



CATHOLIC PARISHES
WANGARATTA

VOL 36
DECEMBER 2017

CONTACT

60TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL

SAINT PATRICK'S
CONFERENCE

**15 Minutes
with
Father
Mike**

VALE SR. MARY GRIFFITHS

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OF
WANGARATTA

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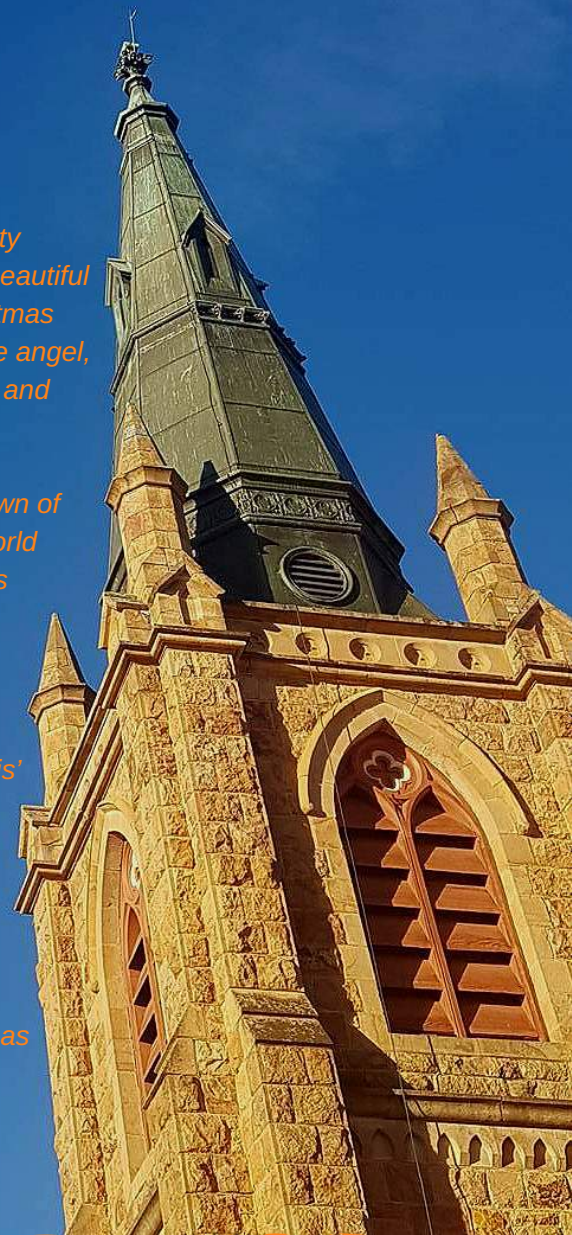
by Hilary Timma

Each December in our parishes of Wangaratta, as in parishes worldwide, Nativity statues are being dusted off and arranged artistically, in anticipation of a most beautiful and significant Birthday celebration: that of the birth of Jesus. At Mass on Christmas Eve, the baby is gently and lovingly placed in the manger. Mary and Joseph, the angel, cattle and donkey, shepherds with sheep and the three Magi, all look on in awe and adore the resting infant.

To think that this humble scene, which occurred over 2, 000 years ago in the town of Bethlehem, still commands such joy, attention and replication throughout the world attests to its significance and timelessness. The story continues to hold people's attention.

St. Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first Nativity scene in 1223 in Greccio, Italy, in an attempt to place the emphasis of Christmas on the worship of Christ, rather than on materialism and gift giving. Staged in a cave, St. Francis' Nativity scene was a living one with humans and animals cast in the roles.

Take some time to visit the Christmas Crib and reflect on its simplicity, beauty and its precious story, from St. Francis' perspective. Accompany children or grandchildren and see how they respond - little children are often fascinated by the scene and ask delightful questions about 'what is going on here?' Enjoy this captivating representation of the birth of Jesus as we celebrate another Christmas Season. Focus on the Christmas messages of peace, joy, hope and ... wonder.



PEOPLE, ANTARCTICA AND THE COSMOS

FIFTEEN MINUTES WITH FR. MIKE

Interacting with people is Father Mike's joy and is 'the best thing about being a priest'. He became a priest to 'look after people' which is the primary role of the diocesan priest.

The appeal of the priesthood Eldest in a family of six, with 'lots of relatives on the land around Christchurch', Fr. Mike was 'an average student who just survived school'. He played Rugby Union and 'worked during the school holidays at jobs including at a flour mill, a textile factory and manufacturing marble terrazzo!' 'There were always priests around the house when growing up, his uncle was a diocesan priest' and Fr. Mike 'grew into it'. The priests he knew 'were all solid, straight, good fellows'. Entering the seminary at the age of nineteen, he studied philosophy in Christchurch and then theology at Dunedin, where it is 'seriously cold'. Ordained in 1970, Fr. Mike has been a priest for forty seven years. Completing three years in his first parish, he was then posted to a parish in Christchurch, while simultaneously serving in hospitals. A further move during the '70s was very satisfying, as 'the parish priest there appreciated and encouraged the drive and enthusiasm of young priests'. He was then posted to Twizel - the parish at the centre of the Waitaki Hydro Electric Construction project and served there for eight years before a short posting to the 'bottom of the West Coast'.

Stints in Antarctica and the Air Force Serving in Antarctica as priest for the US Antarctic Research Programme (US Navy and Coastguard and Science Support), Fr. Mike had fourteen short postings between 1977 to the mid-1990's and was away for up to three months at a time. After some years as parish priest in New Zealand, Bishops requested that he serve as a priest in the Air Force. He undertook the necessary training and was posted from Base to Base. From Auckland Air Force Base, he was posted on exchange to an Australian Base.



The Air Force and the Diocese requested he stay with the force in Australia but he declined, went back to New Zealand to serve at parish level for a short time and then returned to Australia as a priest in the RAAF.

Pursuits and inspirations Having been fortunate enough to travel and spend time in some interesting (and remote) parts of the world, Fr. Mike is also a man of eclectic interests and tastes. He prefers dry white wine to red (red can give him a bit of a headache), likes savoury food in preference to sweet, can't yet really understand the niceties of AFL, does understand Rugby Union and supports the All Blacks. Having grown up in New Zealand, he is more used to the cooler climates and favours a Wangaratta Winter over its Summer'. When parish priest in a mountainous part of New Zealand, he had many mates who were mountaineers and he also enjoyed climbing. So, if there was time to be indulgent, shooting and being outdoors (tramping and climbing) appeal greatly. He is fascinated by the Sciences: Cosmology (the science of the origin and nature of the universe), how the earth was formed, how the Sciences affect people and how we all got to be here; and, collecting meteorite fragments and what they tell us about the universe. The classics of literature and modern poets are favourites. Theological works and the Scriptures are a deep interest to him, as well as modern scholarly works that focus on the Jesus of History. Musically, 'Classical and Folk appeal', though he is 'not a Jazz fan'. Fr. Mike 'sang in an a cappella Baroque group' when he was young; and, 'played the flute - very badly, actually'.

Hilary Timma



GROWING AND LEARNING ALONGSIDE

Taking on the role of Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching at Galen Catholic College has been a wonderful opportunity for me to grow and to learn in a new environment. I have been warmly welcomed into the Galen community and I already feel very much part of the fabric of this fantastic school. The year 2015 delivered a series of very fortunate events for me and my family, including a move from Melbourne to a small cottage on 10 acres in the beautiful North East and the chance for me to work at this great school.

I have been extremely fortunate in my life to have had inspirational teachers who encouraged and challenged me to pursue my dreams. A chance meeting changed my life, when I bumped into my former Art teacher on a train journey, shortly after completing Year 12. On hearing that I had applied to study accounting she asked why I had not contemplated becoming an Art teacher. 'You would be a great Art teacher', she said. I had never considered being a teacher up until that moment. Those words totally changed my life and I have never regretted my decision to change my direction and become an Art teacher.

I have had a very rich and rewarding career as a teacher and have taught in a number of schools including at Loyola College, Darwin High School, Mercy College, Whitefriars College, Siena College and now, at Galen Catholic College in Wangaratta. I feel very much at home here and, in some ways, things seem to have come full circle for me. I was born in Dublin and spent my first sixteen years in Ireland, most of these years in rural villages. My parents instilled a deep respect and love for the land in their six children and I am relishing the chance to experience the beauty of this region and to reconnect with nature.

My schooling in Ireland also had a profound effect on me. Having attended St. Brigid's Primary School in Killester, Dublin I feel very much at home with the dual Brigidine and Marist charisms that form the foundations of everything that we do at Galen Catholic College. Brigid of Kildare is a patroness of those who have a care for the earth, for justice and equality, for peace and reconciliation. I was also fortunate to participate in the Marist Footsteps program in 2016 and was inspired by the writings of Marcellin Champagnat. The mission of Marist Schools is to lead young people to know and to love God in the way of Mary, in the belief that they can all become good Christians and good citizens. I am inspired by Marcellin Champagnat Marist educators who, before all else, love their students. I am very fortunate to work every day with young people who inspire, motivate and energise me and make me very happy to be a teacher. I feel privileged to work with young people and to have the opportunity to learn alongside them.



