



NEWS

Brisbane leaders raise more than \$500,000 for St Vincent de Paul Society

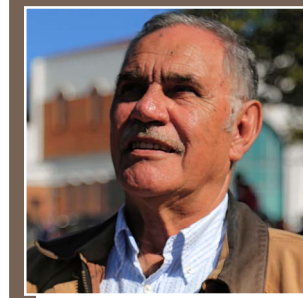
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South Sudan crisis needs media attention, greater government action

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David Miller: 'My prayer for Australia would be justice for all – equality for everybody'

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COULD YOU EAT LIKE A REFUGEE?

Brisbane Catholics take on challenge to help feed people struggling in camps

By Emilie Ng

INDONESIAN migrant Mira Tedjo was never forced to flee her country and become a refugee, but she does know what it's like to eat like one.

During Refugee Week from June 18 to 24, Ms Tedjo and many other Catholics across the country took up the Ration Challenge by Act for Peace, an international aid agency of the National Council of Churches in Australia.

The challenge invites people to eat like a Syrian refugee living in a camp in Jordan while raising money to help send extra food to camps around the world.

As a participant in the challenge, Ms Tedjo, who came to Australia by choice as a teenager 14 years ago, received a 1.5kg box of rations to last for one week.

The box included lentils, rice, chickpeas, kidney beans, sardines and vegetable oil – all of which are the food typically served to refugees in Jordan.

Solidarity: Mira Tedjo joined the Act for Peace Ration Challenge to raise money for people living in refugee camps by eating like a Syrian refugee for one week.

Photo: Emilie Ng

Recipes from the refugees were also given to participants as part of the challenge.

Wanting to “do it tough” for the refugees, Ms Tedjo also sacrificed eating items participants could earn through specific milestones or bought separately, like spices, coffee and flour, because they are considered luxury foods in refugee camps.

There were withdrawal headaches and fatigue on the first day, and within days she could feel her immune system weakening.

“Doing this Ration Challenge actually brought down my immune system,” Ms Tedjo said.

It was an experience that has brought the Catholic parishioner from Annerley in union with millions of refugees around the world.

“I didn't realise until I cooked the whole meal for the whole week how little they really are served after I portioned it,” Ms Tedjo said.

“I thought if the refugees are really going to eat that little I will sacrifice myself and raise some funds for them, and I won't quit because we live a good life and we can eat whatever we want here.

“I can't imagine, how can they (the refugees) eat so little, being an adult, eating one takeaway container – and it's not even full – for the day?”

At times when she wanted to quit, Ms Tedjo took inspiration from the sacrifices made by one of the Church's greatest friends to the poor, St Teresa of Kolkata.

“I just think Mother Teresa is a great role model for doing this. I mean, she would be doing the same thing,” she said.

After three days, Ms Tedjo raised \$570 for Act for Peace, raising more than \$300 in just one day.

While she is now back to eating a regular diet, she knows there are millions of Syrian refugees living in freezing conditions who aren't so fortunate.

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A TRADITION OF FUNERALS BY LADIES.

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Unity at risk: "Mr Pyne puts his faction in the winner's circle, but that means putting the largest division of the federal Liberal Party, the Queensland LNP, in the loser's circle."

Pyne's same-sex prediction at odds with Liberal policy

By Mark Bowling

IT is supposed to be the long, winter break for our federal politicians, but Government frontbencher Christopher Pyne's leaked foray into the same-sex marriage debate fuelled a factional boilover within his own party, and heated rebuke from advocates for traditional marriage.

Mr Pyne was caught on tape predicting same-sex marriage could be legalised "sooner than everyone thinks" as he addressed a gathering of moderates before a party federal council meeting in Sydney on June 23.

Despite politicians fleeing Canberra for a six-week break, the spotlight remained firmly on the Liberal Party, exposing its rifts and divisions, and Mr Pyne's strained loyalties to party leaders, past and present.

The tape apparently caught him gloating that the party's moderates were "in the winners' circle" following Malcolm Turnbull's rise to become Prime Minister.

Mr Turnbull was pressed to restate the Gov-

ernment's policy on same-sex marriage was for a plebiscite "and we are sticking to it".

"Our policy is clear, we have no plans to change it, full stop," he said.

Former prime minister, now backbencher Tony Abbott said it looked like Mr Pyne wasn't being "fair dinkum" with the Australian people and suggested he was being disloyal to the Government.

Australian Marriage Forum president, Toowoomba-based Dr David van Gend, joined a chorus of condemnation: "Christopher Pyne has shown contempt for the largest division of the Liberal Party, the Queensland LNP, by his comments on the Coalition's marriage policy".

"Last weekend, Mr Pyne told fellow 'moderates' in the party that their faction is in 'the winner's circle' and needs to 'deliver a couple of things'," he said.

"He specified changes to the definition of marriage, saying, 'One of those we've got to deliver before too long is marriage equality in this country ... We're going to get it. I think it might even be sooner than everyone thinks. And your friends in Canberra are working on that outcome'.

"Mr Pyne puts his faction in the winner's circle, but that means putting the largest division of the federal Liberal party, the Queensland LNP, in the loser's circle.

"Only three months ago, March 18, the state council of the LNP strongly supported a resolution that would keep the people's vote on marriage as Coalition policy into the next term of parliament."

Mr Pyne is a close ally of Mr Turnbull and while the Prime Minister supports same-sex marriage, he has resisted allowing his party room a free vote on the issue.

The Government took former prime minister Tony Abbott's policy of a plebiscite to the 2016 election.

However the Senate rejected the proposal last November.

As a political fire raged around him, Mr Pyne remained calm, appearing on the ABC's Q&A, insisting none of the comments he made on the leaked tape were anything new.

"I support the party's policy on marriage equality, and I'm in favour of marriage equality if I had a vote at the plebiscite," he said.

Mr Pyne insisted his relationship with Mr Abbott was also just fine.

And on party-room scuffles: "We're not a Stalinist party; people are allowed to have different views," he said.

"That doesn't mean the Government is in crisis if we have different views."

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Brisbane leaders raise more than \$500,000 for Vinnies

Eye-opening experience

By Mark Bowling

AFTER Helen Yost shivered her way through the CEO Sleepout on June 22, with just two hours of sleep, she vowed she would go home and hug her two daughters “extra tight tonight”.

“I was afforded the luxury of a sleeping bag, a blanket, three pieces of cardboard, two layers of clothing ... I had my beanie and my ugg boots and I was still really cold,” Ms Yost said.

“It didn’t matter which way I put the cardboard, the wind found a way of getting into the sleeping bag and onto my face.

“And to think there are over 105,000 people sleeping on the street with less than what I had.”

The temperature dropped to 11 degrees as Ms Yost – who runs an all-female plumbing service, Tradettes – and 170 local business, community and government leaders braved the cold weather under the Story Bridge for the St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland’s annual Vinnies CEO Sleepout.

Brisbane participants raised more than \$528,000, which will provide direct support to those in need through care packs, emergency assistance and housing for vulnerable people facing homelessness.

The event attracted more female CEOs than ever before – a total of 70 women participants.

“It was definitely an eye-opener, for everything I take for granted each day, like food, water, shelter, hot showers, private amenities that I don’t have to share with the public,” Ms Yost said.

She is a parishioner at St Joseph and St Anthony, Bracken Ridge, and her two daughters, aged seven and eight, attend St Joseph’s Primary School.

A qualified plumber, her business employs a team of 10, including five apprentices – the first all-female plumbing and landscaping business in Australia – which has been operating since 2013.

Ms Yost said participating in the CEO Sleepout resonated in a personal way.

“As a child, my family experienced homelessness,” she said.

“We lived in a caravan park for about eighteen months and we moved quite a lot because my parents didn’t have the financial stability to rent a property on a long-term basis.

“So we moved around a lot and there were a few nights when we slept in the family car because we didn’t have anywhere to live.

“I definitely credit those experiences with the resilience I have today.”

Ms Yost said the extent of homelessness in Australia was reinforced when she recently visited Melbourne with family.

“I saw the extent and severity of homelessness for the first time. It is very exposed in Melbourne,” she said after visiting Flinders Street Station where many of the city’s homeless congregate.

“It was heartbreaking. My children and I bought some food and drink for the homeless and we gave it out as a family.

“I think that was very important for my children to experience. They are more appreciative of the small things, and the big things we do for them.”

St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland chief executive officer Peter Maher used this year’s CEO Sleepout to announce the organisation had invested more than \$6 million in housing in the past year, using funds raised at previous events.

The new housing is located around Queensland, including Cairns, Mackay, Toowoomba and Brisbane, and is being used to house families and individuals who would otherwise have no place to call home.

“Brisbane’s business, community and government leaders rose to the challenge to raise much-needed funds to help Vinnies provide immediate relief to people in crisis, and to break the cycle of poverty and homelessness,” Mr Maher said.

Vinnies provides crisis accommodation to individuals experiencing homelessness, as well as advocacy support, budgeting services, living skills programs, emergency relief, transitional housing and access to programs that help rebuild lives.



Helen Yost: “It was definitely an eye-opener, for everything I take for granted each day, like food, water, shelter, hot showers, private amenities that I don’t have to share with the public.”

“ It was heartbreaking. My children and I bought some food and drink for the homeless and we gave it out as a family. ”



Fundraiser: Leaders braved the cold weather under the Story Bridge in Brisbane for the St Vincent de Paul Society Queensland’s annual Vinnies CEO Sleepout.



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Order of Malta providing care around the world



Providing care: Delegates from the Order of Malta National Assembly in Brisbane. The theme of the 2017 assembly was Remembering the Forgotten, with Order of Malta members attending from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore.

Acting for the least

By Mark Bowling

THE Order of Malta is about to open a best-practice medical clinic in Timor Leste's capital, Dili, to provide care for the country's poorest.

In a country where one in six children die within their first year due to treatable illnesses and malnutrition, the clinic will provide a much-needed boost to the country's developing health system.

"People suffer from diseases, that in western countries are quite easily cured," the order's ambassador to Timor Leste David Scarf, who has been instrumental in steering the project during the past two years, said.

"It was designed by professional architects in Australia. It is a best-practice clinic based on world standards."

Mr Scarf outlined the project and his diplomatic role in Timor Leste during a presentation to the 2017 biennial national assembly of the Australian Association of the Order of Malta in Brisbane from June 23-25.

The new clinic is taking shape in Bebonuk, one of the poorest sections of Dili.

It will boast well-trained staff, state-of-the-art equipment, and resources to treat 200 patients a day.

"We are offering free medical care for those Timorese patients who can't afford to pay," Mr Scarf said.

"What we want to achieve is provide the best quality health care we can to everybody.

"We say we act for the least, the last and the lost."

Jape Group managing director and a major donor to the Order of Malta Clinic Alan Jape said: "I think we have to lead the way and do something to help our fellow Timorese.

"When the Order of Malta approached us, we were very happy to say we can do something. So this is the building."

The theme of the 2017 national assembly was Remembering the Forgotten, with Order of Malta members attending from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Thailand and Singapore.

The theme reflects on the fundamental ideals of the Order of Malta – established more than 900 years ago – and is consistent with the or-



Giving back: Loretta Higgins, Alice Grogan and Teresa Gerada at the Order of Malta Dinner.

der's mission to uphold human dignity and care for people in need.

Leading Australian thinkers in the fields of theology, biblical studies and sociology addressed the assembly including Verbum Dei Sister Maeve Louise Heaney, Fr Anthony Mellor and Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge.

There was also a presentation on the work of the order in South-East Asia.

On June 23, eight members took a vow of obedience known amongst the order as "making the

promise" during a vigil at St Joseph's Church, Kangaroo Point.

The vow is considered a major "commitment to deepening spirituality of one's self".

The following day, 20 knights and dames from Australia and New Zealand were welcomed into the order at a public investiture ceremony at St Paschal's Church, Wavell Heights.

Apostolic nuncio Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana addressed members and guests of the Order of Malta at a formal dinner.

Double the feast for Banyo Nundah parishioners

CATHOLICS living on Brisbane's northside are claiming to be the only parish in the world that has two churches marking consecutive Sunday solemnities.

Holy Trinity Church, Banyo, and Corpus Christi Church, Nundah, which make up the amalgamated Banyo Nundah parish, wrapped up eight days of feasting to mark each church's feast day.

Several countries around the world, including Australia, celebrate Corpus Christi on the Sunday following Holy Trinity Sunday, but the feast day is traditionally held on the following Thursday to align with the Institution of the Eucharist on Maundy Thursday.

Banyo Nundah parish priest Fr Bernie Gallagher said the fact both his churches' feast days landed within a week of the other "was divine providence and coincidence".

This "divine coincidence" has paved the way for a new parish tradition, the eight-day "Feastival" which Fr Gallagher started in 2015.

The Feastival carves out an octave of feasting between Holy Trinity Sunday and Corpus Christi Sunday and encourages the two church commu-

nities, which are five kilometres apart, to join for Mass, prayer and fellowship as one congregation.

Parishioners are encouraged to attend the solemn Mass for both church's particular feast day, spend time in Eucharistic adoration held over two days between both churches, and attend a talk on mission by a special guest.

Confirmations for children attending the parish's two schools also occur during the Feastival.

Fr Gallagher said the eight-day event also reminded the two congregations about their origins and how the Church, as St Paul writes in the Second Reading assigned for Corpus Christi, was made up of many but form one body.

"Inside the Corpus Christi Church about the altar is a painting that was put there just after the church was open," Fr Gallagher said.

"It's called 'All nations adoring' which I always thought, how interesting to do that back in 1930 when there weren't any nations except Caucasians, and now they (the parishioners) all look up there and they'll see someone from every continent – whether it's a European, or a Middle Eastern, South American, Africa.

"Now we're benefitting from people going



Celebrating: Banyo Nundah parishioners with parish priest Fr Bernie Gallagher celebrating the parish "Feastival".

out to all the nations and proclaiming the Good News."

This benefit is most evident during Mass. "I don't know how many people would be at church if we didn't have the Filipinos and the Indians," Fr Gallagher said.

He said he would be interested to know if there were any other parishes around out there who have got two churches, one named Holy Trinity and one named Corpus Christi.

– Emilie Ng

Census data shows reduction in religious affiliation

Decline in faith across nation

By Mark Bowling

BRISBANE Archbishop Mark Coleridge believes the latest census data, which shows a drop in religious affiliation, suggests “the young are more interested in unorganised spirituality than organised religion, and that they aren’t as interested in denominations as their forebears were”.

Catholicism remains by far the most dominant religion in Australia with more than 5.2 million followers, however the 2016 census data shows a decline in religious affiliation, particularly among the young.

In 2016, 22.6 per cent of Australia’s 23.4 million population listed Catholicism under religious affiliation, compared to 25.3 per cent in 2011.

However the 2016 census shows that the number of people who listed “no religion” had risen to 29.6 per cent, almost double the figure in the 2001 census.

About 13 per cent of Australians listed Anglican as their religious affiliation (second behind the Catholic Church), compared to 17.1 per cent in 2011.

“It doesn’t necessarily mean that people, young or old, are less religious than they were; but it does mean that they’re religious in very different ways than in the past,” Archbishop Coleridge said.

“And the Church needs to look carefully at that, lest the communication gap between believers and non-believers grow even wider.”

The census shows an emergence of other



Faith: “In 2016, 22.6 per cent of Australia’s 23.4 million population listed Catholicism under religious affiliation, compared to 25.3 per cent in 2011.”

major religions in the past decade.

Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism have all significantly increased, while Buddhism has declined.

What do Australian families look like in 2016?

The census shows that 44.7 per cent of families were couples with children, while 37.8 per cent were couples without children.

Another 15.8 per cent were one-parent families, and 1.7 per cent were listed as “other family types”.

This data has barely changed since 2011.

The composition of Australian families is almost identical to five years ago.

The costs of housing in Australia has increased significantly.

In 2016, the median household weekly rent was \$335, compared to \$285 in 2011.

However the median household mortgage repayment has decreased over the past five years,

from \$1800 a month in 2011 to \$1755 a month in 2016. In 2016, 72.7 per cent of Australians spoke English at home, compared to 76.8 per cent five years ago.

Mandarin, the second most spoken language, has jumped from 1.6 per cent in 2011 to 2.5 per cent.

Arabic has increased slightly (by 0.1 per cent) to become the third most common language in Australia, while Cantonese is fourth. Census data shows one in four Australians are now born overseas.

The United Kingdom is the largest single source of residents born overseas, followed by India and New Zealand.

The data also confirms that during the past 25 years the vast majority of migrants arriving in Australia – eight in 10 – settle in capital cities.

Three out of every 100 people identify as indigenous.

Federal ministers and the Australian Bureau of Statistics have insisted the data can be trusted.

That is despite website outages which lasted almost two days during census collection last year, styming the attempts of many Australians to complete the census online.

It was the first time the ABS had attempted to shift the massive survey online.

Notwithstanding the debacle, the response rates remained relatively high.

An estimated 96 per cent of occupied households completed census 2016, only slightly below the 96.5 per cent response rate of the 2011 survey.

“Thanks to the very high participation rate of Australians in last year’s census, and the (bureau’s) efforts to assure the data through its rigorous quality checks, the census will provide a comprehensive and accurate account of modern Australia,” Federal Small Business Minister Michael McCormack said.

Refugee nurse thriving with Aussie opportunity

FOR Brisbane nurse Rachael Magot there are always small, daily reminders of being a refugee.

“You can work hard, but you never forget; it will always be with you,” Ms Magot said during Refugee Week from June 18 to 24.

“Until I came to Australia, I thought life in the refugee camp was the best that life could be.

“It was all I had known for most of my life – from when I was eight years old until I left at twenty-one.”

Ms Magot (pictured), now 33, married and with two children, is a nurse at the Mater Hospital, South Brisbane.

Her parents live under conditions of drought and famine in their native South Sudan, and she has siblings who remain in refugee camps in Uganda.

Ms Magot said her family hardships and experience as a refugee helped in her daily nursing, particularly in providing compassionate care to patients who have similar backgrounds as refugees.

Born in Sudan, she fled with her family when she was eight years old.

War had broken out and it was too dangerous to stay in present-day South Sudan.

“We had to leave our home and hide in the bush. Often we had no food,” she said.

Her family fled to a refugee camp in Kenya, which became their home for 13 years.

“Most of the time, I was happy in the refugee camp,” Ms Magot said.

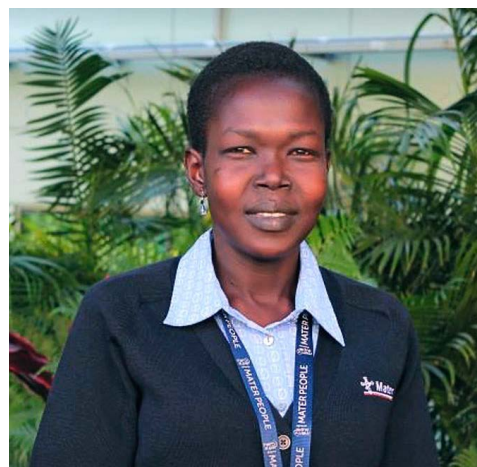
“Although there were occasional attacks from the local Kenyan host community, we were relatively safe, we had two meals a day and I was able to go to school.”

Ms Magot received a scholarship to attend St Joseph’s Girls, a Catholic high school in Kenya.

She excelled and her brother, who had resettled in Australia, sponsored her to come to join him as a refugee and further her studies.

It was at high school that Ms Magot also met a young man, also a Sudanese refugee, who would become her husband and join her in Australia.

“It wasn’t until I arrived in Australia that I realised how much hardship there was in the



refugee camp,” she said.

“I found Australians to be friendly and most people were welcoming. I think most Australians are open to multiculturalism.”

Ms Magot overcame the initial challenges of moving to a foreign land and culture.

“I was away from my support network. I had my brother, but in the refugee camp I was surrounded by a large, extended family – 18 of us in total,” she said. “The biggest challenge was the language barrier – not just understanding English but also the different accents. Also, no one could understand me.”

