

# JOURNEY

NEWS FROM THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG

Bear Grylls:  
My greatest  
adventure ...  
will it be  
yours in 2017?

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# Be Courageous

## *this Christmas*

BY JUDE HENNESSY



**W**hen moving into the Diocese some 20 years ago, my family and I were welcomed into a beautiful parish community where people

know each other, “do life” together, play sport, often share meals together, and experience true friendship. As we mingle after Mass – having a cuppa, talking and laughing with kids running around everywhere – people who drive by our parish would surely have to think, “Wow, these people really love each other!” In fact, I know plenty of people who say just that.

At Christmas, I’ll again have the privilege of singing and playing guitar with all the musicians of our parish at the Christmas Eve Vigil Mass. It will be in the playground of our Parish Primary School, full to the brim as usual. There will be many familiar faces in the crowd: the Sunday “regulars” for sure, but also the families and people who used to come to Church regularly, but have drifted for whatever reason and only come once or twice a year.

To be honest, I’ve looked out at that congregation over the last few years with mixed emotions. I am happy that so many are there to celebrate the

**There will be many familiar faces in the crowd: the Sunday “regulars” for sure, but also the families and people who used to come to Church regularly, but have drifted for whatever reason and only come once or twice a year.**

coming of Jesus at Christmas. However, I have this itch to reach out to those who are the “non-regulars” and welcome them, befriend them, and ask them to keep coming back and be a part of this awesome community – a community that will love them, help them in their walk with God and make their lives even better because of the presence of Jesus in the life of the Church and in its members.

Just as importantly, I’d love to somehow let them know that the Body of Christ is incomplete without them in it. Those “feelings” I know I will get again, as I look out at that sea of faces, are ones at the heart of the new evangelisation – a tension between the desire to share the gift of faith with people, but not wanting to “scare them off” by coming on too strong. I don’t think I am alone in wanting people to know that this Baby who comes to us at Christmas in fact came that we might have “life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).

In this edition of the Journey, you will come across a number of articles that focus on the Church’s mission to make Jesus known and loved. As you read them, take time to think, indeed pray, about how you can be true to the call to do just that, and respond authentically to the urgent request from Pope Francis for “we”, the Church, to embrace missionary discipleship.

**I have this itch to reach out to those who are the “non-regulars” and welcome them, befriend them, and ask them to keep coming back and be a part of this awesome community ...**

It always takes courage to reach out and say simple things like “come along”, “welcome”, “what’s your name?”, “what’s going on in your life?”, or “this is why my faith is important”. But, it is through these simple encounters that we can draw people back into our parish communities and, from there, into powerful and life changing encounters with the love of Christ. ■

*Jude Hennessy is the Co-editor of Journey, Director of CCD & Evangelisation and Director of Parish Services, Diocese of Wollongong*

BY BISHOP  
PETER INGHAM



On Sunday 20 November 2016, Pope Francis closed the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica in Rome, formally ending the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

In doing so, he stressed the need for greater reconciliation and forgiveness in the Church and in the world, publishing an Apostolic Letter imploring us to continue being merciful.

Titled, *Misericordia et Misera*, (MeM) the Apostolic Letter maintains Pope Francis' emphasis – even as the Year of Mercy comes to an end – that, “Mercy cannot become a mere parenthesis in the life of the Church; it constitutes her very existence, through which the profound truths of the Gospel are made manifest and tangible” (MeM, 1).

There have been some incredible images in Catholic and mainstream media over the past year of Pope Francis modelling what it means to be the hands and the face of mercy.

At the heart of the Year of Mercy has been the call for all of us in the Church to examine our conscience and repent with joy, confidence and the assurance that, “*Forgiveness* is the most visible sign of the Father's love, which Jesus sought to reveal by his entire life. Every page of the Gospel is marked by this imperative of a love that loves to the point of forgiveness” (MeM, 2).

Another element of our journey through the Year of Mercy has been Pope Francis' desire that we all need to come to an understanding that, “Mercy gives rise to *joy*, because our hearts are opened to the hope of a new life” (MeM 3).

Last year, In announcing the commencement of the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis noted that this was a year where we are all called to a powerful encounter with God's mercy. If we know this mercy and know God's love deeply, we cannot but have the desire to share it. Thus, the Year of Mercy should have many outcomes in our personal walk with Jesus that ultimately leads to our participation in



# Mercy, Peace and Joy

PHOTO: DANIEL HOPPER

## The Jubilee now ends and the Holy Door is closed. But the door of mercy of our heart continues to remain wide open.

POPE FRANCIS

an era of new evangelisation. Knowing and communicating mercy lies at the heart of the pastoral conversion of the Church “shaped daily by the renewing force of mercy” (MeM, 5) as part of the new evangelisation. The footnote explains that “pastoral conversion” is a conversion of the Church's ministry to more openness and outreach.

Whilst the Year of Mercy has come to an official end, Pope Francis desires that mercy remain at the heart of our understanding of who God is and how we as Catholics should engage with the world in an era of new evangelisation. In MeM, Pope Francis notes three simple ways we should continue to engage with God's mercy:

1. *By engaging in Mass with an ear to the words of mercy* that are throughout the liturgy. “From the beginning to the end of the Eucharistic celebration, mercy constantly appears in the dialogue between the assembly at prayer and the heart of the Father” (MeM, 5).
2. We are encouraged to *become regular personal readers of Scripture* as well as listeners in the context of our liturgical celebrations. “Hearing the Word of God” celebrates mercy because, “In the biblical readings, we retrace the history of our salvation through the proclamation of God's tireless work of mercy” (MeM, 6).

3. “The celebration of mercy takes place in a very particular way in the *Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation*.” It is in this Sacrament we find redemption, new life and freedom in Jesus. The power of this Sacrament involves “an encounter between two hearts: the heart of God who comes to meet us and a human heart. The latter is warmed and healed by the former” (MeM, 16).

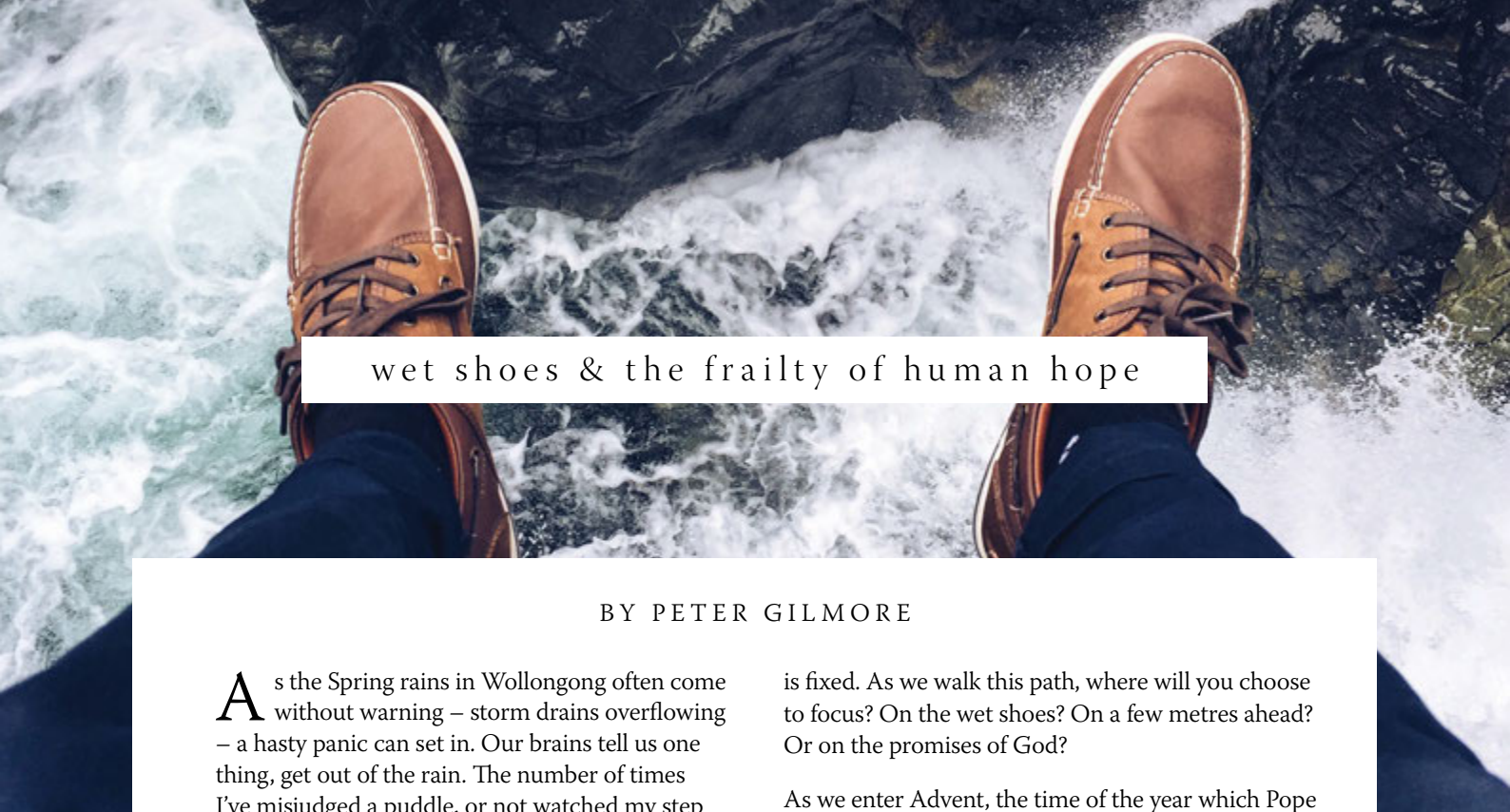
As a conclusion to the Year of Mercy, Pope Francis tells us, “The Jubilee now ends and the Holy Door is closed. But the door of mercy of our heart continues to remain wide open” (MeM, 16). How wonderful therefore that as the Year of Mercy ends, we enter into the Advent and then Christmas seasons, where the God of mercy comes to meet us as a child, in complete humility, as a vulnerable babe in a manger. Let us too – in the people we meet, in the friends we encounter, in the family time we have in this season – remember that the simple message of our faith is mercy. My prayer is that we will continue to encounter this mercy in our personal walk with Jesus, and look for new ways to share this mercy in word and in action, as witnesses to the love of God and participants in the Church's mission of evangelisation. ■

Yours in Christ



Most Rev Peter W Ingham DD  
Bishop of Wollongong





## wet shoes & the frailty of human hope

BY PETER GILMORE

As the Spring rains in Wollongong often come without warning – storm drains overflowing – a hasty panic can set in. Our brains tell us one thing, get out of the rain. The number of times I've misjudged a puddle, or not watched my step and ended up shoe-deep in rainwater, is probably too many to admit. There really is nothing worse than walking around in wet shoes. It's miserable. In fact, one could imagine there being a wet set of Nike runners in the dictionary next to the word "miserable". With every squelching step, your shoes taunt you, "Haha, you stepped in the water!"

When we encounter calamity, loss, disappointment, struggle, oppression or opposition, all of which are real things just like the puddle, we often make our focus the wet shoes beneath us. The puddle is long gone but we still carry the pain and emotions of what happened. And every step is a reminder. So, rather than fixing our gaze ahead of what is to come, we are locking our gaze on what has been.

With our eyes fixed on our feet, we have the frailty of human hope – "Well, I hope tomorrow is better than yesterday," "I hope this thing goes well," "I hope you feel better" and "I hope you come back home tonight." It's all built around the imminent threat of loss and death. It's the world in which we have walked in puddles and there's always a puddle waiting to ruin our day again.

So what then? If human hope is frail, what then?

As Christians, our hope is a supernatural gift, often called a *Theological Virtue*. With this gift, we "desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the grace of the Holy Spirit" (CCC 1817). The secret, if we were to call it one, is *where* our gaze

is fixed. As we walk this path, where will you choose to focus? On the wet shoes? On a few metres ahead? Or on the promises of God?

As we enter Advent, the time of the year which Pope Benedict XVI calls the "spiritual season of hope par excellence", we have an opportunity to grow in this virtue of hope. God's chosen people, the Hebrews, begin every moment of prayer or praise by recalling what God has already done for them and what he has promised to do. How well do you know the promises of God? Can you remind yourself, without prompt, in the darkest hours when you have the wettest shoes?

Our way is the way of Jesus, the way of the Cross and we were promised, should we want to follow him, that there is no other way but Calvary. But, on the other side of that mountain top is a tomb with a stone rolled away and a risen Christ. When we lift our gaze with hope,

we see the empty tomb in the shadow of the Cross that was needed. This is the source of our hope – we, who have died with Christ, will indeed rise with him.

Jesus comes in the absolute frailty of a human Babe this Christmas. He begins his walk with the Father where we do. As we await our Saviour during this Advent, let's fix our eyes on the hope of God's promises and not on the wet shoes on our feet. ■

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*Over the next week, considering meditating on one of these promises each day and committing it to memory: Luke 18:27, Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 6:31-34, Romans 8:32, Philippians 4:6, Proverbs 18:10, Psalm 34:4*

*Peter Gilmore is a Faith Education Officer for the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Diocese of Wollongong*

# MY BIGGEST *Adventure*

BY DANIEL HOPPER &  
LORRAINE MCCARTHY

From the frozen tundras of Siberia to the hellish fires of a volcano in Guatemala, Bear Grylls knows adventure. He's crossed the North Atlantic in an inflatable boat and even climbed Mount Everest, but he's calling Alpha his biggest adventure yet. What would make the renowned survivalist, best-selling author and TV host, become the Alpha Ambassador in 2017 and the face of a transformative program of faith?

Bear's answer is simple, "For so many years I always just strived to be strong in myself. It was as if all I needed was me and my buddies and we'd be, like, invincible. But the truth is none of us are.

And I don't want to do this thing called life, I don't want to do it on my own.

It kind of feels as if my longing for this light inside is now stronger than my fear of what others might think. "Alpha was the best thing I ever did. It helped answer some huge questions and to find a simple empowering faith in my life.

