students of St Aloysius to work hard so they can have a good life. She also made us think about how richly blessed we are to have a roof over our head, food in our stomachs, families who love and support us and to have clean, warm clothes to wear. We have so much to be thankful for.

Let us keep on showing generosity towards our friends who have so little. Thank you everyone!

St Aloysius Parish School Redan Mission Team

The Ballarat Soup Bus does an amazing job in feeding and caring for those members of the community who, for one reason or another, find themselves living out of home. As fellow members of the Ballarat and Redan communities, it is important that children at St Aloysius Parish School Redan understand that they are being supported by others and that in turn, they are able to offer support.

Recently, at the school assembly, the school community was very fortunate to have Lorraine from the Soup Bus visit and speak to the children about the Soup Bus and its work. She spoke passionately about the important work they also do in supporting those less fortunate. Lorraine

Seeds of Justice Conference

On May 21, students from Damascus College Ballarat attended an online Seeds of Justice conference, hosted by Bernadette Hogan, a former Damascus student. The theme was, "Mercy Empowering Women" and the Key Guest speaker was Sr Angela Reed RSM.

Sr Angela is the head of Mercy Global Action and discussed her experiences working with the United Nations and provided insight into Social Justice issues affecting women across the world, in particular domestic violence.

The event was attended by Mercy Affiliate schools across Australia. It was great to be able to link in with these schools and recognise the large Mercy family that we are a part of here at Damascus. We also learnt about what other schools offer which focuses on women empowerment.

As a female student at Damascus, I recognise that our school offers events such as Mother's Day breakfasts, and "Try a Trade day" for women. The school also ensures that all students participate in STEM, Woodwork and Metalwork which are often areas dominated by males. Sr Angela provided a statistic that "globally, it will take 170 years for women to have equality with men." This event has allowed me to realise the importance of female empowerment and equality.

Emily Crumpler, Year 9



Harmony Day Interreligious Forum

As part of the city of Ballarat's Harmony Fest, The Ballarat Interfaith Network hosted a Harmony Day forum, 'Unity in Diversity' on March 21 at St Patrick's Hall, Ballarat where representatives from seven different religious traditions came together to offer insights into various questions relevant to our shared humanity. March 21, Harmony Day, was nominated by former Australian Prime Minister John Howard, as a day for Australians to come together to reflect on, and celebrate, the many cultures that make up our country, thereby building bridges of understanding towards a more culturally sensitive and socially cohesive community.



Ajahn Maha Chi - Buddhist Community, Pradush Narayanan - Hindu community, Carol Hughes - Jewish community, Ita Rahmawati - Islamic community, Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai - Uniting Church community, Kamelia Khosh - Baha'i Community, Fr Andrew Hayes - Catholic community

Within the theme "Unity in Diversity," the panel offered much wisdom as they addressed the following questions:

1. What is the common denominator for all religions?
2. How do religions teach and encourage us to listen deeply to ourselves?
3. Who are we, and why are we here in the world?
4. What is COVID teaching us?
5. Is it possible for there to be religious unity in diversity?

The event opened with a performance of the koto, also known as the Japanese harp, by Fr Andrew Hayes. Fr Andrew chose this instrument for both its inter-cultural resonance, and because it drew him out of his comfort zone, practising as he did for the forum with 'new ears and eyes'. The forum concluded with questions from the audience before the closing hymn "Path of Thy Love" was performed by the beautiful Baha'i Virtual Choir.

Ballarat Interfaith Network's next community event will be a 'Friendship Walk' in September, where participants will visit various places of worship across Ballarat. All are welcome.

Jo-anne van der Voort - Ballarat Interfaith Network

Celebrating Mother's Day



St Mary's School in Donald celebrated all mothers, grandmothers and special women in the students' lives at a special Mother's Day Breakfast.

Students flowed into the multi-purpose room from 8.00am with their special guests in tow. The inviting smell of toast, bacon, eggs and hash browns welcomed visitors and students alike. Warm tea and coffee, juices, cereals and fruit ensured all were satisfied. A huge thank you to Mrs Egan, our Office Administrator, for her organisation of the breakfast and for decorating the room so beautifully. Students and visitors chatted happily during breakfast, with the hum of voices, grins on faces and even a hug or two adding to the warm atmosphere.

Breakfast concluded with a specially prepared liturgy to acknowledge and celebrate the special role our mums, grandmothers and significant women play in the lives of

our students. We gave thanks for the endless love, care and wisdom these women show each day and extended the invitation to always remember the role model of Mary, mother to all.

The morning concluded with the Parents and Friends drawing their Mother's Day raffle and making a presentation of appreciation to all staff. Each student presented their visitors with a flower before saying good-bye and heading to class to begin the day.

Mary Hogan – Religious Education Leader



Strategic Directions Launch

Catholic Education Ballarat's (CEB) Strategic Directions for 2020-24, **Partnering: A Step Further**, was officially launched on Thursday, May 13 at the *Faith in the Future: Pastor and Principal Forum* which was held in Ballarat.

The Strategic Directions were developed in consultation with school communities across the diocese to strengthen the partnerships between schools and CEB to enhance Catholic education and work together towards our vision:

As partners in Catholic education and open to God's presence, we pursue fullness of life for all.

As shown in the diagram, the priorities of CEB's Strategic Directions are:

- Empowering all to flourish
- Building inclusive Catholic learning communities
- Achieving best practice
- Fostering inspiring leadership
- Enhancing family engagement, governance and stewardship

The **Partnering: A Step Further** document and launch video can be accessed on the DOBCEL website: dobcel.catholic.edu.au/strategic-directions

The Faith in the Future: Pastor and Principal Forum facilitated by Fr David Ranson, a priest of the Diocese of Broken Bay, was an opportunity for educators and priests to come together and explore the role of the Pastor in Catholic education and the nature of delegation.

The creation of DOBCEL affords diligent oversight of the complex governance of parish schools while offering continued support to parish priests in undertaking the pastoral care of their school community. The village model of the parish school has required re-visioning in light of the regulatory and legislative environment in which schools operate. At the same time, the Catholic school remains an important expression of the Church's mission. Attaining the right balance between the demands of the current context and the responsibilities inherent in the ecclesial sphere will in no small way contribute to the continuing efficacy of the mission of the Catholic school.

Emma Newman - Marketing and Communications Officer

Mini Vinnies

Mini Vinnies empowers primary school students to become advocates within their school and local community by putting their values into action. The Mini Vinnies students at St Patrick's School Camperdown have been collecting donations for the Mini Vinnies Winter Appeal and Food Drive.

They collected blankets, sleeping bags, coats and any items that families wished to donate for the Winter Appeal. They then organised a collection of non-perishable food items for the Food Drive.

A special thank you to all families who sent in donations, their kindness is very much appreciated and the donated items will provide much needed support in the community.

The Mini Vinnies students presented their donations to the St Vinnies team on Friday, June 11 at the St Vincent de Paul shop in Camperdown. While they were there, they were taken on a tour of the facilities.

Mini Vinnies is about doing good works in the community that benefit people facing social injustice and St Patrick's Mini Vinnies is doing a great job.

Michael McKenzie - Principal



Our Diocesan Community - July 2021

A reimagined Library - an integral part of the future of Emmanuel College

The Library at Emmanuel College Warrnambool was redeveloped and expanded in a \$1.5 million-dollar renewal project and was officially opened on May 24 – the beginning of Catholic Education Week. The facility will accommodate students from all year levels in 2022, when major changes to Emmanuel's campus structure will see senior students relocated to the McAuley Campus and Year 9 students will move to the Rice Campus to be immersed in the new 9@RICE Program.