Ms Magot’s priority after arriving in Australia was to complete a Certificate III in English, and two years later she started a Bachelor of Nursing, a profession she had hoped to one day enter.

“When I was in high school, I volunteered with a local HIV/AIDS unit for patients who didn’t have family to support them,” she said.

“I liked the social part of the job, and the feeling that I was helping someone.”

Ms Magot has lived in Australia for 10 years, been a citizen for eight years and a nurse for five years.

“I enjoy nursing and I’m thankful for this and other opportunities I’ve had as a refugee in Australia,” she said.

– Mark Bowling



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Alysha's diving deeper for gold

AUSTRALIA'S national diving squad has welcomed emerging diver Alysha Koloï (pictured) to the team only two years after transferring into the sport.

The Year 10 San Sisto College student and former elite gymnast qualified for the national junior squad earlier this month with just two years' of training under her belt. She said jumping on the springboard into a pool rather than a gym floor was only possible with 11 years of gymnastics training.

"After eleven years of gymnastic training, I was able to quickly enhance my already developed aerial awareness, strength and work ethic to put me in good stead for diving," she said.

Ms Koloï placed eighth in the Australian Open Championships' three-metre springboard event, a performance that helped her qualify for the national team.

She also placed sixth in the finals for the one-metre springboard event.

Ms Koloï's place on the national team means she is now eligi-

ble to compete in international competitions like the Commonwealth Games and The World Series, but she has her eyes set on the Olympic Games.

"As I am still very new to the sport, I hope to advance in the rankings and prove myself in the world of diving arena," she said.

"I aspire to hopefully one day compete in an Olympic Games event, which will definitely be a long and hard road, but I am looking forward to the challenge."

As someone who successfully moved into a new sport, Ms Koloï said her advice to other people considering being a diver was "to give it a go".

"You never know what you are capable of until you try it," she said.

"It is okay to make mistakes, everybody does, and as I'm still learning, it is how you come back from them that determines whether you break or become a stronger and better person in and out of the pool."



Tap talent: Year 10 San Sisto College student and former elite gymnast Alysha Koloï has qualified for the National Junior squad in diving.

God's Word transforming lives in remote East Arnhem Land

Journey of faith shared

By Mark Bowling

A NEW documentary takes a fascinating look at how the Bible has been translated into the indigenous language of the Yolngu People on Elcho Island in the Northern Territory's remote East Arnhem Land.

In Our Yolngu Journey of Faith, there are poignant moments of faith, joy and deeper understanding that transform lives.

Translator and documentary director Yurranydjil Dhurrkay tells of an old man who, when hearing the scriptures for the first time in his own Yolngu language sheds tears of joy and declares, "Oh, beloved Lord, I can hear you speak to me in my language. I can understand you".

Queensland filmmaker and producer Matt Blyth, who is a regular parishioner at St Teresa's Church, Ravenshoe, has spent years working with Aboriginal people to produce documentaries in Arnhem Land and understands the customs and landscapes of this region of Australia far from the southern cities.

"It was an enormous challenge working across four languages and trying to access rare footage and photographs," Mr Blyth said.

"There were many Red Sea moments when we felt we couldn't go backwards, and it was hard to go forwards – but with faith and trust we did."

This is an uplifting documentary tracing how, in a small community, a group of Aboriginal Christians have spent decades dedicating themselves to translating the Bible for their own people in their own Yolngu language and dialects, spreading the faith and preserving their Yolngu culture.

Drawing on rich archival footage, the story of Our Yolngu Journey of Faith starts with the arrival in the 1950s of Beulah Lowe, a missionary and linguist.

She was sent to the Elcho Island community of Galiwin'ku by the Methodist Overseas Mission, learnt the language of the Yolngu people and documented it to produce the first written record of the language, Yolngu Matha.

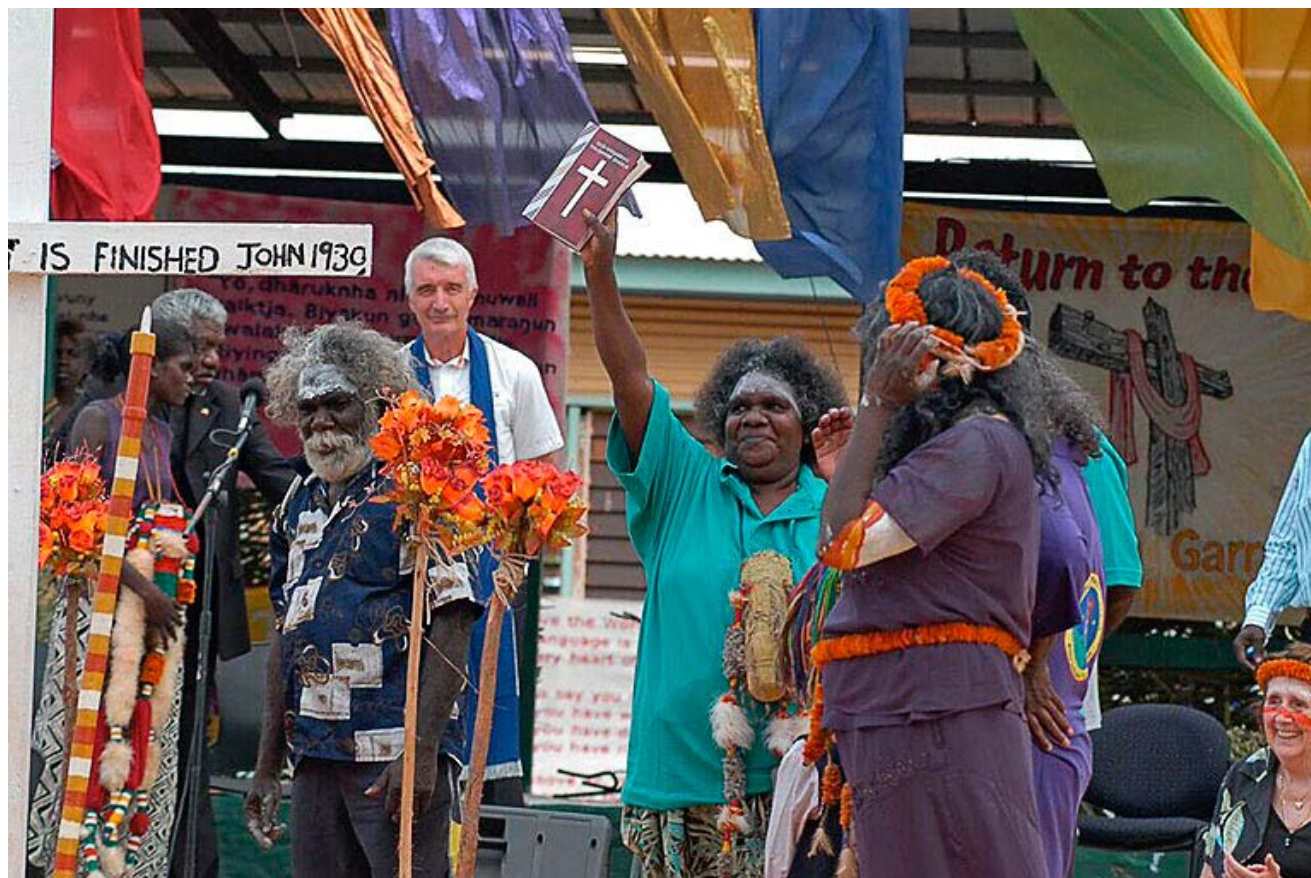
Her lifelong dedication to translating the New Testament into Yolngu, in co-operation with other translators, represents the heart of her many significant contributions to the community – not least of which are the language-based resources she developed to assist staff in East Arnhem Land to learn Yolngu Matha.

After the mission closed in 1974, Ms Lowe worked for the Aboriginal Advisory and Development Services until 1978, meticulously documenting the people's traditions and language in consultation with numerous clan members.

Over time her Bible translation work expanded to include other Yolngu languages, including Gupapuyngu, Gälpu, Gumatj, Wangurri and Djambarrpuyngu.

It is difficult for English speakers to imagine a time when no English translations of the Bible existed.

When William Tyndale's printed English



God's word: Director and Bible translator Yurranydjil Dhurrkay displays Djambarrpuyngu New Testament.



Faith production: Director and Bible translator Yurranydjil Dhurrkay, producer Matt Blyth and Bible translator Djawut Gondarra.

Faith ceremony: (Left) A ceremony celebrating the launch of the 1994 Djambarrpuyngu mini Bible.

translation of the Latin Bible was published in 1534, all Church services were conducted in Latin, a language understood mainly by clergy and scholars.

As the documentary reveals, being able to read and hear the New Testament in their own language has been transformative for the Yolngu.

Ricky Gurruwiwi speaks of his personal redemptive experience catalysed by reading the New Testament in Yolngu language.

In the words of translator Wänggarr: "I am grateful and thankful for the translation team choosing me.

"I'll be doing it for the rest of my life because

I love it. Not 'like' it. Love it."

Our Yolngu Story of Faith, a groundbreaking documentary about Yolngu language, Yolngu faith and Yolngu culture, will premiere on NITV on July 3.

It will also be available for viewing on SBS On Demand.

Iranian woman to be sent back to danger and abuse Mojgan's visa denied

By Mark Bowling

AN Iranian woman's "hopes and dreams" in Australia have been dashed by an Immigration Department order that could force her to be deported by the end of this year.

Mojgan Shamsalipoor, 24, has lived in Brisbane for the past nine months after being released from immigration detention.

Her case has been in the media spotlight, and she has released a book telling of her heart-wrenching struggle to remain in Australia with her husband.

However, on June 14, a phone call from the office of Immigration Minister Peter Dutton has confirmed Ms Shamsalipoor has only six months left in Australia before returning to Iran.

Her lawyer Kevin Kardigamar said despite "a legal limbo with no future at all", Ms Shamsalipoor would continue to fight for her hopes and dreams, but the constant threat of being detained or sent back to Iran was having "a very draining impact on her mental health".

Under an international agreement, Iran refuses to accept the involuntary return of asylum seekers.

Ms Shamsalipoor faces persecution and imprisonment if forced to return.

"The Minister does not want to intervene or even look at her case again," Ms Shamsalipoor's husband Milad Jafari said.

"It is a very shocking and depressing decision made by the Minister. He should be our leader and look at the case of each individual."

Ms Shamsalipoor and Mr Jafari are two young Iranian asylum seekers who met in Australia after fleeing their homeland.

At just 17 years of age, all Ms Shamsalipoor wanted was to be safe from physical and sexual abuse.

In the months between their separate sea voyages, the Australian Government changed the way asylum seekers were treated.

Though Mr Jafari is recognised as a refugee and will soon become an Australian citizen, Ms Shamsalipoor has been told she cannot stay here even though the threat of imprisonment and further abuse, or worse, means she can't return to Iran.

In September last year, after almost two years in detention, including time inside Darwin's Wickham Point Detention Centre, Ms Shamsalipoor was released back into the community.

Mr Dutton used his discretionary powers to issue Ms Shamsalipoor a temporary bridging visa, which was renewed in March while she then applied for a partner visa.

The department has rejected her application for a partner visa and given her until the end of this year on another temporary bridging visa.

More than 105,000 people have signed a petition in which Ms Shamsalipoor has pleaded for Mr Dutton to allow her to stay.

"I'd rather kill myself than return to Iran – to the hell where my stepfather took my innocence by force," the petition states.

"My life's been rebuilt in Brisbane. I went to high school here, made incredible friends and married a beautiful man."

A new biography, *Under the Same Sky*, released in April, has raised the profile of Mojgan and Milad and their case to stay together in Australia.

The book tells of a couple's love and caring for each, and includes the tale of her harrowing detention.

"This is our story, but it is the story of a lot of refugees I met ... during two years in detention," she said.

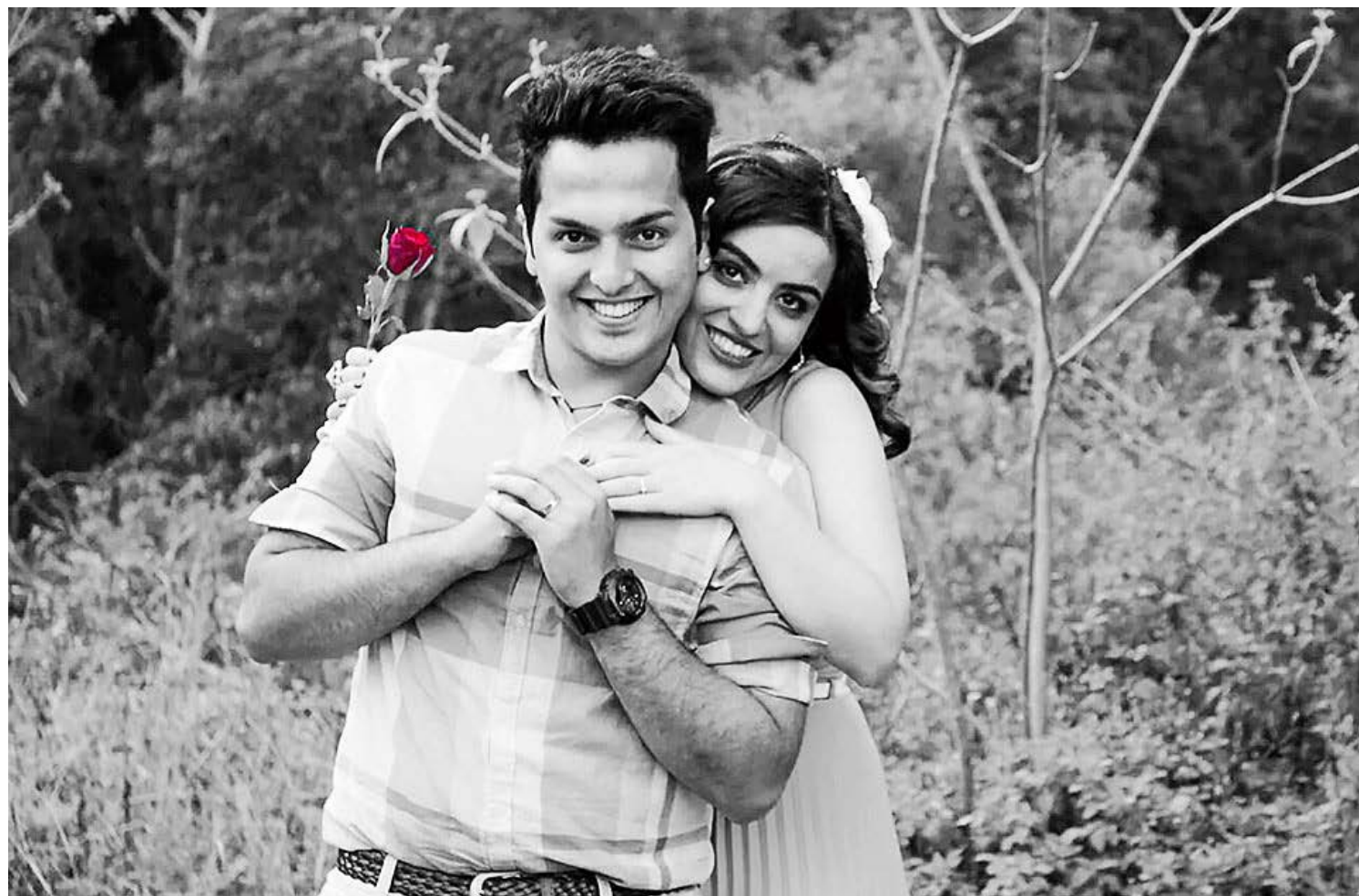
"They deserve to be in the community. They deserve to have a normal life as everyone."

Under the Same Sky is also a story of how Australians from many walks of life, have sympathised and backed the young couple.

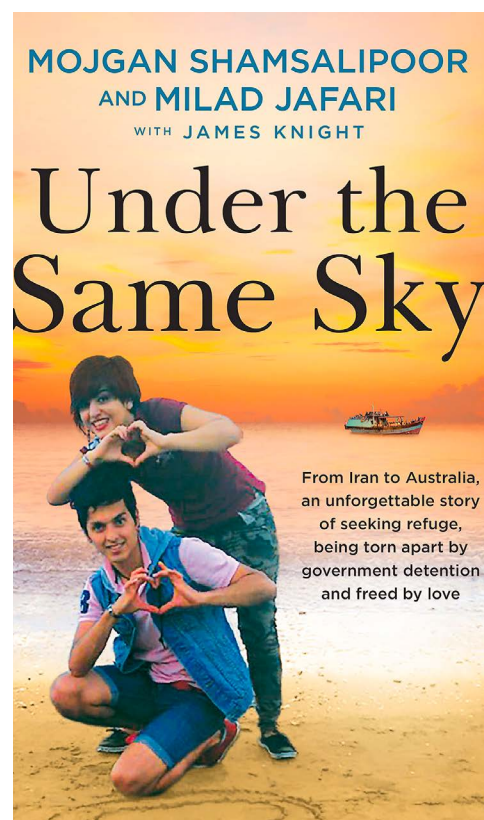
Supporters range from a legion of schoolgirls to politicians who have raised the case in state and federal parliaments.

"It is very clear the general public feel very strongly about this case," Mr Kardigamar said.

"It makes no sense keeping a young woman,



Sad fate: Mojgan Shamsalipoor and Milad Jafari in happier times.



Love and hurt: Mojgan Shamsalipoor and Milad Jafari have released a book, *Under the Same Sky*, which tells the story of their flight from Iran and the hurt they have endured because of Immigration Department decisions in Australia.

a member of an Australian family, in limbo. It contributes nothing to border security, and lacks all compassion.

"She (Mojgan) cannot be sent back to Iran because the Iranian Government does not accept forced deportees. And Mojgan is very clear in her resolve she will not go back to Iran voluntarily.

"Everyone gains if she is allowed some kind of a future in Australia."

Ms Shamsalipoor and Mr Jafari, along with former teacher Jessica Walker, spoke at a World Refugee Day rally in Brisbane on June 24.

A petition in support of Ms Shamsalipoor can be found online at: change.org

VATICAN NEWS

Clergy in Mid-East to be close to people



CHRISTIANS in war-torn areas of the Middle East must never be far from priests and bishops in their country so they can feel God's closeness in the midst of suffering, Pope Francis said.

"It is fundamental to always nourish the style of evangelical closeness: in the bishops, so they may live it toward their priests and that they in turn make the Lord's caress be felt by the faithful entrusted to them," he said. "But all the while keeping the grace of remaining disciples of the Lord, beginning with the first who learn to be the last among the least."

The Pope spoke on June 22 during a meeting with members of a Vatican co-ordinating body, known by its Italian acronym ROACO, which operates under the auspices of the Congregation for Eastern Churches.

The funding agencies include two based in the United States – the Catholic Near East Welfare Association and the Pontifical Mission for Palestine.

The Congregation for Eastern Churches and the coalition of funding agencies are responsible for assisting Eastern-rite churches around the world as well as the Latin-rite church in the Holy Land.

CNS

Papal voice: An elderly woman from Mosul, Iraq, sits at a refugee camp in Khazer, Iraq.



Photo: CNS

Pope makes major donation to South Sudan charities

WITH a trip to South Sudan postponed indefinitely, Pope Francis is sending almost \$500,000 to help two Church-run hospitals, a teacher training centre and farming projects for families as a way to show the people there his solidarity and support.

Because a planned trip with Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury couldn't happen this year as hoped, Pope Francis "wants to make tangible the presence and closeness of the Church with the suffering people through this initiative 'The Pope for South Sudan'," prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development Cardinal Peter Turkson told reporters at a Vatican news conference on June 21.

"He fervently hopes to be able to go there as soon as possible on an official visit to the nation; the Church does not shut hope out of such an afflicted area."