"This faith inside is like a backbone, helping me stand tall and helping me be strong when I'm really up against it, facing those odds, whether it is on a mountain or stuck in some jungle, or just dealing with the storms of life. Sure I need that. But at heart my Christian faith says, 'I'm known, I'm known to Christ.'"





# ure

Alpha is a tool for evangelisation that is being used by thousands of Catholic parishes around the world to introduce people to the first proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ, otherwise known as the *Kerygma*:

“Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you, and now he is living at your side to enlighten, strengthen and free you.”

EVANGELII GAUDIUM, 164

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Alpha is a series of interactive sessions that explore the basics of the Christian faith in a friendly, open and informal environment. It is a parish tool for evangelisation based on welcome and hospitality, sharing and prayer, all in the midst of a caring parish setting. Each session includes a meal, a talk, and small group discussion, where no question is too simple and no answer is pre-packaged.

Alpha explores many questions such as: Is there more to life than this? Who is Jesus? Why did Jesus die? How can

I have Faith? Why and how do I pray? Why and how do I read the Bible? How does God guide us? How can I resist evil? Does God heal today? What about the Church and telling others?

Alpha was first developed by an Anglican Parish in London over thirty years ago and has been experienced by over 29 million people since. There are currently 84,000 courses running in 112 languages in 169 countries in all mainstream Christian denominations. It has been hailed by many Catholic cardinals, bishops, theologians, scholars, pastors, and leaders as an effective tool for awakening faith in people who are on the fringes of parish life, as well as faithful Catholics and those outside the faith.

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa, Preacher to the Papal Household, recently said, “All those who love Jesus love evangelisation, as well as everyone who takes their Christian vocation seriously – and this includes Christians of all denominations ...

**Alpha can do what has been, since the beginning, the most important job for a Christian – bringing people to Jesus ... the next step after building a first relationship with Jesus is of course what we call Catechesis.**

**Alpha was the best thing I ever did. It helped answer some huge questions and to find a simple empowering faith in my life.**

BEAR GRYLLS

“In my opinion, Alpha accomplishes an incredible task, in making people interested in faith and in making faith relevant.

“It is a wonderful method to introduce people to a first knowledge of faith in a way that is very appropriate to modern man ... One of the advantages of Alpha is that it focuses on the Kerygma.

“In the ancient Church, there was a clear distinction between the Kerygma and the Didache (the *Catechesis*). The Kerygma was the starting point of faith, and the Catechesis had to form the faith. But faith in itself blossoms only by hearing the Kerygma ...

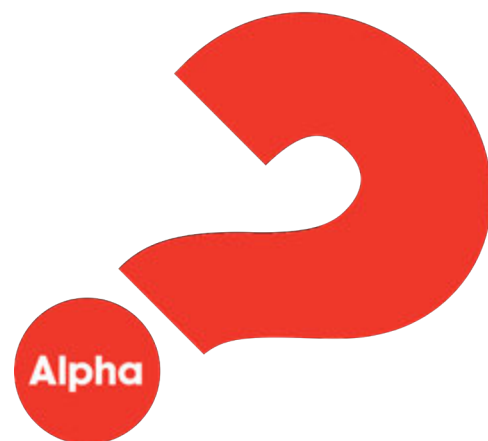
“The name is not the Alpha and Omega course, it's Alpha course, which means that Alpha is a beginning, an introduction ... It can bring people to a personal relationship with Jesus.”

*continued on next page ►*



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helping me stand  
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BEAR GRYLLS



Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna, is a contributor in the Alpha film series. Cardinal Schönborn said, "Alpha is for meeting Jesus. What I like in all that I have seen and heard about Alpha is the simplicity. For me, the Christian life has something to do with simplicity, friendship, closeness and joy. That's what I feel about Alpha and I think that's a sign that it works and that it's given from the Lord ...

"Alpha can do what has been, since the beginning, the most important job for a Christian – bringing people to Jesus ... the next step after building a first relationship with Jesus is of course what we call Catechesis. The Catechism is one tool to help with this formation."

This endorsement of the pre-catechumenate value of Alpha was reinforced by Cardinal Seán O'Malley, Archbishop of Boston, who said, "Many of our Catholic parishioners have benefited from Alpha by way of its building on their initial interest in the Church, as a pre-catechumenate experience, or for others, a renewal of their desire to more deeply understand and live their Catholic faith."

Alpha is a simple process that can be run by teams of lay people. Resources are available to download for free (after registering your course on the

[www.run.alpha.org.au](http://www.run.alpha.org.au) website) and Alpha Australia has a staff member who works specifically with Catholic parishes. Many dioceses are also keen to support parishes with training and advice as they see the potential that Alpha offers.

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CARDINAL SCHÖNBORN

Janette and David Willson have been running Alpha in their parish in Port Pirie, South Australia, for a number of years. Janette said in relation to their 2016 group, "On the first night we had just under 50 guests meet together along with 15 leaders and helpers. This was such a special night as both the leaders and helpers shared their personal Alpha journey. Week-by-week, as each

topic was presented, guests learnt to listen to the experiences and thoughts of others in their small groups as well as express their own. It's incredible to see the transformation of each of the guests. Looking back, this group seems so different to the individuals that had tentatively assembled at the Port Pirie Yacht Club for the Welcome Dinner.

"We have discovered that the experience of Alpha allows the individual to accept the call of Jesus. Over time we have witnessed people who have done Alpha accept ownership of their faith and step out to take on ministry roles and responsibilities within their parish."

Pope Francis is calling us to be more missionary in our approach, yet speaking of faith with others is not

something that always comes easily to us. Alpha helps a parish to become an evangelising community and is a proven tool for evangelisation. In Australia, an increasing number of Catholic parishes are running it. Alpha makes no assumptions about a person's level of knowledge or understanding of faith, so it is a way of reaching those who are disconnected from the Church, or who have never been to Church before.

Will you take up the challenge and join the many thousands of people who are using Alpha to reach a new generation with the message of Jesus?

Bishop Peter Ingham is encouraging parishes in our Diocese to consider working with the Parish Services Team to make Alpha a strategy for outreach and renewal. The resources are amazing and the process is a proven way of making faith relevant, especially to those who don't come to Church. To get started, have a discussion with your parish priest and then others in your parish who might want to be part of a team who share the Good News of a life with Jesus in his Church. ■

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*Contact either Jude Hennessy, 4222 2407 ([jude.hennessy@dow.org.au](mailto:jude.hennessy@dow.org.au)) or Darren McDowell 4222 2463 ([darren.mcdowell@dow.org.au](mailto:darren.mcdowell@dow.org.au)) to see how the Diocese can support your parish to draw those disconnected from faith into a relationship with Christ and your parish community.*

*Daniel Hopper is the Director of Media & Communications, Diocese of Wollongong*

*Lorraine McCarthy is the Alpha in a Catholic Context Co-ordinator in Australia.*



# NSW Government Sings the Praises of Catechists

BY JUDE HENNESSY

The valuable work of catechists in the Diocese of Wollongong was recently given great encouragement at a celebration of Special Religious Education (SRE) held at NSW Parliament House in Sydney on 15 November 2016. The event was hosted by the Inter-Church Commission on Religious Education in Schools. Education Minister, Mr Adrian Piccoli; the Shadow Minister, Mr Jihad Dib; Opposition Leader, Mr Luke Foley; and 26 other NSW Politicians joined a crowd of over 350 in the Strangers' Dining Room in Parliament House. They were joined by faith leaders including those from the Christian, Buddhist, Islamic, Hindu, Jewish and Bahai faiths.

In what was a powerful representation of unity in diversity, the celebration highlighted the valuable contribution SRE makes to the public education system. During the celebration, awards were presented to 15 individuals for the great contribution they make to SRE and the lives of students through the faith of their family.

In presenting the awards, Mr Piccoli said he supported the valuable place of SRE in the public education system and that this support was shared by the NSW Opposition. "The NSW Government supports the good work done by providers of SRE in our public schools. It is an important way in which children can learn about the values that are at the heart of the world's religions. I congratulate the award recipients for their enthusiasm and hard work."

Also supporting the event was the Shadow Minister for Education, Mr Jihad Dib, who said, "Having the opportunity to learn more about one's own religion is an important option for students and their parents. The availability of SRE in public schools contributes to our vibrant



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BISHOP PETER INGHAM

multicultural, multi-faith society. I commend the approved providers and many volunteers for their dedication and commitment."

CEO of Jewish Board of Deputies, Mr Vic Alhadeff, said "SRE provides a critical underpinning to the success of our multicultural, multi-faith society, and this event is a great opportunity to recognise the contribution the major faiths make to public education. It imbues students with understanding of their faith and tradition, and in so doing gives them a basis from which to embrace the world."

Our own Bishop Peter Ingham attended the event with a contingent of around 30 representatives from the Diocese of Wollongong. Bishop Peter spoke with numerous politicians and other

faith providers in his role as the Bishop responsible for collaborating with government and the Catholic Conference of Religious Educators in State Schools (NSW-ACT). Bishop Peter said, "It is wonderful to be able to have dialogue with so many politicians and religious leaders from across the major faiths and to celebrate their achievements while highlighting the fact that the Catholic Church sees 90,000 of the 210,000 students who attend SRE in schools each week with our 5,000 volunteer catechists."

It was wonderful that the contribution of our catechists was highlighted so powerfully by both the major political parties in NSW. Put simply, they were full of praise for the contribution our catechists make to public education. Along with all the members of our faith communities, I thank our catechists for responding to the call to *give the gift they were given* as we look ahead prayerfully and enthusiastically to this evangelising work in 2017. ■

*To find out how to become a catechist in your parish please contact Cindy Oliver on 02 4640 8550 or [cindy.oliver@dow.org.au](mailto:cindy.oliver@dow.org.au)*

*Jude Hennessy is the Director of CCD & Evangelisation and Director of Parish Services, Diocese of Wollongong*

## PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

EDITED BY DANIEL HOPPER

It has been almost two years since the founding Director of CatholicCare Wollongong, Ms Kathleen McCormack AM, was appointed by Pope Francis to the 17-member Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors (PCPM), to advise the Pope on the protection of children and vulnerable adults in the Church.

Kath recently sat down with Journey Catholic Radio for an in-depth interview upon her return from the PCPM's September 2016 Plenary in Rome. You can listen to the full interview at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au)

**What was your first year on the PCPM like?**

It was a steep learning curve. I was flying across the world to meet and work with people I had never met. On meeting each one of the PCPM members at the start of the first Plenary, I was struck by their energy. They came from all walks of life. Among the group we had two survivors of abuse, professors, a former prime minister, a baroness, clergy, a child psychologist who is a married man with five children, and two religious sisters from Africa – all with a common aim to care and protect children in our future.

**What was it like to meet Pope Francis and to what extent is he involved in the oversight of the PCPM?**

Cardinal Seán O'Malley (the Chair of the PCPM) takes a report from each Plenary meeting directly to Pope Francis and lets him know what we are doing. I believe that one-on-one contact with the Holy Father is why we have had some good outcomes so far.

Cardinal O'Malley is a most pastoral man and very easy-going. Being introduced by Cardinal O'Malley to

Pope Francis was one of the most humbling experiences of my life. The Pope is so down-to-earth and he has the ability to speak to you as if you are the only person he has met that day. He is very interested in the Royal Commission in Australia and assured me that the survivors and families of sexual abuse were very much in his prayers. He also assured me that he prays that the findings of the Royal Commission will help the bishops and religious leaders to bring justice, healing and hope. He then asked that I pray for him!

**[The Holy Father] is very interested in the Royal Commission in Australia and assured me that the survivors and families of sexual abuse were very much in his prayers.**

**In June 2016, Pope Francis released his Apostolic Letter, "As a Loving Mother". What is it about and did the PCPM have any influence on its development?**

The PCPM was really encouraged that the Holy Father released this document. It is the answer to the PCPM's

calling for greater accountability of Church leaders. It was addressed with the establishment of a panel of legal experts to advise the Pope on removing a religious superior or bishop from office for failing to protect minors and vulnerable adults from sexual abuse.

The origins of the title "As a Loving Mother" is a beautiful story and shows how much Pope Francis is listening to the sufferings of survivors around the world. Fr Hans Zollner SJ, who is on the PCPM, told me that a survivor met with the Holy Father and he brought with him a picture of the *loving Mother looking over Jesus*. He told the Holy Father that he didn't have a loving mother looking over him, and we now understand this is why the Holy Father called the document "As a Loving Mother". Fr Zollner also told me that the Holy Father keeps the picture on the window sill in his room.

**It has strengthened my faith. I really couldn't do what I do without prayer and reflection. I am also encouraged greatly by standing in solidarity with survivors and witnessing the hope that many of them have.**

KATH MCCORMACK

**Have you been involved in keeping the PCPM informed of the progress of the Royal Commission in Australia?**

Yes, I've been able to communicate a whole lot of what's been happening in Australia. At the last Plenary meeting in September, I organised for Mr Francis Sullivan, the CEO of the Truth Justice and Healing Council (TJHC) to Skype with the PCPM for over two hours to give a real history of what's been going on in Australia: the nature of the abuse, the extent within the Church in Australia, and what we can expect from the Royal Commission's report to be handed-down in February 2017. Francis also spoke to the PCPM about the research that the TJHC has been doing.

What's interesting is that Cardinal O'Malley had never met Francis Sullivan before, but was so impressed with what he had to say, that he recently met up with him in person in Boston to further seek his input. I agree with Cardinal O'Malley's assessment of Francis Sullivan. I had been fortunate to work with him for many years when he was with Catholic Healthcare Australia. I believe he is a prophet. There are not many people that could have steered us through the amount of turmoil we've experience in the last four years as well as he has.

On the topic of Australian developments, I presented at the Australian Catholic





Bishops Conference this week (November 2016) where they announced the creation of Catholic Professional Standards (CPS) Limited, a new independent company commencing in early 2017 to develop, audit and report on compliance with professional standards to protect children and vulnerable people. It will be responsible for setting the highest national standards to ensure the safety of individuals involved with the Catholic Church in Australia. A Board of Directors is currently being established and the Board will operate and function independently of the Church.