There is a school of thought that suggests libraries are superfluous in the twenty-first century as we all have a library of sorts at our fingertips in our mobile phone. Principal Peter Morgan explained at the opening event that Emmanuel College subscribes to a different school of thought, saying, "Emmanuel has made a conscious decision that a library is an integral part of the future of this school. And the reason for that is because libraries do more than simply provide resources. The Emmanuel library is a safe learning environment; it's a place where people of all ages share ideas, learn together, identify and solve problems, create, listen, experiment and grow. It's a little bit like the "Village Green", where communities gather and in the sharing of ideas and in being together, individuals experience belonging and community is formed. In a Catholic school we could say it is part of the journey of discovering what it means to be fully human; to have life and to have it abundantly."

Internationally known Library consultant, Kevin Hennah, worked with staff in developing a vision of how the space, technology and collection should evolve to maintain relevance and continue to support and enhance the educational program into the future.

The value of the Library as a centre for wellbeing was highlighted during the period when it was closed for construction and renewal. Emmanuel's Psychologist Jodie Fleming said, "Our Library is such a valuable resource in terms of our student wellbeing. It provides so many wonderful locations that encourage socialising and connection, which is so important when we are talking about adolescent development. It also provides lots of spaces that are sanctuaries that allow time out for those students needing to recharge, not to mention all of the incredible resources on hand that cater to just about every interest. In the time that the Library was closed to undergo expansion and renovations, we had many more referrals and presentations to Wellbeing, which speaks to how vital and important this space is to our students. Students who would ordinarily seek respite in their quiet place within the Library and those who would find company at a chess board or a comrade at a Lego table found themselves at a loss."

The Emmanuel College Library received national recognition in 2017 when it won a place on the list of Australia's Great School Libraries, compiled by Freedom of Access to Information and Resources, Education HQ and Australian Library Associations, while in the same year the head of Emmanuel College's Library won the state's top award for Teacher Librarians. Margaret Sinnott received the John Ward Award from the School Library Association of Victoria after being nominated by her peers across the state. The redevelopment will see the Library continue to be a relevant, engaging and well-used hub of learning and wellbeing well into the future.

Jean Christie - Director of Marketing

Photo: Fr Lawrie O'Toole and Fr John Fitzgerald bless the building, accompanied by College Captain Will Woolstencroft



Fr George Kuruvila's Silver Jubilee

On February 7, 2021 the community of St Patrick's Balmoral marked the Silver Jubilee of Fr George Kuruvila's ordination. Fr George's ordination was in Kerala India on December 29, 1995. Although, due to the pandemic, celebrations for the jubilee were delayed, Fr George has enjoyed several celebrations throughout the St Mary Mackillop parish.

Sabrina Agee Watt - Woodbine

Left: Fr George Kuruvila cuts the cake made by St Patrick's parishioner Caryl Grey.

BISHOPS FORMALLY CONVOKE FIFTH PLENARY COUNCIL

Over the past three years, we have been hearing about a Plenary Council for the Church in Australia. Many of the people of our diocese have participated in gatherings to pray and to share their reflections in preparation for the assemblies of the Plenary Council that will be held in October this year and July next year. The guiding question has been, "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" The responses from our diocese and from all around Australia flowed into a working document summarising questions for the Plenary Council to consider. Our gatherings and the writing of subsequent documents have been steps along the road of the Plenary Council.



the first assembly of the Plenary Council will be held in similar fashion, with members gathered in state-based hubs that will be connected electronically across the whole of Australia. Please pray that the Holy Spirit of Pentecost will continue to guide us all on our Plenary Council journey.

Bishop Paul Bird CSsR

PLENARY COUNCIL AGENDA CALLS FOR MISSIONARY, CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH

The agenda of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia calls those attending the Council assemblies to "develop concrete proposals to create a more missionary, Christ-centred Church in Australia".

The Council agenda, which has emerged from three years and several layers of prayer, listening, dialogue and discernment, will shape the program of the Council's assemblies – the first of which opens on October 3.



The agenda's preamble draws from Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, which explores the Pope's "dream of a 'missionary option'". "That is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation of today's world rather than for her self-preservation," the Pope wrote.

Plenary Council President Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB said that invitation and exhortation to be a missionary people runs through the agenda. "Through the Plenary Council, we are being called to consider how we can be a Church that goes out to the peripheries, that welcomes all into our communities and shows the face of Christ to the world," Archbishop Costelloe said.

The agenda has been developed in the form of posing questions, with sixteen questions falling under six themes: Conversion; Prayer; Formation; Structures; Governance; and Institutions. "So much of what we heard during the Council journey related to this concept of 'conversion' – personal conversion, communal conversion and institutional conversion – with an ever-deeper renewal in Christ," Archbishop Costelloe said. "The agenda asks us a number of difficult questions, but without

Another step happened at the recent meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference when the bishops formally convoked the Plenary Council. This was the wording of the decree: "Having considered it necessary and advantageous and with the approval of the Apostolic See, the Australian Episcopal Conference now convokes the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia (Canon 439 §1). The approval given by the Apostolic See on the Thirteenth Day of January 2018 is attached. The Conference on the Thirteenth Day of May 2021 having approved the *Instrumentum Laboris* ("Working Document"), the Agenda, and the Statutes and Regulatory Norms (Canons 94 and 95) now by decree formally convokes the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia." The decree was signed on May 23, 2021, Pentecost Sunday, by Archbishop Mark Coleridge as President of the Bishops Conference.

Like so much of life at present, the convocation of the Plenary Council was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Bishops Conference meeting was held partly in person and partly online. The bishops of Victoria gathered in person in Melbourne and other groups of bishops gathered in other states, while we were all connected electronically across the whole country. This was the setting in which we cast our vote to convoke the Plenary Council. It was unusual but in a way it was appropriate, because

asking those difficult questions, we won't be entering into the depth of our hearts to consider how we become that missionary, Christ-centred Church we need today. Each member attending the assemblies will bring their own unique gifts to the agenda on behalf of the People of God in Australia."

Plenary Council Facilitator Lana Turvey-Collins said the agenda asks questions with widespread relevance. "These questions have been developed for a specific purpose – for prayer, conversation, discernment and decision-making during the Plenary Council – but they

are questions that can challenge each of us, each parish, each Church community," she said. "In preparing for the Council and beyond, the agenda can be a rich source of reflection and contemplation in our own settings."

Archbishop Costelloe asked people to continue to pray for the Council and for the members who will attend the assemblies. The more than two hundred and eighty members participated in focused formation sessions in June.

Members to the Plenary Council for the Ballarat Diocese, Marie Shaddock and Felicity Knobel, answer some questions about the Plenary Council



Marie Shaddock:

What are your hopes or positive aspirations for the Plenary Council?

My hopes are that the Holy Spirit will truly renew Australia, not just the Church. I hope that through the workings of the Plenary Council we can set the whole of Australia on fire with a love for God and his Church; the Church he shapes. I hope that we all, but particularly those called to participate in the Plenary Council, will be open to the Holy Spirit and allow him to move and act where he will. I hope as members we will practise that humility that is the basis for true discernment. "We" as Church and Country can aspire to be great again but not by looking backwards. With God the direction is always in the positive and ever new, and so we must be prepared to let go

and trust. That does not mean that we redefine the Catholic Church, all the tenets of our faith stand true. However, the mistakes we have made in the past do not define us; unless we want it to. Instead, with the creativity of the Holy Spirit to guide us, they can be a springboard into a dynamic future if we are prepared to be humble, open and by open, I mean making ourselves vulnerable to God and his designs, and pure – as in committed to exclusively doing the will of God. Then we will once again have integrity and can be a shining light, leading the way out of the depression of materialism, self-indulgence and indifferentism that is suffocating our world today.

What are your fears and challenges?