An official visit was meant to draw the world's attention to a silent tragedy, give voice to those suffering, and encourage conflicting parties to make renewed and greater efforts in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict, the cardinal said. Already in March, Pope Francis had expressed doubts about the possibility of making the trip, saying in an interview with Germany's Die Zeit newspaper, that visiting South Sudan would be "important", but that "I don't believe that it is possible".

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Further information: www.centreforchristianspirituality.com.au
dl-walker@bigpond.com or greg.bourke@cam.org.au

Church supports creation of separate Gorkha homeland in India

People are suffering

CHURCH leaders have expressed solidarity with ethnic Gorkha people who are on an indefinite strike protesting for a separate homeland in the Darjeeling area of eastern India.

Since June 8, Darjeeling district in West Bengal state has witnessed violent clashes between local residents and police.

Street protests, stone-throwing as well as violence from both sides has intensified since June 12 when the popular local organisation Gorkha Janmukti Morcha called for an indefinite strike demanding the creation of a separate homeland – Gorkhaland – for ethnic Gorkha people.

At least three people have been killed in the violence.

"The Church is not directly involved in the protest. But the Church is with the people," Bishop Stephen Lepcha of Darjeeling said.

He said local people were demanding the right of self-governance because West Bengal state officials did not attend to their needs.

The Gorkhas live in the hill country of West Bengal and have a language and culture separate from the rest of the state.

"The problem arises here again because people do not see the government helping with any development in this hilly region," Bishop Lepcha, a native of Darjeeling, said.

"People suffer unemployment and poverty. The administration has failed miserably."

The struggle for a separate state within the Indian federation began three decades ago.

Armed classes claimed 1200 lives from 1986 to 1988.

The confrontation then was resolved by the West Bengal government, which established the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill council, a semi-autonomous body administering Darjeeling.



Support: Protesters supporting ethnic Gorkha people carry signs and shout slogans during a June 22 demonstration in Mumbai, India. Church leaders have expressed solidarity with ethnic Gorkha people who are on an indefinite strike protesting for a separate homeland in the Darjeeling area of eastern India.

Photo: CNS

"But in effect everything was controlled by the state government," the bishop said, adding that without freedom the council also "failed to work for the welfare of the people".

Bishop Lepcha said the demand for Gorkhaland was "genuine as it will help Gorkha people safeguard their language and ethnic culture, which they consider under threat".

He would like the government and the Gorkha people "to have dialogue and solve the problem, or else the situation will be out of control".

Catholics were "very small in number" from among the local population but had a "good rapport" with other local people and the West Bengal state government, the bishop said.

"We are in a process to find out some ways to help bring peace back to the

region," he said.

Jesuit Father Kinley Tshering, the order's provincial superior in Darjeeling, said he was worried the strike, if it continued, may hit ordinary people hard because they may run out of food and other essential items.

The strike has led to blocked roads, preventing trucks with food and other supplies from traveling to the region.

"This can fan further protests," Fr Tshering said.

"Our people are suffering. We can't run away with our responsibilities. Our prayer and solidarity are with them."

The priest also said the demand for a separate homeland was "right because the former council did very less in terms of development in the hilly region".

CNS

Zambia bishops, faith leaders wary of possible dictatorship

THE president of the Zambian Catholic bishops' conference joined other religious leaders in deploring worsening tensions in the east African country, accusing its president of intimidating opponents and silencing the media.

Archbishop Telesphore Mpundu of Lusaka and leaders of the Council of Churches of Zambia and the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia said in a statement that the country was at a crossroads as it faced "many challenges related to governance, the muzzling of people's freedoms and human rights violations".

The leaders said they were saddened by the "blatant lack of political will" to tackle Zambia's crisis, and wished to "see the government do better and succeed" by raising their "prophetic voice".

They said they had tried for weeks to explain their concerns to President Edgar Lungu.

They also said they feared he was "creating a new dictatorship".

"Only leadership that does not have the will of the people on its side, or thinks it does not have the will of the people on its side, uses state institutions to suppress

that same will," the statement said.

Political tensions increased after the violent night-time arrest of the head of the opposition United Party for National Development Hakainde Hichilema after his supporters were involved in an April 10 clash with President Lungu's motorcade.

The Lusaka Times reported on June 22 that Mr Hichilema, who could face the death penalty, had been transferred with five others charged in connection with the incident from a maximum-security jail back to Mr Lusaka's central prison.

The faith leaders said continued mistreatment of Mr Hichilema, who ran in five presidential elections and finished a close second to President Lungu in voting in August, was causing "growing amazement and alarm".

Mr Hichilema unsuccessfully challenged the election result in Zambia's Constitutional Court.

President Lungu has threatened a state of emergency if his legitimacy remained contested.

Recent pressure on newspapers and television and radio stations was exacerbat-

ing an atmosphere of "fear, intimidation and threats", the leaders said.

"There cannot be national reconciliation and healing through manipulation of truth – the kind of leadership we have now allows law-breaking as long as it benefits the powers that be," the statement said.

"If this isn't dictatorship, then what is it?"

In their statement, the faith leaders said their previous warnings had been ignored, raising anxieties for the future of Zambia, which has been long viewed as a bastion of democracy in Africa.

They added that Mr Hichilema should be "treated with respect as a political prisoner" and released into house arrest, while Mr Lungu should act as "guardian for all Zambians", rather than aiming "only to protect the good of members of his party".

The Lusaka Times reported on June 19 that Auxiliary Bishop Benjamin Phiri of Chipata had contested the statement and accused Archbishop Mpundu of failing to consult other Catholic leaders before its release.

CNS

Crisis: Zambian President Edgar Chagwa Lungu.

Photo: CNS



Adoration inspiring students and teachers to pray more

School puts Christ first

By Emilie Ng

EUCCHARISTIC adoration is re-connecting students and staff of a Brisbane Catholic school to the true purpose and meaning of Catholic education.

Students and staff at St Finbarr's Primary School, Ashgrove, completed a second year of 24-hour Adoration after receiving many beautiful responses from children who experienced the program last year.

Adore for 24 takes children out of the classroom to the nearby St Finbarr's Church, which is part of the Jubilee parish, for 30 minutes of Eucharistic adoration over the course of one school day.

Parishioners, staff and parents of children are also invited to pray before the Blessed Sacrament during and after school, with the Blessed Sacrament exposed for 24 hours.

Year 3 teacher Niamh Healy co-ordinated the Adore for 24 program last year, proving to both principal Ann Hall and parish priest Fr Peter Brannelly that children can have profound experiences of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

"I'm just lost for words – to sit in the church and watch the children's faces, it's God's presence and it's so inspiring," Ms Hall said.

"It brings you back to what we're all about as a Catholic school.

"At the core of Catholic schools is to connect us to our Catholic identity, and Niamh has nurtured the faith with the teachers and children in ordinary ways."

In preparation for the program this year, Ms Healy ran formation sessions for each classroom to explain the Road to Emmaus scripture, which was read during the adoration sessions.

"We were focusing on the difference between what it means to talk about God, because we do learn a lot and that's essential to teach children about God and about Jesus," Ms Healy said.

"Facts such as where he was born and all those things are necessary, but this was more helping them to understand and to participate in what it means to talk to God."

The formation also taught the children that Christ wanted to transform their lives in the way he transformed the disciples on the road to Emmaus when they recognised him in the breaking of bread.

In written feedback to the staff, several students said being before the Blessed Sacrament inspired them to pray, gave them a sense of calm from their worries and even gave them an understanding that God does forgive their sins.

One student wrote, "for the first time ever, I actually felt like God was really with me".

"I felt like his hand was resting on my shoulder," the student wrote.

Another student said after approaching the Blessed Sacrament they "felt God's love in my heart".

"During Adore for 24, I felt relaxed and I had an image in my head of Jesus helping me and caring for me," the student wrote.

"It was a really relaxing time and when I left I had a smile on my mind.

"Just being in the church made me happy."

The immense joy of being before Christ was also obvious for one student, who felt "like Jesus was right there hugging me" as the Scripture was being read.

"After the session was over, I was very aware of how lucky I am, to be going off to such a good school, having a loving family and living



Adoring Jesus: "I'm just lost for words – to sit in the church and watch the children's faces, it's God's presence and it's so inspiring".

in a safe country," they wrote.

"I was also very aware that wherever I go, Jesus and God will always be with me."

Ms Healy said the responses from students were inspiring.

"I learned from these responses that many students had a special experience; a moment with God," Ms Healy said.

"Knowing that a little eight-year-old now believes that she will always feel loved by God and hearing that another student believes that Jesus can open his eyes to the truth, completely inspires me.

"I believe it is so important to take the children physically close to God, to break open the Scriptures in a tangible way and allow Jesus to do the rest.

"Listening to my students, children really felt Jesus' true presence, they discovered that Jesus is real, not just a concept or an idea, and they simply loved spending time with Him.

"This in itself shows me that providing children with an opportunity to have some time in Adoration, allows that beautiful relationship to be fostered.

"To have had this opportunity has been a special blessing and I feel very grateful."

It's also a program St Finbarr's principal deems worthy of repeating every year.

"It's just part of us now, it's part of our religious life," Ms Hall said.

The success of the program and the spiritual zeal felt by both students and staff has also impressed St Finbarr's parish priest.

"The proof is in the pudding," Fr Brannelly said. "It's not a matter of dragging kids across to the church and making them sit there quiet for an



Joyful prayers: Students and staff at St Finbarr's Primary School, Ashgrove, completed a second year of 24-hour Adoration.

hour – it's doing the preparation.

"That Road to Emmaus (formation) provides the foundation for them to understand about opening their eyes to what they are experiencing over there."

As well as ensuring students in his Catholic schools are receiving formation in the faith, Fr Brannelly said Adore for 24 made sure the church was always open.

"Once before, all our churches were always open, and there was a tradition of, if you went by a church, stopping in to 'pay a visit', as the old line would go," he said.

"These days most churches are locked up and they're only open for small portions of the week.

"There's nothing more unwelcoming than driving by a church and seeing everything bolted up.

"St Finbarr's at Ashgrove is our church in a village, literally, and one of the great challenges is to open the church up and let it be a place of welcome.

"Let's not be afraid, terribly afraid, of something happening (but) open the church, and by this Adore for 24 is just one of those opportunities to open the church up, open the doors up."

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Home and retirement plans

By Zilla Lyons

A GREAT deal of wealth is tied to our homes.

The Federal Government has proposed, in the most recent budget, to allow people over the age of 65 to add \$300,000 to their superannuation fund from the sale of their principal residence.

Some people – especially those in larger cities – are living in homes that have appreciated over the years to be worth more than a million dollars while they are struggling to fund their retirement with little more than the age pension.

Additionally, the move may free up some housing stock for young families who are seeing limited housing inventory available for them when they're looking to buy.

There are a few caveats in the proposal.

The home must have been owned for at least 10 years and be considered the principal residence. In other words, the scheme would not apply to, say, a rental property.

If the legislation passes, the existing voluntary super contribution rules for people aged 65 and older will not apply.

In other words, the person or couple downsizing will be able to contribute to super without satisfying any work test, without fitting the usual age contribution limits of 65-74 without having restrictions relating to their account balance possibly exceeding \$1.6 million.

A couple can take advantage of the measure on the same house, contributing a total of \$600,000 into their respective superannuation as the result of downsizing.

These contributions will be in addition to any other voluntary contributions people are already qualified to make under existing concessional (pre-tax) and non-concessional (post-tax) cap rules.

One important measure to consider is that the sales proceeds will be counted toward the age pension eligibility tests.

I would encourage anyone considering such an important financial and life decision to seek financial and possibly legal advice from independent, qualified advisers before proceeding.

For self-funded retirees, the downsizing proposal may have significant merit.

They may perhaps already be considering downsizing to free up funds, particularly with the high home values in many capital cities.

If this legislation is passed in its current form, a couple could, after July 1, 2018, be able to invest up to \$600,000 from the downsizing to their super accounts and have tax-free earnings and capital withdrawals from their retirement accounts.

This might seem like an easy move for self-funded retirees, or people who require an incentive to move to a more suitable home that matches their current lifestyle and needs.

Currently, the proposal does not require the "downsizer" to purchase a new home with their sale proceeds.

The proposal raises some key questions and observations, particularly around age pensioners – many of whom are asset-rich but income-poor.

What impact will this scheme have to their retirement plans? Will it appeal to that group?

Presently, your principal residence is an exempt asset from the Centrelink age pension tests and the value is not capped.

An aged pensioner may be living in their principal residence, which might be worth many



Home change: "The Federal Government has proposed, in the most recent budget, to allow people over the age of 65 to add \$300,000 to their superannuation fund from the sale of their principal residence."

millions of dollars, but don't have much money to live on.

There may be family pressure on these individuals to sell the home because their children – justly or not – might view this valuable real estate asset as a financial entitlement. If the sale can provide a more comfortable retirement, however, that could be preferable.

The impact that downsizing could have on a person's age pension status cannot be understated. While there is a proposed change that would allow the proceeds of downsizing to exceed contribution caps without penalty, the age pension assets test will still apply.

Currently, a single aged pensioner can have up to \$250,000 in assets and receive a full age pension. Over a 20-year period, a single aged pensioner entitled to the full age pension – ignoring any supplements – will receive \$287,287 in today's dollars (assuming a five per cent rate of return). Suppose that that person had \$240,000 in existing assets; if they were to downsize and deposit \$300,000 of the proceeds into super, they could lose their entitlement by breaching the asset test threshold with a total of \$540,000 in counted assets.

As the limits are higher and the age pensioner couple both share the same house, the effect may not be as pronounced as for an individual.

The current asset test threshold for a home-owning couple with combined assets below \$375,000 means they're eligible for the full age pension.

If their assets are between \$375,000 and \$821,500, they're eligible for the part pension.

The downsizing scheme, as it is currently proposed, may have limited attraction for most age pensioners because it could make some people lose access to the Age Pension.

As the cost of living continually increases however, we need to find a way to help people access the value of their home.

In The Conversation, UTS professor Peter Wells writes: "Our current retirement system is simply not sustainable, as our population ages and life expectancy increases. Australia incentivizes people to structure their finances so they are asset rich and cash poor. They are then able to claim the pension and can leave an inheritance, which is in part paid for by taxpayers."

Let's assume that a cap of \$1 million applied to the Centrelink-exempt value of the principal residence.

Would this influence the situation?

Currently, there is a formal Government loan scheme that provides payments to bring part-age pensioners up to the full age pension payment without requiring the individual or couple to vacate their principal residence.

Operating similarly to a reverse mortgage, the loan balance is repaid when the principal residence is sold.

In this theoretical case, if an aged pensioner chose to remain in an existing property with a value exceeding \$1 million, they could lose part or all of their current age pension entitlement under the asset test.

A pension loan scheme that uses the home value as collateral could help a person or couple replace age pension income by leveraging the value of their home without being forced to sell it, all without negatively impacting the value of their home.

Perhaps if the exempt value of the principal residence was capped – again at, say, \$1 million – and any value above the amount was counted toward the Centrelink assets test, we might see more downsizing because the value of that home

would already be counted against your entitlement.

A broadened pension loans scheme would be an integral component of this proposition.

These hypothetical changes to the welfare system in Australia – including the Age Pension – could make the system more sustainable for future generations while potentially increasing the supply of homes available on the market which would help to stabilise house prices.

This could also reduce the escalating debt burden which is preventing our children and grandchildren from being able to own their own home, improving Australia's overall economic stability.

Any views, opinions or recommendations of the writer is solely their own and do not in any way reflect the views, opinions and recommendations of Australian Catholic Superannuation. The views, opinions or recommendations in the article may change in the future.

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Zilla Lyons is a regional manager with Australian Catholic Superannuation and Retirement Fund.



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Eating like a refugee

FROM PAGE 1

She said as a Catholic, it was her responsibility to see Christ in refugees because “they’re still children of the Lord and the Lord made them”.

“I would always welcome refugees,” she said.

“As a Catholic, it’s just being kind to others and, just like the Bible says, if I’m hungry, feed me, if I’m with no clothes, clothe me – seeing them as Christ himself.

“It doesn’t matter who they are, either a refugee or the poor or the sick.

“They are still children of God.”

Since the Ration Challenge began three years ago, more than \$3 million has been raised, money that has fed 10,700 refugees for a year.

Brisbane archdiocesan employee Donna Longland, who completed the challenge with her housemate Andrea Barton, is another Catholic who has contributed money to help feed a refugee in Jordan.

Along with the 1.5kg box of food, the pair also redeemed a voucher for a 400g bag of flour.

Ms Longland and her housemate cooked all their meals from scratch using the recipes written by refugees.

“It was interesting to have to cook everything from scratch and to try new things,” Ms Longland said.

“You can understand that it’s so much easier to do this for just a week, but to know the refugees have to live with the rations day in day out, or not even know if the next ration is coming, I now have a bit of an understanding and solidarity with the refugees.”

While Ms Longland said she had not exactly walked in the shoes of a refugee, the challenge helped her to “walk alongside them”.



In solidarity: Mira Tedjo during the Ration Challenge. Photo: Emilie Ng

“It was difficult, and there is no fruit or vegetables, or all the other luxuries we have, like coffee or tea,” she said. “The highlight for me was talking to people openly about refugees, especially when people offered me foods and I had to explain why I couldn’t eat that.”

The challenge also showed Ms Longland that Australia “has a duty to assist refugees in whatever way we can”.

As a Christian, it is also important to understand the needs before reaching out with a

helping hand.

“One of the things we believe as Catholics and Christians is to help people where we can, but to help them you have to understand their situation, otherwise it’s just your own self-gratification,” Ms Longland said.

“It’s just affirmed for me that we need to have an understanding that when a new refugee arrives in Australia, they will need to change to our way of life and even changing their diet for one week has a big impact.



Ration challenge: More than 14,000 people received a 1.5kg box of food typically eaten by a Syrian refugee in a camp in Jordan. Photo: Act for Peace

“ It doesn’t matter who they are, either a refugee or the poor or the sick. They are still children of God. ”

You realise that it’s not an easy thing they are doing.”

Ms Longland said the challenge inspired her to speak out more about refugees and to stay informed about policies that could impact their lives.

“There’s a limited amount we can do but it’s just about raising awareness and stopping the fear mongering that the media and politicians portray about refugees and how they will change the way we live,” she said.

Warning over fee increases

By Mark Bowling

THE Federal Government has warned Catholic schools not to raise fees after passage of its Gonski 2.0 education funding reforms.

Catholic school leaders are uncertain about how the new funding will operate and can’t rule out fee changes. There are also concerns students with disability will lose out.

The Federal Opposition and the powerful national education union are vowing to fight the reforms even after the Government adding an extra \$5 billion to the plan, boosting it to \$23.5 billion over the next six years.

Gonski 2.0 reforms will force a major shake-up to Catholic school systems across the country, and have drawn sharp criticism from Catholic school leaders, concerned at a lack of consultation and the uncertain future of the system-weighted average which, they claim, has allowed Catholic schools to operate in rural and remote Australia and keep Catholic schools affordable for low and middle-income families.

“The uncertain future of the system-weighted average, as well as radical changes to the fee expectations for Catholic primary schools, means principals and families are increasingly worried about the affordability of Catholic schools in coming years,” National Catholic Education Commission executive director Christian Zahra said.

After Gonski 2.0 passed through parliament with crossbench support on June 23, Government frontbencher Christopher Pyne said Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and Education Minister Simon Birmingham had done enough to end the “school funding war”.

“Now we can focus on getting our outcomes up,” Mr Pyne told Sky News.

He recharged a battle with the Catholic school sector with further comments.

“I think they have been dishonest,” he said. “They have pretended to have commitments from previous governments that were never funded.”

Catholic education bodies have suggested fees may rise in low-income areas under the Gonski 2.0 plan.

“If fees go up in the Catholic Church, it’s got nothing to do with a lack of money from the Commonwealth Government,” Mr Pyne said.

Queensland Catholic Education Commission executive director Dr Lee-Anne Perry said Queensland Catholic schools would now be able to plan for the 2018 school year with more certainty.

However, Dr Perry said there remained uncertainties about how Gonski 2.0 would operate.