**I understand that a large part of the work of the PCPM involves training various groups and dicasteries in the Vatican.**

This is one of the biggest breakthroughs the PCPM has had – that we’re on the agenda with the dicasteries in Rome. We’ve been successful in raising awareness through seminars and training. We are also developing

universal guidelines to be disseminated throughout the world. It’s not enough for countries to comply with the minimum, we need to have guidelines which provide a very strong framework for safety and

**This is one of the biggest breakthroughs the Pontifical Commission has had – that we’re on the agenda with the dicasteries in Rome. We’ve been successful in raising awareness through seminars and training.**

prevention. In the area of formation, we are carrying out research in collaboration with the Centre for Child Protection (CCP) at the Gregorian University in Rome to ensure the Church has a sound development of human formation for the clergy and religious so that they can effectively meet the duty of safeguarding and protection.

Recently, for the first time, Cardinal O’Malley, Monsignor Oliver (Secretary to the PCPM), Fr Zollner (President of the CCP) and Mrs Marie Collins (a survivor of abuse), spoke on behalf of the PCPM to the Congregation for the Clergy. Marie gave a beautiful testimony; Fr Zollner spoke on formation in seminaries; Fr O’Malley spoke on the work of the PCPM; and Mons Oliver was there to answer questions on Canon Law.

They also addressed a group of 150 new bishops who had gathered in Rome for the week, including two new bishops from Australia, on guidelines such as screening, reporting and training. The feedback from these sessions has been great.

**The Pope and the PCPM have been listening to the voices of survivors of sexual abuse. How much did this have to do with the Pope’s announcement of the Worldwide Day of Prayer for Sexual Abuse Survivors?**

The request for the Worldwide Day of Prayer came from a survivor in Canada who has worked with fellow survivors and their advocates. She pleaded that the Catholic Church would listen to and focus on hope and healing. Therefore, one of the first recommendations of the PCPM, and taken-up by Pope Francis, was the Worldwide Day of Prayer for Sexual Abuse Survivors. The purpose is to unite the Universal Church to pray for survivors, to help heal, and proactively protect children from sexual abuse. The PCPM believes that prayer is one part of the healing process for survivors and the community of believers. Public prayer is also an important way of consciousness raising in the Church.

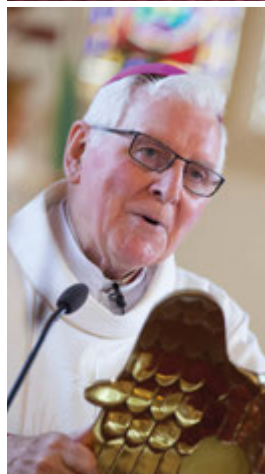
It is my understanding that with the Royal Commission handing down its final report early next year, the Day of Prayer in Australia will happen later in 2017.

**Has your work on the PCPM had a negative impact on your faith journey?**

No. Quite the opposite. It has strengthened my faith. I really couldn’t do what I do without prayer and reflection. I am also encouraged greatly by standing in solidarity with survivors and witnessing the hope that many of them have. ■

*Daniel Hopper is the Director of Media & Communications, Diocese of Wollongong*

# Farewell, Good Shepherd



**Fr Vince was “user-friendly” as a pastor, he had “the smell of the sheep” (as Pope Francis recommends to us clergy), a friend to all. He was grounded and he had the common touch.**

BISHOP PETER INGHAM

On Thursday 10 November 2016, the Diocese farewelled a true man of God, Fr Vince Whiteman – much beloved founding priest of the former Sacred Heart Parish, Warilla. St Francis Xavier Cathedral was packed to capacity as Fr Vince’s family and friends joined Bishop Peter Ingham and the clergy of the Diocese in celebrating the life of one of the true great priests of the Diocese. Below are excerpts from Kathleen McCormack’s Eulogy and Bishop Peter Ingham’s Homily given during the Pontifical Funeral Mass for Fr Vince Whiteman.

## Kath McCormack

Kath: What are you doing in your parish?

Fr Vince: We’re building a hall.

Kath: What will you use the hall for?

Fr Vince: To have Housie.

Kath: Why Housie?

Fr Vince: To pay for the hall.

This was my first conversation with Fr Vince Whiteman.

It was 1979 and I had visited his Parish, the Sacred Heart at Warilla, to explain my new role with Centacare (now CatholicCare) and discuss how we could work with them. Little did I know that this conversation would be the first of many to-the-point, down-to-earth and honest conversations between us, and the start of a great friendship which sees me standing here today, 37 years later, privileged to be giving Vince’s eulogy.

Vince went on to tell me all the things that were happening in the

Sacred Heart Parish. He said “Kath, I am the priest here but I am only one member of the Church community. I have lots of good people around me. They do all the work.” Vince made it very clear that no one person can have all the knowledge and skills to be able to address each task in ministry well. He encouraged others to bring their knowledge and skills forward and integrate them into a harmonious whole. As a result, the parishioners had a real sense of belonging, and there were groups of volunteers everywhere.

Vince’s easy cooperative manner gave expression to the Gospel. “Go out to the world and tell the Good News.” I am sure many of you here today will never forget the way Vince read and proclaimed the Gospel!

He was a true leader and he walked with me in the early development of CatholicCare. He was a member of the CatholicCare Advisory Council for many years. Vince hardly ever missed a Council meeting, and when he gave advice, it was profound and all listened.





After he retired as a Parish Priest, he became a resident priest at St Michael's at Thirroul. He loved his life there too and the people loved him. He went to painting classes, played crib and attended all the parish activities. One of the real loves of Vince's life was his beloved Sydney Swans AFL team. He enjoyed the games and the company of the people he went with.

Recently, he shared with me how fortunate he felt to have so many loving people around him when he became ill. I told him that he was dying how he had lived, well loved. Since I have retired from CatholicCare, I have been on the Pontifical Commission for Protection of Minors working with Pope Francis. Vince used to love to hear stories about my work in Rome. He wanted to know, "What was Pope Francis like when you met him?" I said, "He is just like you Vince, very down-to-earth and humble." He cried.

Fr Vince, in the words of those who knew and loved you, you were kind-hearted, friendly, compassionate, humorous and humble – a "Class Act".

## Bishop Peter Ingham

Think of Vince's ministry over 53 years: the countless Masses celebrated, the Word proclaimed and preached – didn't he proclaim the Gospel well; his passion and clarity arrested the listener, the sorrowful people he comforted, those he guided, the poor he helped, the babies baptised, the confessions heard, the marriage unions witnessed, the sick anointed, the eyes closed in death, the comfort given, the dead buried. Vince's vocation, his priesthood, his ministrations were what counted, that his life was justified in the way he lived the priesthood.

Fr Vince had great loyalty to our Diocese, to CatholicCare, to the Warilla Parishioners. Vince knew how to connect with people and accept them as they were: he was a gracious man for others who wouldn't want to impose himself on anyone. Fr Vince was "user-friendly" as a pastor, he had "the smell of the sheep" (as Pope Francis recommends to us clergy), a friend to all. He was grounded and he had the common touch.

Vince's deep faith in God and his strong allegiance to the Church and the Sacraments, his commitment to the priesthood, his ability to blend this faith with life: that is what made Vince so special.

So let us not so much mourn Vince's death as celebrate his homecoming, his birth to eternal life. We give thanks to God for Vince's life dedicated to the family of the Body of Christ; we give thanks to God for the example Vince's goodness, generosity and consistency gives us; and we give thanks to God for the lessons that we have learned from Vincent Whiteman.

May Vince's gentle soul rest contentedly in the happiness of God's home where Jesus, "the way, the truth, and the life", has gone ahead to prepare a place for him and for each and every one of us. May Fr Vincent Whiteman rest in peace and receive the reward of his goodness.

Amen.

# Let your *light* shine

*Bringing the Gospel to public school students through intergenerational evangelisation*



PHOTOS: DANIEL HOPPER

EDITED BY LISA  
METCALFE

In 2013, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) in the Diocese of Wollongong set up a program to encourage Catholic high school students to participate in the proclamation of the Good News to our young Catholic students in Government primary schools. In response, Holy Spirit College Bellambi, St Michael's Parish Thirroul, and Thirroul Public Primary School have developed a wonderful partnership that is building youth skills in evangelisation and providing primary school students with great role models.

As part of the program, student catechists from Holy Spirit College have partnered-up with two experienced catechists from St Michael's Parish, Mr and Mrs Bob and Anne Bower, as they visit the Catholic students at Thirroul Public Primary School each week.

Bob and Anne – active members of St Michael's Parish since 1971 – were honoured at the recent Annual Catechist Mass on 12 November with the inaugural *Bishop Peter*

**Since 2016, Bob and Anne have successfully mentored over 40 Holy Spirit College students to become student catechists proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ to Catholic students at Thirroul Public Primary School.**

*Ingham Evangelii Gaudium Award* to acknowledge their faithful mentoring and support of student catechists.

It all began when Bob and Anne were “tapped on the shoulder” by Fr Lawrence McCarthy and asked to join the Thirroul Catechist Team. Since 2007, they have been an integral part of the Catechist Ministry, teaching from Kinder through to Year 6 at Thirroul and Scarborough Public Primary Schools. In 2013, Bob and Anne pioneered the student catechist program when they began guiding Year 10 Students from Holy Spirit College to develop as student catechists.

Since 2016, Bob and Anne have successfully mentored over 40 Holy

Spirit College students to become student catechists proclaiming the love of Jesus Christ to Catholic students at Thirroul Public Primary School.

When the vagaries of sickness, exams or other school-related activities occasionally interrupted the continuity in student participation, Bob and Anne persisted with patience and understanding. Their kindness and compassion, as well as excellent teaching methodology, has allowed so many student catechists to be encouraged, learn, grow and flourish in their faith under their warm, generous and instructive methods.

I recently sat down with Bob and Anne and asked them about their experience as catechists and pioneering the student catechist program.

## **What motivated you to become catechists?**

Bob: Honestly, we were “tapped on the shoulder” by a much loved and respected parish priest, Fr Lawrie McCarthy, who said, “We desperately need catechists. Can you help?”





Anne: We did however recognise the need. As recently retired teachers, we had some useful skills and a love of teaching. Bob was more wary of the task ahead as his previous teaching was only with adults in the TAFE system.

Bob: Well I did have two very challenging students amongst my first class. It was Carol, a very experienced and helpful Anglican SRE teacher, who “rescued” me and provided me with strategies to gradually gain some classroom compliance. The training course provided by Mrs Leonie Green, CCD Coordinator at that time, was a huge confidence booster. That support from CCD was very important.

Anne: We have both also personally gained a lot in our own spiritual development from the Level 2 and 3 courses offered by the CCD.

### **In your nine years as catechists, do you have a most memorable teaching moment?**

Anne: The surprisingly insightful answers that pupils in years 1 and 2 can give always amaze me. They take in what they are hearing, reading or

### **Don't worry that you might not be good enough. Trust that God is with you and let the Holy Spirit be your guide.**

doing so wholeheartedly. With Year 5 and 6 students, it is great to interact with them when they show greater interest and want to know more about the topics.

Bob: A tough former student and his mother crossed the road and he said, “Mum, meet my Scripture Teacher from last year!” That was pretty special.

Anne: Being a catechist has provided real opportunities to increase our own faith and knowledge of Christ's teaching.

Bob: It has helped us to be better and more committed Catholics.

### **Having student catechists in the classroom and coordinating their input into the lessons is extra work for you each week. What makes this extra effort worthwhile?**

Bob: The student catechists are wonderful. It is no chore to introduce them into the class, firstly by observation, then gradually an increase in their participation. Their enthusiasm is inspiring and the children respond readily with them.

Anne: It is wonderful to see high school students showing an interest in wanting to work with young students and sharing their faith. Their interest makes it an easy task. It is also great having the extra help in the classroom! We have some great future teachers there.

Bob: Volunteer drivers play an important part in this program picking up and delivering the students to and from school. It is part of what makes it so successful.

### **What would you say to people thinking about becoming a catechist?**

Bob and Anne: Thank you! What you are doing is blessed. Don't be afraid to seek advice. The first full year or two are the hardest until you settle into the role. You can always ease your way in as a helper to start. The CCD team provides excellent training and great resources. You are never alone. Don't worry that you might not be good enough. Trust that God is with you and let the Holy Spirit be your guide. ■

*God doesn't call the equipped, he equips the called. To find out how to become a catechist in your parish please contact Cindy Oliver on 02 4640 8550 or [cindy.oliver@dow.org.au](mailto:cindy.oliver@dow.org.au)*

*Lisa Metcalfe is a Support Officer for the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Diocese of Wollongong*



# Can do Camtu

an interview with Camtu Pham

BY DEBBIE GATES

**W**e continue our series in Journey of profiling the many wonderful volunteers in our Diocese who work tirelessly behind the scenes. Camtu Pham resides in our Wollongong region and is a member of Lumen Christi Catholic Parishes Vietnamese Community located in Fairy Meadow. When Camtu arrived in Australia from Vietnam in 1984, she could not speak a word of English. Today, her many achievements include being an author, teacher, university lecturer, international speaker, entrepreneur, board member, and most importantly – wife and mother to two young sons.

Camtu got her start as an entrepreneur selling pineapples to classmates as a 12 year-old schoolgirl in Vietnam. She later expanded her business by stocking lollies and sweet potatoes. Camtu is the seventh of eight children. In 1978, two of her brothers and one of her sisters were

forced to flee Vietnam for Australia. After settling in Wollongong, they sponsored their parents, Camtu, and her younger sister to join them in 1984. Camtu recalls many challenges when she arrived in Australia as a teenager, including living on a diet of pies at high school because “pie” was the only word the ladies in the canteen could understand her saying!