By Marie Salinger
Deputy Principal
Learning and Teaching: Galen

A MOMENTOUS DAY FOR GALEN

GALEN CATHOLIC COLLEGE OPENING SCHOOL MASS AND BLESSING OF THE NEW SENIOR SCHOOL



On Wednesday 22nd February, 2017 Galen Catholic College celebrated its Opening School Mass. It was a momentous day for Galen, as we had the Official Opening and Blessing of our new Senior School and we launched 'New Horizons', our 2017 - 2019 School Improvement Plan.

What made this a particularly significant day was that it is the first time we have gathered together as a whole school since 2013. This was an enormous undertaking from a team of staff working together to create a very special event. The huge marquee certainly attracted lots of attention in the lead up to the big day! During Mass, our theme for 2017 'Care for our Common Home' was also announced. This theme will be put into practice through Social Justice and by the whole school as a Catholic education community.

Our school chaplain Fr. Novelito Lim delivered a fantastic Mass with a beautiful sermon on the importance of being thankful and working together. He was assisted by Fr. Brian Carey of the Rutherglen parish. Fr. Lim was then accompanied by our school principal, Mr. Bernard Neal and other special guests, for the blessing of the new senior school buildings and classrooms. Overall it was a very important and significant day in the history of Galen Catholic College.

Patrick Arcuri
Deputy Principal, Galen

An Outstanding Year: St. Patrick's Primary School

TERRY CORRIGAN, PRINCIPAL



I reflect on this year with great pride and with many wonderful memories. We are blessed to enjoy a great sense of partnership with our families and the staff has continued to 'step up' and provide outstanding modeling and commitment to the students in our care. This is a very special place to be.

On a weekly basis, we had many Masses and liturgies at school and in our beautiful church; and parents, grandparents and friends are always welcome. The Parish-based Sacramental programs (Confirmation/Eucharist and Reconciliation) were very well received, bringing our parish and school communities closer together and providing significant growth in the journey of faith of our students. It is wonderful that Bishop Leslie officiated at our Confirmation/Eucharist celebrations; and, equally important, is the splendid commitment of our Parish Priest, Fr Mike, along with Fr Novie.

The Catholic Education Office conducted two school reviews – a Stewardship of Resources Review and a Pastoral Wellbeing Review – which went extremely well. We received some very positive feedback, providing us with information for future growth in these areas. We also achieved outstanding results on our Naplan Testing, being our best result ever and we are very pleased with the outcomes. Naplan testing measures our school against other State and National schools. The school also surveyed parents, teachers and students on areas of school life. This was conducted by the Catholic Education Office to ensure consistency of the data. Results show very high parent, student and teacher satisfaction levels, which bodes very well for the health of the school.

Our School Board continues to lead strategically and has achieved a great level of success. Equally, our Parents and Friends Association has made outstanding contributions to our school. Currently they are looking at the refurbishment and replacement of playground equipment. This is achieved through their many fundraising programs that add to the life of the school, not the least of which is our Mayfair, which involves the majority of our families. Having such committed families at our school, parental engagement remains at the forefront of future plans. We ran a series of Curriculum Nights to engage the parents more deeply in the learning opportunities of their children and these were extremely well attended. A great deal of positive feedback was received, with a strong desire for these to continue into the future. Furthermore, we conducted a series of learning walks, enabling parents to witness the learning intentions of the school and discover strategies for supporting their children's learning.

The school's commitment to social justice continues in many areas. We remain strongly committed to our local St Vincent De Paul Society branch and collect money, grocery items and blankets for their Winter and Christmas Appeals. During Lent, we also collect money for CARITAS through our Pancake Day Breakfast and classroom Caritas money boxes. We are also committed to fundraising during October for Catholic Mission Month.

St Patrick's Primary School continues to be a happy place where students, parents and staff thrive in an environment committed to the Catholic values of respect for self, others and the world in which we live. I would like to thank the Parish of St Patrick's for their continued support for our school and I hope that you will keep us in your thoughts and prayers. God Bless.



SHARING OUR HIGHLIGHTS

St. Bernard's Primary School

Jenny Symes, Acting Principal

Carly Avery, RE Coordinator

It has been a busy year for St. Bernard's faith-filled learning community with staff, students and parents involved in many events. We love to share some of the highlights:

Social Justice: During the 2016 Christmas season, St Bernard's Social Justice (SJ) Leaders, along with teachers, organised donations for the St. Vincent de Paul Drive. In 2017, SJ Leaders handed out pancakes and collected donations on Shrove Tuesday. To help students understand the importance of Caritas and the message of 'Love Your Neighbour', SJ Leaders ran events each Monday for 4 weeks, asking students to go without electricity, chairs and tables and flavourful food. On the fourth Monday, at the beginning and end of the day, students walked around the oval carrying backpacks, to experience what it was like to walk a long way to get to school.

Retreat: In June, St. Bernard's staff participated in a two-day retreat in Beechworth, working with Fr. Joe Taylor, who led them through prayer and scripture; and Michael Crowe, who focused on Christian Meditation. This time provided invaluable opportunities for spiritual growth and reflection.

F.I.R.E Carriers (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education): Our fabulous team of Grade 6 student F.I.R.E. Carriers organised learning sessions about Aboriginal Education for younger students including: Aboriginal dance sessions, learning experiences on culture, music, dance and Aboriginal sporting greats. The F.I.R.E. Carriers walked the 'Bullawah' Indigenous trail through Wangaratta and learnt about the Yorta Yorta people, then led the 135 Grade 1/2 students on this walk, sharing their learning and stories.

Sacraments: The Sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation were celebrated with Bishop Les Tomlinson on the 13th and 14th of May. The children prepared for this celebration with their parents, in family groups and their class teachers, in Religious Education sessions. All were delighted to take part in this ceremony. During Term 4, a large group of students began the family group sessions for the preparation of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We look forward to joining students and their families in celebrating this Sacrament in our school chapel.

St. Bernard's Feast Day: On the 21st of August, staff and students celebrated the Feast of St. Bernard of Clairvaux by participating in a variety of activities. Student leaders organised tabloid sports activities for everyone, to celebrate and reflect on Saint Bernard and the connection between him and our school. We also participated in a whole school liturgy to end our celebrations.

Community/Parish Involvement: Throughout the year, St. Bernard's had a range of celebrations involving parents and community members, which are important for students and families as members of the Catholic community. Some of these events included: celebrating Masses and Feast Days, welcoming parents and friends to unit Masses; and, Grandparents Day led by Foundation students. Our grades 3/4 and 5/6 students visited Illoura to celebrate monthly Mass with residents. Other key events were our Mother's Day Liturgy and Father's Day Social Night.

New buildings at St. Bernard's: The year continued with events that promote the Catholic ethos of our school. In the New Year, we look forward to celebrating with a Mass of Thanksgiving, the opening of classrooms in the Early Learning Centre and the studio classrooms and Technology Centre in Grade 3/4 area. We hope all Parish members will visit our school when the new buildings are opened!

We thank Fr. Mike and Fr. Movie for their support and guidance in our school community. We look forward to sharing more liturgical moments with them in the future!



ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEW LEARNING SPACES

OUR LADY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
MARK WALSH, PRINCIPAL

This year is the first full year the whole school has been in refurbished learning spaces. It is pleasing to see so much of what we were hoping from the work has come to fruition. Innovative use of spaces has added significantly to the calmness of the school with greater learning engagement, also allowing children with special needs to find places to learn that suit their needs. More opportunities exist for support specialists to have dedicated rooms. Our next major capital program is refurbishment and extension of the administration centre. Each year, the school outlines our actions to grow our school, based on the Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement document and expressed across five areas.

1. Catholic Identity We have:

- Followed up 2016 Enhancing Catholic School Identity data, planning with Catholic Education Office
- Organised professional learning sessions for staff
- Focused on use of scripture and introduced greater variety in forms of prayer
- Increased staff exposure to contemporary Catholic writings
- Added to our contemporary Catholic symbols with explanations
- Developed a process providing explanation of key Catholic traditions
- Used the Making Jesus Real program to link to the Positive Behaviour In Schools approach
- Reviewed and re-written our acknowledgement of country
- Plans in place for integrating the capabilities component from Victorian Curriculum
- Reviewed arrangements for attending parish Masses.

2. Leadership We have:

- Continued to educate our community on educational thinking and practice behind redevelopment of learning spaces
- Built on the work done in Making Jesus Real, linking action and purpose
- Re-aligned the model of parent leadership within our School Board and Parents and Friends (P&F) Committee with their respective constitutions
- Ensured the financial position of the school allows for redevelopment of our master plan and maintenance plan
- Provided more opportunities for involvement of new school board members in school leadership
- Developed a process of staff goal setting and sharing within our learning team
- Grown support of the 'leaders of learning' in our school.