“We still hold concerns that, once the intertwining elements of the new funding package are fully implemented, the affordability of our low-fee Catholic schools may be at risk,” she said.

“... Our schools and authorities will be working very hard to ensure the continued affordability and quality of our schools for those seeking a Catholic education for their children.

“Our concerns about funding for students with disability are also unanswered.

“The new model will base the funding for these students on data which the education sector, and even the Minister, do not believe is reliable at this stage.

“As it stands, students with disability in Catholic schools stand to lose out and we will continue our discussions with the Minister over this and a number of other issues.”

Dr Perry said the sector also had questions about other aspects of the package.

“We have no detail about how the National School Resourcing Board will work and what its role and functions will ultimately be,” she said.

“Now that the legislation has passed we look forward to a productive working relationship with the Federal Government to implement the changes and to resolve our remaining ongoing concerns.”

OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENTS FOR BRISBANE’S BISHOPS

ARCHBISHOP MARK COLERIDGE

July 4: Episcopal Council meeting; 5.10pm Mass, St Stephen’s Cathedral

July 5: 12.30pm Mass, St Stephen’s Cathedral

July 6: Bible Society Australia, United Bible Societies Conference, Sydney; Keynote at the Australian Catholic Biblical Association Conference, Sydney

July 8: 6pm, Mass of Installation of Fr Alex Vickers OP, Our Lady of Graces, Carina

July 9: 8am, Mass, St Stephen’s Cathedral; 10am Australian Catholic Students Association Conference, St Leo’s College.



BISHOP KEN HOWELL

July 4: Episcopal Council meeting

July 9: 9am Mass, St Patrick’s, Fortitude Valley.



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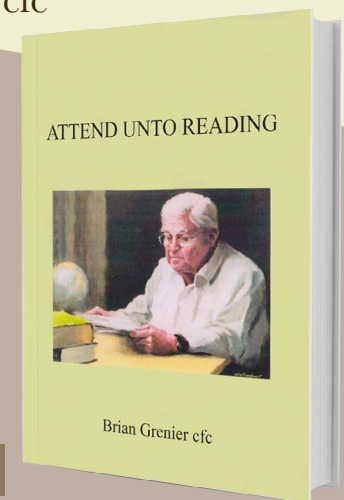
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Buranda community St Luke's reopened

By Emilie Ng

RENOVATIONS on one of Brisbane's iconic Spanish mission-style churches, St Luke's Church, Buranda, are finally complete after a 30-month closure.

The Catholic community at Buranda held its first Mass inside the newly renovated church on June 18, the first in nearly three years.

The church officially closed for renovations on December 28, 2014, and Sunday Masses were relocated to the Little King's Movement centre in Woolloongabba.

Renovations to the church included a complete electrical rewiring and repainting of the church, repairs to the roof which was damaged in a 2014 hail storm, and the restoration of the high altar and two side altars.

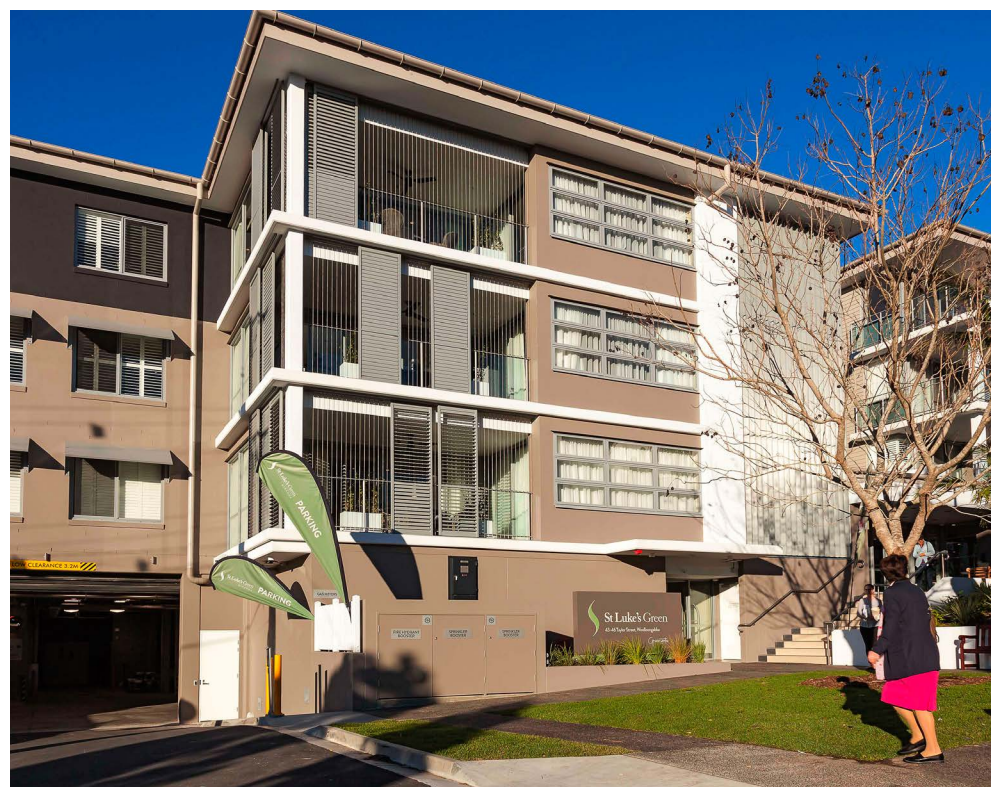
There is also a new marble ambo and matching marble low altar, which were both originally inside the Sisters of St Joseph Home in Wavell Heights, run by the Sisters of St Joseph.

CONTINUED PAGE 13

New altar: Buranda parish administrator Monsignor Peter Meneely celebrates Mass in the newly renovated St Luke's Church. The refurbishment includes a new marble altar. The high altar also has been renovated.



Refreshed: Parishioners gather in St Luke's Church for the first Mass since the church was closed for renovation; and (left) the bell has been placed in the bell tower for the first time.



Moving back: The St Luke's community processes with the Blessed Sacrament back into the renovated church for the first Mass there in 30 months; and (right) a section of the St Luke's Green retirement community.

gathers for first Mass in its renovated church for 30 months

FROM PAGE 12

These changes coincided with the development of a retirement and aged-care complex, St Luke's Green, which is now part of the Buranda parish community and will officially open in September.

Parish administrator Monsignor Peter Meneely said the new village – which includes a 60-bed retirement village and 60 beds in high care – suited the parish's missionary needs in the new millennium.

"We started by looking at a vision of a development of the site to respond to the missionary needs of the parish at this time in its history," Msgr Meneely said.

"That new mission is in aged care."

Msgr Meneely said the parish came into negotiations with retirement and aged-care property company Greengate for a 99-year lease agreement of the church land.

The agreement includes protection of the existing church, convent and presbytery, and the development of St Luke's care village.

"Part of the vision was those that lived in the area would have an option to stay in the area when they go into retirement," Msgr Meneely said.

"It's also eighty years since the church was open so major renovations were needed.

"We're also seeing a significant densification in the area, with lots of units being built, and we're seeing more younger families and retirees coming in."

Msgr Meneely will act as chaplain to the St Luke's Green community in providing spiritual care to Catholics in the area.

This would also include a proposal to have live-streaming of all the St Luke's Masses on televisions, laptops and computers owned by residents of the village.

Msgr Meneely also encouraged lay Catholics in the area to grow the parish's spiritual dimension through prayer groups and other outreaches.

"The church will be opened every day and will be there for anyone to pray in, meditate in, pray the Rosary in, and so on," he said.

"My hope would be, certainly, for a good integration between the retired and aged care and the parish's life."



New beginning: Monsignor Peter Meneely, carrying the Blessed Sacrament, and Fr Fadi Salame, from St Maroun's Church, Greenslopes, joining Buranda parishioners in procession into the renovated St Luke's Church.



Remembering: Long-time parishioner of St Luke's Church, Buranda, Vera Acres, who died on June 16, with Monsignor Peter Meneely at the parish's sod-turning event on March 8, 2015. St Luke's was Mrs Acres' home parish for 65 years.

St Luke's farewells oldest parishioner Vera Acres

BURANDA'S Catholic community has remembered the parish's longest-living and oldest parishioner Vera Acres, who died two days before her home parish reopened to the public.

Born on November 26, 1916, Mrs Acres lived to be 100 years and nearly seven months old.

She died on June 16 this year, just two days before the St Luke's Church, Buranda, reopened for Sunday Mass.

Mrs Acres shared her life story in The Catholic Leader one month after her 100th birthday, saying her faith in God was what kept her alive.

"Everybody asks me what the secret is, but there's no secret," she said.

"All you've got to do is just live day to day and just, I don't know, just believe in God I suppose.

"That's probably why I'm still alive."

The long-time St Luke's parishioner spent 65 years of her life in the parish at St Luke's, which celebrates 80 years since its opening and blessing this year.

She even had her 100th birthday celebrations at the church, attending a special birthday Mass on November 27 at St Luke's celebrated by parish administrator Monsignor Peter Meneely.

Msgr Meneely presided at her funeral on June 26, the first one in the newly reopened church.

He said Mrs Acres was the oldest parishioner in the St Luke's community.

"Vera is the church's oldest parishioner, so it's most appropriate that she be the first to have her funeral in the newly restored church," Msgr Meneely said.

Mrs Acres leaves behind three children, seven grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

– Emilie Ng



Special day: Monsignor Peter Meneely and Fr Fadi Salame celebrating the first Mass in the renovated St Luke's Church, Buranda, for 30 months.



Supporters: Zoe Lomax and Sarah Martelli are among those admiring the refurbishment of St Luke's Church.

Do you have an attitude of gratitude?

ST Paul in the First letter to the Thessalonians urges us to “in everything give thanks”.

A daily habit that I have developed is to give thanks to God for all the gifts, grace and blessings so abundantly poured down upon my loved ones and me.

Every day I count what counts – my blessings.

I have a real sense of how blessed my life is and an attitude of gratitude is far more prevalent in me than I can recall from the past.

Living in the now has very real benefits. It is a joy.

Some people limit their own abilities by consistently thinking negatively.

Life brings setbacks to every person.

Setbacks are a part of life.

If you adopt the attitude that they are only challenges, you’re more likely to find solutions quickly.

The key is to transform pain into gain and hurt into healing. Life is not negative.

It is wonderful.

It is full of joy and laughter. We have a divine fire within us.

We reach for the stars. We dream of the infinite.

We have God’s breath in our lungs and God’s love in our hearts.

To have an attitude of gratitude means to express thankfulness and appreciation in all areas of your life, for the big as well as the small.

Master motivator Zig Ziglar was fond of saying: “Of all the ‘attitudes’ we can acquire, surely the attitude of gratitude is the most important and by far the most life-changing.”

Author Dan Mager claims that “Gratitude changes perspective – it can sweep away most of the petty, day-to-day annoyances on which we focus so much of our attention – the ‘small stuff’ situations that bring up feelings of impatience, intolerance, negative judgment, indignation,



Grateful: “I have a very real sense of how blessed my life is and an attitude of gratitude is far more prevalent in me than I can recall from the past.”

anger, or resentment”.

Each day we live is a gift – our loved ones are gifts from God – the talents, skills and opportunities we are given in life are gifts.

The rising sun, the setting sun, the stars and moon at night, the birds that sing, the dogs and cats at play, butterflies, the beauty of flowers, the green grass, the food we eat – everything is gift if we just look for it.

It is possible to find something to be grateful for in every situation.

“Count your garden by the flowers
Never by the leaves that fall;
Count your days by golden hours,
Don’t remember clouds at all.
Count your nights by stars, not shadows,
Count your life by smiles, not tears,
And with joy on every birthday
Count your age by friends, not years.” (Author unknown)

There is the story of the father who, in trying to keep his son occupied, cut up a picture of the world into jigsaw pieces.

He figured it would keep his son busy for some time and was therefore surprised when, shortly afterwards, his son brought him the puzzle, completed.

“How did you get this puzzle back together so soon?” the father asked.

His son replied, “Well, Dad, there was a picture of a man on the other side, so I just put the man right, and that made the world come out right!”

Living life with an attitude of gratitude is another way to “put the man (or woman) right”. Gratitude is the most powerful meditation of a lifetime.

Gratitude does come so easily if we allow it. As you focus on gratitude, you will quickly find your way home to God.

For as we give gratitude we are in turn blessed for giving it.

It is a gift for both the giver and the receiver. When we give gratitude, the value of our life increases and joy fills our beings.

St Paul teaches us to pray always and in all circumstances of your life with gratitude in my heart.

Yes, we have so much to be thankful for every day.

Yet, do we remember to pause during the day to say “Thank You, Lord”?

Be grateful for the gift of life and take time to meditate on the unfailing love of God.

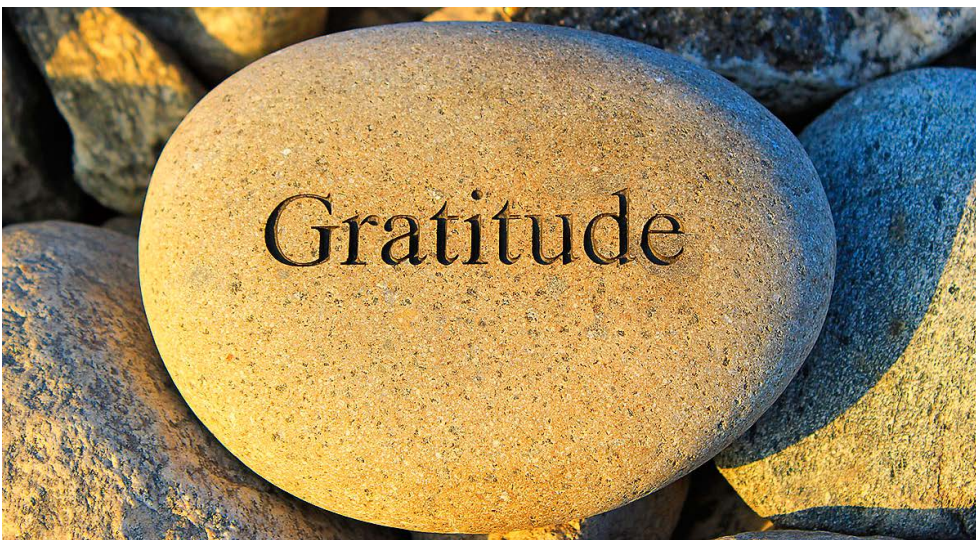
Try it today – it only takes a few moments – then make it a daily habit.

“In everything give thanks.”

Gracious God, day by day, you enlighten and enrich our lives by your grace and mercy.

As we embrace your gifts with gratitude, may your grace and mercy flow through us to shine your love on all we meet.

Have a golden day and treasure life.



BY TERRY LEES

Terry Lees is a member of the Mount Isa Catholic parish.



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South Sudan crisis needs media attention, government action



Action needed: A boy from South Sudan stands next to his family's belongings at a camp for displaced people in Lamwo, Uganda.

Photos: CNS

Under the world's radar

POPE Francis is first of all a shepherd who makes seeking out the lost and forgotten his top priority.

But he also knows that wherever he goes, the cameras and news coverage will follow.

He leveraged his pull on the media spotlight early in his papacy when he went to Lampedusa for his first trip as Pope, tossing a funeral wreath onto the vast, unmarked cemetery known as the Mediterranean Sea – where thousands of migrants die each year escaping from economic distress, political crises or persecution.

His visits to the Central African Republic, refugee centres, prisons, homes for the elderly and ill have all been key stops in his mission to reach out to the neglected peripheries, encourage those who are suffering and the hidden heroes helping them, and wake up the world to their presence and plight.

South Sudan was meant to be next on that list, to red-flag the disastrous effects of civil war – millions of people facing violence, displacement, chronic hunger and mass starvation – and to nudge conflicting parties toward peace.

However, mounting doubts over security and how ready those parties may be for negotiation have put a boots-on-the-ground papal visit on hold.

And now some Catholic aid and development agencies are wondering, with no pope, how does this tragedy get on the world radar now?

“With Donald Trump, Brexit and terrorist attacks happening in the news”, outlets that are usually very receptive to covering humanitarian crises and efforts “don’t have the space to cover them”, director of communications at Caritas Internationalis Patrick Nicholson said.

Despite the immensity of the tragedy, “it’s

really off the radar in terms of the world caring,” he said, which is why “the Pope raising awareness is absolutely crucial”.

Everybody’s efforts to get the word out is still key, and Mr Nicholson and his Caritas colleagues created southsudan.caritas.org after a recent visit to South Sudan to better show the human stories and lives at stake.

Associate executive director of Solidarity with South Sudan Sr Yudit Pereira-Rico said her organisation was promoting the hashtag #SouthSudanWeCare on social media to show the South Sudanese people that they would not be overlooked.

“The people there feel they are forgotten. There is no media attention and they always tell us, ‘Please, don’t forget to speak about us’,” she said.

A member of the Congregation of the Religious of Jesus and Mary, Sr Pereira-Rico said she had spent the past two decades working in the poorest parts of West Africa “and yet I’ve never seen the poverty like there is in South Sudan”.

“My first time in South Sudan, in Malakal, I wasn’t able to sing ‘Hallelujah’ in church” having seen the situation of the people.

“Now, more and more, I can see that God is here.”

Sometimes she and her colleagues can feel so powerless when faced with so many people in need, “but just being there” can offer comfort, she said.

“A challenge we have as Christians is believing in the resurrection in these situations, know-

ing that there is a good end for human history,” she said.

Solidarity with South Sudan is an international network of religious congregations that was formed to train primary school teachers, health care workers, pastoral agents and sustainable farmers from all ethnic groups, learning tolerance and reconciliation along the way.

The NGOs do the emergency relief, “and we do development, teach values”, Sr Pereira-Rico said.

The 28 nuns, priests and brothers from 20 different congregations and 20 nations living and working together in four different communities across

South Sudan are a living witness of what harmony in diversity and collaboration looked like, she said.

“We’re like the United Nations,” she said, and “we show people a new model of living”.

The local church also provided the credibility, networks and infrastructure that relief agencies needed to reach the most vulnerable, country representative in South Sudan for Catholic Relief Services Jerry Farrell said.

“The Church has an incredible reputation. It is battered and weary”, like its people, but it never shut down, it always stuck by its people, which was partly why it was so respected, he said.

By working directly with parishes and religious orders, like the Comboni sisters, CRS can get food to 5000 to 6000 families in places where no one else had access, he said.

No matter how bad things got, the Church still was operating its schools, hospitals, clinics and programs all over South Sudan – the facilities

may not look as nice as those in the West, “but they work”, he said.

“Peacebuilding is quiet, but relentless,” he said, and it often did not make for an exciting or visual story.

Media often liked to cover things such as the highly complex emergency airdrops to those who were stranded, but Mr Farrell said reporters should be looking at the Catholic schools, like the ones run by the Sisters of the Sacred Heart.

“It’s not visually catchy, but that’s the real story. That’s where the future of South Sudan lies,” he said as these schools provided basic care, nutrition and even vegetable gardens for the mothers to grow healthy food.

The other real story that should get coverage, he said, were the survivors.

“The people here are incredibly resilient and one of the main reasons for that is they go to church,” he said and they were deeply spiritual people.

With aid from partner agencies, the Church became a place people went to find basic supplies, safety, sanctuary and “spiritual nourishment because without that, aid is just a pat on the back”, Mr Farrell said.

“Things will be better. It will just take time because peacebuilding is meant to help South Sudan heal itself.”

As the Catholic, Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches worked for peace from the bottom up and the role of political leaders was to help from the top down, he said, someday they would all meet in the middle.

CNS

Advocate: Sister Yudit Pereira-Rico.





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Technological 'practices' may be harming your memory

By Brett Robinson

AS a father of four, I am familiar with practice. There's hockey practice, piano practice and lots of practising patience.

My kids are learning what a C-sharp sounds like and how to track the ball when they are playing defence. These practices form our family by training perception.