My fears and challenges are not of a physical nature. There is the extra prayer, reading and responsibilities which take time and do add pressure to life. They take their toll, but my greatest fear is that those who are cynical and sceptical will suck the Plenary Council dry and destroy the presence of the Holy Spirit in other people and the Plenary Council itself. My heart tells me the Holy Spirit is far more powerful and loving than that, but my heart also bleeds for those who for many genuine reasons are cynical and sceptical. I would ask them not to. They are missing out on so much and unfortunately often dragging others down with them. I also have a fear of those with their own agenda, that they will try to force it on others. Again, if I revert to the Holy Spirit, I don't believe it will happen – but it is a fear. My greatest challenge is to "trust". To trust not blindly but with faith and hope and not listen to the little voices that try to belittle what is happening. Trusting is not a single act, it's the act of a lifetime and as surely as you think you have nailed it, down you go again. I often find myself thinking of St Peter and him jumping out of the boat to walk with Jesus on the water – and then sinking.

Has anything good come out of the Plenary Council so far?

Has anything good come out of the Plenary Council so far? Yes!! There is so much more prayer being offered, and that can only be good. So many more people are thinking beyond their own circumstances and are more aware of their fellow parishioners and their needs. Coming together to listen to each other has been so important! At times it may have been with anger, frustration or hurt but it is and was necessary if we are going to heal, learn from our mistakes and move forward. For any parishes that were brave enough to get involved, carried out discussion groups and listened to each other, they have already begun to receive. In many cases what comes out of these discussions are the nuts-and-bolts answers for beginning to fix our ordinary parish life. It may be as simple as finding better parking options for those with reduced mobility, printing the Gospel in more than one language or adjusting Mass times. And really that is the whole point to the Plenary Council. It is about each individual parish and every parishioner. It starts with listening to each other, that in itself is healing. People feel more valued if you are prepared to genuinely listen to them, and that is what this exercise has been about listening and following through, allowing Holy Spirit to heal and work in our lives.

Felicity Knobel:

What issues do you think are important?

The journey of the Plenary Council has been an interesting one. We can blame COVID-19 for pressing pause on so many things. It felt like momentum for the Plenary Council had stopped and we all had so many other things to think about and worry about in 2020. This pandemic has shown us all what is important in our world. Our sense of belonging to a community. Working with others. Having contact with people. Being excited. Taking time to be with the people we love. These things have always been important, however, COVID-19 has shown us that these things are vital in our world and that we cannot take them for granted. We have the opportunity as the Catholic Church post COVID-19 to make people feel welcomed, to offer the hands of friendship to all, to be with others and to create something very special.



What do you hear from those you meet about the Plenary Council?

People are wanting change. People are wanting a Catholic Church that is listening to all. People are very definite that they do not want another round of committees or ideas - they want action. The people of the Catholic Church spoke so beautifully about what was needed, what our future should include and how we wanted our Church to be moving forward. We hear the voices, we know the concerns, we know what we have to do. The Plenary Council is for decisions to be made and for actions to be actioned.

Five locations, one Plenary Council Assembly. How?

Having just taken part in an online formation experience with approximately seventy-five other people from around Australia and with a wide variety of technology skills, it is truly amazing what has been organised. Our recent formation session was a great opportunity to "be with" our fellow members and to begin to see how the Plenary Council will operate. There will be five locations throughout Australia and I will be attending the hub in Melbourne. Though we will be physically with other members in Melbourne we will also be using technology to interact with the other four hubs throughout Australia.

New and departing Principals

Matthew O'Brien – new Principal, St Joseph's Primary School, Warrnambool



Matthew O'Brien commenced as Principal of St Joseph's Primary School, Warrnambool on 24 May 2021. Until this time he held the position of Education Officer as part of the Southern Zone, Learning and Teaching team and has been employed with Catholic Education Ballarat since 2014. Prior to his current role, Matthew was Deputy

Principal at St Pius X Parish School 2002-2013 and has held a number of leadership positions, including Interim Principal, throughout his career. Matthew has completed a Masters in Educational Leadership and has extensive experience in effectively leading educational change. As an experienced educational leader, Matthew has demonstrated a strong commitment to working alongside people and building quality relationships.

Gerard Raven – new Principal, St Brigid's College, Horsham

Gerard Raven was appointed as Principal of St Brigid's College, Horsham commencing in Term 3, 2021, after his appointment as Interim Principal since the beginning of Term 1, 2021. Gerard is an experienced educational leader, having started his teaching career at Ouyen

Secondary College. He was then appointed to Catholic College Bendigo (now Catherine McAuley College) where he held several senior leadership positions. Gerard was subsequently appointed Deputy Principal at The Cathedral College in Rockhampton and Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching at Sacred Heart College, Geelong. Gerard is very well qualified for this position having recently completed an Executive Master of Business Administration. He also holds a Masters in Educational Leadership.



Eugene Dalton – departing Principal, Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School, Warrnambool East



It is with sadness that we farewell Eugene Dalton as Principal of Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School, Warrnambool East. Eugene has been Principal of OLHC since 2004 and has been a highly valued member of our Ballarat diocesan education community for over 40 years. We thank Eugene for his significant contribution at OLHC, Warrnambool in addition to the other diocesan schools where he has served as Principal, Vice Principal and Teacher.

Mr Stephen Madden will continue to act as Interim Principal until a new principal is appointed.

Our Diocesan Community - July 2021



Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week (NVW) is Australia's largest annual celebration of volunteers. From May 17-23, 2021 NVW celebrated the significant contribution of Australia's almost six million volunteers. Each year these volunteers dedicate over 600 million hours to help others.

The theme for NVW 2021 was Recognise. Reconnect. Reimagine. RECOGNISE, celebrate and thank volunteers for the vital role they play in our lives. RECONNECT to what is important by giving our time to help others and ourselves. REIMAGINE how we can better support volunteers and the communities they help.

A Prayer for our Volunteers:

We pray for all those who volunteer in our catholic communities. May we value the many talents and gifts that God has given to these people. We thank them for generously offering their time to parish ministries. For all these gifts, given out of your love, we thank you, God of all goodness. Amen.

Amongst the various gatherings held in the Cathedral Parish Ballarat for Volunteer week was a morning tea held by the St Vincent de Paul Society to thank Conference members, workers in the Assistance Centre and the Vinnies Shops. The gathering also provided an opportunity to acknowledge the work of Renae Scholte who is concluding her role as Administrative Assistant for the North West Central Council of St Vincent de Paul.

St Patrick's Cathedral Parish Newsletter 23/5/2021
<https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/get-involved/nvw/>
 Photo: Renae Scholte with Damien Bernasconi

RETREAT

Bishop Paul Bird and thirty-one priests of the diocese gathered in February at Halls Gap for our annual Clergy Retreat. While we looked forward to this more than usual due to the pandemic preventing us gathering in person for meetings and other occasions since our previous retreat last year, the lockdown at this time made it uncertain if we could proceed until just a few days prior.

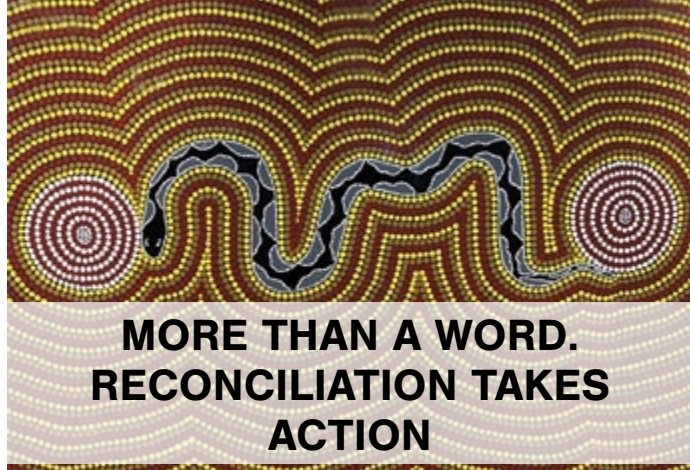
As it was, our biggest challenge was our Retreat Director, retired Bishop Eugene Hurley of Darwin, being prevented from joining us in person due to border closures. Thanks to modern technology, he was able to zoom into us in a larger than life digital way on a big screen and we were able to communicate with him.