3. Learning and Teaching We have:

- Introduced and implemented the Victorian Curriculum
- Introduced a new students reporting format
- Explored and implemented applications of Google classroom, docs, drive and sites
- Developed a process of staff goal setting and sharing allowing for appropriate and timely feedback
- Been actively involved in Inquiry mindset program
- Reviewed our assessment schedule and time table and links to last year's expectations.

4. Pastoral Wellbeing We have:

- Developed a response team to work with specialist behavior support staff
- Developed student code of conduct
- Focused expectation for all community members to make only positive physical contact
- Prepared for Pastoral Wellbeing review
- Worked to increase awareness about processes in managing behaviour and its link to learning
- Involved staff in the preparation of personalised learning plans.

5. Stewardship of Resources We have:

- Developed a Staff Portal for information-sharing and document review
- Prepared for the move to accrual accounting and moved the P&F accounting into the school's accounting program
- Developed plans for refurbishment of the administration area
- Prepared for a Stewardship of Resources review.

Fr. Mike Pullar, ably supported by Fr. Novie, leads our community spiritually. Fr. Novie has celebrated the majority of our Masses this year and his wonderful understanding of the children and their liturgical needs has made him a firm favorite. Appreciation is also extended to Sister Gail Ryan for her vital and dedicated role of supporting our families. I would like to thank all staff, students and families at Our Lady's for their ongoing and generous support of the school and to our School Board members and the P&F committee for their contributions.

LIAM COOK

East Timor was one of the best experiences ever. It is hard to explain what I saw because there were so many little things, like wild dogs roaming the streets and everyone in Baucau going to church at 5:30 am. The immense resilience of the Timorese, to win their independence in 2002 from Indonesia and the horrific events that followed, has put my own life and problems into a wider perspective. Even our tour guide Sebas, hopefully a life-long friend, has changed how I view and value my family. I thoroughly enjoyed my experience in East Timor and recommend it to anyone who is considering applying.

RUBY UEBERGANG

One of the biggest impacts on me was our first debrief as a group, where our guide Sebas introduced the program and opened up about himself. Sebas is going through a great deal of mourning due to the deaths of his child and wife. The traditional mourning process in Timor-Leste is heavy and lasts a long time. We were so grateful to have Sebas with us. We all made close friendships with him and he taught us so much about his culture and ourselves. We had a great time with him, as he made everything fun, although he had this massive weight on his shoulders. We thank him for that, wish him all the best and hope to see him soon at Galen.

EMMA CHRISTY

While in East Timor, we visited the Ponta Leste School, where people aged from 7-25 learn English. There were three stages, with A being the most advanced class. Before we left home, we were asked to plan a lesson about simple things like colours, numbers, animals and Australian foods. At Ponta Leste we were welcomed by Jenny, whose English was very good, then a traditional dance was performed by local kids. We sang 'Castle on a Hill', followed by a quick tour of Ponta Leste and then showed students the photo books we had prepared. I was surprised how well they spoke English, so our simple lesson plans were no longer useful and we had to improvise, teaching things like plurals, silent letters and past/present tense. On our last day at Ponta Leste, we organised a party to say farewell to the local kids. Overall, our experience was amazing and I miss the looks on their faces when we taught them something new.

SHAYLA LEAVETT-BROWN

Our visit to Timor-Leste was an extraordinary experience for which I am very grateful. We visited the Canossa Training and Development Centre for Women which was connected to where we were staying. We visited classrooms where different activities were being taught with a range of age groups. The first was English, so we spoke some English and they did their best to respond. Next were Hospitality and Textiles. It was very interesting to see the students enjoying their work at school, as they were having the best time and don't take anything for granted. On several days we travelled to Watebo beach which had amazing, beautiful blue water. On another day, we walked to the beach and saw how the locals around Baucau live, which is so different from Australia. Houses were made of mud and sticks but looked very sturdy. There were crops and plants that some of us had never seen before. At the beach, Liam and Sebas found some coconuts, split them open and we drank the juice and ate the inside, both so fresh and delicious. The weather was perfect – not too hot – and when it rained it was beautiful to see how everyone reacts. We all played basketball in the pouring rain because we didn't want to waste an opportunity. I had the best experience of my life and hope to go back some day.

LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCES

East Timor Reflections





BORINYA
Wangaratta Community Partnership



ASPIRING TO BE MORE

Borinya Wangaratta Community

by: Peter Chalkly, Principal



As the new principal of Borinya in 2017, I wish to express sincere thanks for the welcome and on-going support I have experienced from the entire Borinya community of staff, students and families. As I heard in a line from the gospel recently, on the Feast of the Transfiguration, 'it is good to be here'!

Most would be aware that Borinya, Wangaratta Community Partnership, is a Flexible Learning Setting that provides an alternate education pathway for disengaged or at-risk secondary aged young people. Now in our ninth year, Borinya is one of three flexible learning settings for secondary aged students in the Sandhurst diocese.

Our year commenced with many obvious examples of students re-engaging in their education, making positive choices, responding to new challenges, or setting achievable goals. These reflections of student engagement and effort fit really easily with our Borinya theme for 2017, which is 'Aspiring to be more.....' This quote comes from a statement from Oscar Romero, the former Archbishop of San Salvador in Latin America.

He was a tireless worker for the poor and was killed by rebels in 1980. The challenge for each of us, as part of the Borinya community, is to aspire, to strive, to try to be more generous, to be more caring, to be more committed to our learning and so on.

I take the opportunity to thank staff for their care, commitment and hard work throughout the year thus far. I mentioned to someone recently that to work at Borinya, it helps to have a tough skin and a soft heart and I see that reflected in the staff here on a daily basis.

To the parents, carers and families here at Borinya, thank you for trusting us to provide a second or third chance at an educational pathway for your child. I acknowledge that we don't always get it right, but it is not from a lack of effort, intent or care.

Finally, I also acknowledge the support of Fr Mike Pullar, the Board of Management, members of Catholic Regional Education Wangaratta (CREW), Catholic Education Office (CEO) staff and the many valued partnerships we have with numerous community agencies – each of which provide valuable assistance and support to our students.

I am confident that across the remainder of the year there will continue to be more moments that are truly transformative encounters within our Borinya Community.

A VAST PARISH AND WELCOMING COMMUNITY

HOLY CROSS, MOYHU PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL REPORT

by Viv O'Loughlin



Many are not familiar with our Parish so we thought we could tell you a little about it. Moyhu Catholic Parish covers a huge area, from Greta West, Docker and Bobbinawarrah in the north, Carboor and Rose River in the east, Greta South in the west and Cheshunt South and Tolmie and beyond in the south. It is mostly rural land or hill country. Fr. Mike and Fr. Novie travel long distances to celebrate Masses. We have two churches and our own parish council.

The beautiful Holy Cross Church is in a rural setting on the Wangaratta-Whitfield road, about 25 km. from Wangaratta and 2 km. from Moyhu. The stunning stained glass windows were crafted by Colonial firm 'Ferguson and Urie'. St. Joseph's Church is in the heart of Whitfield, deep in the King Valley and about 25 km. south of Moyhu, an area with a strong Italian heritage and many noted wineries and eateries. Masses are 10.30 am at Whitfield on the first Sunday and 10.00 am at Moyhu on other Sundays.

Distance is a big issue for parishioners, especially with the elderly. Many travel 12-15 km. to Whitfield Church and some up to 50 km. or more to Moyhu Church. Nonetheless, we are continuing with our efforts to engage more parishioners and to provide a welcoming and supporting community. Fr. Vito came to the King Valley early in the year to provide a Mission for our Italian community. Friday night's Italian Mass at St. Joseph's was followed by supper.. A special thank you to Mick, for driving to the various homes and Silvana, for providing lunch for Father.

In October, we held a special Mass on the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, patron saint of Italy, followed by morning tea.

After Mass, cuppa's were held at both Holy Cross, Moyhu and St. Joseph's, Whitfield. A parish community afternoon tea was held at 'Ineeta's Café' at Moyhu and a number of parishioners had a friendly get-together and a chance for some council members to answer questions from parishioners. Some of our community attended the Ecumenical World Day of Prayer service at Moyhu Anglican Church in March, a lovely opportunity to mix with others from our local area. Next year in March, the service will be at St. Joseph's, Whitfield.

Two young people attained encouragement awards from the Pastoral Council, known as the St. Brigid's award and the St. Francis Xavier award, in remembrance of two of our churches that are now closed. This year, our small parish is assisting three young people from Fiji through the St. Vincent de Paul 'Assist-a-Student' Program.

We continue to upgrade the Moyhu Presbytery. This year has seen major work on the roof, tiles and guttering. The bathroom has also been modernised and plumbing throughout the house and yard attended to. So, if you have time for a beautiful Sunday drive into the picturesque King Valley, call in for Mass at Moyhu or Whitfield where a warm welcome is assured.

WILLING HANDS WORKING TOGETHER

OUR LADY'S PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL REPORT

ANTHONY HOLLIGAN



It has been an eventful year for Our Lady's Parish with new members of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) becoming familiar with their roles.