Camtu is the CEO of CleverLINK, a company she owns that supports businesses with e-business presence and marketing services. She currently serves as a member of the Diocesan Finance Council, having previously served as a member of the Catholic Development Fund (CDF) Advisory Council, and has been a board member of WEA Illawarra and President of the Corrimal Chamber of Commerce.

I recently sat down with Camtu to talk about her work in the Diocese.

## **How did you become involved with these councils?**

Initially, CleverLink had been contracted to do some work for the CDF around the same time as my book launch in 2004. When the CDF Advisory Council was looking for a new member with a similar skill-set to mine, the CDF General Manager, Tony Sanderson, recommended me to the Bishop for the position. At the time, I had only recently given birth to my first-born son, but I really wanted to accept the role and represent the voice of young parents, females and people from non-English speaking backgrounds. So I joined the Advisory Council and served for the next six years. After my tenure was finished, I volunteered as a board member of WEA Illawarra and led the Corrimal Chamber of Commerce for more than three years. In 2015, Bishop Peter asked me to join his Diocesan Finance Council. The timing was right for me so I said yes and, once again, I am back serving my Bishop!





PHOTO: DANIEL HOPPER

**I really wanted to accept the role and represent the voice of young parents, females and people from non-English speaking backgrounds.**

### **What have you learnt since becoming involved with these councils?**

I am now in a position where I have a bird's-eye view of the Diocese and I recognise that the knowledge that comes from this is a privilege to be taken seriously. The more I learn, the more I appreciate the huge responsibility that Bishop Peter has, and the immense amount of work that he, our clergy, religious, and lay staff and volunteers do.

### **What are some outcomes that have happened under your "watch" that you are proud of?**

I was on the CDF Advisory Council when the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) happened. This council ensures that investments made with the CDF are reinvested wisely to protect depositors' funds and also ensure that the income earned from these investments can be distributed to continue the work of the various ministries of the Church in the Diocese of Wollongong. I am proud to have been part of the team that safely managed these investments and minimised the impact of the GFC on our valuable work. I was also instrumental in the creation of two key and essential diocesan roles. As a result, we have Daniel Hopper (who took this photo) and Debbie Gates (who is now interviewing me!)

**I am proud to have been part of the team that safely managed these investments and minimised the impact of the GFC on our valuable work.**

### **What is your vision for the Diocese?**

To build on the work that is already being done to improve communication, encourage youth leadership and expand our involvement with our wider community, especially the Catholic business community.

### **Do you have a favourite story to tell about your time on these councils?**

I remember joining the CDF Advisory Council in August 2004, eight weeks after giving birth to my eldest son. I reviewed all the documents, was prepared for, and attended all the meetings. One day, the meeting went longer than usual and I had to leave to go home and nurse my son. It was the first time that I had ever needed to use such an excuse. The only person at that meeting that was hard on me for using that excuse was me! I have never forgotten that moment. Looking back, I think that it was a beautiful moment.

**"My hands were empty when I come to this world. Now anything that I have, is a gift from God to me."**

VIETNAMESE HYMN

### **Your "God" moment?**

There is a Vietnamese hymn that features these inspiring words, "My hands were empty when I came into this world. Now anything that I have is a gift from God to me."

My "God" moment was when these words connected with me and I recognised how God has been so generous to me, my family and our community. I want to be generous by giving of my time, my expertise and my resources to make his kingdom a better place.

### **Your "claim to fame" moment?**

One day Bishop Peter saw me volunteering at the Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School Fete in Fairy Meadow. I was selling spring rolls. Addressing me, he said to those around us, "This lady can sell more than spring rolls; she could sell the Sydney Harbour Bridge!" I replied, "I will take that as a compliment Bishop!" He replied with a smile, "It was meant to be!"

On the domestic front, according to my boys, I am a cool and fun mum because I can, "Fix things, teach them some neat tricks, join in when they play and I can understand their jokes." I will take that as approval from them, while I can!

### **A "bucket list" item?**

Two come to mind. To travel to Europe, Brazil and Asia with my family and to find the time to write and publish more books. ■

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*Debbie Gates is the Director of Development and Community Engagement, Diocese of Wollongong*

# CHRISTMAS ART

*Students deliver a powerful message*

BY JO KENNY

Catholic primary school students from across the Diocese have again produced stunning works of art for the annual *Christmas Story Art Exhibition and Competition*. This event, a wonderful celebration of the spirituality and creativity of Year 5 and 6 students, highlights the role of the arts in Religious Education and provides an opportunity for the students to reflect upon their understanding and interpretation of the Scripture of Advent and Christmas from the Religious Education Curriculum.

This year, 53 artworks were chosen for exhibition in the Wollongong City Art Gallery. These were selected from over 160 shortlisted entries, which were in turn selected from 1,000 entries from students across the Diocese of Wollongong.

An expert panel of judges, including Mr John Monteleone, Director of the Wollongong Art Gallery, and Mr John Charadia from Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong, had the difficult job of narrowing-down the finalists to 17. These artworks were shipped to Sydney at the conclusion of the exhibition, to be included in the Archdiocese of Sydney's Christmas Story Art Exhibition, which opened on the First Sunday of Advent in St Mary's Cathedral Crypt, and an additional three artists from this group received major awards on the night.

## Major Awards

The winner of the "Bishop's Choice Award" was **Montanna Taff** from **Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Parish Primary School Rosemeadow**. In Montanna's reflection of her work, "**The Journey**", she explained that she wanted to reflect the amazing strength Mary required to endure such an uncomfortable and long journey under such difficult conditions.

The "Director of Schools' Christmas Story Award" went to **Chloe Balmaceda** from **Mary Immaculate Catholic Parish Primary School Eagle Vale**, for her work "**The King is Coming**". Her artwork portrays a wonderfully kaleidoscopic starry night sky, each of the colours symbolising different emotions the journey of life leads us through; the light colours highlighting the bright and joyful moments; the blues and blacks for times where life is complicated and our faith and courage are called upon.

The winner of the "CatholicCare Star of Hope Award", **Lars Price** from **St Joseph's Catholic Parish Primary School Bulli**, was inspired by the plight of refugees past and present. He created his work, "**The Journey of Many**", after reading *Flight* (2016 Children's Book Council of Australia Picture Book of the Year) – a timeless story that explores one family's perilous journey, but brings with it a message of hope.

Congratulations to the student artists, their families and teachers who supported them, and all involved in the organisation of the exhibition. ■

## MAJOR AWARDS

- A *Bishop's Choice Award*  
**Montanna Taff**  
OLHC, Rosemeadow
- B *Director's Christmas Story Award*  
**Chloe Balmaceda**  
Mary Immaculate, Eagle Vale
- C *CatholicCare Star of Hope Award*  
**Lars Price**  
St Joseph's, Bulli

## YEAR 5 FINALISTS

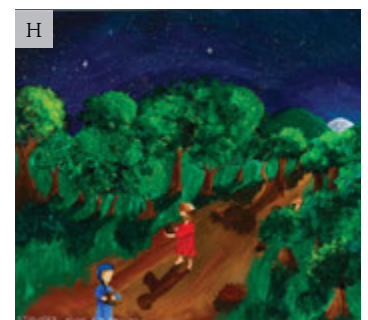
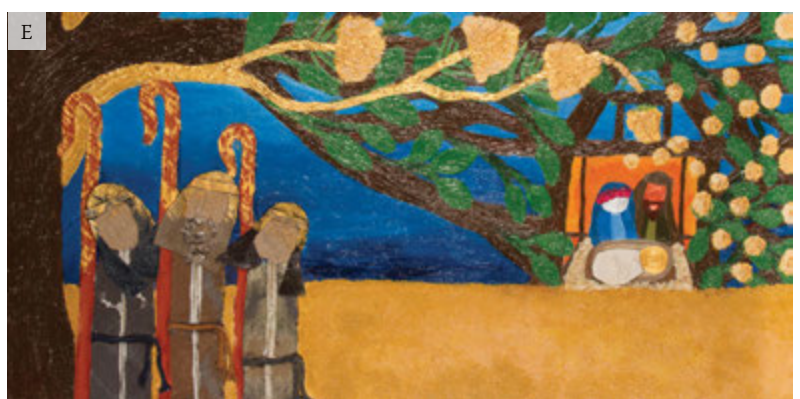
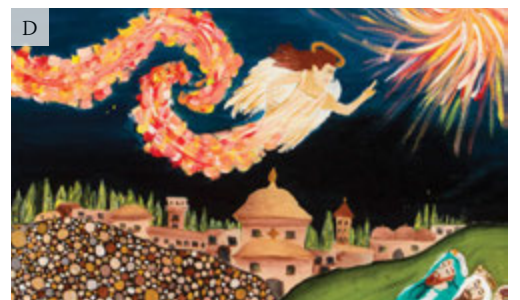
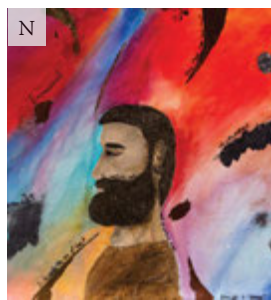
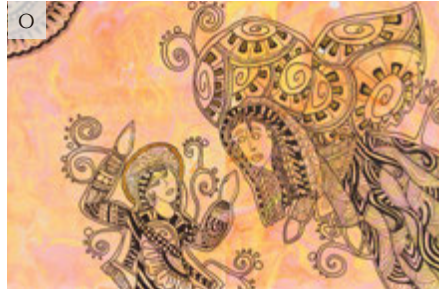
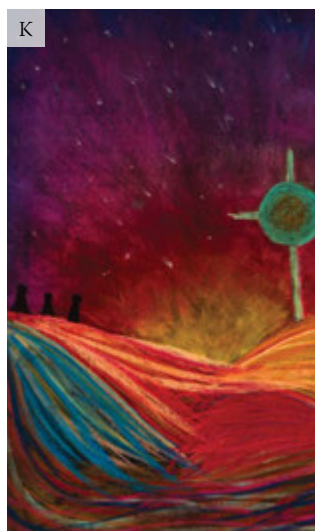
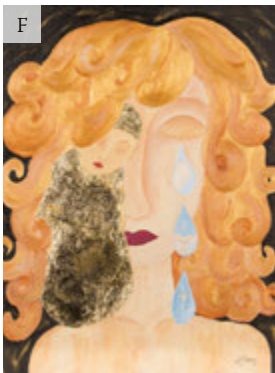
- D **Zoe Wegener**  
St Paul's, Camden
- E **Ilaria Ramirez**  
St Columbkille's, Corrimal
- F **Abbey Clancy**  
St Paul's, Camden
- G **Isabelle Van Akker**  
St Joseph's, Bulli
- H **Kya Stawski**  
St John, Dapto
- I **Jack Cordell**  
Ss Peter and Paul, Kiama

## YEAR 6 FINALISTS

- J **Peggy Holmwood**  
St Thomas Aquinas, Bowral
- K **Sradha Rajesh**  
St Brigid's, Gwynneville
- L **Kayne Booker**  
Holy Cross, Helensburgh
- M **Marco Padovano**  
St Michael's, Mittagong
- N **Grace Milross**  
St Columbkille's, Corrimal
- O **Jillian O'Connell**  
St Thomas Aquinas, Bowral
- P **Stella Barahona**  
St Paul's, Camden
- Q **Cooper O'Neill**  
Holy Cross, Helensburgh

*Jo Kenny is the Education Officer – Primary Religious Education, Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong*









# doing things differently

BY JUDE HENNESSY

**I**t has been an amazing year for Youth Ministry in the Diocese of Wollongong. The collaboration between the Diocesan Youth Coordinator, Mr Seth Harsh, and other key groups looking to give young people an encounter with Christ and his Church in new vibrant ways, has seemingly started to bear fruit. This has been most evident in the reaction of young people to some amazing events in the Diocese and the growing numbers of committed youth attending faith-based events.

## Scratching the Surface

“I’ve been really heartened by the openness of young people in our schools, youth groups, camps and retreats to engage with and be transformed by good formation and experiences of prayer where they encounter the presence of God,” said Seth. “When you scratch the surface with young people, you come to see that the offerings of our modern world are not satisfying their deepest desires, and the Church has the answer to their quest for meaning and fulfilment in the overwhelming love of the person of Jesus.”

**When you scratch the surface with young people, you come to see that the offerings of our modern world are not satisfying their deepest desires, and the Church has the answer to their quest for meaning and fulfilment in the overwhelming love of the person of Jesus.**

## Committed Youth Ministry Partners

In 2016, the Diocesan Youth Office commenced the implementation of a vibrant vision for youth ministry that is enabling other key contributors to collaborate in bringing young people to a personal relationship with God. The Diocese is really fortunate to have many great people in our schools, Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong (CEDoW), the Youth Mission Team (YMT) and The Catholic Guy Team in the Macarthur region, who are all committed to youth ministry in the Diocese.

One of the biggest achievements in the last 12 months has been refining and narrowing the vision for youth ministry to focus on providing opportunities for encounters with the presence of God for young people in schools and then endeavouring to draw them to involvement in events and groups in regional settings where they can be further formed in faith and nurtured by fellowship with each other.

## Not coming to Church? Let’s go to them!

“The reality is simple. We have very few young people regularly attending Church, so our first point of contact is to go to them in schools, present the basic message that God loves them; that God will fill their biggest needs and Jesus and his Church wants to walk with them to make their lives vibrant and full of meaning. From there, we hope to attract them to come and hear more at twilight retreats, school holiday camps, diocesan events and youth groups.

“We have made a good start this year with the implementation of lunch-time concerts in Catholic Secondary Schools. We turn up with our purpose-built youth ministry trailer, lower





PHOTOS: DANIEL HOPPER

the stage and put on a concert with a message. It's probably stating the obvious that young people love music, and so using that medium we've been able to put on a concert that delivers a message about how faith and God makes their lives so much better. The fact of the matter is too, that the people who deliver this message are awesome, great 'musos' for sure, but authentic and contemporary witnesses to young people about the power of God's love," said Seth.