A country boy from Orreroo SA, then country priest and bishop, Bishop Eugene's background and ministry resonated with us all and we quickly warmed to him. He shared a series of reflections from Pope Francis' *Amoris Laetitia* (The Joy of Love) and his moving personal experiences living among and ministering to our indigenous brothers and sisters, who comprise a third of the Catholics of his geographically huge diocese.

By the end of the week, we were rejuvenated and looking forward to our continued journey.

Fr John Monaghan





Northern Territory and presented as a gift to mark the week of celebrations. The College thank the James family for their thoughtful gift which is greatly appreciated.

The College was incredibly proud to present new badges to all staff and students as part of their annual Reconciliation Week Assembly. All recipients are encouraged to wear the badges as a symbol of their pledge towards full reconciliation. We were also proud to hear from current and past Indigenous students talking about their stories of reconciliation and imparting valuable lessons to the whole school community.

National Reconciliation Week in 2021 was celebrated between May 27 – June 3 with the theme: MORE THAN A WORD. RECONCILIATION TAKES ACTION and National Sorry Day on May 26.

Reconciliation Australia's theme, **More than a word. Reconciliation takes action**, urges the reconciliation movement towards braver and more impactful action. Reconciliation is a journey for all Australians – as individuals, families, communities, organisations and importantly as a nation. At the heart of this journey are relationships between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We all have a role to play when it comes to reconciliation, and in playing our part we collectively build relationships and communities that value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their histories, cultures and futures. 2021 marks twenty years of Reconciliation Australia and almost three decades of Australia's formal reconciliation process. (<https://nrw.reconciliation.org.au/>)

St Patrick's College Ballarat commenced its week-long Reconciliation Week activities with a special boarders' and family dinner. As part of the celebration the College was stunned and overjoyed to receive a donation from the family of current boarder Jack James (son of Old Collegian Mark and grandson of Brownlow Medallist John). This incredible artwork was purchased in the

In continuing to recognise Reconciliation Week and 'National Sorry Day' on May 26, a select group of Aboriginal students from the College talked about their experiences to students at Magpie Primary School. Collectively, the groups created two symbolic paintings with one to stay at Magpie Primary School and one to return to St Patrick's. As stated by Isaac Hucker during the presentation, "It doesn't matter if your Arrente, Yorta Yorta, Welsh, Polish, Sudanese or American. Our hands look pretty similar. Our aim for this artwork is create an image that shows people working together and supporting each other and you don't know their race."

Paul Nolan - Director of Community Development



Fifteen years ordained

On March 17, I celebrated my fifteenth anniversary of being ordained as a priest. I have been blessed to serve and work in many communities around the diocese. Every community that I have been involved in has been a learning curve and I have become a better person from these experiences. The day to day role of the priest and journeying with people through the challenges and celebrations of life is a blessing. Every baptism, wedding and funeral is different and this allows me to be involved in special celebrations with couples and families at that particular time of their lives. Being a teacher also offers different avenues to open the Word of God, through action, prayer and work not only to the students, but also to staff who enable me to be a visible sign of God's love in the world. I was ordained on St Patrick's Day 2006 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat so to finish off I will use St Patrick's Breast Plate, "Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ above me, Christ below me, Christ all around me."

God bless!
Fr Matthew Thomas

Fr Matthew is Parish Priest in Mildura, a community he spent time in previously as an assistant priest, and as reported in the Mildura Weekly, Fr Matthew said "the connections and familiarity I had with Mildura made life a lot easier when I returned. I've already met people whose marriages I witnessed back then and they've all got children now, it's exciting. I loved it here last time and I'm hoping to have the same experience this time. It's just a great environment, a great place to live."

Photo courtesy of the Mildura Weekly, April 2
Our Diocesan Community - July 2021



KEY MOMENTS

St Joseph's Parishioners in Ouyen gathered together on Holy Thursday, in the absence of a priest, to live out some of the key moments of Jesus' Last Supper and His Agony in the Garden. Twenty two people gathered in the Parish Centre to make Holy Thursday night a more meaningful and memorable time as together we enjoyed a Passover meal. As we gathered, the group broadly reconstructed the last night of Jesus' life sitting around the lamp-lit table, listening to the account of the original Passover. Just as Jesus did, we thanked God for the

meal of roasted lamb, unleavened bread and bitter herbs which was enjoyed by all.

From the Parish Centre, the group went to sit under the vines outside the church and to listen to scriptures read by firelight in the still night air. The group then entered the church for an hour of silent adoration before departing for home. All agreed it was well worth doing. Some found it inspiring in that it brought them closer to Jesus by understanding what he went through. Many did not know what to expect and found it gave fresh meaning to the whole of the Triduum by bringing to life the accounts in the gospels.

Marie Shaddock

Music in Red Cliffs

St Joseph's Primary School Red Cliffs offers a comprehensive music and performing arts specialist program. It is developmentally appropriate, with our junior unit predominantly learning musical concepts such as beat, rhythm, pitch, texture through singing games and by playing the marimba (large xylophone instruments) and other untuned percussion. The method of teaching is strongly influenced by the Kodaly and Orff pedagogies, which may be compared to learning your mother language – you learn to speak the language first in small segments and then build up the complexity and questioning around how you use the language as you become more competent.

As students move into senior school they are extended by learning more complex rhythms, layering of parts both vocally and with percussion instruments. The instruments we use with senior students are primarily the African djembes, our class set of marimbas, recorders and ukuleles. Students begin to develop their understanding of written music and use a variety of methods to compose their own pieces. A significant feature of the senior performing arts program is that of Music Technology. Students learn a range of skills both in the performing arts and technology to create projects that can be shared with the wider school community. We use apps such as 'GarageBand' to make original compositions, and 'iMovie' and 'Puppet Pals' to make short films.

The music program is designed to allow students to develop their ability to perform and create music but also to express themselves through music and performance. Singing, music and public speaking and the sharing of this through performance and digital technologies are an integral part of our school music program. Performances at school and parish Masses, as well as regular fortnightly music items at our school assemblies, mean that music is a core part of the way we celebrate learning at St Joseph's.

Performing for our local community is core to our music program. Our Junior and Senior Choirs very successfully perform annually at the Mildura Eisteddfod and our Grade 5/6 Marimba Band and choirs perform at events such as Grandparents Day, at our local Kindergarten and Jacaranda Village nursing home, as well as through our involvement annually at the Red Cliffs ANZAC Day service and Carols by Candlelight. At St Joseph's we believe experience in music and the performing arts is essential to allowing all children to fulfil their potential. We congratulate our Marimba Band who managed to squeeze in a very impromptu recording of their two contrasting pieces for the Eisteddfod just before we went into lockdown recently. Their entry will be submitted to the Mildura Eisteddfod. Congratulations students on working very hard to perform these challenging and lovely pieces!

Naomi Kennedy - Principal



STEM EXPO

On Monday, May 10, all Year 9 students at Damascus College Ballarat had the opportunity to take part in the annual STEM Expo, where they spent time with a Scientist. Now in its tenth year, this event promotes careers in Science, Technology, Allied Health, Medicine, Engineering and Maths (STEM) amongst the student body.

Members of the Ballarat community, past students and parents of Damascus College who work in the STEM area were invited back to speak and inspire students about their occupation. Each student spent time with six to eight scientists. Students rotated amongst speakers, where they listened, talked, asked questions and completed a worksheet on their experience.