The past twelve months has been a busy time with the PPC continuing to work towards compliance with Child Safe legislation. Considerable amounts of time and effort have been dedicated to this by Father Novie and Father Mike, along with the PPC members, to ensure processes and procedures have been implemented. As a result the parishes now have:

- A Child Safe Policy
- Procedures and guidelines for all volunteers and employees
- An Audit procedure to identify potential risks to Child Safety
- An Incident reporting procedure
- Notices and information placed in the Narthex of the church.

Glass has also been installed in the internal doors of the church to enhance visibility in all areas of the church.

The gathering and 'Cuppas' after Sunday Mass at Our Lady's continue to be well attended and very successful, highlighting the value of parishioners coming together socially in fellowship, strengthening our connection to each other as a community. Similarly, the Men's Breakfast hosted at Our Lady's continues to be a success, being well supported and attended by men of all our parishes. It is hoped that these events continue to grow in popularity and more men see this as an opportunity to connect with fellow parishioners.

In addition to the above, the PPC has also:

- Supported the celebration of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist undertaken by the children of our parishes
- Supported the establishment of the Children's Liturgy
- Supported the inclusion of children participating in the closing hymn for Sunday Mass

- Continued to support youth and school Masses
- Enabled installation of new heaters in the church
- Overseen the upgrade of security to the church and presbytery.

Although there have been many moments of joy and celebration there have also been times of grief and sadness. Sister Mary, having moved out of her role as Parish Pastoral Associate just 12 months earlier, succumbed to illness and died in February. Her Funeral Mass was held in Beechworth which was well attended by parishioners, facilitated by the provision of a bus, enabling many of our older parishioners to attend.

Max Fletcher, another long serving member of the Wangaratta Parishes and a past Principal of Galen College, lost his battle with cancer in January this year. The funeral, in memory and celebration of Max's life, was held at Our Lady's Church on the 17th of January. This was very well attended and was a reflection of the influence and connections that Max had, extending well beyond that of the Wangaratta Parishes.

Margaret Howard, a long standing and active member of Our Lady's Parish was remembered at her Funeral Mass, held on the 31st July this year at Our Lady's Church. This was a moving celebration attended by family and many members of our parish community.

We remember all those members of our parish who are no longer with us. May they all rest in peace and experience the eternal love of God.

As we move into 2018, it is fitting to thank all those who volunteer their time in supporting the parish, in maintaining and caring for the church, visiting the sick and infirm, preparing liturgies, maintaining the grounds, running the Sunday cuppas; and, the PPC members for their time and effort in ensuring that our parish continues to thrive.

Special thanks must go to Father Mike and Father Novie for their ongoing Spiritual guidance and leadership within our parish.

During this year, the pastoral council has spent considerable time discussing the parish Child Safe Policy. The policy documents have been studied at all the monthly meetings, adding to the considerable time spent by Fr. Mike and Fr. Novie, making sure that all the requirements have been met and all safeguards are in place. This policy affects all parishioners, even those with only a casual association with children or vulnerable adults. The Child Safe Policy is now complete and is to be reviewed in 12 months.

Two changes to our meeting procedure have been implemented this year. The first is a rotating chairperson, with each member taking a turn at running the meeting and taking responsibility for its organisation, including a reflection for discussion.

The second is the breaking up of the 'general business' into six groups, reflecting the important areas the parish representatives need to be discussing; and then, where applicable, assisting in the execution of any recommendations. These groups are:

- WORSHIP – proposal of a Memorial Mass to be held in November for all the deceased of that year, with every family invited to light a candle for loved ones
- EDUCATION - includes the publication of the Contact magazine. The website upgrades are also included in this area
- SERVICE - to further the relationship between the parish and young families with baptised children
- TEMPORALITIES/MAINTENANCE - this year the talking changed into action, with the repairs and maintenance costs up \$46,000 on the previous year. On the wish list are new speakers for the church, as the old ones have lost most of their resonance
- YOUTH - encourage and arrange greater involvement of youth and children in the parish, including at Mass
- CHILD SAFE – ongoing review, development and implementation of Child Safe Policy (as discussed previously).

We would like to thank parishioners for their support and interest over the last twelve months and encourage anyone to approach pastoral council members with ideas, comments, or constructive suggestions related to the ongoing betterment and future growth of our parish communities.

Parish Council Members: Fr. Mike Pullar (PP), Fr. Novelito Lim, Christine Haddrick, Franco Cudini, Terry Corrigan, Rosemary Pane, Pat Arcuri, Hilary Timma, Carole O'Sullivan, Kerrie Hill and John Wells.



PROPOSALS AND ACTIONS

ST. PATRICK'S PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL REPORT

by John Wells



SHARING THEIR JOURNEY OF FAITH

CONFIRMATION AND FIRST EUCHARIST 2017

One of the highlights of our Catholic School year is our Sacramental weekend, with the celebration of First Holy Communion and Confirmation. This year we had seventy five students from across the three Catholic Primary Schools and surrounding schools, receive the Sacraments at three special celebrations over the weekend of the 13th and the 14th of May. Bishop Les, Father Mike and Fr Novie led each of the celebrations. The children were wonderfully supported by their families, schools and parish communities.

The children had prepared for six weeks in small groups, in addition to the Religious Education programs at each school. All the children presented themselves beautifully and participated in the Masses very reverently. We congratulate them on completing the Sacraments of Initiation and taking the next step in their faith journey.

Catholic Education Week (15th-19th May) was celebrated with each of the Catholic Primary Schools gathering together as CREW (Catholic Regional Education Wangaratta) in grade areas to celebrate, pray, play, learn and share a meal together. The Grade 3/4 students, including those who received the Sacraments, participated in a Mass of Thanksgiving led by Fr Novie. Students were able to fully participate in the Eucharist and reflect on receiving the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.

Elizabeth Maher
Grade 3/4 Teacher

ST PATRICK'S DAY 2017

Feasting, Singing and lots of IRISH jokes

The 17th of March was a very important day for St Patrick's Parish and School because it was St Patrick's Feast Day. The date is believed to mark the day Saint Patrick died. He was thought to have introduced Catholicism to Ireland. The day was celebrated with a Mass, which was performed by Father Novie, who did a great job as usual. The whole of St Patrick's Primary School attended and a number of students participated in the readings. We also listened to the Grade 6 Social Justice representatives from St Bernard's Primary School inform us of the sacrifices they were making for Lent and the fundraiser that they were having for Project Compassion, which was a giant Toblerone raffle!

After the Mass, six Grade 6 leaders from St Patrick's and from St Bernard's were invited to join the parishioners for a light lunch in St Patrick's Hall.



It was great because not only did we get to see our friends from St Bernard's but we also got to speak to parishioners and have a social connection with different generations, which was lots of fun. We had delicious food and all of the parishioners helped in the kitchen, doing an excellent job. One of the highlights was the extraordinary home-made cake which was greatly appreciated by all.

After everyone had eaten, Mr Dillon presented a bit of a show which included singing, trivia and some hilarious Irish jokes. It was a terrific way to celebrate St Patrick's Day and my friends and I are extremely grateful to have been given this special opportunity.

Alice O'Connor
St Patrick's Primary School



TAKING THE NEXT STEPS

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK MASS IN WANGARATTA



BY KERRIE HILL (CEO)

On Tuesday 30th May, over two hundred students and teachers from local Catholic primary and secondary schools gathered for a Reconciliation Mass in Wangaratta. Children from Beechworth, Yarrawonga, Benalla and Wangaratta represented their schools in the annual event held at Our Lady's Church.

National Reconciliation Week marks a significant week of recognition and celebration of our Aboriginal history and the contribution of the Aboriginal community. This year the theme was 'Let's Take The Next Steps', encouraging all Australians to celebrate Indigenous cultures and consider what is still to be done to support reconciliation.

We received a memorable welcome from Aboriginal elders in attendance. Graham Briggs welcomed on the didgeridoo and bullroarer, while Julie Ferguson welcomed to country in Yorta Yorta language. Dr Treahna Hamm, who is well known to our CREW schools as a visiting Indigenous artist, was delighted to join student representatives, staff and parishioners for the Mass.

Fr Novelito presided over the liturgy, sharing some valuable thoughts about what it means to have true reconciliation. Students proudly participated in all parts of the Eucharistic celebration including the wonderful Our Lady's choir and dancers. Leaders from all schools pledged a commitment to be active participants in the reconciliation process and to commit to taking the next steps for healing and change.

Many thanks to Fr Novie, Genevieve O'Reilly, Cathie Walsh, Our Lady's School and all CREW FIRE Carriers for their support and involvement in this important gathering in our school and parish community.

STILL GOING STRONG

WANGARATTA INTER CHURCH COUNCIL

BY BARBARA WATERMAN

Annually worldwide, the week before Pentecost Sunday is set aside as a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. Here in Wangaratta the ecumenical movement is healthy and strong and is known as the Wangaratta Inter Church Council (WICC), represented by eight local denominations. The week begins with a prayer breakfast at the Wangaratta Club and concludes on Pentecost Sunday with an ecumenical evening service at one of the Churches, which also hosts a shared meal.