### School Encounter Events and Twilight Retreats

A key reason for the lunchtime concerts offered to schools is to develop interest in and enthusiasm for school encounter events, such as our after-school twilight retreats, that draw on the skills of the Office of the Bishop (OOB), YMT, school and CEDoW staff. These events go deeper with young people, utilising music, games, testimony, small groups and prayer to give them an encounter with God. Seth says, "Our faith isn't an ideology, it is a relationship with the Risen Christ and the events have been called 'Encounter' because that is what Pope Francis is asking us to bring people to,

especially young people, an encounter with the Holy Spirit. We want them to feel something – God's presence – and from that point hopefully draw them into deeper relationship with Jesus by remaining in contact with them, inviting them to camps and other events, and from there back to parish life and the Sacraments."

### Peer-to-Peer Ministry

It has been encouraging seeing the number of young people in schools who are already very committed to a personal walk with Christ. Seth said, "It's been great to be able to provide them with some basic formation so they become faith leaders and witnesses in their schools." This is a key long-term goal that the OOB has been working-on with schools since 2015 and it culminated this year with a great day of formation at the St Francis Xavier Cathedral precinct Wollongong with the OOB, YMT, Sam Clear and Sr Hilda Scott OSB all providing input. We continue to be encouraged that as 2016 comes to a close, another 70 young people are about to commence the process of training to work alongside our parish catechists to share their faith with young people in Government primary schools in 2017.

**The reality is simple. We have very few young people regularly attending Church, so our first point of contact is to go to them in schools, present the basic message that God loves them; that God will fill their biggest needs and Jesus and his Church wants to walk with them to make their lives vibrant and full of meaning.**

### World Youth Day 2016

World Youth Day was another key event in 2016, with a group of 25 people, mainly young teachers from our schools, accompanying Bishop Peter Ingham to Poland for a few weeks of celebrations and formation, and to be challenged by Pope Francis to be powerful witnesses to the world in their own time and culture. Some of these staff have returned very committed to providing young people with experiences of faith and community that attracts them back to Church by working with diocesan initiatives.

*continued on next page ►*





## Youth Mission Team

The Wollongong YMT has had a huge year in 2016 coordinating and running:

- Retreats and reflection days in our Catholic schools
- Weekly iSTAND Youth Group Nights at the Xavier Centre Wollongong
- Weekly soccer hang outs
- Brotherhood and sisterhood prayer
- iSTAND Weekend Camps during school holidays
- Assisting at twilight events with Seth and the Catholic Music Revolution band
- Catechesis seminars for Government schools

Ministering to approximately 4,000 young people within the Diocese has not just been busy, it's also been fruitful. At a recent school reflection day at John Therry Catholic High School, Rosemeadow, a Year 11 student said, "I was inspired by the grace of God in all of the Team Members. Their stories, connections, dramas and songs helped me realise and reflect on who I am as a person and how much love God has to give." All things going to plan, the Diocese hopes to establish a similar weekly youth group in the Macarthur region in 2017.

Over 100 new young people have also been attending the iSTAND Youth Group Nights for 14 to 18 year olds at the Xavier Centre (Wollongong) on Friday nights, with inspiring talks, music and games coordinated by

Miss Tara Hennessy from YMT in cooperation with the Diocese. iSTAND provides solid Catholic formation to students who want to grow deeper in their Catholic faith. Tara said, "It's quite obvious that these young people have a hunger to talk about and be formed in the stuff that really matters. The genuine friendships that have grown sees them really supporting and challenging each other in their faith. A bunch of them now run their own lunch-time group called 'weSTAND' at Holy Spirit College, Bellambi, where they talk about faith issues and pray together.

"We have also been blown away by the attendance and response to our three-day iSTAND camps during the school holidays in 2016, and I know the Diocese is looking to ensure these cater for an even bigger number of young people in 2017."

For information on our 2017 calendar of events, please contact our Team Manager at [wollongong@ymt.com.au](mailto:wollongong@ymt.com.au).

## Much to do in 2017

In many ways, 2016 has simply seen the commencement of a number of youth initiatives that will be consolidated in 2017. The weekly Sunday night 5.30pm Youth Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral Wollongong followed by the over 18's young adult gathering will continue to grow, with plans for Youth Alpha to run in this and hopefully other locations. A new YMT will commence their work in the Diocese in February 2017, building on the great work done in 2016.

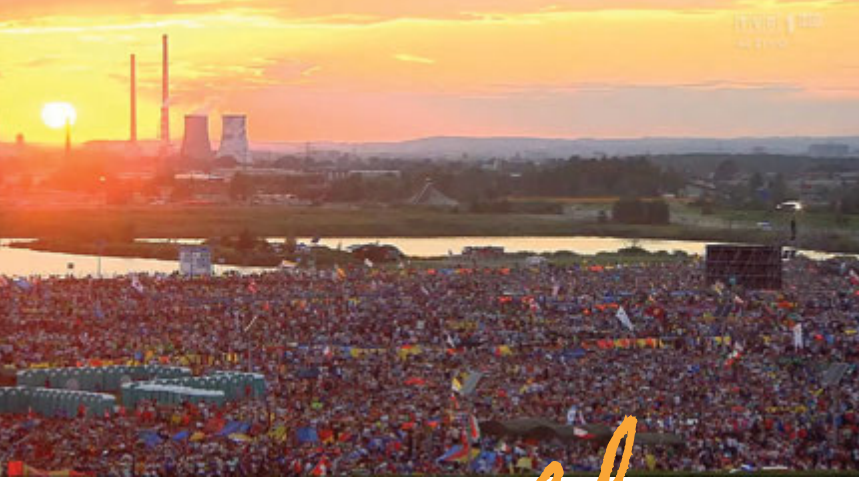
The biannual "Light to the Nations" Easter celebration run by the Missionaries of God's Love will once again be held in the Diocese, with up to 1,000 young people and families expected to gather at Chevalier College Bowral for the Easter Triduum ceremonies. For many, this event has been an experience of faith that has changed their life and it is hoped that many young people from the Diocese will attend next year. In December 2017, the Australian Catholic Youth Festival will come to Sydney with around 12,000 young people expected to attend, and hopefully a very solid contingent from the Diocese of Wollongong. In many ways this is expected to be a mini-World Youth Day experience that powerfully presents the basic but profound message of the Gospel clearly to young people.

## Get involved

There's a heap of wonderful stuff happening for young people in the Church in the Diocese of Wollongong, much more than can be mentioned in this article. To stay connected and know what is coming up, visit [www.cymw.org.au](http://www.cymw.org.au). ■

*If you are passionate about your faith and think you've got what it takes to help nurture the faith of young people, the Diocesan Youth Office is always keen to speak to willing and capable volunteers. Contact Seth Harsh on 4222 2460 or [seth.harsh@dow.org.au](mailto:seth.harsh@dow.org.au)*





CATHOLIC EDUCATION

# A Mighty *Flame* Follows a Tiny Spark

BY MEGHANN DAVIS

Embarking on a momentous journey of the heart, and joined by my fellow pilgrims from the Diocese of Wollongong, I travelled to Kraków, the home of Divine Mercy, for the 2016 World Youth Day. The words of Saint John Paul II: “where, if not in Divine Mercy, can the world find refuge and the light of hope?” were a constant source of strength and comfort. The key message of “blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy” (Matthew 5:7) is for me, the lasting gift of this life-changing experience.

I was filled with hope, in bearing witness to millions of people from every corner of the earth, coming together in solidarity and faith in a world that is thirsting for peace. The closeness, dialogue and brotherhood sparked a mighty flame in my already burning heart. Countless moments that are now cherished memories combine to write the story that was my World Youth Day experience. Millions of pilgrims huddled like tinned sardines at Campus Misericordiae, clutching radios tuned into the English translation of Pope Francis’ homilies. Complete silence echoed as we held on to each and every word that he delivered to the youth of the world. The words: “Jesus is calling you to leave a mark on history” were a powerful and moving invitation to listen to the whispers of God in my heart.

Having the opportunity to come into contact with people’s lives, and not just merely seeing images on a screen, has taught me many lessons. When we visited the site of the Auschwitz Concentration Camps, I was moved to tears of sadness and anger at the atrocities and sheer lack of respect for the dignity of human life. However, immediately afterwards, I was challenged by the thoughts of Sr Mary, who at the end of our Mass asked us to not feel sad upon leaving the camps. Instead, she pleaded that we channel our energy into being beacons of light and peace. I was filled with pure joy and happiness from singing loudly with hundreds of Malaysian pilgrims on the walk to the Mercy Centre. My heart was warmed by the young Polish boy who hugged me ever so tightly when I guided him into the front of the crowds in order to see the Pope up close. I was overwhelmed by the utter silence that descended across the Field of Mercy as the bells rang during Benediction and millions knelt in deep reverence and prayer. I felt a peace like never before when staring into the Shrine of the Black Madonna at the Jasna Góra Monastery in Częstochowa. I was filled with awe as Pope Francis stopped before the wooden Door of Mercy with the inscribed words “Jesus, I trust in you”, hand-in-hand with young people from each continent. An incredible sense of closeness flowed through my heart as we quietly lit candles in the dark night at the Vigil Mass, united in prayer.

**The words, “Jesus is calling you to leave a mark on history,” were a powerful and moving invitation to listen to the whispers of God in my heart.**

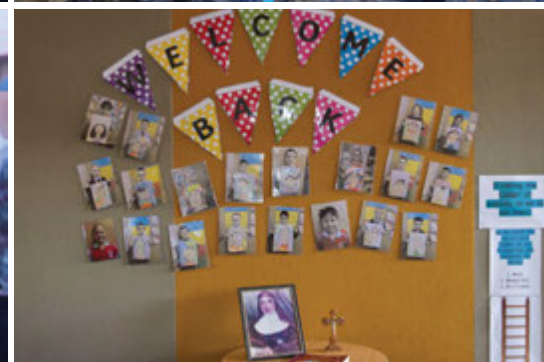
Upon returning home to the warm embrace of my family, the realisation of what I had encountered was felt profoundly. Long after the whirlwind that was World Youth Day had swept over, and still as each day unfolds, I have been called to reflect and act upon the key messages. For the Lord doesn’t want to remain in the beautiful city of Kraków or in my cherished memories alone. Pope Francis invited us to allow the Lord to enter our homes, our hopes and our dreams. I set-out to encounter God, Divine Mercy and the Holy Spirit more deeply in each person. I feel honoured to have grown and begun the beautiful adventure of connection and dialogue. May the blessings and joy that I so abundantly received be a legacy shared with many for years to come. ■

*Meghann Davis is a teacher at St Michael’s Catholic Parish Primary School, Nowra*



# after th

PHOTO (TOP LEFT): JEFF MCGILL/PORTRAITS.WORDPRESS.COM



BY DON O'BRIEN

Less than five months ago, on Sunday 5 June, St Anthony's Catholic Parish Primary School Picton was devastated by a storm and subsequent flooding during an intense East-Coast Low weather event. The school, along with much of the Picton township central business district, was submersed by heavy rain and flash-flooding. The extent and destruction of this extreme weather event was unprecedented in the Picton and surrounding areas. Eight of the school's nine buildings and permanent structures were inundated by the storm waters that created a raging torrent down the main street of the town.

The damage was far-reaching and, on assessment, required a full refurbishment of all but two classrooms, the school hall, library and storage sheds. The buildings needed to be stripped-back to their bare internal walls, and all floor and wall coverings and the contents of the classrooms and the library were also mostly lost. School staff literally only had hours to salvage whatever was recoverable from the site before the condition of the rooms destroyed those items as well.

However, what then came in the days, weeks and months after 5 June, can only be described as a modern "miracle" and a testament to the "human spirit" triumphing over

**It was a heartbreaking decision, but with the school facilities so badly damaged and simply unable to be inhabited, we were forced to close the school site indefinitely.**

adversity. It was a heartbreaking decision, but with the school facilities so badly damaged and simply unable to be inhabited, we were forced to close the school site indefinitely. As a critical incident, detailed planning, negotiation and arrangements had to be quickly enacted to ensure the ongoing





PHOTOS: ELLE HOLDER-KEEPING

provision of education and learning for the children enrolled at St Anthony's.

So what were we to do with all our students? The proposed plan was to transport all students and staff by bus each day to and from two of our Catholic schools at Rosemeadow. Kindergarten to Year 2 children would be provided with classrooms at Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Parish Primary School and our Year 3 to Year 6 children would be taught in classrooms in a separate block at John Therry Catholic High School. While at Rosemeadow, the St Anthony's students would remain in their normal classes and continue to be taught by their own teachers.

At the time, the plan seemed ambitious, challenging and exhausting. However, the hospitality received at Rosemeadow was indeed a rich blessing and gift. Like never before, we were reminded that we are part of a "family" that is the system of Catholic schools and the local Church in the Diocese of Wollongong. Like all good families, when one of the clan is in trouble, then it is time to respond and assist. On their first day of arrival at Rosemeadow, students from Our Lady

Help of Christians formed a guard of honour for the St Anthony's students to walk through.

Children and colleagues mostly unknown to one another on 5 June 2016 are now calling each other friends. The hospitality, welcome and care extended by the entire Parish and School communities at Rosemeadow were genuine acts of mercy and compassion.

Meanwhile, back at Picton, the building company that was engaged to remediate and refurbish the school got to work quickly, cleaning out classrooms before the reconstruction commenced. The works included full replacement of the turf and top soil in the playgrounds which had been covered in storm debris. The quality of the work from all involved has been exceptional and those who have worked to restore the school went beyond an employment position; they were invested in the school community and their efforts will always be appreciated and remembered.

In early September 2016, after ten weeks of travelling to Rosemeadow, the school welcomed the K-2 children back to the new St Anthony's Picton. Just six weeks later, at the beginning of Term 4, the remaining children and staff returned to their beautiful and newly refurbished school – bigger, better and brighter than ever.

Any tragic event is certainly trying and difficult for any community to cope with. Be assured this was a tragic event, not only for the school, but the wider close-knit Picton community. Many individuals and families are still deeply affected by what has happened. Many businesses are still not yet back up and running and some may never be.