Ivanka Saric, Science Learning Area Leader said that this event exposes students to careers in Biology, Engineering, Chemistry, Maths, Environmental Science, Technology, Physics and Psychology. "It is a great opportunity to introduce these disciplines to students in Year 9 so that they consider these subjects when heading in to Year 10 and VCE" she said. "It is also fantastic to see past students return to Damascus to speak to current students about their occupation. The passion and enthusiasm they have for their job is contagious and the students walk away with a greater understanding and appreciation for these career options".

This year the College welcomed speakers who are Physiotherapists, Research Technicians, Geologists, Midwives, Nurses, Environmental Scientists, Chiropractors, Cancer Researchers, Occupational Therapists and students studying Nursing, Paramedicine, Biomedical and Mechanical Engineering, Forensic Scientists and Sports Science.

Sarah Boswell - Leader of Marketing & Development

Be More!

Inspired by Project Compassion's 2021 theme, 'Be More', the students of Lumen Christi, Delacombe, held their annual school walkathon to Victoria Park as the culmination of their Project Compassion Appeal. The student's focus for fundraising was to do something practical for those experiencing COVID-19 in our world. After finding out about the plight of families in Bangladesh refugee camps and how difficult it is to protect them and their families from a COVID-19 outbreak, the children wanted to focus their fundraising efforts on providing these families with COVID-19 prevention kits. Kits cost \$10.00 each and contain facemasks, soap, sanitiser and handwashing stations, as well as going towards training healthcare staff, providing information and awareness campaigns and cash assistance for families who have lost their livelihoods.

Through the combined efforts of the classroom Project Compassion boxes and the Walkathon, a cheque of \$3105 was presented to Ballarat Diocese Caritas Director, Sue Searls. Justice representatives, Nicole and Mia, presented the cheque to Sue. Top fundraisers from each year level were also presented with a book in recognition of their efforts. The children are very excited that money raised will be going to provide COVID-19 prevention kits for over 300 families in Bangladesh refugee camps. Through our generosity in donating to Project Compassion and aspiring to 'Be More', we are assisting some of the world's most vulnerable people to build better futures for themselves, their families and their communities. Lumen Christi's school vision is 'We are called to Shine the Light of Christ in the World!'



Leonie Leviston - Religious Education Leader, Lumen Christ Primary School, Delacombe



St Vincent de Paul changeover meeting

Recently, members of St Vincent de Paul Society's Ballarat Cathedral Conference gathered in the Cathedral hall for their annual changeover meeting. Alan West, who has served as Conference President in recent years, has concluded his term. We thank Alan for his energetic leadership and service to our whole community during his term as President. We welcome Kevin Elliott into this role and offer him our encouragement and support.

Graeme Trethowan, who has been treasurer for many years, has handed this role over to Margaret Howell. Thank you to Graeme for his dedicated service to the Society over many years and we offer our thanks to Margaret as she commences. Frank Stuart continues as Vice-President and Mary McAloon as Secretary.

The Assistance Centre, located in Dawson Street South at the front of the smaller Cathedral hall, has reopened. Thank you to all the volunteers who offer assistance to those who come seeking help. We thank all the Conference members and volunteers at the Assistance Centre for their commitment to Gospel service, outreach and care.

St Patrick's Cathedral Parish newsletter, April 18, 2021

Photo: Outgoing Conference President Alan West and new Conference President Kevin Elliott

World Day of Prayer

The annual World Day of Prayer participation in the Ballarat/Buninyong/Creswick district was a wonderful success with beautiful services that were well presented and appreciated, despite the clouds of coronavirus restrictions hovering around us. The World Day of Prayer originated in the nineteenth century in North America. Australia joined in 1927, so this is our ninety fifth celebration. Each year, Christians of a different country prepare the service. This year, Vanuatu prepared the service on the theme: "Build on a Strong Foundation." From the

time of my visit to Vanuatu with my daughter, Narelle, I have felt a special warmth towards these beautiful people and some of this was shared in the services. The CD of the Port Vila band 'Laurfauo' that greeted me at the airport was played before each of the services! The same service is shared in over one hundred and seventy countries and is translated into eighty-eight languages and a thousand dialects, all on the same day, as the services follow the sun from Tonga in the South Pacific at sunrise and circle the globe to conclude at Western Samoa, almost next door, at sunset.



Although we were unable to conduct our services in aged care nursing homes at this time, attendance at this World Day of Prayer has grown. We were thrilled with the generous giving to the Trauma Healing Program in Vanuatu, breaking all records of previous giving. Our World Day of Prayer Australia project, linked with the Bible Society, aims to deliver a Trauma Healing Centre bringing understanding, care, healing and hope to 60,000 women in Vanuatu who have been traumatized by gender-based violence.

The program takes a holistic approach, advocating for women and empowering those who have been victims within the community. This is a massive outreach, almost equivalent to having an impact on every woman in the City of Ballarat. The program has three parts: 1: Trauma healing - helping survivors regain self-esteem and dignity and supporting them to become productive members of society. 2: Scripture engagement materials - trauma healing and inspirational guidance from the Word of God providing comfort and strength. 3: A Literacy program - workshops educating women on their rights, as well as in literacy and numeracy, and in positive decision-making skills on issues affecting the whole family. Taken together, our prayer is that the Trauma Healing Program will help women live with hope and give hope to others, to build on a solid foundation. Our local hope was to send \$1,000.00 from Ballarat to assist. Amazingly, despite the difficult times, we have doubled that amount, Praise God!

Blessings and gratitude to all, and thanks to Anne Dark, Church Photographer, St James' Parish Church, Sebastopol.

Max White - World Day of Prayer, Ballarat Committee



A cameo from the Archives: No. 16 –

St. Michael's Hamilton

Not many people know that Loreto had a Convent and School in Hamilton, in regional Victoria. Hamilton was on the railway line from Ballarat to Portland and Mother Gonzaga Barry referred to it as the “half-way house.”

In 1905 a property, formerly Hamilton Academy, was bought by the parish and a day primary and secondary school were opened under the management of Loreto. Loreto also took charge of St Mary's Parish School which was moved to the same site. The school also held commercial classes.

In the school magazine, “Eucalyptus Blossoms” of 1909, the Convent is described as, “situated on a height just on the outskirts of the town, and commanding a good view of the surrounding country. It has spacious grounds, beautifully laid out, and adorned with shrubs and plants. The house was originally built for a Church of England grammar school, a purpose which it served for several years. A client of St Michael kept a steady eye on it, and when it was offered for sale, he inspired the Catholic body to purchase it for a convent – a use for which it is admirably adapted. The Loreto Sisters dedicated the Convent to St Michael, the great protector of the Institute. The work of the Sisters lies chiefly in their schools, of which they have

two – a high school and a flourishing primary school. All the Catholic children of the town attend, and the nuns are often congratulated on the excellent material they have to work upon”.

The property consisted of a house and other buildings on about four acres of land. Dedicated to St Michael and the Holy Angels, the first liturgy held at what was to be called St Michael's, was on St Michael's Feast Day. The school began with 150 children - 100 primary and 50 secondary.

Unusually for Loreto, the whole primary school was co-educational, due to the lack of availability of an equivalent boys' school in the area. The Victorian Merit Certificate examination became the entrance qualification for the public High School (opened in 1916) so the boys had to stay at primary school for seventh and eighth grades, an interesting concept for the Sisters. At the end of 1923 the school was handed over to the Good Samaritan Sisters.



St Michael's Students c.1917

For more resources relating to Loreto's Hamilton convent see <https://www.loreto.org.au/records/records-relating-to-loreto-hamilton/>
Text and photos courtesy of the Loreto Province Archives



WE STAND WITH THEM

Reconciliation Week is a time for all of us to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements and explore how we can help achieve reconciliation in Australia. Reconciliation Week runs from May 27 – June 3 each year. These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey: The successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision.