This year it was St. Patrick's turn to be host. By 5:30pm it was cold and miserable, yet over fifty people and four ministers braved the elements to attend. Fr. Novie presided and members from other churches conducted the readings and prayers of the faithful. The music and singing was in the capable hands of our organist who also sang the reflection hymn 'The Magnificat'.

After the service, we were joined in St. Patrick's supper hall by more friends, including Fr. Mike and enjoyed a lovely meal and lots of fellowship.

The WICC is a great way for Christians to network. We meet every three months, pray together and share news from around the parishes. We also ensure there is a Nativity scene display and message in the CBD for Christmas and, at Eastertime, we have an Inter Church 'Way of the Cross' – run by the Knights of the Southern Cross – this year held in the grounds of Our Lady's School.

WICC has been going strong in Wangaratta for over 20 years and with the help of the Holy Spirit we pray it will do so in the future. We pray as Jesus did – 'Father make us one'.

REACHING OUT TO THOSE IN NEED

Catholic Parishes of Wangaratta Social Justice Group

We began 2017 with the Annual Meeting of the North East Deanery. Kerry Stone (Diocesan Coordinator, Caritas/Justice) came to Wangaratta and informed us about the 2017 Project Compassion theme 'Love Your Neighbour'. Pope Francis said, 'To love God and neighbor is not something abstract, but profoundly concrete: it means seeing in every person the face of the Lord to be served, to serve him concretely. And you are, dear brothers and sisters, the face of Jesus'.

On Project Compassion Sunday, parishioners viewed a short film of introduction to the 6 feature stories. Lenten boxes and envelopes were distributed. Social justice members assisted in preparing the liturgy during Lent. The 6 feature stories for the 6 weeks of Lent were shown at Masses during Lent.

Thank you to our parishioners who gave so generously to Project Compassion.

Many parishioners gathered at Our Lady's Parish Centre to share a simple meal with this year's Caritas Lenten Visitor, Australian Richard Campbell - a survivor of the Stolen Generation - who turned to art to help overcome his anger and pain. He spoke about his work with Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation (KBHAC) that is supported by Caritas, and how it helped heal him and others like him, restoring their dignity and identity.

In June, parishioners were asked to support the emergency Caritas Appeal for East Africa Food Crisis. It was very appropriate to be reflecting and reaching out to our brothers and sisters in East Africa on the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. Together we form one body in the love of Christ. In August parishioners, faith groups, schools, community groups and many others signed a petition presented to MP Cathy McGowan's Chief of Staff, urging support and action on climate change. The petition called on the Federal Government to support urgent reduction of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions and increase support for vulnerable countries adversely affected by climate change.



The 2017-2018 Justice Statement from the Australian Catholic Bishops entitled 'Everyone's Business: Developing an Inclusive and Sustainable Economy' was announced on Social Justice Sunday. The Statement recognizes the great benefits of economic growth Australia has achieved. However, not all Australians have shared in this national prosperity. We are all called to play our part in building an inclusive economy, founded on true solidarity, with those who are most vulnerable.

The Statement is available on the Social Justice website: www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au plus, The Ten Steps that challenge us to question our attitudes and make a difference.

This Christmas, let's give the joy of a Global Gift - helping to create a lifetime of change for some of the world's poorest people. Send a message to loved ones, while at the same time giving a gift to those in need. Order forms for Christmas Global gifts are available in our Parish churches, or order online at Caritas Australia.

For more information about our first meeting in 2018, contact the presbytery office or visit the parish website.

As followers of Jesus we pray to be healed from the blindness that stops us seeing those in need.





▼ 'St. Augustine's', Eldorado

'St. Augustine's' at Eldorado has a long history. The church received a crown land grant in early 1868. Mr. J. Roberts, a German immigrant, was asked to lay the foundation stone in June 1868, in recognition of his initiative in starting a building fund and being a major benefactor. Fr. Patrick Kearns came from Mansfield to officiate at the opening on Whitsunday, June 5, 1870. This was the first church erected in Eldorado and is notable because it was made of hand-made bricks carted some distance to town (Murray, p.72).



▼ 'St. Stephen's', Tarrawingee

By Autumn, 1890 the Catholics around Tarrawingee had a new church, for which 1,000 pounds was in hand and 210 pounds had yet to be raised. Thirty seats were made of Kauri pine and the altar, of gilded Kauri pine was a splendid piece of work, being made by Thomas Gaunt of Melbourne. On May 22, 1890, a dozen mounted horsemen met his Lordship Dr. Stephen Reville and Dean Timothy Murphy, three miles outside of the town and escorted them to the new building, to be consecrated as 'St. Stephen's', in honour of the Bishop (Murray, p.76).



(Edited extracts from 'As the Spirit Leads' by P. Murray; and 'From Paddock to Parish' by K. Howard)



▼ 'St. Martin's', Boorhaman

The solemn blessing of 'St. Martin's' (circa 1887) involved the sprinkling of the inside and outside of the Church with holy water, while Fr. English recited the 'Miserere'. The Bishop spoke to the large gathering, complimenting them on their zeal and urged them 'to be loyal to the land that was the birthplace of themselves, or their parents, and true to their religion.' He then entered the sacristy, where he met the forty children he would confirm later that day. Mass followed, with most of the congregation having to stand; many could not fit inside either (Murray, p.79).



▼ 'St. Joseph's', Whitfield

Not long after the First World War Armistice, Mr H. McDonald encouraged the Catholics of King Valley and Whitfield to erect their own church. The idea gelled among the small community and, when Mr. McDonald moved to Avenel, James Whitty took over as secretary and enthusiasm was maintained. The builder, George Murphy of Wangaratta, began construction in 1920 though delay after delay followed because of post-war shortages, especially for cement. Not surprisingly, it appears common for the major centres to have acquired scarce materials more readily than the distant, small rural towns (Murray, p.112).

▼ 'St. Joseph the Workman', Glenrowan

The first Mass at Glenrowan was celebrated on April 29, 1887 and the church was officially opened and dedicated to 'St. Joseph the Workman' by His Lordship, Dr. Reville, on July 14, 1887. Following the Mass and dedication, Mr. Sullivan presented an illuminated address to the Bishop. It is also noted that the Mass collection on the day was 54 pounds. Over the years, the old building gradually deteriorated and the new church was officially opened and rededicated to 'St. Joseph the Workman' on November 8, 1970 by the Most Rev. Bernard Stewart, Bishop of Sandhurst (Howard, p.14).



MORE THAN POSSESSIONS

A CAMEO OF RUTH O'HAGAN

Living and travelling overseas in the 1950s with her husband Kevin, then moving with their family around Victoria as Kevin took up various teaching posts, where she lives is of no great concern to Ruth O'Hagan. Now residing in Wangaratta, Ruth lived at Tarrawingee for thirty years and misses the sunsets over the Warbies and the prolific birdlife, as Ruth and Kevin were keen birdwatchers.

Ruth attended Hampton High School and first met Kevin (then at Teachers' College) through a boyfriend of hers at the time. While training at the Children's Hospital (1948 – 1952) she again met Kevin, who worked in hospital administration. They became engaged and, while Kevin headed off to England, Ruth completed her nursing studies. She then travelled to England to marry Kevin, where they traversed the British Isles

together. When their first son Peter was six months old, they explored Europe and the Mediterranean, before returning to Australia, boarding the ship at Naples. Mother of ten children (premature twins died at birth), bringing up their brood of eight, including Fr. Matthew, is referred to by Ruth as her 'hazy days'. Family life required a certain amount of regimentation 'to keep the show on the road' and her children learned to be self-reliant and co-operative, necessary qualities in a large family, as in life. Ruth feels so fortunate to have married Kevin. While she had other opportunities he was absolutely the best choice. They were early members in Australia of 'Teams of Our Lady' and were married for 63 years. Kevin died last year. Life is not so busy for Ruth now and she enjoys reading, family history, art, music, travel, family and friends. Ruth is concerned about refugees, humanitarian justice issues and the environment and also finds time to knit for 'Wraps with Love'. Ruth is not attracted by material things and is 'not into ownership but rather stewardship' as 'things are on loan'. Her family is very important to her and all of her children have developed into responsible adults, which 'means more to her than possessions'.

BY HILARY TIMMA



A HIGHLY REGARDED COMMUNITY MEMBER

Spending time with Mary Evans

BY MIRIAM BALFOUR

Born in Whorouly in 1924, to parents Michael and Bridget O'Connor, Mary continued her parent's example of Catholic faith. She, her brother and sisters attended St Joseph's Church in Whorouly and went to the local primary school. Secondary schooling required that Mary board at the convent in Myrtleford, as school buses took only those travelling to State schools. Times were difficult, with hard work the order of each day. Mary speaks fondly of the education she received from the nuns.