Throughout all of this we have learned much about ourselves as a community. We have learned much about gratitude. The overwhelming support we received from our colleagues within the Diocese, from the broader community and beyond, was both humbling and

**... the hospitality received at Rosemeadow was indeed a rich blessing and gift. Like never before, we were reminded that we are part of a "family" that is the system of Catholic schools and the local Church in the Diocese of Wollongong.**

gratefully received. Jesus teaches us that "the Kingdom of God is among us" (Luke 17:21), and that the signs of the Kingdom can be seen in the fruits of the Spirit, "Love, kindness, patience, generosity" (Galatians 5:22). This has been clearly evident in the support and care we have received.

We are especially grateful to our family at Our Lady Help of Christians and John Therry who gave us a home when we had none. They extended to us a faith-filled and generous hospitality in the same spirit of Jesus' parable, "I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35).

This tumultuous event and subsequent triumph of the human spirit will go down in the annals of history at St Anthony's in 2016. We celebrated in thanksgiving with Bishop Peter Ingham, at a Mass in November, to bring this extraordinary event to something of a conclusion. In many ways, life has returned to a more normal rhythm at St Anthony's Picton but we will be forever grateful in the knowledge that we are blessed with the gift of family and the Holy Spirit. ■

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*Don O'Brien is the Principal of St Anthony's Catholic Parish Primary School, Picton.*

# Caring for those who cared for us

BY DEBBIE GATES

On Sunday 11 September 2016, Bishop Peter Ingham collapsed prior to a Confirmation ceremony, breaking his collar bone. He was admitted to Campbelltown Hospital for treatment and testing to determine the cause of his fall. He was cleared of any major complications and was released from hospital a few days later.

He then took some weeks off from official duties to recover. During his time of recovery, he maintained his usual sense of humour and was well looked after by our Clergy Care Coordinator, Mrs Susan Daniels, and Fr Ron Peters at the Bishop's House. He was overwhelmed with messages of love and support from home and abroad and is grateful for the praiseworthy care he received at Campbelltown Hospital. Bishop Peter has made a good recovery and is now driving again and was back on the golf course on 7 November.

There is a sense of irony in that the fall occurred the weekend before the "Bishop's Annual Appeal" in support of sick and retired clergy in the Diocese, which includes the Bishop! As in other dioceses, the responsibility to care for our sick and retired clergy comes under the umbrella of the local Diocese, and is supported by donations collected at a special appeal for sick and retired clergy.

Donations to this Appeal help to provide suitable accommodation, transport assistance, and holistic health-care to those clergy who have dedicated their lives in service of the Church and cared for all of us, in their own time of need.

Bishop Peter said, "One of the wonderful outcomes of such an Appeal – and one that I have now personally experienced – is the role of Mrs Sue Daniels, our Clergy Care Coordinator. Sue, a Registered Nurse, is brilliant! She was the hands and feet of Jesus

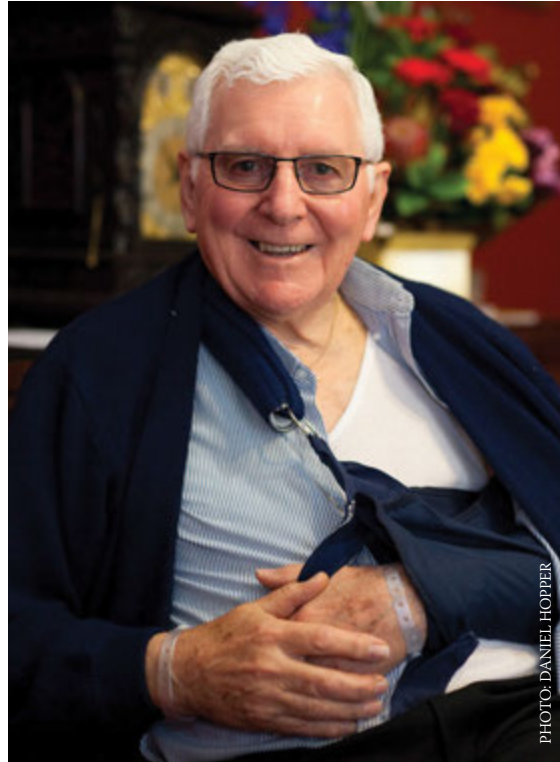


PHOTO: DANIEL HOPPER

**It really brought home to me the importance of the Appeal and made me even more grateful for the wonderful response of everyone in the Diocese through their giving.**

to me during my recent hospital stay and continued to accompany me at my follow-up medical appointments. She ensured my room at home was set-up correctly so that I could get myself in and out of bed. She assisted me with some daily tasks that I was not able to do due to my shoulder being in a sling. She drove me to and from my appointments and made sure that I was following the doctor's orders to rest, rest and rest (something that does not come easily to me)! Her professional presence made a positive difference and I am extremely grateful for Sue's

**She was the hands and feet of Jesus to me during my recent hospital stay and continued to do so at my follow-up medical appointments.**

reassurance, company and care of me while my broken collarbone healed.

"It really brought home to me the importance of the Appeal and made me even more grateful for the wonderful response of parishioners in the Diocese through their giving. Such practical giving ensures people like Sue will be there for my brother clergy and

me when we are facing a short-term health crisis or the longer term challenges of ageing."

Today, there are five clergy in retirement. It is likely that we will have an extra 12 clergy retiring over the next five years alone. The challenge for us as a Diocese is to ensure that we can continue to care for our sick clergy and offer a dignified retirement for all of our diocesan clergy.

Bishop Peter wishes to thank everyone who supported his Appeal. "At a time when the number of clergy in our Diocese relying on this type of care continues to grow, your practical support is very much appreciated and something for which I am very grateful." ■

*This year \$54,800 has been raised. Donations can still be made online at [www.dow.org.au](http://www.dow.org.au) (click the "Make a Donation" button)*

*Debbie Gates is the Director of Development and Community Engagement, Diocese of Wollongong*





# Only one wish for Angela this Christmas



With the tinsel already being hung in shopping centres, Christmas is upon us once again. But while for many Australian kids, a new bike or a pair of football boots might be on the list this year, one little girl in the Philippines has a very different wish.

Catholic Mission has launched its annual Children's Appeal, which raises funds for children in developing communities around the world, and this year the focus is a struggling family in the Philippines.

At six years of age, little Angela from Tondo, Manila, weighs just nine kilograms – the same as a healthy eleven-month-old baby. She still bears the scars of fractures to nearly every bone in her tiny body, a result of brittle bone syndrome and malnutrition. Her only wish is to lead an independent life.

Because of her malnutrition, Angela is especially susceptible to tuberculosis, a potentially fatal condition that is highly contagious given the extremely unhygienic conditions of Tondo.

**Each day, Angela relies on her 66-year-old grandmother Heidi to carry her to and from their tiny home in one of the poorest areas of Manila, with her little brother Daniel in tow.**

Each day, Angela relies on her 66-year-old grandmother Heidi to carry her to and from their tiny home in one of the poorest areas of Manila, with her little brother Daniel in tow. Together, they walk to day care for Daniel, or to the school or medical clinic for Angela.

The medical clinic, which has become a place of refuge and respite for Heidi, is run by Sister Susan Imperio and the Canossian Sisters. They operate one of the only dedicated tuberculosis treatment and prevention programs in the region, and they offer full medical check-ups for Angela and Heidi at whatever price they can afford.

Catholic Mission is appealing to supporters to open their hearts this Christmas to struggling families in the Philippines and around the world. A small contribution, says National Director Father Brian Lucas, can help to change a life.

"Angela is one of millions of children around the world who will do it tough this Christmas," he said. "But thanks to the generosity for which our supporters are renowned, the Canossian Sisters can ensure that Angela, Heidi and Daniel are happy and healthy this Christmas."

The direct mail and online appeal will reach supporters around the country in mid-December, allowing enough time to make a contribution in the name of a loved one—a perfect alternative to the standard stocking-fillers. ■

*Keep an eye out for Catholic Mission's Children's Appeal this Christmas, and please give generously. For more information on the appeal, visit [catholicmission.org.au/christmas2016](http://catholicmission.org.au/christmas2016).*

*Breaking the Silence on Family Violence*, an initiative of the Diocesan Schools Council, Office of the Bishop, CatholicCare and Catholic Education, took place on Thursday August 11 at the Fraternity Club in Fairy Meadow to mark the Year of Mercy.

Over 250 people gathered to listen to three guest speakers who spoke on the reality of family violence. Dr Eman Sharobeem (Australia Day Ambassador) gave powerful testimony of her personal experience of family violence. Judge Paul Conlon (NSW District Court Judge) spoke of the increasing prevalence and motivating factors of family violence, and Michael Austin (Director of CatholicCare) spoke on the necessity of seeing family violence as a public issue.

Each presenter outlined the impact that domestic violence plays in the family and the need to support people who are enduring such violence, often suffering in silence.

The following is an excerpt from Michael Austin's speech.

BY MICHAEL AUSTIN

**T**his evening I would like to speak with you about the act of seeing, and how seeing is the necessary precursor to change and transformation.

When we think of family, we want and expect them to be places of love, of nurturing, of safety, despite all the array of challenges and pressures that can and do come with family life. There is an aspect about family violence we don't really want to see. It makes us so uncomfortable we want to look away, we don't want to see. The poet TS Eliot captured this sentiment insightfully in one of his "Four Quartets":

"Go, go, go said the bird: Human kind cannot bear very much reality."

So when we do look, what we see is disturbing, painful. So how does the act



of seeing the reality of family violence lead to the possibility for change, for transforming this situation? Firstly, with the act of seeing, we can recognise and admit we have a problem.

**... seeing is the necessary precursor to change and transformation.**

When all of us start seeing, something else can occur, a shift can take place. We start to change our understanding of family violence from something that is exclusively a private matter, something that happens behind closed doors, to something that is a public issue. When this occurs, we can start to ask different questions.

Viewing family violence as a private matter tends to focus our attention almost exclusively on the behaviour of the victim, but in a particular way. With this view, one frequently hears the question, "Why does she stay?" On a superficial level this question focuses our attention on the victim. However the question is loaded with assumptions that can tend to attribute blame and responsibility on the victim. The people missing from this question,

of course, are the perpetrators of violence, overwhelmingly men, and the other unseen victims – children. Focusing on the victims is critically important. It directs us towards assisting people to achieve some level of safety and/or be able to leave the situation. If family violence is solely a private matter, then as a society we are all "kind-of" absolved from any responsibility for it.

Viewing family violence as a private matter contributes to another dynamic that can be isolating and dangerous and perpetuate the silence – the experience of shame and stigma. Something that is exclusively private, that is not sufficiently publicly recognised, can mean that someone experiencing family violence is somehow strange, at fault, stigmatised. The experience of shame or stigma can be very isolating; it can mean just when someone needs to reach out for help, that they are further imprisoned by feelings of shame and stigma.

The prevalence of family violence and its gendered nature require a different level of seeing.

If we adopt a different viewpoint, and understand family violence as the





**Mercy without works is dead ... What brings mercy to life, is its constant dynamism for going to meet the needy and the necessities of the many spiritually and materially disadvantaged.**

This year, Pope Francis exhorts us to see through the eyes of Mercy. And Mercy, he has said, is a verb. It is something we enact. Mercy is not an abstract idea, it is about action, but a particular kind of action, one that confronts challenges in a way that leads to peace and reconciliation. Pope Francis said, “Mercy without works is dead ... What brings mercy to life, is its constant dynamism for going to meet the needy and the necessities of the many spiritually and materially disadvantaged.”

So, during this Year of Mercy, may we be Oases of Mercy, to see, to sustain our seeing, to confront the problem of family violence, and contribute to a fundamental change in our understanding and attitudes in order to transform this suffering. We can, and we must. ■

*Michael Austin is the Director of CatholicCare, Diocese of Wollongong.*

**But the looking isn't easy. We're not looking at something beautiful, we're looking at something terribly confronting, something profoundly disturbing.**

public issue that it is, this tends to lead us towards asking different sorts of questions, questions that can open the possibilities for looking differently, and for change. What as a society do we need to do to ensure safety? How do we create a society where respectful relationships are the norm? What services do we need to provide to better support women and children? What is going-on in our culture and society that could be perpetuating this problem? How do we listen to the voices of children?

Asking these types of questions enables us access to the more fundamental causes of family violence, which means we have the potential to impact on this issue more significantly. With the act of really seeing, it becomes harder to remain content with the status quo, we can begin to demand action, we can begin to act to transform the situation.

We know that family violence cannot be reduced to a single cause. However, it is clear that it has its roots in the disempowerment of women, with particular vulnerability to women from certain backgrounds such as Indigenous women, cultural messages around violence, and strict gender stereotyping. We know that many children are also victims of family violence. We know that the change that will address the root causes must be one that leads to a cultural shift in our attitudes to gender, power and violence. We have an enormous challenge and it all starts with seeing the problem, bringing it out from behind closed doors. But the looking isn't easy. We're not looking at something beautiful, we're looking at something terribly confronting, something profoundly disturbing.

This is where we look for the guidance of people who, through their wisdom, courage and experience, can show us the way, who can help us to sustain the act of seeing to bring about change. One of these, of course, is Australian of the Year 2015, Rosie Battie. And through transforming her unimaginable tragedy hasn't she been showing us the way. She has helped us all to shine a light in a dark place. Another I think of is the life of a man who has recently died, Romanian American Jewish author, holocaust survivor, and Nobel Peace laureate, Elie Wiesel. He had this to say about oppression and the dangers of silence: “We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.”

If you are impacted or you know someone who is impacted by family violence the following can be contacted:

### **1800 RESPECT**

Freecall **1800 737 732**  
[www.1800respect.org.au](http://www.1800respect.org.au)

*24 hour support and counselling line for anyone at risk of family violence*

### **CATHOLICCARE**

**02 4227 1122**  
[www.catholiccare.dow.org.au](http://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au)

*Local family and relationship counselling*

### **POLICE or AMBULANCE**

Call 000 in an emergency



# No honour No future

Australian Catholic  
Bishops Conference  
**Social Justice Statement**

BY REBECCA MILLER

**I**n March 2015, Pope Francis said, “Where there is no honour for the elderly, there is no future for the young.” But, what do we really understand about ageing? Our beliefs and attitudes may be informed by our own personal experience or perhaps more through the experience of caring for a family member.