On May 27, the Aboriginal flag was raised outside the Ballarat Town Hall to launch National Reconciliation Week locally. At the launch, Rachel Muir called on allies and supporters to do more to support Reconciliation and deliver the vital resources needed to achieve lasting change through truth, healing and justice for Aboriginal people in Victoria. St Alipius Parish Primary School Ballarat East were lucky enough

to have students attend and lend their voices to the event. They sang beautifully. We reflect on the profound harm done to the Stolen Generations and their families. We stand with them in their fight for justice and journey to healing.

At St Alipius, we empower students to speak up; we empower students to speak for those who are not empowered to speak for themselves; we empower students with the words to speak confidently using their own voice. As a community, we stand with Stolen Generations and their families.

Eileen Rice - Principal

Our Diocesan Community - July 2021

Sustainability and outdoor learning

Sustainability teacher, Alice, and the students at St Brendan's Primary School Coragulac have worked very hard over the first two terms to learn about sustainable practice and to participate in a range of hands-on activities to put their knowledge into action. Students have worked hard at mulching, building sustainable plant boxes, creating a worm farm, cleaning out the chook shed, creating a new veggie garden and more. The veggie garden really is fabulous!

Recently, the school was privileged to host a visit by Catholic Education Ballarat's (CEB) Leadership team, led by Director, Tom Sexton. Once a month the team holds their meeting at a school in the Diocese and it was Coragulac's turn. It was a delight to take the team on a tour of the school. I was able to talk with pride about the many initiatives that are happening at our school such as the student veggie garden, the Indigenous garden and the partnership with Thomas Carr College. The CEB leaders were hugely impressed and loved the fact that these gardens were clearly created by the students.

Another event in sustainability was the visit from Lyn and her students Louise, Gabby, Demi, Naomi and Lizzy from Geelong Gordon TAFE who have been busy at the school. As part of their Certificate IV studies in Conservation and Land Management, the TAFE students have to create an environmental community event. In conjunction with Landcare, the school was able to work with Lyn so the event could happen at the school. We are so very lucky! Candice Parker from Landcare donated all the trees and shrubs to our school as well as the tree guards.

The Grade 5/6 students and their buddies in Grade Prep engaged in three different activities. Before each activity the TAFE students identified safety aspects of the activity, information about the trees, demonstrated how to do the activity and then the children participated.

The first activity was native tree planting around our bike track. We are hoping to make this a bush track that is interactive, that leads to an increase in bird life and that also encourages imaginative play like cubby building and hide and seek. The second activity was bush tucker planting in our Indigenous garden. The children learnt about each species of bush tucker, how it can be used in cooking and medicine and also got to taste and smell it. This is a wonderful sensory garden experience for the children.

The third activity was creating bug hotels. The children had prepared "baby formula" tins by painting them up as bugs with wings and legs that hang in trees, while an old tin chest was turned onto its side to make a bigger bug hotel on the ground. The students filled these with bark, pine cones, wood and sticks. Bugs are very important for soil health and the food chain in a garden. The students' activities are a way of creating an environment that encourages them to stick around. What a wonderful event to be part of and what a wonderful improvement to our school grounds.

Leanne Eastman, Principal and Alice Armistead, Sustainability teacher



Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2021

"Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit"

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Australia was observed from May 16-23, 2021 in the week between Ascension and Pentecost.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was prepared by the Monastic Community of Grandchamp. The theme that was chosen, "Abide in my love and you shall bear much fruit", is based on John 15:1-17 and expresses Grandchamp Community's vocation to prayer, reconciliation and unity in the church and the human family.

Throughout this week, members of the Cathedral Parish prayed each afternoon in some of the various Christian Churches in the centre of Ballarat, including St Patrick's Cathedral, Peel Street Church of Christ, Central Uniting Church and Christ the King Anglican Cathedral.



St Patrick's Cathedral Parish Newsletter 23/5/2021
Above: Rev Lauleti, Fr Justin, Pastor Tim and Fr Martin

GOVERNANCE SIGNING

A journey of discernment and transition lasting close to three years culminated in April when an historic final meeting of the Emmanuel College Board of Management and College Governors was conducted. One of the final transition responsibilities for the Governors and the Board members was to cancel the incorporation of Emmanuel College, with legal oversight for the College having successfully been handed to Mercy Education Ltd. (MEL). The College is now simply named Emmanuel College Warrnambool and will continue to thrive and grow under this name.

Pictured below are College Governors Sr Eileen-Ann Daffy, Sr Marie Davey, Fr Lawrie O'Toole, Fr John Fitzgerald and College Board members Karen Jongebloed (retired), Maree Lane (Chair) Michael Klem (Finance Committee), Chris Steel (Building & Facilities Committee), Veronica Hughson, Jo McCormack, Brendan Howard (St Joseph's Parish Warrnambool), Andrew Watson (Catholic Education Ballarat representative), Stephen Kerr (Business Manager) and Peter Morgan (Principal). The occasion was the last time the Governors met with the Board, which has now become the Emmanuel College Warrnambool Advisory Council, tasked with supporting the Principal to further develop a dynamic Catholic learning community for our region. As a parting gesture, the Governors gifted the College a new chalice and patten for College Masses. Despite the many school liturgies celebrated over the last thirty years, the College does not have a complete set of Mass items making the gift both appropriate and special.

It is thirty years since Emmanuel College was formed from its predecessor schools, St Ann's College and Christian Brother's College and the change in governance comes at a time when the College is firmly established and thriving. Tribute is paid to the women and men who served this school community either as Board members or Governors, accepting responsibility for the legal and ethical conduct of the College and giving their time, expertise and wisdom to enable the College to overcome numerous obstacles and to flourish. All schools stand on the shoulders of those who come before and Emmanuel is no different. Without their commitment and energy for providing Catholic secondary education in Warrnambool, Emmanuel College would not be in the position of strength it holds today with a clear and exciting vision for the future.

Peter Morgan - Principal



Mercy Associate News

The Ballarat Mercy Associates have recommenced its dinner gatherings, to the great pleasure of our members.

On Saturday, March 20 at 11am in the Mercy Chapel, a COVID safe Commitment Ceremony was conducted. We are delighted to have Kathy Curran, Korina Hegert and Sandra Harvey join our group and we look forward to getting to know them.



The support provided by the Sisters of Mercy to their local Mercy Associates groups is always valued and appreciated. In Ballarat, Sr Anne McMillan has been supporting the group in recent years, a role that will now be undertaken by Sr Geraldine Mugavin. As Sr Anne McMillan's time in the role as contact between the Institute and the Associates concludes, we wish to thank her for the support, guidance and friendship she has shared with us over the last four years. It has been a pleasure to work with her. We welcome Sr Geraldine Mugavin as our new contact and look forward to working with her.

Mercy Associates Ballarat Newsletter

Pictured L-R : Anne O'Connell, Sr Anne McMillan (seated), Sr Geraldine Mugavin and Kathy Pollard

May Racing Carnival celebrated at Mercy Place Warrnambool



For Flora, a Mercy Place Warrnambool resident, her memories of the Warrnambool races are as vivid as the colours in her handmade race-day hat. She and her friends put on their vibrant glad rags at the home to celebrate the Warrnambool May Racing Carnival, stirring many memories of fun in days gone by.

Text and photo courtesy of Mercy Health

CEB new appointment



Paul Jans was appointed as Assistant Director: Business Services for Catholic Education Ballarat (CEB) in May. He comes to CEB from Damascus College, Mount Clear, where he has been the Business Manager since 2007. Paul supported the strategic priorities of the Damascus College Board by developing, deploying and leading the College Business Services team. He has played a key role in Damascus College's continual improvement agenda and has been a highly valued member of the College leadership team.