Mary began teaching at Colac-Colac in 1939. Seven children were enrolled there and Mary brought five more with her in the gig. At times, up to twenty-five children attended. Later, she met Jeffrey Evans, a butter factory worker and, in 1950 they were married at St Patrick's Church, Wangaratta and bought a dairy farm at Edi Upper. They worked side-by-side for fifty-eight years until Jeff died in 2005. To this day, Mary loves going to the dairy, now operated by her son Michael, to see the milking carried out. Now that she is semi-retired!

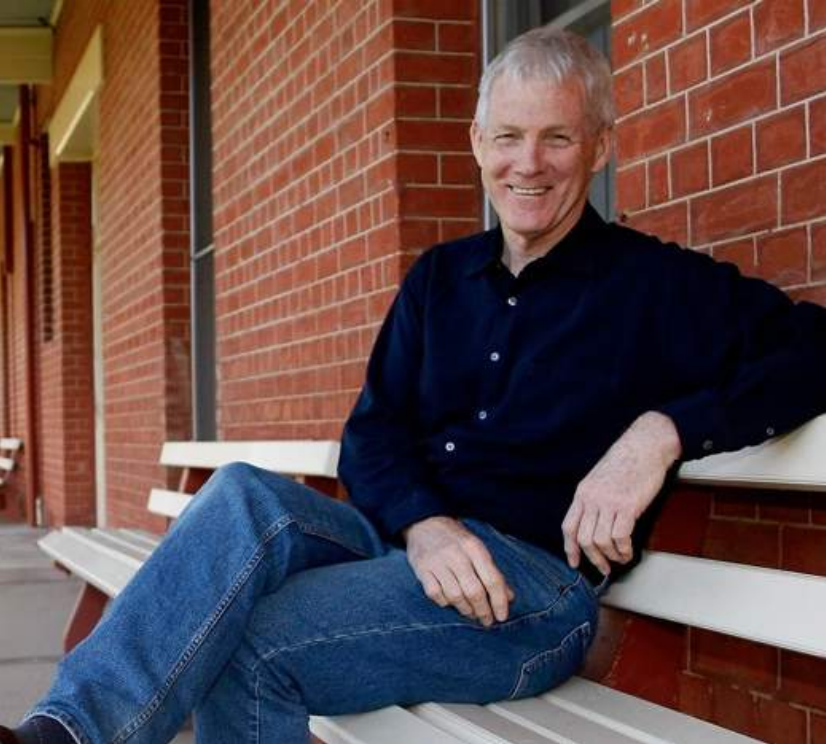
After moving to Edi Upper, Mary taught at the Edi Upper Primary School for three years, where up to

twenty-eight children attended. With the arrival of their four children, she delivered Religious Education at the school. Mary explained, 'Teaching was wonderful then. Children and their parents had great respect for the school teacher and put teachers on a pedestal'. Mary continues to attend the Edi Upper Primary School end-of-year celebrations.

Mary was a talented tennis player, being part of grand final victories won by Edi Upper Tennis Club and still remains a dedicated community member. Her involvement with church, school, tennis, CFA, local hall and, kindness to new arrivals settling in the district, is well known by all in the area. I often witness the respect and high regard that the community holds for Mary. She has never missed Sunday Mass or Mass on a feast day. This meant milking cows early, organising four children and then off to Sunday Mass.

I was so blessed to spend a little time talking with Mary. Most of all, I was inspired by her humble gratitude - 'God's been very good to me. He gave me wonderful parents, a good husband and family and ninety-three years of good health'.





V A L E M A X W E L L G E O R G E F L E T C H E R

'ALWAYS FAIR, GOOD LISTENER, GREAT MATH'S TEACHER AND A GENTLEMAN'

Former Deputy Director of the Sandhurst Education Office, Max Fletcher, died on January 10th, 2017, following a year-long battle with cancer. Max's career in Catholic education commenced in 1972, as Math's teacher at the Marist Brothers' College, Bendigo, later Catholic College. Father Peter Taylor, a former student, describes Max as 'the best Math's teacher he ever had'. In his farewell eulogy, former student and work colleague Tom Sexton, said 'As a teacher, Max had a profound effect on me and generations of students.'

Max was appointed the first lay-principal of Galen Catholic College Wangaratta in 1987, holding that position for 15 years. He oversaw the amalgamation of junior and senior schools, leading the College from strength to strength. Tributes from parents and former students were received from far afield, with compliments including 'always fair, good listener, great Math's teacher, gentleman'.

In 2003, after a year of study and recharging, Max became Secondary Education Consultant in the Ballarat Diocese for 6 years, contributing his exemplary work ethic and passion for Catholic education. In 2009, Max was appointed Deputy Director of Education in the Sandhurst Diocese. Tom Sexton described working with Max as 'a pleasure, experiencing his professionalism and personal qualities were a privilege'. After retirement in 2013, Max served on the Mercy Board of Education and chaired the school boards of FCJ College Benalla and Borinya Community Partnerships Wangaratta, as well as consulting in educational leadership.

Max developed many sporting interests: he played in two Australian Rules premierships with South Mildura; enjoyed tennis and cricket as a young man; played with Maristians and coached their C Grade to a premiership. Bushwalking and cycling became major pursuits later in life – hiking the Victorian High Country and Tasmania for many years; trekking to Everest Base Camp with his niece, Amanda; and, over the Inca Trail and the Camino de Santiago across Spain, with mate Bernard Neal. Max's sporting passion then turned to cycling and, at his farewell Mass, his beloved Cervelo bicycle was amongst the symbols presented.

The concelebrated Mass for Max, held on 17th. January, 2017 at Our Lady's Church in South Wangaratta, was led by Father Dennis Cramer, assisted by Bishop Les Tomlinson, Bishop Peter Connors (retired Bishop of Ballarat) and parish priests from across Sandhurst. In attendance were over 550 relatives, friends, former work colleagues, former students, parents and Wangaratta parishioners. Former colleagues and students formed a music group to enhance a very moving liturgy. In his eulogy, Jamie Fletcher described his Dad as 'a man of passions – for education, family, sport, music and social justice. Education was central to Dad's life; it was a calling and he had an incredible work ethic.'

For thirty years, Max was a loyal and active parishioner of St Patrick's Wangaratta, contributing to liturgy as reader and extraordinary minister of Holy Communion. He was an involved member of the Teams Movement, forming close friendships in the parish. He was very focused on the wellbeing and future of our Church, realizing the importance of Catholic education in that future.

Maxwell George Fletcher is survived by his wife, Loris, children Kristen, Jamie and Kerry and five treasured grandchildren.



Message to Sr. Mary on her 80th Birthday

BY ANN DALEY

Sister Mary, we are happy to be with you today, celebrating the important occasion of your 80th Birthday. We are also celebrating the 60-plus years in which you have dedicated your life to serving others in Christ's name. Joining the Brigidine Order at the tender age of 17, you were professed in 1955.

Since that day, you have worked in many places, in varying ways. Firstly, as a teacher at primary level and then, many years later, at the secondary level. In 1970, you volunteered for missionary life in Papua-New Guinea, organising a school from scratch in a fairly primitive location – rather like the early disciples who trekked far and wide to spread the gospel. I am sure you met many challenges along the way; in total, giving about 15 years to this endeavour. Finally, you returned to Australia to follow another path. In 1998, you came to us in Wangaratta to teach; and later, take control of the day-to-day running of 'Our Lady's', developing it into a friendly and welcoming parish.

We wish you well in your retirement. I am sure you could write a book on your own experiences. However, even reminiscing and knowing you have done your best, will be just as satisfying for you.

We love you and are very grateful that you have touched our lives and souls.

A LOVE OF LIFE

Remembering Sr. Mary Griffiths CSB

BY SR. GAIL RYAN

Sister Mary came from Sandy Creek in North East Victoria. She was the youngest in a family of four boys, who loved her dearly. Mary delighted in the outdoors, was very fond of nature, could recognize every bird call, knew every tree and could name most flowers, in her environment. This interest continued throughout her life. She found God in the beauty of the country especially in the North East.

Mary loved her many years as Pastoral Associate at Our Lady's Wangaratta. She gravitated to people and gave herself completely to her work, welcoming everyone to the parish with a ready smile. Mary was fearless in speaking out against injustice and treated everyone with dignity, respect and compassion. She had the ability to bring out the best in people and to make them feel good about themselves. She loved visiting parishioners at the hospital, in their homes and particularly at Rangeview Nursing Home.

Mary had a love of life and a great sense of fun and people felt very comfortable in her presence. She was a trusted and loyal friend to many. Although unassuming, Mary was a woman of quiet wisdom, great strength and gentleness. Among the many groups Mary initiated at Our Lady's, the Scripture group and Wednesday Support Group were very close to her heart.

Mary also enjoyed working with and supporting Our Lady's school and loved interacting with staff, children and their families and being involved in school functions and ceremonies. It was a very sad day when Mary bade farewell to her much-loved parishioners and moved from Our Lady's to live in Beechworth.