I'm thankful for all of the kids' activities, partly because they distract them from the screen.

The screen is another venue for forming perception, though we rarely think of it that way.

We tend to talk about media technology as a means for communicating or gathering information. Meanwhile, the practice of using the technology is forming our perception in small ways that often go unnoticed.

One example is the blue light that is emitted from smartphones and tablets that interferes with the neurotransmitters that bring on sleep.

Reading before bed can be a relaxing activity but doing it from a screen can tell your brain just the opposite – to wake up.

Media technology practice also has an effect on memory.

How many times have you opted to Google something rather than try to remember it on your own? How many photos have you taken at a party or on vacation for fear that you might not remember how fun or beautiful everything was?

Practice forms habits and when they are properly ordered, habits can be salutary for the soul.

However, habits can also turn into disordered obsessions or addictions.

Today, we hear a lot about technology addiction but not a lot about technology practice.

There are certainly addictive qualities about media technology but even if we are not addicted, we are still engaged in the practice of



Bad idea: "Reading before bed can be a relaxing activity but doing it from a screen can tell your brain just the opposite – to wake up."

using those technologies regularly.

And those practices can alter our perception in ways that change our understanding of others, ourselves and God.

The question that needs asking is, What is all of this technology practice forming us for?

Our devices — even when they are put away — haunt us with the possibility that a new message or bit of news is ready to be consumed.

It starts with a practice like using the computer for hours a day (required for most office workers) that spills over into leisure time with social media, games and plenty of Netflix.

For children, it is the threat of boredom that drives them to the screen.

Boredom, a state once reserved for the free play of the imagination and memory, is conquered by their thirst for constant stimulation that can only be slaked by streaming media.

Catholic philosopher Josef Pieper said leisure

was the basis of culture.

It's leisure that gives us the time and space to contemplate God. Without it — in lives that are dictated by labour and the digital tools required to perform it — we lose our capacity to perceive the capaciousness of God.

The ways that we spend our leisure time says a lot about what we ultimately value.

But there are upsides to the new technology's effects on the senses, memory and imagination.

There are practices that help us recognise the pain of another human being or get in touch with something transcendent. One example is viewing family photos with a child and telling them stories about when they were little.

It's a small practice that forms their memory in ways that remind them that they are part of a family and a stream of memories, part of something much larger than themselves.

If the goal is finding a healthy balance with

“ (Our technological practices can alter our perception in ways that change our understanding of others, ourselves and God. ”

our technological creations, then we have to start with practice.

Just as a doctor practises medicine, a Catholic practises religion.

We know it's the cure for our spiritual maladies, but sometimes we shirk our duty to rise and pursue the good.

Take a moment to revisit the practices in your daily life and to ask how they are forming your memory and imagination.

As Catholics, we call to mind Christ's passion, death and resurrection so that we can imagine a life of hope.

There's even an app for that.

It's called 3D Catholic and 3D stands for three devotions: prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

It's a simple reminder that our virtual technologies shouldn't strip us of our physical bodies — because those bodies can be used to commemorate Christ's passion through prayer, fasting and helping others in real ways. **CNS**

Brett Robinson is director of communications and Catholic media studies at the University of Notre Dame McGrath Institute for Church Life.

Prayer reflections for the week

The following prayer thoughts for the week are from Br Brian Grenier's book *Attend Unto Reading*.

July 2 – Doubt and Faith

Despite GK Chesterton's quip that "religious doubt produces a great deal of doubtful religion", such doubt is not incompatible with a vibrant and mature faith. Indeed, according to the Angelic Doctor, St Thomas Aquinas, "unrest is of the very nature of faith". Spiritual writers remind us that religious doubt can be creative and that it should not be routinely suppressed. True faith, in Sallie McFague's insightful words, "is about doubt negotiated, not about doubt avoided". Kenneth Leach puts it this way: "For faith in God does not bring the false peace of answered questions and resolved paradoxes."

July 3 – Feast of St Thomas the Apostle

There is a touch of irony in the fact that we, who have yet to imitate his virtue, should remember Thomas the Apostle more as the doubter than as the one who affirmed his faith in Jesus more comprehensively than anyone else in the Gospel narrative — "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28). He was a "no-nonsense", pragmatic type of person — an impetuous man of courage who expressed (more credibly than Peter) his willingness to die with Jesus (John 11:16) and who apparently saw no need to take refuge with the other disciples in the upper room (see John 20:24).

July 4 – Missing the Meaning

Jesus' contemporaries responded in different, indeed quite contrary, ways to his words and deeds. All but one of his chosen apostles lived and died for him; but the other, Judas the betrayer, was an accessory before the fact to the execution of his master. One of 10 whom Jesus cured of the dread disease of leprosy returned to thank him; the others did not (Luke 17:11-19). One thief on Calvary cursed the Lord of heaven and earth; the other effectively

asked Jesus for a place in his heavenly kingdom (Luke 23:39-43). Lent is a good time to evaluate our own personal response.

July 5 – Loneliness

Aloneness has two faces, one negative and one positive. There is loneliness which is inescapable because it is part of the human condition, and there is freely chosen solitude which is indispensable because it is a condition of being human. There are probably people of our acquaintance whom we know to be desperately lonely. If so, we need look no further for a personal ministry expressive of our Christian commitment — a ministry which can be exercised in a myriad of ways. Care for such people should be high on the list of a parish's pastoral priorities.

July 6 – A Retreat Question: Who Am I?

We may not consciously pose the question, "Who am I?", with any frequency; but occasionally, in moments of personal reflection, it will rise to the surface and will insistently invite our response. Perhaps we can then identify with the American poet Carl Sandburg who wrote of his need to find a place of solitude from time to time where, communing with nature, he could say to himself, "Who are you, Sandburg? Where have you been, and where are you going?" Our very happiness depends on our willingness to ask questions like

these and on the answers we give.

July 7 – Memorial of Blessed Peter To Rot

Born in New Britain in 1912, Peter To Rot (pronounced "toe rote") was a trained catechist and co-worker with the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. He continued to exercise his ministry alone after the imprisonment of the missionaries by the Japanese invaders in 1942. A man of conspicuous virtue, he ran foul of the enemy and, after enduring torture, was eventually put to death leaving a wife and young family. He is venerated today as "a martyr for the faith". Pope John Paul II beatified Peter To Rot when he visited Papua New Guinea on January 17, 1995.



“ Spiritual writers remind us that religious doubt can be creative and that it should not be routinely suppressed. True faith, in Sallie McFague's insightful words, 'is about doubt negotiated, not about doubt avoided'. ”

July 8 – 'Learn of Me ...'

On several occasions Jesus directed his disciples to follow his example. At the Last Supper, having washed their feet, he said: "I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15); and having blessed, broken and distributed the bread, he said to them: "Do this in memory of me" (Luke 22:19). More generally he told them, "Learn of me; for I am gentle and humble in heart" (Matthew 11:29). Anyone who follows Paul's advice — "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5) — will indeed be Christ-like.

Church pleads for tougher regional stance against Islamists

Searching for peace in Mali

CATHOLIC Church leaders in Mali have urged a common front against Islamist violence after al-Qaida-linked terrorists attacked a tourist resort just days before the creation of the country's first cardinal.

"Although our church hasn't been directly targeted, it's deeply affected by such attacks," Monsignor Edmond Dembele, secretary-general of the Mali Catholic bishops' conference, said.

"The international community should urgently help Mali and other countries in this region to curb these outrages.

"When the people of Mali are struck in this way, neighbouring states are struck as well.

"The echoes of fear and insecurity are felt throughout Africa."

Meanwhile, authorities continued the investigation into the June 18 attack on Le Campement Kangaba resort, east of the capital Bamako, which left nine dead, including four assailants.

Msg Dembele said sporadic rocket attacks on military and civilian targets across the country had fuelled "popular tensions", as well as fears of intercommunal violence between Christians and Muslims.

"For now, this isn't an interreligious conflict. No one has been attacked because of their faith," Msgr Dembele said.

"But we're worried the situation could deteriorate rapidly. As long as there's a lack of security, no one feels safe and sheltered, and anyone can be caught suddenly by the violence," he said.

Four attackers were captured by Malian special forces, backed by French and United Nations troops, during the resort attack.

The gunmen have seized hostages and killed two soldiers and three civilians.

The hostages ultimately were freed.

An Islamist group, al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, claimed credit for the siege, which was



Tougher stance: Malian forces conduct search operations after a terrorist attack at the Le Campement Kangaba resort outside the capital of Bamako. Mali's Catholic Church has urged a common front against Islamist violence, after Al Qaida-linked terrorists attacked a the resort on June 18, days before the creation of the country's first cardinal. Photos: CNS

branded a "jihadist attack" by Mali's Security Minister Salif Traore.

The northern city of Timbuktu was placed under tight security after a simultaneous on June 18 attack on its airport.

The attacks were the latest in a five-year Islamist insurgency, and were the most serious since a November 2015 terrorist attack on the Radisson Hotel in the capital left 22 dead, half of them foreign company employees.

Msgr Dembele said Mali's Catholic and Protestant churches had urged "prayers for peace", and were "profoundly concerned" about recent events.

He added that the Pope's May 21 nomination of Archbishop Jean Zerbo of Bamako as Mali's first-ever cardinal had enhanced the Church's importance and its possibilities for contributing to reconciliation.

"The Pope chose Archbishop Zerbo because of his work for interreligious dialogue, as well as for his engagement in wider national unity. I'm sure his nomination will bring fruits in these

areas," Msgr Dembele said.

About 200,000 Catholics live in Mali, a country of 17 million people.

Cardinal-designate Zerbo, who has headed the Malian Catholic Church since 1998, has been widely praised for fostering Christian-Muslim dialogue and helping facilitate government-opposition talks after ethnic Touareg separatists overran most of northern Mali during 2012, operating alongside Islamists linked to al-Qaida.

Despite a 2015 peace deal that allowed rebel fighters to be integrated into the national army, Touareg and Islamist attacks have continued, delaying the return of displaced Malians from neighbouring Niger, Mauritania and Burkina Faso.

However, his elevation was marred by May 31 reports in France's Le Monde daily and other newspapers, accusing him of holding secret accounts in Switzerland with the British-based HSBC bank.

Msgr Dembele said the claims had been denied by a June 1 bishops' conference statement, which insisted all Church money had been used

"with total transparency" by an interdiocesan commission.

He said the "unjust accusations" had been designed to "damage the church's image in Mali", and said the bishops' conference would soon provide further information to discredit the "false media reports".

"There are so many armed groups now, all attempting to prove themselves with steady supplies from abroad, that it's difficult to coordinate negotiations," the secretary-general said.

"We really need the whole international community to reflect on how the Sahel region's problems can be tackled. By helping Mali develop and offer hope to its people, it'll also be helping Mali's neighbors and contributing to peace and stability."

Cardinal-designate Zerbo promised President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita at a June 2 meeting the church would continue "working alongside the state to implement reconciliation and peace in Mali," according to the bishops' conference website.

CNS



Peace plan: Cardinal-designate Jean Zerbo of Bamako, Mali.

Holiness means being open to God, Pope Francis says

BEING a saint doesn't require spending long hours in prayer, but rather living life open to God in good times and in bad, Pope Francis said.

Christians should live with the "hope of becoming saints" and with the desire that "work, even in sickness and suffering, even in difficulties, is open to God," the Pope said on June 21 during his weekly general audience.

"We think that it is something difficult, that it is easier to be delinquents than saints. No. We can become saints because the Lord helps us. It is he who helps us," he told the estimated 12,000 pilgrims in St Peter's Square.

Pope Francis rode around in his popemobile, stopping along the way to greet pilgrims and kiss babies. One child casually waved goodbye to the Pope as he was handed back to his parents.

In his talk, the Pope reflected on the intercession of the saints, who are "older brothers and sisters who have gone along our same path, (gone through) our same struggles and live forever in God's embrace".

"Their existence tells us above all that Christian life isn't an unattainable ideal. And together, they comfort us: We are not alone, the Church is made up of innumerable brothers and sisters, often anonymous, who have preceded us and who, through the action of the Holy Spirit, are involved in the affairs of those who

still live here," he said.

Just as their intercession is invoked in Baptism, the Pope said, the Church asked for their help in the sacrament of marriage so couples "can have the courage to say 'forever'."

"To live married life forever; not like some who say, 'as long as love lasts'. No, it is forever. On the contrary, it is better you don't get married. It's either forever or nothing. That is why their presence is invoked in the nuptial liturgy," he said.

The lives of the saints, he said, served as a reminder that "God never abandons us" and in times of trial and suffering, he "sends one of his angels to comfort us and fill us with consolation".

There are "angels, sometimes with a face and a human heart because God's saints are always here, hidden among us", the Pope said.

Another sacrament in which the saints are invoked was Holy Orders, in which candidates for the priesthood laid prostrate on the ground while the bishop and the entire assembly prayed the litany of the saints, he said.

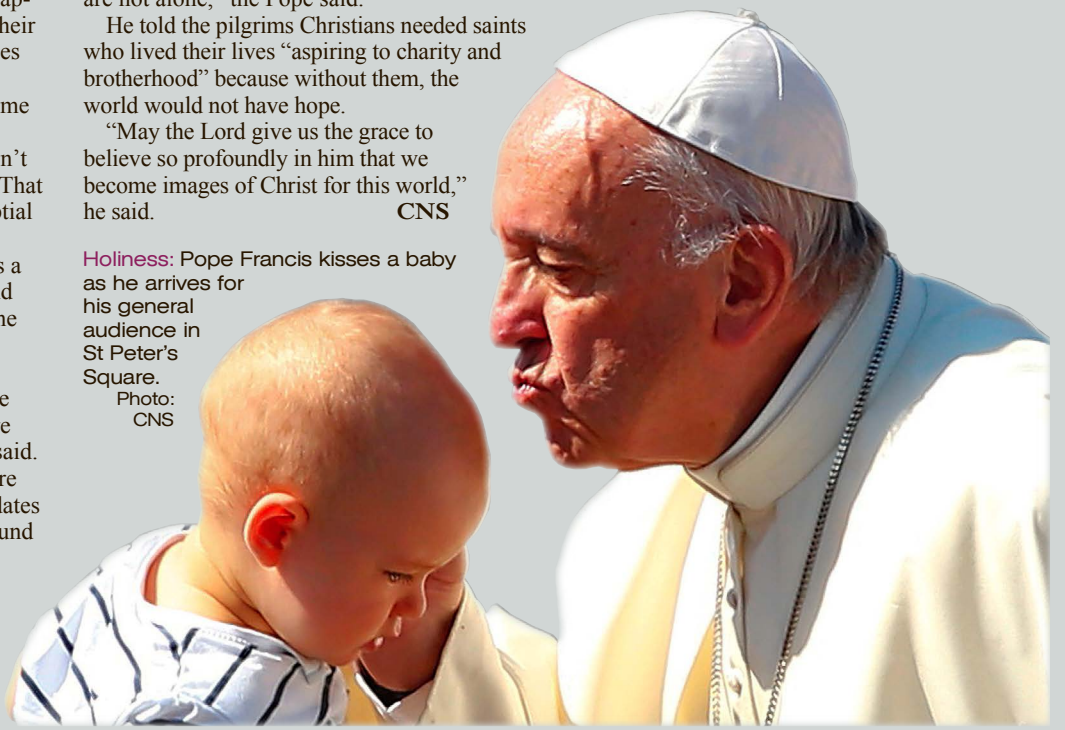
"A man would be crushed under the weight of the mission entrusted to him but, in feeling that all of paradise is behind him, that the grace of God will not fail because Jesus is always faithful,

he can go forward serenely and refreshed. We are not alone," the Pope said.

He told the pilgrims Christians needed saints who lived their lives "aspiring to charity and brotherhood" because without them, the world would not have hope.

"May the Lord give us the grace to believe so profoundly in him that we become images of Christ for this world," he said. CNS

Holiness: Pope Francis kisses a baby as he arrives for his general audience in St Peter's Square. Photo: CNS





Listening:
“It lays the foundation for secure attachment in all our relationships from childhood into adulthood.”

Listening is the music of love

“One of the most supremely loving gestures we can give another is to listen to them. Yet for most of us, being listened to is a rare experience. What makes it so hard to give this simple gift to each other?”

We remember those days so well – the early romance days.

Living in two different cities we relied on phone calls and letters and counted the days until we would see each other again.

Those phone calls were treasured time together, straining to hear every syllable, every breath, every sigh.

We tuned our hearing so as to capture every nuance of meaning. The other’s attentiveness affirmed, it healed and it inspired an even deeper commitment to loving the other.

Listening fuelled our experience of falling in love.

It also transformed that love from early infatuation into a love that knows the other for who they truly are.

Listening has also sustained our love over decades and will continue to do so for more to come.

Listening, truly listening, to another is a supreme act of love.

When we “are truly known”, it meets deep emotional needs and nourishes our self-esteem.

It lays the foundation for secure attachment in all our relationships from childhood into adulthood.

It also provides the listener the opportunity to really understand the person who they are trying to love; in a manner that just doesn’t happen in the daily talk centred around information sharing and efficient planning.

To listen is a simple act; the act of being profoundly present.

To be in the moment with the other person, attentive to them, exclusively.

It is a whole-body endeavour, requiring not just our ears, but also our consent, communicated through both our verbal and body language.

Three things are essential to good listening.

Firstly, we must recruit our attentiveness.

This means attuning our attention, giving our full focus to the other.

Eye contact, physically turning towards the other, removing distractions are all part of attentiveness.

Mentally, we need to set aside our preoccupations so that we can use all our mental energy for the task.

In practical terms, that means putting down the remote control and phone, turning off the TV or computer, closing the book or paper, and ceasing any other activity.

Yep, that includes Rosary beads, Bibles and prayer books.

Secondly, to listen well, we need to not just hear what the other says, but also confirm that we’ve heard and understood the message.

The message is always more than the words said. It often comes packaged in innuendo and red herrings.

There is meaning embedded in the tone, in the emotional content behind the words, in the words not said, or said badly.

It’s an active dance of discovery that requires us to respond and synchronise with the other’s lead.

Thus, all listening is a dialogue, an exchange.

Good listeners seek to tenderly explore the person behind the words – to know “who” is speaking, rather than “what” is being said.

Thirdly, listening takes self-discipline – the discipline of restraining our advice; our opinion; our need to reply, correct or defend.

This is especially challenging when the message of the speaker is one of complaint, or one we find unfair, judgemental or offensive in some way.

Hard to imagine that ever happens to us, right?

Problem-solving can come later; the first task is just to listen, to connect.

This is why self-discipline is key to good listening because without it we short-change the opportunity it offers and pay the price for that later.

There are many things that can challenge our marriage and make it harder than it should be.

The art of listening is like a free pass to a better relationship.

It costs nothing to do, requires nothing but the intention, a genuine curiosity to know each other better and a little self-discipline along the way.

It is a real form of loving smart.

Finally, we need to remember that we were great at it when we fell in love and so we can be confident we can do it now if we so choose.



BY FRANCINE AND BYRON PIROLA

Francine and Byron Pirola are the co-authors of the SmartLoving series. Visit www.smartloving.org for online courses and resources.



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FAMILY FAITH

BY SELINA VENIER

Holy heroes the ultimate role models

LOOK, I have nothing against Batman, Spiderman or any other like-minded superhero.

The thing is, having raised two daughters into blessed teenagehood, the whole superhero thing bypassed our household.

I can remember a slight fondness for Wonder Woman in my childhood but it was as fleeting as her modest attire.

And so, when Master Four marked his recent birthday, in flew the superheroes.

They were gifts that kept on giving; what they gave was the point.

Yes, there was Batman, all beefed up and overpowering plus the formidable Joker, somewhat less threatening in stature but with quite the nasty snarl and gun power to boot.

Arriving with certain "Cowabunga", clueless as I am about that, were the Ninja Turtles. I'm sure they serve a purpose in another part of history, somehow, but we were none the wiser.