What we do know is that Australia is in the midst of unprecedented social change with 75% of men and 85% of women reaching retirement age with approximately 20 years of life ahead of them. Advances in health-care and improved access to aged-care services mean that people are not just living longer, they are contributing more actively to the social fabric of our communities in a way that has never been seen before.

## **The stats are in**

According to a 2010 report from the United Nations Population Division, by 2045 the number of older persons

in the world (defined as those 60 years and above) will exceed the number of children (15 years and under) for the first time. The UN body identified this as a demographic trend of mammoth consequence, one “without parallel in the history of humanity”. The number of Australians aged 65 and over will more than double from 3.6 million today to 8.9 million by the middle of the century.

**The aim of the statement is to help us understand that the place of older people is at the heart of our communities, not excluded from society and culture.**

This largely explains why the Australian bishops this year titled their annual Social Justice Statement, *A Place at the Table: Social Justice in an Ageing Society*. The aim of the statement is to help us understand that the place

of older people is at the heart of our communities, not excluded from society and culture even as their frailty and vulnerability increases.

Contrary to the stereotype of older people being a burden in our youth-driven society, the reality is that over 31% of people aged over 65 years regularly volunteer, and nearly half are providing informal assistance to someone not living in their household. Only 7% of Australians will become residents of aged-care facilities, the remainder choosing to stay in their homes and continue their roles providing much needed child-care and valued participation in local communities through leadership and wisdom as fierce advocates for many issues of social justice.

## **Avoiding the “throw-away culture”**

The Australian bishops remind us in their Statement that Pope Francis has repeatedly condemned the



**It's not that we need to give the elderly a place at our table. The trick instead is to ask, how can I come to the table of the older generations and enjoy their meal, what they have to offer, and be a part of their lives?**

abandonment of the elderly as part of what he calls a “throw-away culture”. Just as God asks us to be his means of hearing the cry of the poor, so too he wants us to hear the cry of the elderly. In his most recent Apostolic Exhortation, *Amoris Lætitia*, Pope Francis challenges families and communities: “The Church cannot and does not want to conform to a mentality of impatience, and much less of indifference and contempt, towards old age. We must reawaken the collective sense of gratitude, of appreciation, of hospitality, which makes the elderly feel like a living part of the community. Our elderly are men and women, fathers and mothers, who came before us on our own road, in our own house, in our daily battle for a worthy life” (n 191).

### **Taking on the Pope's challenge in our parishes**

Parishioners at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Varroville have embraced this approach led by their Parish Priest, Fr Shane Kelleher OCD, who has asked them to keep older people at the forefront of their parish planning. Fr Shane said, “We put a lot of resources into looking after our lambs, but we must not forget our sheep.” Consequently, the parish offers a range of groups that are inclusive and of interest to older people. Their monthly Friendship Group is a thriving and welcoming group for people of all ages who come together for Mass followed by a full day nourished by faith, good food and friendship, where laughter and tears are shared in equal measure. Groups of this nature have proven to have the added benefit of providing a safety-net to those in our parishes who are at risk of falling through the cracks.

We need to ensure that when someone is no longer able to come to Mass their connection to parish is not severed. Parish groups can allow absences to be noted and caring enquiries can identify when a pastoral visit or support is required. Mary Mother of the Church Parish Macquarie Fields has recently celebrated the generous bequest of a bus to provide transport to parishioners and to ensure they remain valued members of their parish community. These are but two of the many initiatives in our parishes that are “not forgetting their sheep” through their pastoral outreach.

**We put a lot of resources into looking after our lambs, but we must not forget our sheep.**

FR SHANE KELLEHER OCD

### **Diocesan support**

On a diocesan level, we have established a Committee for the Aged which aims to identify and advocate for issues relevant to people who are ageing (the committee is currently seeking expressions of interest for new members to commence in 2017.) Bishop Peter Ingham has also established the role of the Aged Care Advocate, which I am tasked to fulfil. My role is to provide support to parishes who have a concern for an older parishioner, providing information to better understand options, and to provide support to access aged-care services. I also offer support to over fifty pastoral care volunteers who are active each week visiting the sick, housebound and those isolated in aged care facilities.

### **Aged Care Services at CatholicCare**

In addition, our diocesan social welfare agency, CatholicCare, devotes an entire division of their work to Aged Care Services by providing in-home support such as domestic assistance, garden care, transport, shopping and assistance with personal care or companionship. For many people, receiving a little help, often only a few hours a week, will ensure they can remain safely at home for many years.

**We need to ensure that when someone is no longer able to come to Mass their connection to parish is not severed.**

**It's not that we are including them, but they are including us**

Whilst supporting older people in our communities has been a high priority of Bishop Ingham, there is still much that can be done. The newly-released Social Justice Statement provides a sound framework for those seeking ways to renew their ministries and parishes.

Bishop Peter Comensoli of Broken Bay recently gave a wonderful interview to the Editor of Crux (USA), John Allen Jr, in which he clarified the intent of the Social Justice Statement. “Maybe the right way to think about it is this: It's not that we need to give the elderly a place at our table. The trick instead is to ask, how can I come to the table of the older generations and enjoy their meal, what they have to offer, and be a part of their lives? In other words, it's not that we're including them, but they're including us.

“Remember, Jesus often went to other people's tables, he didn't necessarily demand that they always come to his.” You can read the full interview at [dow.sh/comensoli](http://dow.sh/comensoli).

The new Social Justice Statement 2016-17 and supporting resources, including ten steps for parishes to create a place at the table for everyone, can be found on the site of the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council [www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au). ■

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*If you would like to express your interest in joining the Committee for the Aged or would like more information regarding pastoral care please contact Rebecca Miller – Aged Care Advocate on 0419 152 310 or [rebecca.miller@dow.org.au](mailto:rebecca.miller@dow.org.au).*

*For Information regarding CatholicCare's Aged Care Services contact (02) 4227 1122 or [enquiries@catholiccare.dow.org.au](mailto:enquiries@catholiccare.dow.org.au).*

*Rebecca Miller is the Aged Care Advocate, Catholic Diocese of Wollongong*

# Climate change has led to hunger and thirst across the Pacific



Caritas is encouraging the Wollongong community and all Australians to speak up in solidarity with our Pacific neighbours, calling on them to send a letter to their politicians, urging stronger action on climate change.

Caritas Australia recently produced a report on the issue: *Hungry for Justice, Thirsty for Change - State of the Environment for Oceania*, in partnership with Caritas Aotearoa and Caritas Tonga. Caritas is the international aid and development agency of the Catholic Church and one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world.

The report documents the experiences of Pacific Islanders who are struggling with the impacts of climate change.

Pope Francis' release last year of his encyclical letter on human ecology, *Laudato Si' ("Praise be to you") on the Care of Our Common Home*, was a defining moment for the Catholic Church. It included the invitation for the global community to heed "the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor".

This is also the Jubilee Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis, in which the Church has been called to consider what more can be done to reach out to our neighbours in need. We respond to Christ who says In Matthew 25, "I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; thirsty and you gave me something to drink."

Over the last twelve months the Pacific – a region known for an

**In my own country Kiribati, climate change is threatening our very way of life. We are experiencing food and water shortages and sea-level rising – the reality is that our children will have to leave our homeland.**

abundance of food and water – has been hit by multiple big weather events, supercharged by El Niño. This has affected approximately five million people across thirteen countries, leading to food and water shortages, malnutrition, and, in some extreme cases, death.

"In my own country Kiribati, climate change is threatening our very way of life. We are experiencing food and water shortages and sea-level rising – the reality is that our children will have to leave our homeland," Report Ambassador, Maria Tiimon said.

Rising sea levels and coastal erosion have left the main hospital of the Solomon Islands in need of relocation, a project that is set to cost \$US100 million. On four separate occasions patients, including the critically ill and mothers and babies, have had to be evacuated after the hospital was inundated by water.

In response to these challenges, communities across the Pacific are showing incredible resilience

and leadership with 14 countries across Oceania ratifying the 2015 Paris Agreement. Caritas Australia welcomes the Australian Government's recent announcement that it will ratify the Paris Agreement by the end of the year and is calling for the country's dependency on fossil fuels to end.

"Australia needs to honour the promises that were made in Paris and set emission targets that are in line with limiting the rise in global temperatures to well below 1.5°C," Paul O'Callaghan, Caritas Chief Executive Officer said.

Caritas is also calling on the Government to make more funds available for vulnerable Pacific countries to adapt to climate change.

"Countries across Oceania are among those most affected by climate change, even though they have contributed minimally to its causes. Australia needs to contribute its fair share of funding to support vulnerable countries to adapt to climate change, over and above the existing aid budget."

"As the world works to solve the climate change crisis it is critical that the voices of Pacific Islanders continue to be heard." ■

*Send a letter to your MP and Senators, urging them to advocate for stronger climate action, at [www.caritas.org.au/hungryforjustice-act](http://www.caritas.org.au/hungryforjustice-act). Caritas media contact: Nicole Clements 0408 869 833 or [nicolec@caritas.org.au](mailto:nicolec@caritas.org.au).*





# Kiribati: WARRIORS

*on the front line*



BY JOSIE COOKS

Until seven years ago I hadn't even heard of Kiribati (pronounced "Kirabas"), let alone understood the climate change issues they face as a country. I was given the privilege of visiting the tiny Pacific nation as part of a delegation of Catholic Education staff from Wollongong. Not knowing what to expect, I also had no idea I was about to embark on a life-changing experience. Whether it was the friendliness of the locals, the heat, the geographic remoteness, or the sound of singing that echoed in the air as the local women swept paths in the morning before the heat took hold of a new day, something about this island nation and its people reminded me of my hometown. Growing up in a remote part of northwest Victoria, an area dogged by drought and mice and locust plagues, I understood what it was like to live somewhere that was at the mercy of Mother Nature. Not knowing if my life journey would bring me this way again, I savoured every moment of the Kiribati experience that would become permanently etched in my memory.

Kiribati recently experienced a change of government after 13 years and unexpectedly, the spirit of the Pacific called me again, bringing an opportunity to return to the place I hold dear in my heart, rekindling relationships that had been built. Looking out on the flight from Fiji to Kiribati, I was drawn to the enormity and power of the water below. It was hard to believe that the turquoise ocean, so exotic and enticing, was also the demon of destruction for a group of islands that had provided shelter and provision for its inhabitants for thousands of years. From my bird's-eye view, the tiny islands of South Tarawa looked like a long, slender snake slithering across the water, emphasising the isolation and vulnerability of its residents at the mercy of the mighty Pacific Ocean.

Kiribati, at its highest point just two metres above sea level, is described by former President, Anote Tong, as, "The most vulnerable of the vulnerable." One of the least developed countries in the world and the poorest nation in the Pacific region, this warrior at the frontline of climate change is continually attacked by rising sea levels and king tides, resulting in contamination of their fresh water supply, destruction of sea walls and frequent flooding of villages. The people of Kiribati face the realistic possibility of losing their homes, their culture and their identity to climate change. The Kiribati Adaptation Program predicts that by 2070, normal tide levels in Kiribati will rise between 2.6m and 3.1m during storm surges, leaving the islands uninhabitable.

While the majority live in impoverished conditions and face devastation regularly, this is a country rich in culture and spirit. Making our way around the islands, our ears filled with the sound of laughter and traditional song. Passing by schools and "maneabas" (a common building for gatherings), the air was filled with angelic voices in perfect harmony. School children dressed in bright coloured uniforms beckoned us with an enthusiastic "mauri" (hello), as we passed them on the streets. Locals invited us into their homes to share a meal of fish and rice and this generosity of spirit was gifted to me in the form of a "tibuta" (blouse), which an elderly woman had spent days sewing and smocking by hand. It is a country with so little, yet its people are so willing to open their homes and hearts to share what they have with the strange "I-Matang" (white people) that had come to visit.

While former President Tong has worked tirelessly to generate international awareness of the impact climate change is having on Kiribati, the new government has turned its attention to the domestic development of residents,

focusing on decentralisation, food security, infrastructure and education to improve the standard of living and help them survive climate change. In recent years, the education system has suffered a shortage of teachers, resulting in a decline of literacy and numeracy levels. The government realises that the survival of its people depends on an improvement in their quality of life, which can be achieved through better education outcomes.

On my last visit we were granted an audience with the former President who said, "For years the people of Kiribati have been screaming at the world to listen to their cries for help." Well Mr Tong, in hearing your pleas we are taking a stance in solidarity with your people by proposing the introduction of the Teacher Immersion Project. Conducted in partnership with Australian Catholic University (ACU) and the Kiribati Catholic Education Office, this initiative involves teachers from Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong working with ACU students and Kiribati teachers over a three-week period for practicum supervision as mentors and tutors.

The people of Kiribati are in serious distress with no simple solution to the problems they face. We have an obligation to respond to their needs. No one is certain what the future holds for them, and we can't undo the damage already done. We live most privileged lives and the introduction of the Teacher Immersion Project provides an opportunity to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with these courageous warriors, helping ensure they don't face the battle alone. ■

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*Anyone seeking more information about the Teacher Immersion Project, should contact Neil McCann on 0409379955.*

*Josie Cooks is the Community Development Officer for Catholic Education, Diocese of Wollongong*

# A Big Year for The Catholic Guy Team



BY SANDRA PURCELL

Over the last 12 months, The Catholic Guy (TCG) Impact Centre, based in the Macarthur region of the Diocese of Wollongong, has reached thousands of people across Australia and the world.

While always looking for new ways and places to reach people internationally, the focus remains very much on TCG communities in Australia, all of which are supported and managed by the team located in the Diocese of Wollongong.