After only one year in Beechworth and a life of giving herself to others, Mary died peacefully on 20th February, 2017.



MINISTERING TO CATHOLIC RESIDENTS AT RANGEVIEW

MARIE MCGANN

Some years ago, then Parish Priest of Our Lady's Fr. Steve Bohan with Sr. Mary Griffiths, began organising monthly Masses at Rangeview Nursing Home. These Masses continue to this day, with Fr. Novie or Fr. Mike celebrating Mass there each 1st. Wednesday of the month, assisted by a few members of Our Lady's Parish. Additionally, an extraordinary minister from Our Lady's takes communion to Catholic residents at Rangeview each Sunday. Currently there are five residents that they visit.

One of the residents is Anita Curran who, by the way, grew up on a hop farm in Cheshunt and attended St Joseph's Convent in Wangaratta. Anita was an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist for 15 years, to the sick and also residents of nursing homes. To this day, Anita still involves herself in the church with donations of altar linens. Thank you Anita for your dedication.

Though we have a small number of Catholic residents at Rangeview, it is still a pleasure for us to continue this ministry, for it gives joy to these residents every time we remember them through the celebration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.



PARISH STATEMENT FOR CHILD SAFE POLICY

FR. MIKE PULLAR AND FR. NOVELITO LIM

There is probably no one in the Church who is unaware of the difficult and confronting reports that have reached us, as a result of the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the Victorian Commission for Children and Young People. The conclusions of these Commissions tell us that our Church i.e. our parishes, schools and other institutions, must be much, much more active, organised and set-up to protect children and culturally or physically vulnerable children, from sexual and physical abuse and to respond effectively to any misconduct. While you will have heard some information about this issue and have seen the posters placed in our churches and other buildings these are just the start of the structures and processes that we need to set in place.



Our own parishes in Wangaratta and in the King Valley are now required to have documented systems in place, to support and protect children. We now look to all of you for co-operation and support, as we work our way along the various pathways that will tell us – and the rest of our community and diocese – that we have the most competent and suitable people working with young people in our parish communities.

Alongside the internal requirements, all of us who work with, or have contact with, children in our parishes will know and understand the new Laws regarding: Grooming, Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose. We are required to be trained in child-safety, to understand appropriate ways to protect and support vulnerable young people and to be culturally aware and respectful.

What we have done

The parishes of Wangaratta ensure that:

- We have a visible, practical and clear Code of Conduct
- We have named Child Safety Officers and their contact details
- We have a visible, clear, Child Safe Statement in each parish building
- Our buildings are refurbished to meet current Child Safe standards
- We undertake screening, training and supervision appropriate to the needs of children.

We have established and maintained a Child-Safe Risk Management Register and review process. Working with Children Checks (WWC) are required for all of our parish staff and volunteers – including contractors – before commencing their duties. Our parishes will need to establish a Register of holders of WWC cards. We require that parishioners undertaking Volunteer parish duties involving children, have a written statement of those Duties, Responsibilities and Limits and work to those duties.

Thanks for your help and co-operation. Like every journey of a thousand miles this one starts with just one step.



JUBILEE OF CHARISMATIC RENEWAL

THE WANGARATTA CHARISMATIC PRAYER GROUP

By Margaret West

This year we are celebrating the 50th Jubilee of Charismatic Renewal, which Pope Francis describes as this 'current of grace'. Before the 2nd Vatican Council, Pope John XXIII asked the whole Church to pray a special prayer, part of which was 'Renew your wonders in our day as for a New Pentecost.' Following the Council, several renewal groups sprang up, Charismatic Renewal being one of them. People gather worldwide, in groups both large and small, to pray and work together to spread the Good News of God's love. This renewal in the Holy Spirit helps us to grow in holiness through the fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal.5.22), through prayer, scripture sharing, teaching and testimony. The Holy Spirit empowers us to evangelise, by the witness of our lives, by proclamation of the Good News, by loving one another, by serving in our parishes and the wider community and with special concern for the poor and marginalised.

Our Wangaratta Prayer Group has been meeting continuously since 1973. Our aim is to assist people to deepen their relationship with Jesus, through prayer, for a further release of the gifts and graces they received in Baptism and Confirmation. As a result of prayer, millions of people have experienced God's love in a new way, resulting in a deeper desire to pray, with love of Sacred Scripture, the Mass and Sacraments. Intercessory prayer for our parishes, schools and the wider community is an integral part of our meetings.

We meet every Tuesday in Delaney Chapel from 2.00pm-3.30pm. Everyone is welcome. Enquiries Margaret West 5722 2821.

STRENGTHENING OUR PARISH COMMUNITY

OUR LADY'S SUPPORT GROUP

By Margaret O'Neil

Our Lady's Support Group was formed in 2006 by Parish members concerned about the welfare of elderly parishioners; and, as bereavement support for those left alone after the death of partners or family members.

The aim is to prevent isolation, by encouraging older parishioners to be part of the group and to strengthen the Parish community. Guided by Sr. Mary, a small group met and developed an action plan. As a fund-raiser, we organised a Christmas Hamper raffle which was very successful. In 2007, we were given a very generous donation and some equipment for use at meetings. On meeting days we have had a variety of activities, including Bingo, Chat Days, Sing-a-longs with Sr. Mary playing her accordion, lunches and an occasional Guest Speaker.

Guest speakers have been from Aged Care, the Police liaison officer, a Physiotherapist from Community Care and Adrian Johnstone, the CEO from St. Catherine's. A TV and Video Player enabled us to have film afternoons. A BBQ donated by the Bingo Group encouraged us to have lunches under the Cyprus tree. Some of the group attended a course on 'Seasons of Growth' conducted by Sr. Gail Ryan.

Initial meetings were held in the Presbytery and our first Christmas lunch was attended by 20 people. Soup lunches were also held during winter. We took a Bus out of town for a Christmas lunch in November and then a Christmas in July was added. The Parish Meeting Room has enabled us to have more lunches and last year we had our Christmas in July lunch there.

We meet on the last Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm; and change to 12 noon when lunches are advertised in the Bulletin. Afternoon tea is always enjoyable.



IN APPRECIATION OF A DELIGHTFUL COUPLE

Farewell to Kate and Peter

by Ann Daley

Kate and Peter Robb arrived in Wangaratta in December, 2011. They were soon connected with Our Lady's Parish where they found the community very welcoming and friendly. Kate attended Star of the Sea Presentation Convent in Melbourne and on completion of her education, she attained a studentship in teaching. Later, she became assistant principal at St. Clare's Catholic Girls High School in Canberra, where she taught for 28 years. During her long-service-leave, she completed a course in pastoral care at the Mercy Complex in Melbourne and decided that was where her vocation lay. She resigned from teaching and moved to working in that capacity at Mercy Hospital in East Melbourne.

Following her marriage to Peter in 1996, she moved to Ocean Grove and worked in Pastoral Care at both Rice Village and the Mercy. Once in Wangaratta, Kate soon used her talents in pastoral care at Rangeview Nursing Home, as well as relieving at Mercy Hospital in Albury and occasionally, at Mercy Place in Shepparton.

Peter contributed by buying materials and constructing the cross that is used in the Easter Ceremonies. Both Peter and Kate distributed communion at Sunday Mass throughout their time here, and it was a joy to hear Kate reading the Epistle at Mass. Her diction and inflection were perfect. Kate used her experience as a teacher to instruct and prepare families for the Sacrament of Baptism. She also lovingly laundered and starched the altar linen.

Kate and Sr. Mary became firm friends, having both teaching and community care in common, so when Sr. Mary was unable to conduct our Thursday scripture class, Kate competently carried us through the lesson. Having lost both Sr. Mary and Kate in the same year, our scripture classes have been abandoned; but the group is most grateful to have had those years sharing the gospels.

When Peter's health deteriorated, the couple decided to move back to the Geelong area, to be closer to his extended family. We were sad to see them go! We keep in touch, we pray for them and remember their time here with much affection.