Paul attended Mercy Regional College, Camperdown for his secondary education (Catholic Regional College at the time). He has a Bachelor of Commerce and is a qualified CPA. Previously Paul has held senior positions in the health and private sectors and as the Ballarat Diocesan Business Manager.

Paul has been responsible for a range of business service areas throughout his career, including finance and accounting, risk management and compliance, master planning, property and facilities management, ICT systems and support, auditing and project analysis.

Paul will bring a wealth of experience and school and system knowledge to the position. CEB welcomed Paul to his new role on Monday 5 July, 2021.

Julie Duynhoven, current Assistant Director: Business Services at CEB, will transition to part-time employment from Term 3 and will generously facilitate a smooth induction and transition for Paul into this senior position before her retirement at the end of the 2021 school year.

A Pilgrimage for the Year of St Joseph

The Aussie Camino is a pilgrimage route running from Portland in Victoria to Penola in South Australia, inspired by the life and journeys of Australia's first Saint, Mary of the Cross MacKillop, and her mentor Fr Julian Tenison Woods. This year being declared the Year of St Joseph by Pope Francis, it was a great opportunity to visit and reflect on the "Josephites" or "Brown Joeys"; the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, founded by Saint Mary MacKillop in Penola in 1866.

The Camino included amazing walks along cliff tops, beaches, sand dunes, goat trails and farm tracks. Based on the traditions of the Camino de Santiago de Compostela in Spain, pilgrims received a guidebook, passport, scallop shell and stayed in the local towns along the way. On average, the walk was between twenty to twenty-five kilometres per day (6-8 hours) for the eight days of walking. The pilgrimage was ten days which included departing Ballarat on Friday, April 30, 2021 and returning on Sunday, May 9, 2021. Fr Justin Driscoll accompanied the pilgrims and offered these words each day as a summary of the journey experienced.

Day one - leaving All Saints Church, Portland - beginning the Aussie Camino from Portland to Penola with Mary MacKillop in this Year of St Joseph. "Apply to St Joseph with confidence in every difficulty and you will not be disappointed". (Mary MacKillop)

Day two - Cape Bridgewater – today St Joseph – Tender and Loving. "In Joseph, Jesus saw the tender love of God". (Pope Francis)

Day three - today's Camino from Lake Mombeong towards the beach along the section of the Great South West Walk to Nelson on the Glenelg River. "Enter into the hum of humanity" (Joyce Rupp)

Day four - with an early start from Nelson on the Glenelg River, crossing into South Australia with the pilgrimage ending for the day in Port MacDonnell. We have been blessed with fine weather today. Today's focus – St Joseph the Accepting one. "Whatever troubles may be before you, accept them bravely, remembering whom you are trying to follow". (Mary MacKillop 1909)

Day five - today Port MacDonnell to Mt Gambier with a lunch break at Mt Schank, the longest walk so far. The focus is on St Joseph - the Creative and Courageous Believer and Guide, "May God grant you courage and wisdom in all you do and say". (Mary MacKillop 1875)

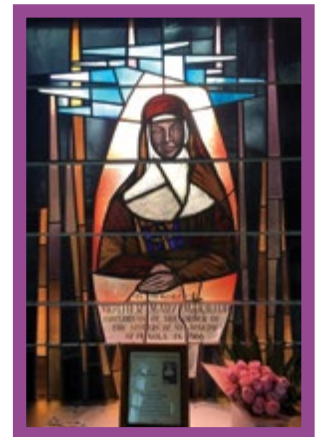
Day six - Mt Gambier to the Bush Haven Cottages towards Dismal Swamp! "Work is a means of participating in the work of salvation ... to develop our talents and abilities and to put them at the service of society". (Pope Francis)

Day seven - Today's walk to Kalangadoo (Home of Brian Dawes' character Roley Parkes – Letter from Kalangadoo). In this Year of St Joseph this seventh day focused on St Joseph, in the Shadows and we prayed "for all those who during this pandemic are serving in the shadows like Joseph to protect, care, heal and support the vulnerable".

Day eight - Penola - final day – Aussie Camino to Penola in the Year of St Joseph concluded with Mass at St Joseph's in Penola and a visit to the interpretive centre.

What a wonderful way to celebrate the Year of St Joseph, connecting with fellow pilgrims and nature in the beautiful landscape along the way?

Fr Justin Driscoll - St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat



TRANSFER OF GOVERNANCE TO DOBCEL

Damascus College, Mount Clear and St Francis Xavier Primary School, Ballarat East, have both announced that they will transfer their Canonical governance to Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited (DOBCEL), commencing in 2022.



This announcement coincides with the celebration of 140 years of Mercy ministry in Ballarat. Damascus College (right) was formed in 1995 through the amalgamation of three foundation colleges – Sacred Heart College (established in 1881), St Paul's Technical College (established in 1948) and St Martin's in the Pines (Sacred Heart Senior College) (established in 1967). The Damascus College junior campus was originally located in Victoria Street and moved to join the senior campus on the current Mount Clear site in 2011.

The Sisters of Mercy purchased land on Mount Xavier in 1902 and named it Villa Maria. In 1905 they opened the Villa Maria boarding school for junior boys and registered St Francis Xavier College (left) in 1914. The school has operated under the joint governance of the Sisters of Mercy and the Ballarat Diocese since 2011.



The opportunity to review future governance for the schools arose when the Sisters of Mercy recently made the decision to consolidate their ministries. The move to join DOBCEL heralds an exciting new chapter for both schools and will enable them to continue providing students with quality learning in a contemporary school environment, whilst honouring and respecting their Mercy traditions and values.

“We believe that Damascus College and St Francis Xavier Primary School’s move to the new governance structure

reflects much careful consideration and great care for their future on the part of their present leaders,” says Sr Eveline Crotty RSM, Leader of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea. “We are confident that DOBCEL will be enriched by the presence of these excellent schools and that the Diocese of Ballarat will continue to be well served by them,” says Sr Eveline.

DOBCEL was established in 2019 as the governing body for schools in the Ballarat Diocese and currently governs fifty six of the sixty four Catholic schools. As the company’s founding member, Bishop Paul Bird has welcomed the decision.

“Under DOBCEL governance, Damascus College and St Francis Xavier Primary School will continue to be quality schools where strong management is assured. They will continue to be staffed by teachers committed to sound teaching practice who implement an effective curriculum. They will continue to be safe places where children and young people can flourish,” says Bishop Bird.



Ms Tracey O’Neill, DOBCEL Board Chair and Company Director, has expressed the Board’s delight with the announcement, and has acknowledged that Damascus College and St Francis Xavier Primary School will both



be very welcome additions to DOBCEL. “The Board appreciates the time and consideration taken by both schools to reach this important decision for the

future direction of their school communities. We look forward to supporting them to flourish into the future whilst honouring and respecting their rich heritage,” says Ms O’Neill.

Both Damascus College and St Francis Xavier Primary School will continue to honour the charisms on which they have been founded. The place of the Sisters of Mercy in Ballarat and the legacy of Catherine McAuley will underpin the spiritual and educational settings available to their communities. This will be enhanced by a spirit of service to the parishes from which the students enrol. The partnerships between Damascus College and St Francis Xavier Primary School and DOBCEL respectively will commence with the practical process of transitioning governance over the coming months, with 1 January 2022 as the intended date of transfer.

Emma Newman, Marketing and Communications Officer

World Environment Day Writing Competition

This year the global theme of World Environment Day (5 June) was 'ecosystem restoration'. Taking up the BREAZE Inc. Competition challenge – 'What I can do to help the environment' – Grade 5/6 children from primary schools across greater Ballarat submitted entries. The mission of BREAZE Inc (Ballarat Renewable Energy and Zero Emissions) is to protect and enhance the natural environment and increase environmental sustainability within the region by promoting and developing renewable sources of energy and significantly reducing the region's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions. BREAZE aspires to facilitate, encourage and educate the wider Ballarat community towards a goal of zero emissions by 2030. (<https://breaze.org.au>)

St Francis Xavier Primary School Ballarat East students Mila and Harper, who participated in the competition, did particularly well! Both Mila and Harper will be receiving a certificate and a book voucher as an award for their entry.