## Sunday Gatherings

The key element of the TCG in the Diocese has been the development of an Impact Centre to reach-out and attract those who are disconnected

from Church, and bring them to an encounter with Jesus and the Church. Throughout the year, these gatherings have been held on Sundays at 11am at the Campbelltown Catholic Club (they are now held at Mount Carmel Catholic College Varroville.) These sessions combine great worship, a message from Bruce Downes (or a member of the Leadership Team), and a chance to come together socially as a community of faith.

The growing crowds on Sundays in the Macarthur are also nurtured through mid-week TCG small-group gatherings. The Leadership Team for the Macarthur TCG consists of locals with a zeal for evangelising people in the region. What happens at the Sunday gatherings is now being duplicated in other locations with a number of TCG Impact Centres springing-up around the country utilising the weekly Sunday message as the focal-point of these community gatherings.

## Mission Events

In 2016, some very successful and powerful Parish Mission Events were conducted at Mary Immaculate Parish Eagle Vale and St Mary MacKillop Parish Oran Park. They were well attended, with both Fr Slawek Plonka OMI and Fr David Catterall giving tremendous support. A smaller event was also held in the Northern Illawarra Parishes with the support of Fr Patrick Vaughan. Other parishes in the Diocese who would like to take advantage of having TCG Team run a Parish Mission event in 2017, are encouraged to make contact with Sandra Purcell (contact details at end of article).

## Youth Convention

The inaugural Impact Convention for Youth & Young Adults, presented by TCG Ministry was held on 6-8 October 2016. Over 20 passionate leaders came together to create a professional event for around 60 youth and young adults that reflects the calling of TCG Ministry: to reach those disconnected from the Church.





Olivier Rochecouste and Ryan Farrow, Youth Coordinators at Mary Mother of the Church Parish Macquarie Fields described how they were “looking for something that would give them a good amount of substance that would help fuel their faith” and “**Impact 16** provided that fuel”.

The Parish graciously sponsored eight teenagers to attend **Impact 16**. Ryan said, “In our Youth Group, before the convention, they were a little bit unsure about God and their faith. The fact that we paid this small amount of money to allow them to go and for them to find God and get energised to want to learn more about their faith – it’s just priceless!”

A Student Impact Service is now happening once a month at Mount Carmel Catholic College. Check out [www.thecatholicguy.com](http://www.thecatholicguy.com) for more details. **Impact 17** will be held in Southwest Sydney from 5-7 October 2017 with early bird registration available now at [www.impactconvention.com](http://www.impactconvention.com)

**The Heart Conference was truly amazing! I felt my relationship with God was strengthened in a new way. It has also given me renewed courage to step out more in faith and to pray a lot more.**

SARAH

### Women’s Conference

The second annual Heart Women’s Conference was held on 20-22 October 2016. It was a powerful event drawing women of all ages from around Australia spending time together reflecting on “being brave and having courage with grace” in their life circumstances.

Conference attendee, Sarah, said, “The Heart Conference was truly amazing!

I felt my relationship with God was strengthened in a new way. It has also given me renewed courage to step out more in faith and to pray a lot more. It was a very inspiring couple of days and has changed my life forever!”

### Impact

Hearing the countless stories of the youth, women, leaders and families that have been impacted by the presence of TCG in the Diocese of Wollongong has given us great cause to be thankful to God and very grateful for the support and encouragement of Bishop Peter Ingham, the clergy and parishioners of the Diocese, Campbelltown Catholic Club and Mount Carmel Catholic College – as we engage in and discover new ways of living the New Evangelisation. ■

*Sandra Purcell is the National Events Coordinator for The Catholic Guy Ministry. Email: [sandra.purcell@thecatholicguy.com](mailto:sandra.purcell@thecatholicguy.com)*

## Catholic Women's League in the Year of Mercy



BY ANNE KELLY

The Year of Mercy has now come to an end. We hope you have been able to attend one of the many pilgrimages on offer. On 24 May 2016 the Diocesan Catholic Women's League (CWL) embarked on a pilgrimage to the Diocese's Shrine to Our Lady at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church Unanderra led by Parish Priest, Fr Graham Schmitzer. Fr Graham brought to life the story of the Prodigal Son, showing us the Mercy shown by the Father to the Son upon his return. All who attended the pilgrimage enjoyed the day which concluded with Mass. "I once was lost, but now am found" (Amazing Grace – John Newton 1725-1807).

In July 2016 we celebrated the Feast of St Maria Goretti. This day was hosted by our new Shellharbour City Branch. Parish Priest, Fr Bryan Jones, celebrated Mass and joined all the CWL members at lunch which was well prepared by the ladies of the Shellharbour City Branch.

The Annual Diocesan Mass to celebrate the Feast of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop was held on the 9

August 2016 at St John the Evangelist Church Dapto. Bishop Peter Ingham concelebrated the Mass with Dapto Parish Priest, Fr Francis Tran; CWL Diocesan Chaplain, Father Patrick Vaughan; and Port Kembla Parish Priest, Fr George Condookala. Lunch followed Mass and was hosted by the Dapto Branch of CWL.

On 14 September 2016, we held our annual retreat day at St Mary Star of the Sea Church, Gerringong, led by Diocesan CWL Chaplain, Fr Patrick Vaughan. The theme for the day was St Mary of the Cross – Model of Discipleship. Fr Patrick celebrated Mass, followed by Benediction. The retreat was well attended and ably hosted by the members of Kiama CWL Branch.

We wish to congratulate Ann Pereira, Lismore, for accepting the role of State President, CWLA-NSW Inc. and wish her and her Executive well. ■

*Anne Kelly is the President of the Catholic Women's League, Diocese of Wollongong.*  
[www.cwlawollongong.org.au](http://www.cwlawollongong.org.au)

## Mass for the Restoration of Peace & Justice

On Wednesday 3 August 2016, Fr Ron Peters celebrated Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral Wollongong, specifically for the special intention of world peace. Members of the five school communities in the Lumen Christi Pastoral Region – Holy Spirit College Bellambi, St Mary Star of the Sea College Wollongong, Edmund Rice College West Wollongong, St Brigid's Catholic Parish Primary School Gwynneville, and Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School Fairy Meadow – participated in various ministries within the Mass.

Wollongong Funeral Directors, Hansen and Cole provided photographic prints of Fr Jacques Hamel, Fr Frans van der Lugt SJ and of some of the many people who were murdered in acts of terror and violence in our world. These images are being displayed in the four Churches of Lumen Christi Pastoral Region to draw our attention to the need we have to pray for peace in our world.

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.*



## International Gathering of the Priestly Fraternities of Saint Dominic

In February 2016, Fr Ron Peters participated in the International Gathering of the Priestly Fraternities of Saint Dominic in Rome. This gathering was one of the events organised to celebrate the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Order of Preachers. In 1216, Pope Honorius approved the Order begun by Saint Dominic and later gave the Order the specific task of preaching. Thirty diocesan priests from around the world, as well as a number of Dominican friars, participated in the gathering held at San Sisto in Rome. During the gathering, Fr Ron made his formal commitment to the Rule of the Priestly Fraternities of Saint Dominic in the hands of the 87<sup>th</sup> Master General of the Order of Preachers, Fr Bruno Cadore. The Rule states: "Along with the special grace of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, which helps these priests to perform the acts of the sacred ministry worthily, they receive new spiritual help from the profession which makes them members of the Dominican Family and sharers in the grace and mission of the Order to the sure advantage of the local and universal Church."

Presently, there are two members of the Priestly Fraternity in Australia. There is also a branch of the Dominican Family for the lay faithful. ■

*The Dominican Friars are based in Glebe, Sydney and, the Dominican Sisters at Santa Sabina, Strathfield. More information can be obtained by visiting [www.op.org.au](http://www.op.org.au)*



## Breakfast with the Bishop

On two very crisp and glorious days in August, the Year 12 Student Leadership teams of our Diocesan Catholic Schools gathered in table fellowship with Bishop Peter and each other to dialogue about their journey through Catholic schooling.

Hosted by Mount Carmel Catholic College Varroville and Holy Spirit College Bellambi, Bishop Peter engaged these young men and women, sharing with them inspirational stories, motivational messages and congratulatory remarks as they embarked on the final few weeks of their journey through the HSC year and in its entirety, their amazing experiences of Catholic education in the Diocese of Wollongong.

Staff from Catholic Education Diocese of Wollongong and the Office of the Bishop, teachers from each of the



schools, and the Year 12 students, were ignited by Bishop Peter's presentation and were moved by his presence and support in all matters of Catholic education.

Through this evangelising event, the students present were able to experience the joy of being a member of a Catholic school community in the Diocese of Wollongong, to have experienced the wisdom and knowledge of their Bishop and to know that God truly loves them. ■

## Peter's Pence

My Lord Bishop,  
At the request of the Holy Father, I am writing to acknowledge the offerings totalling **A\$30,000** which you sent to the Apostolic Nunciature from the Diocese of Wollongong as the 2016 Peter's Pence and as a contribution for the support of the Holy See in accordance with Canon 1271.

His Holiness is most appreciative of the charitable assistance which you and those entrusted to your care have given to him in his service to the Universal Church. He sees in this gift a sign of ecclesial communion, motivated by faith in Jesus Christ and devotion to the See of Peter.

Yours Sincerely in Christ,

Angelo Becciu

*Substitute (12 September 2016)*

## News from St Paul's Moss Vale

On 26 May 2016, the Feast of Corpus Christi was celebrated in moving way in St Paul's Parish Moss Vale. After the 10am Mass, Fr Damian Mosakowski OSPPE and the congregation spent time in prayer in front of the Altar in the Church. Fr Damian carried the Blessed Sacrament, in the Monstrance, in procession to St Paul's Catholic Parish Primary School Hall where another unique Altar had been placed. Time was spent in Adoration and prayer, then we returned to St Paul's Church for Exposition, Benediction and special Blessings. This was a wonderful way for our First Communion class, who with their parents, led the procession to witness to the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

On 5 June 2016, parishioners and friends were entertained at St Paul's Church by the wonderfully talented and acclaimed *Exeter Sings Choir* which includes parishioners from



St Paul's. They supplied a varied arrangement of music and song followed by afternoon tea. Thank you for turning a miserably wet afternoon into such an enjoyable time!

Parishioners and anyone interested in joining St Paul's Parish Faith Circles Group are invited to come along on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 10am in the Parish Centre (24 Garrett St, Moss Vale). This is an opportunity to share our faith and our love of God, including prayer and a "cuppa", to foster companionship and friendship.

St Paul's celebrated with a Parish Expo on Sunday 30 October 2016. On display were the unique gifts and talents of 20 parish ministries. A special prayer was



written and distributed to the parish community prior to the event and people were asked to pray for its success.

An invitation to attend was extended beyond the Catholic Church and into the wider Moss Vale community under the heading "Come and See". This attracted visitors from other faiths who enjoyed our hospitality in the form of morning tea followed by a BBQ lunch.

The day was family focused with activities for the younger parishioners, whilst their parents enjoyed the exhibits in St Paul's School hall. ■



LEAVING A

# Legacy of Faith

BY DEBBIE GATES

**M**any of us have a special connection to our parish.

Bernadette, John and Maree\* have done something special to help ensure that future generations have the same opportunity.

**“I am grateful for the good memories and I hope that future generations will also get to experience these.”**

“I spent the first 23 years of my life at St John the Evangelist Parish, Dapto. I was baptised there and made my first Holy Communion and Confirmation there. It was where I went to Mass every Sunday. I went to St John’s Catholic Parish Primary School and the closest Catholic high school. I attended the St John’s Parish Youth Group where I met many of the friends that I still have today. When I married my husband, the ceremony was held at St John’s church. When it came to setting up our new home, we looked for an area that had its own “St John’s” church and primary school, because I wanted my kids to have the same happy experiences that I had growing up in such a close nurturing Catholic community. My sisters, brother and I, together with our families, return to St John’s every year to

attend Christmas Mass with Mum and Dad. It is a very special occasion and we all look forward to it. We reminisce about being in the nativity play each Christmas until we got too “cool” for it and playing handball in the primary playground!

I was delighted when I learned that I could leave a bequest to St John’s Parish. The great thing about a bequest is that you do not have to feel pressured to donate money at a time in your life when you have commitments such as school fees, superannuation contributions and mortgages.

My bequest is a way of ensuring that St John’s will be well maintained into the future and that the parish community will remain vibrant, welcoming and pastoral. It is also a chance for me to acknowledge and be grateful for the good memories I have and to share my hope that future generations of children will also get to experience these.”

**Bernadette**

**“We want our parish to continue to be the special place that it has been for us.”**

“We were motivated to leave a bequest to our local parish because it has, and it continues to have, a profound impact on our lives.

Our parish is here today because of the generosity of past and present visionaries. We hope our bequest can be part of that legacy of faith. We are pleased and proud to have been associated with such a wonderful parish, school and community for the past 50 years. Making a bequest is one way we can give back to the parish and help ensure that it can continue to meet the spiritual, emotional and social needs of those who will follow after us. We want to do what we can to help it continue to be the special place that it is.”

**John and Maree**

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- Provide for the ongoing formation of our clergy
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*Debbie Gates is the Director of Development and Community Engagement, Diocese of Wollongong*

*\* The names of bequestors have been changed to ensure their anonymity.*





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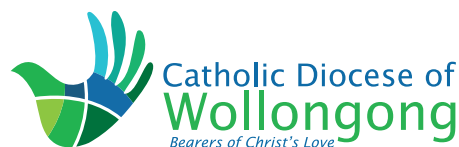


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(entry via Crown St)

**CCD Resource Centre**

02 4640 8550

Micah House

35a Cordeaux Street, Campbelltown

## Vocations Support

General Information can be found at:  
[catholicozvocations.org.au](http://catholicozvocations.org.au)

For enquiries contact: 02 4222 2400

## Marriage Tribunal

Support for those divorced, remarried or seeking to remarry: 02 4222 2409

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## Parish Services Team

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## Mass Times, Churches and Upcoming Events

[www.dow.org.au](http://www.dow.org.au)  
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