Oh, and did I mention the seemingly innocent motorcycle that bent and twisted into a Transformer?

Master Four's innocence queried what the arm-sized weapons actually were.

Still, he likely did the typical boy thing and "flew" Batman around the lounge room, not saying anything in particular as he'd not heard much of him before, but "getting" the fact that yes, he did fly, and, yes, he was powerful, well, sort of.

When Master Four asked about The Joker's character, My Dearly Beloved filled in the gaps but our little lad was more intrigued by the plastic gun protruding from the character's back.

I was ready for a lie-down and that wasn't because of all the party's preparation "hoolahoops".

Now, don't shoot me down, I know Batman and other like him fight for the common good but my point is about their means to get there and the portrayal of the opposing evil, to young and impressionable minds.

Post-bedtime we surveyed the gifts and decided to put the ominous ones away, deciding if they were sought after, we might find them again.

They weren't and, to this day, they still aren't.

Just when I thought we'd conquered that brief interlude of superficial powers, then came an invitation to "dress up" as fairies for girls and superheroes for boys among a significantly sized group of youngsters.

Master Four had Superman pyjamas that came in handy, another gift and reasonably harmless except that my heart was in my throat upon opening and realising that it was very similar to missing boy William Tyrell's final outfit.

The "dress up" result was a whole lot of imaginative play that most would find innocent enough.



Question of power: "Traditional superheroes will keep on keeping on and a return to the '60s version of Batman would be my preference but there's no comparison to true power and goodness."

Personally, it's our preference that our son isn't involved in pretend fighting or gun-shooting with another.

So what was the lesson here?

I remember when the girls were younger we made a point of constantly saying that "no one has power except for God".

They accepted that the "magic" of fairies with wands and the old "abracadabra" was nothing to pay much attention to. They tended to "dress up" as butterflies and the like.

Today I smile when I hear them say to Master Four "no one has power except for God".

He too seems to "get" it, no debate about it.

So which superhero did Master Four want to dress up as?

He wasn't fazed.

What we, his parents, were phased about was the implications of harm, force, any amount of pushing and pulling, fighting and killing that the superhero notion portrays.

We were bothered by the potential for him to mimic it and display characteristics that, quite frankly, are far from his own.

If there was any superhero that we, ideally, would have dressed Master Four as for this particular occasion or any other, it would have been the person of Jesus, the ultimate superhero.

And would there have been anything wrong with that?

To us, no, but to others it would've been confusing, and it may have led to questioning and ridicule.

There's a time and a place, we've decided, and essentially if we follow the path of holiness, we constantly bear likeness to Christ.

In our home we have no sign of witches or wands. The dress-up box is full of animal costumes and doctors' kits.

At Halloween there's no celebration of goblins or ghosts but saints and martyrs, more superheroes.

It's a relief to not hear Master Four ask after his newly-given Batman figurine, and to see him delight in animal characters and books about kindness.

Traditional superheroes will keep on keeping on and a return to the '60s version of Batman would be my preference but there's no comparison to true power and goodness.



BY SELINA VENIER

Selina Venier is an author and works in faith education.

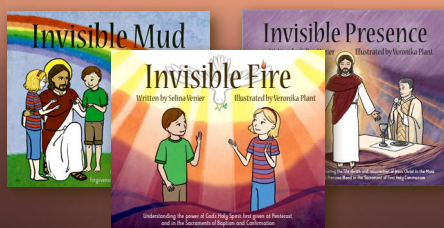
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Favourite lollipop lady retires

FOR 20 years Faye Moulder battled all weather conditions to ensure the safety of students and parents as they crossed busy Galleon Way going to and from St Augustine's School, Currumbin Waters.

But the dedicated crossing guard has decided it was time to hang up her stop sign and take up retirement.

To celebrate her milestone, Ms Moulder was given a "flash mob" send-off at an assembly after completing her last crossing duty.

Year 6 students, each wearing a fluoro vest, formed a guard of honour to cheer her out of the school hall.

Ms Moulder was presented with flowers and a silver angel pendant as a tribute to her work as a "crossing angel".

Although a Queensland Transport employee, she was very much a part of the school community for more than 30 years.

Her children were former students at St Augustine's and her grandchildren attend the school.

Ms Moulder always had a smile on her face and knew the names of those she helped each day to cross the busy road.

She loved to have a laugh and her stylish outfits were always noticeable under her fluoro jacket.

Principal Warren Fields said Ms Moulder's dedication and friendly demeanour made a difference to the start and end of the day for everyone in the school community.

"She will be missed but hopefully she will be now able to spend more time with her family and as a valued volunteer at St Augustine's," he said.

Assistant principal Lynne Rohanna said Ms Moulder was also the eyes and ears of the community, noticing if there was an unfamiliar car in the area, a stray pet or a little person who had missed the bus or was looking lost.

"She would watch over them and ensure they made it safely to where they were meant to be," Ms Rohanna said.

She said the St Augustine's school community wished her a long and happy retirement.



Crossing guard: Faye Moulder received a guard of honour from students after she hung up her stop sign at St Augustine's School, Currumbin Waters.

Wellbeing Week gets everyone in

WHEN it comes to mental health and physical wellbeing at St Benedict's College, Mango Hill, everybody gets involved.

The theme for the college's Wellbeing Week – "Getting Involved" – highlighted to students and staff the importance of keeping mentally and physically well.

Guidance counsellor Kim Rienecker said the theme was adopted to encourage participation by students and staff in all the activities provided during the week so an awareness of mind, body and spirit could be enhanced.

Ms Rienecker said by getting everyone involved they could develop connectedness and a sense of belonging.

"Research suggests the more connected a student feels to school or a staff member feels to their workplace, the greater their wellbeing, attendance and performance will be," she said.

The week kicked off with a staff morning prayer session followed by a barbecue breakfast, while music from Radio SBC lifted the energy and mood of students as it created an atmosphere that achieved a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Student activities included pavement artwork; a pop-up library; a Give and Take wall; a communal dance; a giant chess tournament; and a student-versus-teacher basketball match, which the teachers won.

Kids Helpline, Headspace, Starfish Foundation, Beyondblue, Intercept, Noffs Foundation and Clothes That Care were part of a mental health service expo armed with information, advice, support and encouragement for the students.

Staff received Mental Health First Aid training at a twilight in-service and enjoyed 15-minute head and neck massages.

Principal Claire McLaren said it was wonderful to see everybody getting involved in what was a great week of activities that connected not just students but staff and the rest of the extended college community.

"When we feel well connected and relaxed then life goes a little smoother and people are happier," Ms McLaren said.

She said while there was a fun element to the week there also was a serious side with students learning about outside agencies specialising in adolescent support.

Student Jarvis Wickham said the week was all about good music, good fun, good people and getting connected.

He said the activities that brought students and teachers together were a highlight.

"These activities, like the basketball challenge, helped us connect, bond and build better relationships with our teachers, and it was so much fun too," he said.

Jarvis said he found the mental health service expo interesting with plenty of information on offer about mental health and physical wellbeing.

"As someone who is interested in personal training there was lots to see, read and hear about, including on body image, which I thought was very good because it's something a lot of young people have to deal with," he said.

Expansion: Students Myles Hawks, Lucas Jacobson, Brayden Duff, Jesse Kollegger, Charlotte Barron, and Andy Huynh joined Brisbane Catholic Education deputy executive director Dr Doug Ashleigh, principal Nathan Haley and Federal Member for Wright Scott Buchholz at the official opening of OLG's new facilities.



Community at Our Lady of Good Counsel celebrates new facilities

PARENTS, friends and other guests visited Gatton from far and wide for the opening of much-needed facilities for Our Lady of Good Counsel School.

Principal Nathan Haley said the community as partners in education to celebrate the blessing and opening of the school's new administration centre Mercy House; three new classrooms; the refurbishment of the Daniel Walsh building; and a combined space in the original convent that would be used for general learning and outside school hours care.

Mr Haley said the buildings had a great deal of character from the outside, but this was only bricks and mortar.

He said the real character was formed on the inside, and this would continue

to grow and be shaped by all those who were welcomed through the doors.

"We named the administration area Mercy House as it is our hope that a strong sense of belonging is formed through our Mercy charism that makes our school feel like home for all we meet," Mr Haley said.

He said the building project, completed last year, was a significant one as it stretched right across the school.

"Projects of this size come at a large cost and we acknowledged and thanked the Federal Government for the significant contribution of more than \$2,370,000," Mr Haley said.

"Without this funding, this project would not have been possible."

Mr Haley said the OLG community also should be proud as it contributed more than \$170,000.

He said the project had greatly enhanced the school through providing many contemporary learning and work spaces.

"As educators, we now look forward to taking up the challenge as we work towards supporting and nurturing students on their learning journey towards promising futures," he said.

"Like the Sisters of Mercy who founded OLG school, may we be inspired by the same dedication, passion and commitment as we continue to grow this vibrant learning community."

Jesus, friend who never abandons

The month of July is dedicated to the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. This is an excerpt of the homily of St John Paul II in 1979 for the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ celebrated with first communicants.

GREAT is my joy on seeing you here, so numerous and so full of fervour, to celebrate with the pope the liturgical solemnity of the Body and Blood of the Lord.

I greet you all and each one individually with the deepest tenderness, and I thank you for having come to renew your Holy Communion.

I thank also your parish priests, always dynamic and zealous, and your parents and relatives, who have prepared you and accompanied you.

You are the favourites of Jesus: "Let the children come to me," the divine Master said, "Do not hinder them" (Luke 18:16).

You prepared for your First Communion with such commitment and diligence, and your first meeting with Jesus was a moment of intense emotion and deep happiness.

Remember forever this blessed day of First Communion. Remember forever your fervour and your pure joy.

Many children had expressed the desire to receive First Communion from the hands of the Pope.

Certainly, it would have been a great pastoral consolation for me to give

Jesus for the first time to the boys and girls of Rome. But that is not possible; and then it is better for each child to receive his First Communion in his own parish, from his own parish priest.

But at least it is possible for me to give Holy Communion today to representatives of yours, keeping all the others present in my love, in this vast and magnificent Upper Room.

At the same time I wish to leave with you some thoughts, which can help you to keep your faith always clear, your love for Jesus in the Eucharist always fervent, and your life innocent.

This is the first thought.

Jesus rose again, he ascended to heaven, but he willed to remain with us and for us, in every place on earth.

The Eucharist is really a divine invention.

Before dying on the Cross, offering his life to the Father as a sacrifice of adoration and love, Jesus instituted the Eucharist, changing the bread and the wine into his own Person and giving the Apostles and their successors, the bishops and priests, the power of making him present in Holy Mass.

Jesus, therefore, willed to remain with us for ever.

Jesus willed to be closely united with us in Holy Communion, to prove his love to us directly and personally.

Each one can say: "Jesus loves me. I love Jesus."

St Teresa of the Child Jesus, recalling the day of her First Communion, wrote: "Oh, how sweet was the first kiss that Jesus gave my soul ... It was a kiss of love, I felt loved and I said in my turn: 'I love you, I give myself to you for ever ...'" Teresa had disappeared like a drop of water lost in the ocean. There remained only Jesus – the master, the King.

And she began to weep with joy and

consolation, to the amazement of her companions.

Jesus is present in the Eucharist to be met, loved, received and consoled.

Here is the second thought.

Never forget it. Jesus wishes to be our closest friend, our companion along the way.

You have, certainly, so many friends; but you cannot always be with them and they cannot always help you, listen to you, console you.

Jesus, on the contrary, is the friend who never abandons you. Jesus knows you one by one, personally.

He knows your name. He walks with you every day. He participates in your joys and consoles you in moments of grief and sadness.

Jesus is the friend we cannot do without when we have met him and understood that he loves us and wants our love.

Here is the last thought.

Life, long or short, is a journey towards Paradise – there is our fatherland, there is our real home; there is our appointment.

Jesus is waiting for us in paradise.

Never forget this supreme and consoling truth. And what is Holy Communion but an anticipation of Paradise?

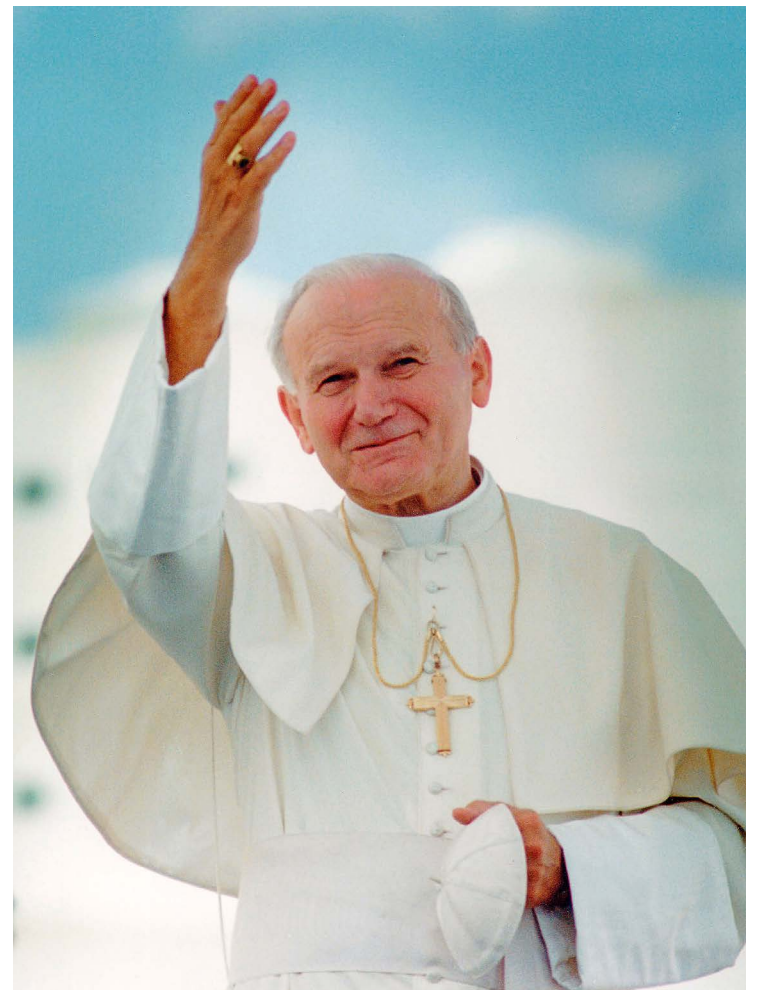
In fact, in the Eucharist it is Jesus himself who is waiting for us and whom we will meet one day openly in Heaven.

Receive Jesus often in order never to forget Paradise, to be always on the march towards the house of the Heavenly Father, to enjoy Paradise a little already.

I conclude by saying to you, keep yourselves worthy of Jesus whom you receive. Be innocent and generous.

Undertake to make life beautiful for everyone – with obedience, kindness, good manners.

The secret of joy is goodness.

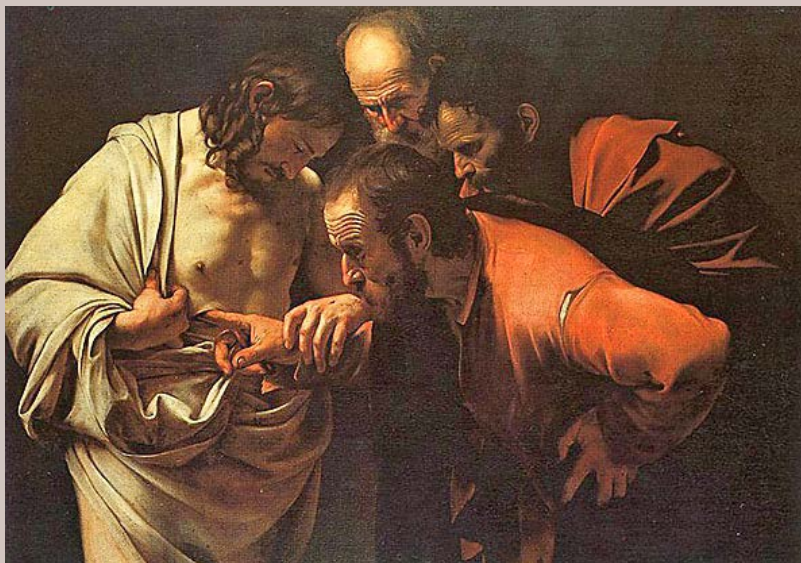


Pope St John Paul II: "Jesus ... willed to remain with us for ever."

“ Never forget it. Jesus wishes to be our closest friend, our companion along the way. ”

SAINTLY LIFE

St Thomas, Apostle



Apostle: The Incredulity of Saint Thomas, painting by Caravaggio.

ST Thomas, whose feast day is celebrated tomorrow (July 3), is the apostle best known for his encounter with the Risen Christ when he proclaimed "My Lord and My God".

An account of the meeting is given in John 20:25-28: "... The other disciples told (Thomas), 'We have seen the Lord.'

"But he said to them, 'Unless I see in his hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into his side, I will never believe.' "Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them.

"Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side...' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!'"

FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

Monday - **St Thomas, Apostle**

Thought to have spread Gospel to India

Wednesday - **St Elizabeth of Portugal**

Queen who was kind to the poor

Thursday - **St Anthony Zaccaria**

Co-founder of order called the Barnabites

Friday - **St Maria Goretti**

Patron of youth

Saturday - **Blessed Peter To Rot**

Beatified by Pope St John Paul II in 1995

14th Sunday in Ordinary Time July 9

1st Reading: Zechariah 9:9-10
2nd Reading: Romans 8:9, 11-13
Gospel Reading: Matthew 11:25-30

13th Sunday in Ordinary Time July 2

1st Reading: 2 Kings 4:8-11, 14-16a
2nd Reading: Romans 6:3-4, 8-11
Gospel Reading: Matthew 10:37-42

Next Sunday's readings

BY FR JOHN REILLY

DURING Ordinary Time the Sunday readings focus on our day-to-day living of the two great mysteries of Christian faith in God, the Christmas mystery of Incarnation and the Easter mystery of Resurrection.

Two of next Sunday's readings focus directly on the interiority of Jesus, the source of his practical living.

The interior life, or "spirituality", of Jesus is at the heart of his experience of God and his relation with his disciples.

Both the wonder of his Incarnation and the hope of his Resurrection are felt in his daily living, and ours as Christians.

Baptism and Eucharist enact our union with Christ and empower our sharing in these two great mysteries, a present grace and a future hope.

The **Second Reading** next Sunday, from Paul's Letter to the Romans, writes of two great powers operating in our lives.

Paul names them "flesh" and "Spirit". The "flesh" is our humanity as a creature of God with an inborn inclination to ignore or reject any need for God in our daily lives.

Products of millions of years of evolution that we are, we are the first beings on Earth to develop self-awareness and a resulting freedom to choose.

This self-awareness naturally inclines us toward a self-centredness that makes us see ourselves to be the centre of our lives.

The "Spirit" is God's interior life, God's divine loving, gifting us to love as God loves. God's love is much more than an emotion. It is God's life and power to create life.

Through Jesus and all who love like Jesus, God's love is raising (resurrecting) the world into a new creation, and a new way of living.

St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits (1491-1556), called these two forces, that he felt powerfully in his own life, the "bad spirit" and the "good spirit".

The "bad spirit" is the source of temptations to self-centredness and sin ("unlove") and death, both in Jesus and in all of us.

The "good spirit" is God's Holy Spirit, the creative source of all living and all freedom to love.

The **Gospel Reading**, from Matthew's Gospel, is unusual. It reads more like something from the Fourth Gospel, a meditation on the interiority of Jesus.

Jesus joyfully praises God for what he sees happening in his disciples.

Simple and unlearned as they are, they begin to grasp something of his own relation with God.

Through openness to God in their hearts and to others in their lives, they begin to discover and feel God's presence and power in their lives.

They begin to feel God loving them in the way Jesus constantly felt.

Union with Christ as his disciples is like a yoke that Jesus bears with us, like two animals side by side pulling the same plough, not as something harsh or unyielding but as God's merciful Spirit of loving.