Our thanks to Kate and Peter Robb



The Catholic Parishes of Wangaratta would like to thank Kate and Peter Robb for all the help they have given to our parish communities. They have assisted the parishes in so many ways. Moreover, they have developed lasting friendships with other parishioners though they have been here in Wangaratta for a relatively short time. Kate and Peter prefer to work in the background, yet this does not hinder them from giving a helping hand. Special thanks to Kate for assisting the parish with the Baptism preparations. Families of the children greatly appreciate her support and her welcoming approach. Kate and Peter, we will miss the both of you and we will always keep you in our prayers. - Fr. Novie

HATCHED, MATCHED AND DISPATCHED WANGARATTA PARISHES



BAPTISMS

Maebh Burns, Charli York, Zion Solomua, Amelia Richardson, Patrick Ladgrove, Jack Stirling, Sophie Reid, Amelia Caminiti, Bernadette Corboy, Xavier Conroy, Annabel Green, Alhana Davern, Ava Lisson-Skidmore, Savannah Broady, Millie Norden, Isla Ashmead, Violet Charlesworth, Finn Hogarth, Leah Ravida, William Clarke, Hunter Borschmann, Clara Silveira, Lia Tekesic, Franklin Fletcher, Georgie Fletcher, Larna Porter, Liam Gaspari, Sadie O'Keefe, Eliza Stamp, Sienna Tronc, Hamish McCoy, Regan Wilson, Oliver Batey, Connor Manson, Jessie O'Keefe, Maeve Everitt, Rhiannon Saunders, Vance Harries, Natalie Mae Younger, Aidan Jake Paola, Darcy Gambold, Attard Twins, Lyla Nuttall, Indie Mahoney, Noa Mahoney, Birdie Mahoney, Arthur Henry Hill, Leo Primerano, Nate Davern, Louise Lengrand-Moylan, Louis Barker, Maisie Hall, Pippa Dalgleish, Mia Szeligiewicz, Luca Nolan, Allysa Rawson, Grace Keane, Finnigan Cornish, Ada Tate, Daisy Pane, Violet Schulz, Harriet Craven, Indiana Richards, Edwina Porter, Peiton D'Amico, Hartrey Fletcher, Louis Seager, Charles Seager, Caitlin Hannah Bradley, Nolan Martinelli, Lilian Bradley, Frankie Adamo, Henry Coles, Carter Colin, Eve Jean Fitzpatrick, Abigail Tonini, Ayliya Maree Pane

WEDDINGS

Angela Sacco and Jason Zane, Kathleen Klemm and Michael Merrylees, Angela Crothers and Ashley Kull, Elise Judd and Brendan Kirk, Laura Bonacci and Saverio Bandera, Sarah Notarianni and Jason Guy, Leah Oates and Tim Suter, Lauren Sykes and Daniel Armitage, Andrew Wighton and Amy Hill, Philippa McSwiney and Patrick Stark, Kate Mulqueen and Kaz O'Keefe, Carla Jose and Ryan Selwood, Erryn Smith and Michael Conroy

50th Wedding Anniversary: Santina and Romeo Giorgi

60th Wedding Anniversary: Kevin and Margaret Howard

FUNERALS

William O'Keefe, Margaret Tyler, Max Fletcher, Murray Evans, Les O'Keefe, Darren Chick, Mary Bell, Erminia Vaccaro, Eric Andison, Dennis Delaney, Yolanda Sacco, Rosalia Elizabeth Smith, Sr. Mary Griffiths, Angelina Ambrosio, Nancy Smart, Lynette Jones, Garrett Boak, Kevin Mahoney, Hetty Russo, Paul Griffiths, Rosina Maria Tasca, Rosa Pizzini, Frank Adamo, Shirley Lloyd, Margaret Condron, Thomas Dwyer, Mary McCormack, Eugenia Mischanovich, Anna Kungl, Margaret Howard, Joan Canny, Ivy Davey, Lois Shallow, Leo Gigliotti, Joe Vassallo, Graeme Oats, Tony Brown-Graham, Geoff Matheson, Rolf Kaup, Jack Finn, Wendy Doensen, Carlo Marchi, John Brennan, Gesualdo Molinaro, Lex Ryan, Edna Billman

GETTING TOGETHER WITH THE WHOLE FAMILY

STUDENTS FROM OUR PRIMARY SCHOOLS WERE ASKED:

HOW IMPORTANT IS CHRISTMAS TO YOU? HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?



Wil Ashton
&
Tori Sampson



Layla Creek



Max William Sullivan



Hugh Carroll
&
Ava McAninly-Bennett

Christmas is important to me because it is the time of the year when my whole family comes together.

My family celebrates Christmas by gathering and having a meal together.

Will Ashton, Grade 6, St. Bernard's Primary School

During Christmas, I can see all of my cousins and have a good day with them.

We celebrate Christmas at home and we all spend the day together.

Tori Sampson Grade 6, St. Bernard's Primary School

Christmas is an important time for me because we celebrate Jesus' birth and go to Mass. We also meet up with our family and relatives. Every second year, we go away for a few days with my cousins on Dad's side of the family. Otherwise, my Nan and Pa come around early in the morning and we all give out presents and enjoy each other's company.

Layla Creek, Grade 6, Our Lady's Primary School

Christmas is one of my favourite things in the year because I can normally see my Uncle and Auntie from Wagga Wagga and it is the time that we get together. I also like to receive Lego and books for Christmas. We get together at my cousin's farm. I like to go to my Nan's house and also catch up with friends.

Max William Sullivan, Grade 3, Our Lady's Primary School

Christmas is very important to my family because normally my family is in a rush, but at Christmas time we can sit down and relax. My family celebrates Christmas by having a big lunch and then exchanging gifts.

Hugh Carroll, Grade 5, St. Patrick's Primary School

Christmas is very important to me because I get to spend time with my family and with people I have not seen in a while.

I love to celebrate it with my family and my relatives.

Ava McAninly - Bennett, Grade 5, St. Patrick's Primary School

SIXTY YEARS STRONG

ST PATRICK'S CONFERENCE OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

St Patrick's Conference of St Vincent de Paul celebrated its 60th anniversary on the 24th of September with Mass in St Patrick's Church, followed by lunch. Members were joined by State and regional office holders, along with past members, fellow Vincentians and parishioners. During Mass, new Conference president Doreen Holmes and new regional president Robert Waterman were commissioned. Conference members Peta Dillon, Les Davey and Shirley Sullivan were presented with their badges.

Sixty years ago, then parish priest Fr Hussey convened a meeting, which resolved to form a branch of the St Vincent de Paul Society. Members were determined to put into practice the philosophy of Frederic Ozanam, founder of the Society: to assist the spiritual and material benefit of the poor. Home visitation was the first priority. The needy of yesteryear were supplied with a meal and accommodation and we still have similar arrangements. Finances in early years came from collections at each meeting, periodic rag drives and anonymous donations. Today, we are generously supported by parishioners and schools, including with the 5th Sunday collection, poor box and money raised in the store by volunteers.

Initially, all Vincentians were male. In 1972, the first female conference member joined and was soon followed by others. The conference also assisted in the formation of branches at Benalla, Beechworth and Our Lady's. Distribution of clothing and furniture was also a priority, initially from a shed, then several other stores, before moving to its Rowan St location. Three members were the bulwarks of the society during the late 70's and early 80's. Despite a paucity of numbers, the work of the society continued and, for a time, weekend transport was provided for families who visited Beechworth Prison. Today, we still support long-distance family visitors and prisoners with no support on leaving prison. During the mid-80's, membership increased to 19 active members. A twin conference was adopted in the Philippines and later, another in Thailand. Some members became Meals-on-Wheels helpers and home visitation continued, along with weekly visits to the Hospital. Margaret Darcy became our first female President.



On the 23rd May 2010, St Vincent de Paul House in Templeton St was opened and St Patrick's and Our Lady's Conferences both operate from here. While the distribution of food and Christmas Parcels, fuel, accommodation and clothing vouchers and assistance with paying utility bills, are a constant, members support more home visitation. Contributions made by all of the Conference's spiritual directors are appreciated greatly. As the late Bill O'Callaghan reflected "May the spirit of our Founder, Frederic Ozanam, continue to inspire and may the honoured name - 'The St Vincent de Paul Society' - be retained".

*A detailed copy of the Report is available on the Parish Website.

Parish Liturgical Calendar for 2018	
1 January	Feast of Mary, Mother of God
26 January	Australia Day
14 February	Ash We4dnesday
17 March	St. Patrick's Day
25 March	Palm Sunday
29, 30, 31 March	Easter Triduum
1 April	Easter Sunday
13 May	Ascension of the Lord/ Mother's Day
20 May	Pentecost
24 May	Feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians
26 and 27 May	Confirmation and 1 st Eucharist
3 June	Feast of Corpus Christi
8 June	Feast of the Sacred Heart
8 August	Feast of St. Mary of the Cross
15 August	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
2 September	Father's Day
25 November	Christ the King
2 December	1 st Sunday of Advent
8 December	Immaculate Conception
25 December	Christmas Day
30 December	Feast of the Holy Family

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CATHOLIC PARISHES
WANGARATTA

A MESSAGE TO PARISHIONERS

by Fr. Mike Pullar

You could say that it has been one of those years dominated by people and events outside of Australia, from natural disasters affecting millions of people to disasters in international relations also affecting millions of people. The behaviours of some world leaders have the potential to destabilise and polarise world communities and the rise of 'hate-speech' and associated threats to unhinge us. These happenings draw us back to appreciate the value of our own families, our community and our faith. We have been gladdened by new life in our parish and community. We have also been deeply saddened by the many deaths and by the difficulties that some families have had to deal with during 2017. As the year draws to a close can we be grateful to God for the many positive qualities in the world and the people around us. May our parish communities continue to care for each other, to thrive with each other and to value our blessings. Whether the year has been a good one or a difficult one for you, we hope you will find life and hope, comfort and the face of God in each other and in our parishes and our communities.