School winning Entry: Mila - Our Earth is sick. And we don't want that, so here are suggestions to help! We should stop cutting down trees because we don't realise that trees are a bird's home. I don't think you would want someone cutting down your home, would you? Trees give us oxygen, so if we cut down trees it also affects us. We could also use reusable things like metal straws and reusable plastic. Everyday 2.25 million pieces of litter are dropped, but in England each day 180,000 sacks of litter are being picked up. We should be proud as we're making changes.

Special Mention: Harper - What I can do to help the environment. We are destroying Mother Earth every single day and barely anyone realises it. So what can I do to stop destroying earth? I will stop using single use straws and cutlery and use cardboard or metal items to enjoy food and drink with. I will put my rubbish in the right bin so it gets put in the right place. I'll stop using as much paper as it uses our trees' supplies. Our trees give us oxygen to breathe and live, so what if we had no trees at all? Human civilization will die soon if we don't make a change. We congratulate both Mila and Harper on their wonderful efforts.

Paul Bissinella - Principal



New sensory garden for Loreto College students

A new sensory garden being developed as part of an overhaul of the Loreto College wellbeing precinct will give students a quiet, private place to take time out or get the support they need. An under-utilised part of the grounds outside an area being redeveloped as a school counselling and learning hub, will be transformed into a space that will stimulate the senses. The garden will include water fountains, ground covers, plants that stimulate all five senses and seating options which include wraparound chairs often favoured by students with autism. "The sensory garden is ideal for anyone when they are just needing space for themselves or a quiet space", said

Loreto College's Judy-Ann Quilliam. "It is a private space accessed from the learning hub and counselling area where students go who want assistance with their learning".

Ms Quilliam said demand for student wellbeing services had been increasing in recent years and was behind a redevelopment of the school's wellbeing precinct including the garden. "In the past we have had school counsellors and our learning hub and other supports in different places but this will combine them all to one area where the sensory garden will wrap around the building", she said. "Particularly in the last couple of years there's been a growing need (for student wellbeing support) and there's also evidence around students when they feel safe and supported that's when they learn best".

Building works are underway in the Mary Ward Centre, which currently accommodates the learning hub, to relocate school counsellors and wellbeing staff. Construction of the garden is scheduled to begin at the end of the year and be completed over the summer holidays. "Many studies have shown that contact with nature directly impacts a student's mental and physical wellbeing", she said. The garden is the focus of the school's 2021 annual giving appeal and already students, family, previous students and the community have shown their generosity with some dedicating special seats and fountains in honour of family members.

Article courtesy of the Ballarat Courier, text by Michelle Smith and photo by Adam Trafford

Photo: Loreto College Learning Diversity Leader Jillian Hogbin with students Sarah, Skyla and Ayla in the garden.

Our Diocesan Community - July 2021



Mary MacKillop College takes The Ration Challenge

For the first time ever, the St Mary MacKillop College Swan Hill Student Forum invited students and staff to join the '2021 Act for Peace Ration Challenge', to raise awareness of the injustices experienced by refugees. Catholic Social Teaching holds that any person who is forced to move to preserve their lives or human dignity has a moral claim on the hospitality of others. Pope John XXIII wrote "Every human being has the right to freedom of movement and of residence within the confines of (their) own country; and, when there are just reasons for it, the right to emigrate to other countries and take up residence there. The fact that one is a citizen of a particular state does not detract in any way from (their) membership in the human family as a whole, nor from his citizenship in the world community". Because every human person, regardless of one's legal status or geographic location, has a transcendent dignity that must always be respected, people on the move should enjoy the full range of human rights, and others (we) have a duty to see that they are respected, protected and fulfilled. In undertaking the challenge our students and staff were seeking to recognise the rights of refugees.

The Ration Challenge turned out to be a very powerful experience, both for the challengers and the school community. For either three or five days, challengers ate only rations and were sponsored to do it. Each ration pack contained a supply of exactly the same food, in almost exactly the same quantities, that is distributed to Syrian refugees in urban refugee camps in Jordan - 420g rice, 120g lentils, 60g chickpeas, a tin of kidney beans and a tin of sardines. Vouchers were given to challengers to self supply an additional 215 ml oil, 900g of rice and 450g of flour representing additional aid sometimes distributed in refugee camps. Students could then earn 'rewards' through fundraising and awareness actions - 170g of one vegetable, 50g sugar and 215 ml of milk. It doesn't sound like much and it really isn't, yet these meagre rations sustain millions of refugees.

As you would expect, living on rations, even just for three days was pretty tough. Challengers experienced sugar withdrawals, cravings and monotony. The lack of energy and lack of focus while trying to study was unexpected and let us tell you, 'hangriness' is absolutely real! But what came as a surprise for the challengers was the emotional impact and the clarity around what we were undertaking. It became increasingly obvious that there

Our Diocesan Community - July 2021

is a stark contrast between daily life for us, living in the security and abundance of Swan Hill and for people in refugee camps. Throughout the challenge we learned more about refugees experiences and tried to see things from another perspective to create more empathy and compassion. We undertook interactive journeys through <http://twobillionmiles.com/> and tried to learn more. Our aim was not only to raise money but also to raise awareness by looking into Catholic Social Justice teachings and explore other ways that we can make a difference in our world.

During the course of the challenge Year 12 student Campbell Kelly gained an appreciation for the resilience of refugees, "Who are able to make do with what little they have and live with gratitude, this being a quality we should all take on." Toni Mia Scalora, also in Year 12, felt that participating in the challenge was "Important not only because it put our school value of Dignity into action but also because it was a way to learn about the refugee crisis around the world and actually do something to help." Otto Conlan, Year 9 didn't hesitate to take up the challenge and said "When I sat down and started to think about what it was that I was going to do with these basic ingredients I gained a level of respect for refugees around the world that can make something out of pretty much nothing".

During the Challenge week we also hosted a Solidarity Meal at school so that others, who perhaps could not commit to the challenge, could share a meal with us in solidarity for the world's refugees. At the end of the challenge our school team raised \$7,700 to help support efforts to provide food security, health services and hygiene packs for refugees. Conflict and disaster-affected communities around the world are among the most impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. In five days our Challenge Team and our generous supporters were able to make a significant contribution to reducing this impact and at the same time we were able to build empathy and awareness. We are hoping to undertake the 'Ration Challenge' again next year as it has been such a positive experience. You can read more about the 'Act for Peace Ration Challenge' at <https://actforpeace.rationchallenge.org.au/>

Catherine Howison - Deputy Principal



Pope Francis has published an Apostolic Letter *Patris corde* (with a Father's Heart), commemorating the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church and proclaiming a 'Year of St Joseph' from December 8, 2020 – December 8, 2021.

The Fifth Plenary Council for the Catholic Church in Australia is moving toward its first session in October. The Bishops have convoked the Council and the agenda has been released. The agenda calls those attending the Council assemblies to "develop concrete proposals to create a more missionary, Christ-centred Church in Australia" and emerged from three years and several layers of prayer, listening, dialogue and discernment. We continue to seek the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and invite you to keep praying for the Plenary Council.

Photos:

Front cover: St Joseph's College Mildura relief sculpture.

Back cover: 1. Cathedral parishioners Frank Stuart, Chris Butler and Sheila Wilton participating in the Prayer for Christian Unity. 2. Mary Mackillop College Swan Hill students eating their rations during the Ration Challenge. 3. Emmanuel College Warrnambool Library. 4. St Brendan's School Coragulac garden.

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

Vision Statement for the Diocese