The Spirit already interiorly gifted to us opens our hearts and empowers our freedom to live and love like Jesus, to share already in Christ's resurrection.

God's loving in us as it was in Jesus, far more powerful than our natural self-centredness, prepares us to share fully the resurrection of Jesus in a bodily way.

The Catholic Leader's contributor Jesuit Father John Reilly died on March 15. This commentary was written in 2014.

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Australians react to the recent release of information from the 2016 Census.



JO MCMANUS

One in five from China, India
http://The changing face of
Straya #census



CHELSEA BOND

#Census results reveal
neither Australian parliament
or Australian television actually
reflect the people they claim to
represent ...



ASH GHEBRANIOUS

1 in 6 people being over 65
is not an indication of Austral-
ians living longer. It's an indica-
tion of a low birth rate. #auspol
#census



TIM DENNEY

#Australia #Census – 20%
of migrants now from China &
India. 49.3% of pop are first or
second-generation residents.

Prayer List

THIS MONTH

POPE'S INTENTIONS

Lapsed Christians – That our brothers and sisters who have strayed from the faith, through our prayer and witness to the Gospel, may rediscover the merciful closeness of the Lord and the beauty of the Christian life.

THIS WEEK

Lebanon – Lebanese Cardinal Bechara Rai consecrated Lebanon and all the Middle East to Mary in Fatima, praying for peace and stability.

China – The Vatican has expressed “grave concern” over the situation of a bishop in mainland China who has been in government custody for almost 10 months and moved repeatedly in an apparent attempt to prevent him from assuming leadership of his diocese.

South Sudan – As millions of people face hunger, rebels fighting the South Sudan government in the southern parts of the country are recruiting fighters from among refugees in camps in northern Uganda.

Yemen – The United Nations has warned Yemen is facing the worst cholera outbreak in the world, with suspected cases exceeding 200,000 and the number increasing at an average of 5000 a day.

Have your Say

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Clear teaching

Bernice Sellars
Bowen, Qld

THE June 18 The Catholic Leader carried a commentary by Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa on the Gospel of the liturgy of the Feast of Corpus Christi. Corpus Christi is the first feast whose object is not an event in the life of Christ but a truth of faith – his real presence in the Eucharist.

It was so good. I thank you for this special item in what has become rare in Catholic newspapers; that is, faith-filled and inspiring teaching on the Catholic faith.

A salient statement in the column should cause all who read it to pause and contemplate – “if there is a danger that believers face at present in regard to the Eucharist it is to trivialise it”.

Sunday sermons used to take an article of faith and explain and reinforce the teaching.

Now one gets the impression that the priests are restricted to the Gospel of the day and resort to some source which gives them stereotyped presentations which seem to lack inspirations, with few exceptions.

Being still

Vince Hodge
Paddington, Qld

BISHOP Robert Barron sounded us out by alleging excessive noise in the liturgy (Your Daily Bread, CL, 25/6/17).

Liturgy (Greek: “service in public sphere”) is a public and communal expression of our worship of God and God’s truth working on us. Psalm 46(10) says: “... be still and know I am God”.

That “stillness” refers to re-direction, not mere silence.

The Septuagintal Greek word gave us “scholastic” as it was “leisure” time away from usual pre-occupations – what we moderns call “chill-out” time.

It is the time in which we step back, re-learn, recognise and celebrate in the truth.

Liturgy is neither a frenzied unity nor a silent acquiescence.

Liturgy both ceases us being distracted from God and leads us to experience God in His truth.

Cardinal Ratzinger (Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI) said in 1985: “To enter into the Eucharist in its deepest significance means to enter into this exchange of wills.”

In the past, culture regularly conformed people to silence in public functions.

The post-conciliar Church recognised that what is debilitating for an older person is informing for a young person; that older people respond to classical forms which are deadening for younger people; in-between there are a myriad of postures.

Truth manifests itself multiculturally.

Noise to one is meaningful sound to another.

Loudness is not the necessary opposite of reverence; silence may manifest fear or ignorance and not the necessary image of an attentiveness.

Ninety per cent of the vocalisations (including multiple ad-lib asides and commentaries) are expressed by the priest or within impenetrable prayers (Gloria, Creed) but no mention is made of these shortcomings. Young people and their music rated a particularly low mark.

Why is a silent laity the only issue?

Whatever its exterior manifestation, liturgy must be an effective sign of an interior stillness; an openness to the movement of God within a communal presence.

Health in Christ

Dr Luke McLindon
Oxley, Qld

THANKS for the story on the good work Beth Burt, midwife and leader, has done (CL 25/6/17) over her years at Mater Health, Brisbane.

The story allowed me to “stand back” and appreciate how blessed we are to have a world-class Catholic health service on our doorstep – a health service where all staff aim and are encouraged to espouse the values Jesus Christ displayed, all those years ago – regardless of creed.

of “The Catechism of the Catholic Church” are worth a read.

Christian values?

Brian Gibbon
Pialba, Qld

I AM disappointed with the decision taken by the St Vincent de Paul Society to allow selected “Vinnies” stores to trade on Sundays.

Many conference members of the society were outraged, having objected strongly against such a move before the proposed “trial” in Queensland was implemented.

The temptation to increase income seems to have overshadowed the society’s adherence to Christian values.

Two paragraphs contained in Section Three

“ Every Christian should avoid making unnecessary demands on others that would hinder them from observing the Lord’s Day. ”

Call for sensible regulations

Kenneth Thomas
Mount Mee, Qld

I REFER to the question “To mine or not to mine?” (CL 18/6/17, page 9).

Did not our Creator put “things” in the earth he created for man to find and use?

True, man sometimes misuses such discoveries, but this should not prevent their use for the betterment of our living – it is up to us, through sensible regulations, to use them as obviously intended.

Funding concerns

Des Lavey
Riverhills, Qld

SPOTTING the education funding con on Catholic parents in Simon Birmingham’s rushed legislation, Liberal Senator Chris Back (CL, 25/6/17) vainly called on the Federal Education Minister to go back to the drawing board.

A \$50 million “concessional” transitional package in 2018 to the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) won’t pacify the anger of the Catholic education sector.

The Federal Government should hold discussions with the NCEC to re-calculate a proper needs-based funding model for Catholic schools.

The thousands of families that make the choice for Catholic education won’t wear the 2017 version.

It will be at the Government’s electoral peril if it ignores the funding concerns of the Catholic sector.

The views expressed in the Letters to the Editor are not necessarily endorsed by and do not necessarily represent the views of The Catholic Leader or the Archdiocese of Brisbane. Letters are submitted on the condition The Catholic Leader may edit them in a manner which meets publication and style requirements.

No-name letters

THE Catholic Leader reminds writers to Have Your Say that letters should carry a name, address and contact telephone number.

We receive many letters from anonymous writers requesting publication. Without your name and contact details this is not possible.

We will not usually publish a letter that has already appeared in another newspaper, neither will we normally publish anything which is more than 400 words.

We routinely edit contributions for defamation, grammar, prolixity, coherence and style.

Counting down to centenary

TWEED HEADS

A SPECIAL liturgy in an old school building, which has been moved for a new life as a chapel, will be a highlight of centenary celebrations for St Joseph's Primary School, Tweed Heads.

The liturgy will be held on September 15 in the original school building which is now St Joseph's Chapel at the Tweed Valley Cemetery.

Assistant principal Christine Mulherin said the whole community was looking forward to the celebrations.

A spokesperson said achieving 100 years was a remarkable achievement and a testament to the Ursuline Sisters who founded the school, the Presentation Sisters who took over in 1952 and to the many lay teachers who continued their tradition of Catholic education today.

Staff and children will dress in period costume and participate in an old-fashioned games day and share a picnic lunch as part of the celebrations.

Tweed Shire Council is supporting the event.

The school will host an open day from midday on September 16 when the classrooms will have presentations on designated decades.

"We are very excited that at exactly 3pm the re-dedication service will take place which coincides with the time of the original blessing 100 years ago," Mrs Mulherin said.

The festivities will conclude with a dinner-dance at South Tweed Sports Club for staff and pupils, past and present, and other members of the community.

"The whole school community is looking forward to this great event as we share and celebrate our past memories and look forward to the future as we continue our Catholic journey in the Tweed parish," Mrs Mulherin said.



History lesson: Year 6 students looking forward to centenary celebrations at St Joseph's Primary School, Tweed Heads.

Shakespeare act wins more than applause

KEMPSEY

ST Paul's College, Kempsey, won a state competition in Shakespearean theatre recently.

The Sydney Theatre Company Sport for Jove hosted the competition at the Seymour Centre, and St Paul's was champion in the group division.

St Paul's principal Kevin Lewis said the students were competing against strong performances from other schools at a regional carnival, and after winning that stage, the college's group performance was chosen to represent the region at the state carnival.

"It was a fantastic opportunity for our drama students to participate in such a prestigious event so winning has been an incredible acknowledgment for both the students and to the college's drama faculty," Mr Lewis said.

The four Year 10 students in the group – Jessica Thomas, Calissa Percival, Jakob Czippan-Sowter and Patrick Brennan – travelled to Sydney to perform their scene from

Romeo and Juliet.

Before their big night, the students were fortunate to be a part of professional workshops that focused directly on their scene.

"We are incredibly proud of our group; they stepped on stage against some very polished and impressive schools," Mr Lewis said.

The students were honoured on the stage in front of an admiring audience.

The "fight scene" was a particular highlight and so convincing that a seasoned professional noted "I have performed in Romeo and Juliet three times and watch countless other performances of this play. I know this scene, I know the outcome and still I was shocked and emotionally moved by the murder of Mercutio."

"The students were excellent representatives of the college and their physicality, engagement in the roles and commitment to the ensemble was exceptional," Mr Lewis said.

"We know it was certainly an unforgettable evening and experience for everyone involved from St Paul's."



Winning performance: Drama students from St Paul's College, Kempsey, Jessica Thomas, Calissa Percival, Jakob Czippan-Sowter and Patrick Brennan in the "fight scene" from Romeo and Juliet.

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Fr Kenny leaves a mark of kindness and generosity

PORT MACQUARIE

FATHER Bernard (Bernie) Kenny, who died on June 10 aged 86, was known as a notable preacher and for his ministry to the sick and aged.

Fr Kenny had been living in Port Macquarie, and his funeral Mass was to have been held at the city's St Agnes' Church on June 23.

Lismore Bishop Gregory Homeming, priests of the diocese and visiting clergy were to concelebrate.

Lismore diocese's website said Fr Kenny's ministry to the sick and the aged "was well known and appreciated in the parishes in which he served".

"Those who came to him for assistance knew him for his kindness and generosity," the website said.

"Over the years, many of his fellow clergy found him to be a sincere friend, honest and supportive.

"In his later years, he became involved in Charismatic Re-

newal, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy and once a month all-night Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

"For those who knew him well and were encouraged by his ministry, he leaves a reputation of spirituality well accorded."

Fr Kenny was ordained on July 22, 1956, at St Agnes' Church, Port Macquarie.

NSW's then-premier Joe Cahill attended.

Fr Kenny's first appointment was as assistant priest at Coraki.

Other appointments followed as assistant priest at Casino, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Maclean and Tweed Heads.

He later served as parish priest in Coraki, Wauchope and Smithtown.

Port Macquarie News interviewed Fr Kenny last year when he celebrated his 60th anniversary of ordination.

In the story, Fr Kenny said every person held value to him.

"To me, everyone I met was very important," he said.

"I liked to help everyone and to me everyone was important as the next person, because they are all important to God."



Much-loved: Fr Bernie Kenny at the time of his 60th anniversary of ordination last year. Photo: Matt Attard, Port Macquarie News

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Messy fun: Maya Peart, Libby Wyatt and Jackson Passfield dunked their faces in icing sugar looking for treats on Beef Day at St Mary's College, Casino.

Beef Week a big success

CASINO

BEEF Week in Casino is always loads of fun for students and staff at St Mary's College and 2017 was no exception.

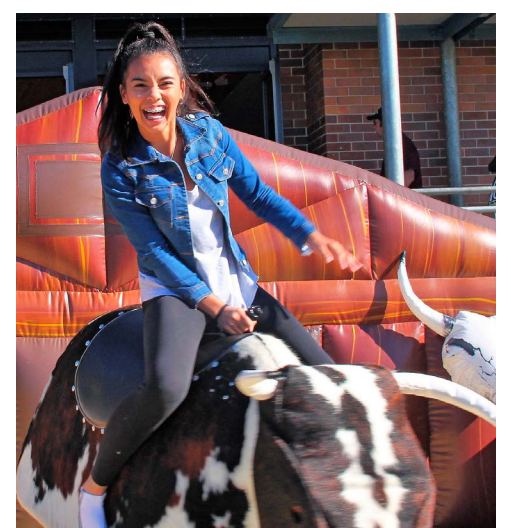
This year, students showed their cattle in the festival's annual parade, enjoyed their Beef Day activities at the college and helped several local organisations in their promotions.

Principal Aaron Beach said Beef Week was an important part of the college's calendar as students demonstrated their work and skills with the cattle as well as enjoyed a day of "play" at the college.

"Over the entire week the whole college community participated in activities, culminating on the Saturday, where we entered a float in the grand Beef Week Parade, and supported organisations like Rotary in catering for the huge crowds, along with other community groups," Mr Beach said.

He said the recent Beef Day activities provided an excellent opportunity for different age groups to work together in fun activities and compete against each other in their sport houses.

"The whole college is involved in the day and, because it is so much fun for both staff and students, it enhances school spirit and unites the college," Mr Beach said.



Riding high: Rachael Goddard hangs on tight as she tries the mechanical bull-ride.

The different activities included bush ironman, pet show, hitting targets with nerf guns, sumo wrestling, sack races, the big slide and mechanical bull-riding.

The college's St Vincent de Paul Society group sold roast beef-and-gravy rolls along with drinks to raise funds for the charity.



Third lap: An old favourite is back for another lap of fun with Cars 3. In this scene, Lightning McQueen (left, voiced by Owen Wilson) is with new coach Cruz Ramirez (voiced by Cristela Alonzo). Photo: CNS/Disney

Humming with extras

CARS 3: Starring (in voice) Armie Hammer, Owen Wilson, Bonnie Hunt. Directed by Brian Fee. Rated G (Very mild themes and coarse language). 109 minutes



By Joseph McAleer

FASTEN your seatbelts and start your engines for a wild (and often ear-splitting) ride in Cars 3, the lat-

est instalment of the family-friendly animated franchise.

Six years after the initial sequel and 11 since the series began with Cars, the anthropomorphic autos are back with a vengeance.

Director Brian Fee ramps up the racing action (and the roar of the engines) while introducing a fleet of new characters sure to please young viewers – not to mention toy manufacturers.

Happily, there's much more than the dizzying blur of NASCAR-like action.

Screenwriters Kiel Murray, Bob Peterson and Mike Rich inject a nice amount of heart and pathos into the comedic plot, and add winning messages about second chances and the value of mentoring.

The years have been kind to ace racer Lightning McQueen (voice of Owen Wilson).

He's still at the top of his game. But just over his shoulder is a new generation of faster vehicles, like the brash rookie Jackson Storm (voice

of Armie Hammer).

"Enjoy your retirement," Jackson tells Lightning as he whizzes past.

In a flash, Lightning is sidelined by an accident.

Disillusioned and depressed, he retreats to his adopted home of Radiator Springs.

There he draws on the support of his loyal tow-truck sidekick Mater (voice of Larry the Cable Guy) and comely Porsche sweetheart Sally (voice of Bonnie Hunt).

Sally knows Lightning must look to the future. "Don't fear failure," she insists.

"Take a chance. Try something new."

A spiffy fresh paint job by Ramone (voice of Cheech Marin) helps.

"It's so beautiful," Ramone says of his own work, "it's like the Sistine Chapel!"

With his spirits buoyed, Lightning heads to the training centre run by his sponsor Rust-Eze and its new owner, the "businesscar" Sterling (voice of Nathan Fillion).

His eager young coach Cruz Ramirez (voice of Cristela Alonzo) is thrilled with her new, if elderly, charge.

"You're my senior project," she gushes.

As the bond between veteran racer and rookie wannabe grows, Lightning recalls the wisdom of his dearly departed mentor Doc Hudson (voice of Paul Newman).

On a whim, he takes Cruz on a road trip to find Doc's original trainer – a grizzled '51 Ford named Smokey (voice of Chris Cooper) – to recapture some of the old magic.

"You'll never be the racer you once were," Smokey intones.

"You can't turn back the clock, kid, but you can wind it up again."

Cars 3 is full of surprises, and there's a nice twist in store well before the finish line.

The film contains a brief, highly stylised crash scene.

Joseph McAleer is a guest reviewer for Catholic News Service.

Invention of the pill and transistor key points

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND: LIVING THE CATHOLIC FAITH IN A POST-CHRISTIAN WORLD

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput; Henry Holt and Company, New York; 2017

"We are passing through a revolution of sorts in America," says Philadelphia Archbishop Charles J. Chaput.

Following such upheavals in the nation's moral life as the "normalisation of pornography, premarital sex, divorce (and) transgenderism", the 2015 Supreme Court decision to legalise same-sex marriage was "a symbolic overthrow of traditional Catholic sexual morality", he says.

It was to help Catholics understand such changes, the archbishop said, that he wrote his new book, *Strangers in A Strange Land: Living the Catholic Faith in a Post-Christian World*.

"I was thinking about the confusion that exists in the lives of so many people, even ordinary, everyday Catholics who love the Church and who love our country here in the United States, but at the same time have a sense that



something is wrong and they really don't know what it's about," he told Catholic News Service during an interview.

For example, he said, "expressing concern about the change in the meaning of marriage is considered to be old-fashioned or retrogressive or bigoted and that leads people to be afraid to even talk about it".

Archbishop Chaput, 72, draws a contrast between contemporary society and the simpler America he knew in his childhood during the 1940s and 1950s.

"In today's world, we treat people with disabilities much better than they did when I was a young man," he said.

"Society is very conscious about their rights and we even rearrange the structures of our buildings to help people with physical disabilities."

On the other hand, "we have a technology that has kept most people with Down syndrome from being born, because the disability is detected early, and technology has done that, and we decide to eliminate those people" through abortion, he said.

"It's a symbol of how we've at the same time progressed and at the same time regressed," the archbishop said.

Archbishop Chaput identifies the contraceptive pill and the transistor as key inventions of the last century that led to many of the cultural changes he outlines in his book.

The pill "was very tiny but led to huge changes in our perception of the meaning of human sexuality, which affects the way we think about family", and the transistor, found in most electronic devices, led to all kinds of new technologies that challenged Christian living in various ways, he said.

"The disruption of family life" through new communications technologies, for instance, had led to a situation where "parents don't know how to influence their kids, or are so busy they don't have time for each other", he said.

The archbishop attributes America's emphasis on the supreme importance of the individual as a contributing factor to the collapse of a Christian moral consensus in the country.

Individualism was "one of the weaknesses of American culture", he said.

"We don't focus enough on history or on community, and that gets in the way of us being serious about those who've thought before us."

For example, "I don't see a whole lot of generosity on the part of the new leadership class in the United States," he said.

Millennials seemed "focused on making

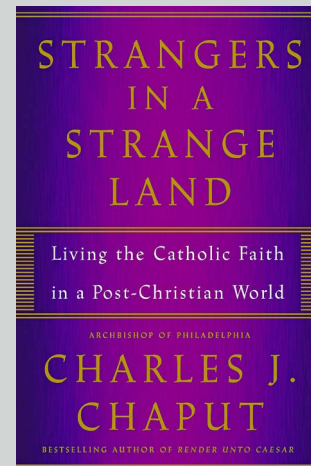
money and having great success and being elite, and I don't see a lot of focus on the common good".

The appropriate Catholic response to the cultural situation in the United States, "where the basic assumptions of Christianity and Catholicism are questioned by everyone", was to "live the Gospel in a radical kind of way", Archbishop Chaput said.

Writing toward the end of the book, the archbishop calls for Christians to engage in political debates in the public square, but also to "build the communities, the friendships, and the places in which we joyfully live out our faith".

Rather than a naive and emotion-based optimism, "the driving force in terms of facing the future for Christians is always the virtue of hope", Archbishop Chaput said.

"Hope is energy built on conviction that the future is in God's hands and God wants us to be very much a part of creating that future – we are kind of the instruments for the future."



PET OF THE WEEK



MAX is "a cute and smiling six-year-old companion dog who is looking for a family to call his own", a spokesperson for the Animal Welfare League Queensland said. "As a cool dude who is typical of his breed, Max thrives on affection and is a real people-pleaser who enjoys spending time either exercising or snuggling," the spokesperson said. Max would someone who would "take him on daily walks, play with him on the weekends and offer him all the tummy rubs he asks for when lounging by your side at night". "If your heart and home have room for a delightful and happy-go-lucky companion dog, then please consider coming to meet Max," the spokesperson said. Max is available at AWLQ's Warra Rehoming Centre, 523 Telegraph Rd, Bracken Ridge. Phone 3807 3782.

IN THE KITCHEN

JULY 7 is the feast day of Papua New Guinean Bless Peter To Rot. This recipe is offered for the occasion.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA BAKED SWEET POTATOES (Serves 4-6)

INGREDIENTS:

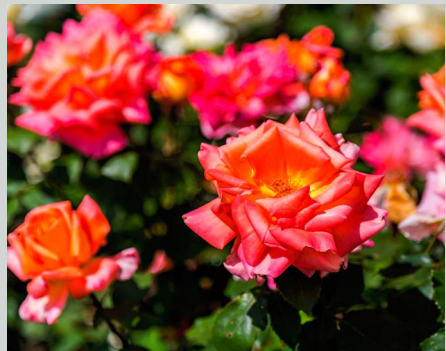
- 3 cups cooked sweet potatoes, mashed
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons finely sliced onions
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon milk
- Salt and pepper (to taste)

DIRECTIONS:

After mashing the cooked sweet potato, mix in the butter, onion, milk, cinnamon, salt and pepper to taste. Separate the egg whites from the yolks. Beat them separately. Fold the egg yolks into the mashed potato followed by the egg whites. Place mixture in a greased baking dish. Brush the top with butter and bake in the oven with the dish placed in a pan of water for 30 to 35 minutes at 160°C.

IN THE GARDEN

July is the main month for pruning roses. Prune roses mid-month. Prune vigorous plants lightly and weakly growing plants hard. Water bushes if wounds bleed; after pruning roses, spray with either a cupric hydroxide-based spray or lime sulphur. This will control over-wintering diseases.



COLOUR OF LIFE

Gospel, June 25
Matthew 10:26-33

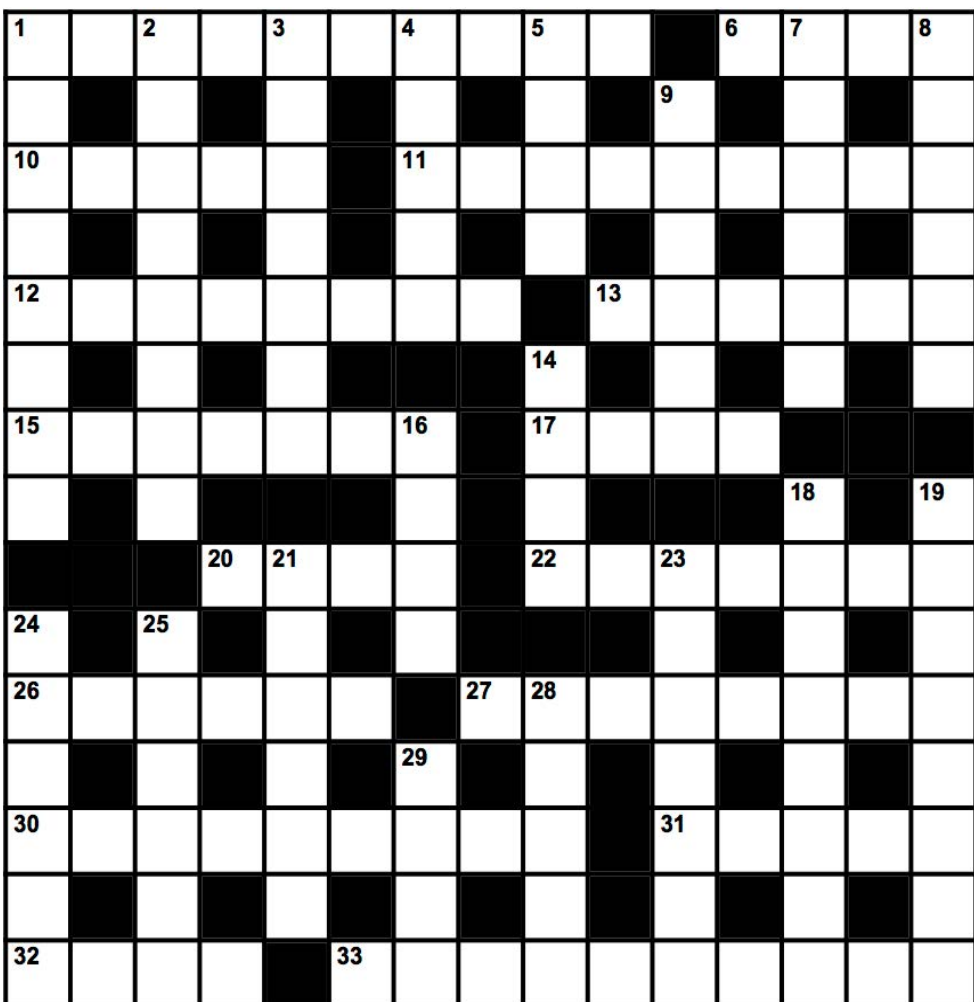
"Suddenly a violent storm came up on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by waves; but he was asleep. The apostles came and woke him, saying, 'Lord, save us! We are perishing!' He said to them, 'Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?' Then he got up, rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm." Matthew 8:24-26



WIN A PRIZE PACK

Send your entry to: New Generation, The Catholic Leader, GPO Box 282, Brisbane, Qld 4001. Entries close on July 10. Last week's winner was Beatrix Dore, 10, of Cotswold Hills, Qld.

Name _____
Address _____
P/C _____
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Age _____



CROSSWORD

Across

- 1 Person preparing for Baptism (10)
- 6 Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (4)
- 10 Care for the sick (5)
- 11 Covenant (9)
- 12 E.g. Romans, Galatians (8)
- 13 Grow (6)
- 15 This is my son, the beloved, with whom I am well _____ (7)
- 17 "Listen, you who have _____" (4)
- 20 Real (4)
- 22 Detest (7)
- 26 Eastern Rite Bishop (6)
- 27 Remorseful person (8)
- 30 Owned (9)
- 31 Corn (5)
- 32 Go upwards (4)
- 33 Jesus spent 40 days there after his baptism (10)

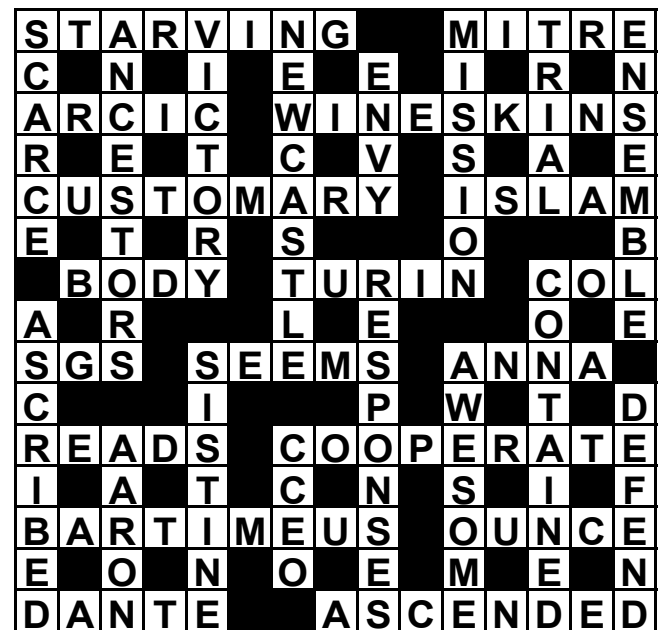
Down

- 1 Disdain (8)
- 2 Noah must have kept these carefully (8)
- 3 Makes (7)
- 4 Set free (5)
- 5 Otherwise (4)
- 7 Using eyes (6)
- 8 Epistle (6)

- 9 Our ___ who art in heaven (6)
- 14 Give a mission to (4)
- 16 Put out into the ___ water and let down your nets for a catch (4)
- 18 Similarly (8)
- 19 Our hearts are ___ until they rest in You (8)

- 21 Treasures (6)
- 23 Pool user (7)
- 24 Am I my brother's ___? (6)
- 25 Goes by (6)
- 28 Concluded (5)
- 29 Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate (4)

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION



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A free 12 hour training course will be provided over two days on Wednesday 26 and Thursday 27 July at our Bowen Hills office.

For more information or to submit your application, please email your details to svcs.volunteers@svha.org.au or call 1800 778 767.

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- Full-time - Continuing
- Commencing late July 2017
- Brisbane Catholic Education Office, Dutton Park

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Featured Events

July 1

PCI'S ANNUAL LUNCH AND MUSICAL AFTERNOON: with Bishop Hurley, The Pop's Quartet, St. Bakhita Community Choir, and the Gracie Mack Jazz Trio. 12pm, 1st July. Marymac Community Centre, 616 Ipswich Road, Annerley. Adults: \$60, Concession: \$45. Family prices available. Bookings 1300 777 777 or email pci777@bigpond.com

July 5

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC RENEWAL'S MONTHLY PRAYER GATHERING: Gather in St Stephen's Chapel on Wednesday 5th July @10.45 am - 12.15 pm, following the 10 am Mass. All welcome. Personal prayer ministry will be available. Join us for Praise & Worship in the city and for a friendly cuppa at the CWL Tea Rooms. Enq. Maureen 0403002199, Helena 0405321901

July 7

CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC MASS, BARDON: 1st Friday Mass at St. Mary Magdalene's Church, Cecil Road, 8pm. Celebrant Fr. Ian Wren. All welcome. Enq; Paul 0417104460 Chris 0417771956

July 7

BIBLE INSTITUTE FOR EVERYDAY LIVING, 2-DAY SEMINAR: ERDU will host the Bible Institute for Everyday Living at ACU, Banyo. This year's theme is 'Friends of God and Prophets, The Biblical Foundations of Friendship!' The two-day event features guest presenter Laurie Brink, O.P., Catholic Theological Union, Chicago. To register call 1300 729 671 or go to www.trybooking.com/266699

July 16

THE SECULAR ORDER OF DISCALCED CARMELITES (OCDS): Meets every Third Sunday at Avila Meeting Room, Carmelite Monastery, Wellington Rd, Ormiston. For information on the life of a Secular Discalced Carmelite, please telephone Mary at 3396 8673 or 0409 273 543, or Anne at 3904 7785 or 0412 844 142

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‘My prayer for Australia would be justice for all – equality for everybody’

Called to justice

By Peter Bugden

DAVID Miller is an Aboriginal man who wasn't raised in his people's traditional ways and he wonders how different his life may have been.

He's a man well-known to many Brisbane Catholics as the one who breaks the silence playing the clap sticks at the start of Masses and liturgies for major celebrations in St Stephen's Cathedral.

It's a ritual he performs leading into the indigenous Acknowledgement of Country before Mass begins.

David would normally be at the cathedral today (July 2) for the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mass at the start of NAIDOC Week but he is in Cairns for the 2017 NAIDOC Awards Ceremony and Ball.

He was attending the ball last night (July 1) with family and friends.

A proud descendant of the Gangulu peoples of Central Queensland, David is passionate about justice and equality for all.

He knows well how his ancestors were denied those rights, and he continues to work for the good of indigenous peoples today.

For 24 years, he has been a member of Murri Ministry, a not-for-profit Catholic group supporting indigenous people around south-east Queensland under the umbrella of Centacare Brisbane.

David's family, like so many other indigenous families, has known the trauma of being torn apart.

"All my ancestors come from (Central Queensland), from a little town called Banana (south-west of Rockhampton)," he said.

"My family was split up under the Aboriginal Protection Act of 1897.

"The full-blood Aboriginal people were taken to Taroom, then on to Woorabinda, then on to Barambah, which is now named Cherbourg, near Kingaroy and six kilometres from Murgon.

"There were forty different tribes put into Cherbourg from all over Queensland.

"They weren't allowed to speak their language. That's why, unfortunately, a lot of the different languages are lost now."

David said Aboriginal people there "were thrown in jail" for speaking their own language.

"My grandmother and an aunty are full-bloods, so obviously they were sent to Cherbourg," he said. "My two uncles, my mother and my aunty were fair-skinned. Their fathers were station owners.

"My mother was sent out as a domestic – or slave – at eight years old.

"From then she was working on stations all her life, and I think she was twenty-two years old when she got her exemption papers (exemption from the Act).

"If you were given that, you weren't able to speak to Aboriginal people.

"It was to make you white, and the Government in those days, thought they were going to 'whiten' us out."

David's mother Emily Miller was a domestic worker on stations around Rockhampton, and she made sure he and his older brother had a good education, but they weren't raised in traditional Aboriginal ways.

He has pondered what that has meant for him. "If you're looking back to see where we were

going to be, it was a genocide virtually – that's what it was – how we were going to be 'whitened' out," he said. "But, apart from all that and those atrocities that happened, I have benefitted, I think, from that education.

"But, at the same time, the people from Cherbourg or settlements, a lot of those young people, too, because their parents or the elders were very, very strong in education, you'll find just as many people come out of Cherbourg who are absolutely brilliant, too.

"I think, with all that aside, I was very fortunate that I wasn't brought up under the Act like my mother was, but, at the same time, she was a very, very strong woman and education was the name of her game (for us).

"It's a hard question actually, to put myself ... I was lucky that I was brought up that way but not in those circumstances."

David's followed his mother's example by encouraging his children Belinda and Damien in education, and is pleased they've made the best of their opportunities.

Belinda works for NITV and Screen Queensland in production and Damien's a former foreign ambassador working in Canberra for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

David has also made sure they were proud of their heritage and armed against racism.

"I'm fortunate – I don't let people put me down, and I brought my kids up the same way – 'Don't let anybody think they're better than you'," he said.

"And, also at the same time, 'Don't think you're better than anybody else'. It's no good saying one thing and doing another."

Retired from work about eight years, David gives much of his time walking the talk – not just with Murri Ministry but with several other groups, including Brisbane archdiocese's Catholic Justice and Peace Commission and the archdiocese's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) committee.

The RAP, approved by Archbishop Mark Coleridge, identifies priorities and key goals in building awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and strengthens relationships between Aboriginal and non-indigenous people across the archdiocese.

It includes recognising indigenous cultural protocols – "welcome to country" ceremonies performed by elders, acknowledging traditional owners of local parishes and communities, naming the traditional land custodians in commemorative plaques, and ensuring indigenous flags are flown in parish grounds and schools.

David's also been active on his parish council.

And why does he do it?

"I like helping people, but I feel within myself that I have a calling to do justice-related acts," he said.

He doesn't think we'll ever get rid of racism "but we can only try our best to stamp it out".

He's only experienced racism "a couple of times" himself, although he said "once I wasn't invited to a

certain place, because I was Aboriginal ..."

"It upset me a little ... (but) I thought, 'Well, I'm better than that, anyway, so why let it worry you?'"

"I always walk with my head high.

"At the same time it affects you, but not everybody can do that and you don't realise some of the damaging things that are caused by bullying and racism."

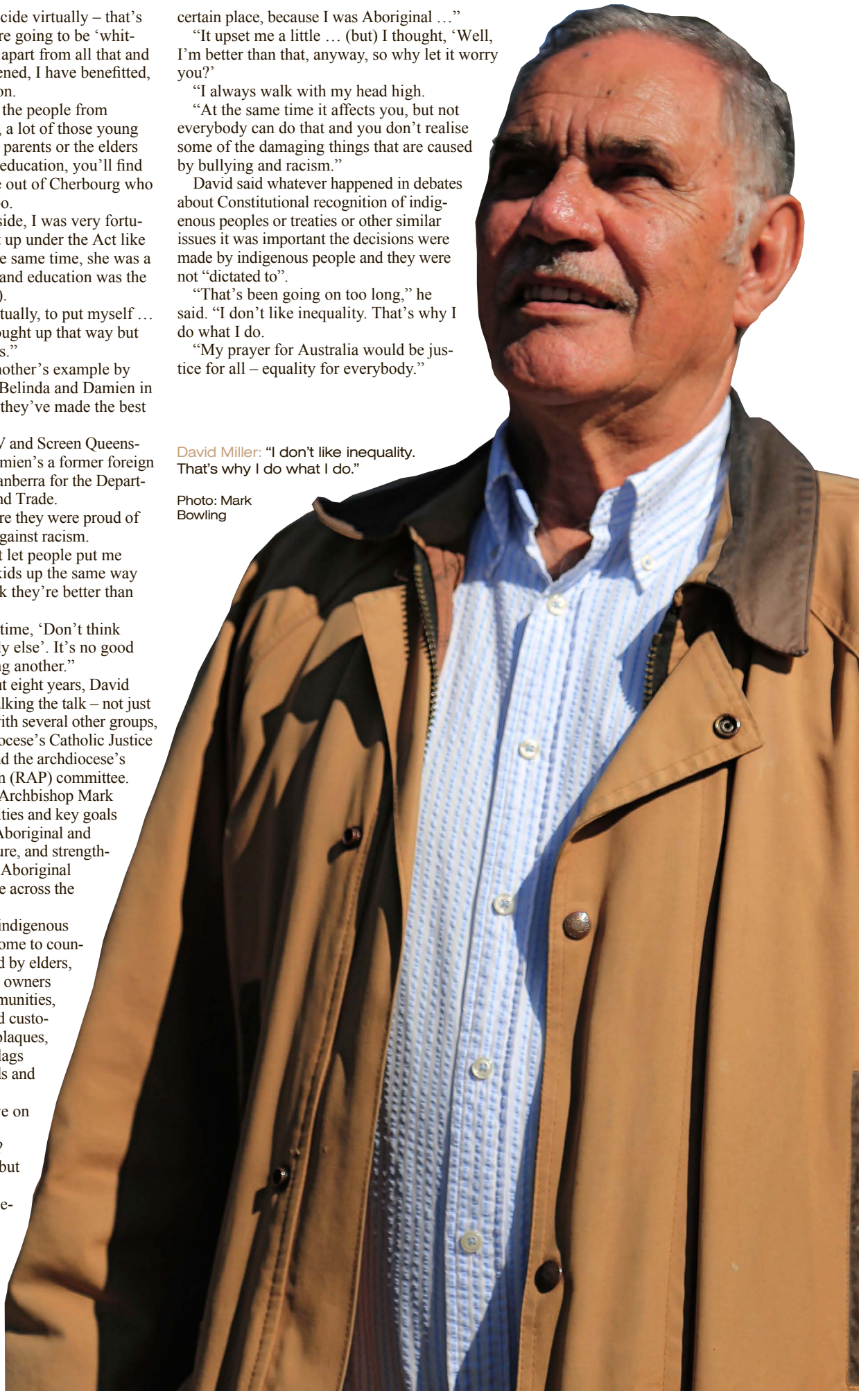
David said whatever happened in debates about Constitutional recognition of indigenous peoples or treaties or other similar issues it was important the decisions were made by indigenous people and they were not "dictated to".

"That's been going on too long," he said. "I don't like inequality. That's why I do what I do."

"My prayer for Australia would be justice for all – equality for everybody."

David Miller: "I don't like inequality. That's why I do what I do."

Photo: Mark Bowling



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