

Sandpiper e-News

AROUND THE DIOCESE

SANDHURST DIAMONDS CELEBRATED AT JUBILARIAN MASS



On 25 July St Patrick's, Wangaratta was abuzz with people who had come from far and wide to celebrate the diamond jubilees of Monsignor Peter Jeffrey and Fr John Ryan. Both priests were ordained on the same day sixty years ago (on 27 July 1963) by Bishop Francis Thomas, who laid his hands on Mons. Jeffrey at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo, then travelled to Wangaratta to ordain Fr Ryan. Fortunately, Bishop Thomas, the Bishop of Geraldton at the time, knew the roads well, having been a Sandhurst priest for 32 years before being ordained a Bishop.

Monsignor Peter Jeffrey's Homily:

"When we listen to the gentle prompting of the Spirit we do not know where we will be led."

"It was an exciting time to be ordained – July 1963 ..." said Monsignor Peter Jeffrey in his Homily. Read it at the end of this e-News.

Fr John Ryan's Speech:

"Whichever way we look at it, whether we appreciate it or not ... in faith we have a story within us and ultimately it is the story of God in our lives."

Despite sharing a rather common name, Fr John Ryan is one of a kind. Read Fr Ryan's Speech at the end of this e-News.



Toast to the Jubilarians

*“Always Spirit lifters, not Spirit crushers.
No matter where they roamed, they always called
Sandhurst home.”*

“I would like to place the Priestly service of Peter and John initially in the context of the Decade of their Ordination, 1958 to 1965 ... That decade was a bombshell for the Church and for many, the Priesthood.”

Read Monsignor **Frank Marriott's** toast to the 2023 Jubilarians at the end of this e-News.

Monsignor Peter Jeffrey Celebrates Diamond Jubilee in Grand Style

On 27 July, two days after the Diocesan Jubilarian Mass, hundreds gathered again at St Brendan's, Shepparton to celebrate the joyous occasion of Monsignor Peter Jeffrey's diamond jubilee as a priest. The evening Mass was followed by a celebratory dinner. The celebrations concluded with a heartfelt speech from Monsignor Peter expressing his gratitude for the support extended to him from the community over the years.

Jenni Kennedy writes ...

Fondly known as Mons. Peter, the esteemed clergyman has dedicated six decades of his life in service to the church and the community, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of many.

The church was filled to overflowing as a large gathering of well-wishers poured in from far and wide to join in the festivities and pay tribute to the incredible milestone of Monsignor Peter's devoted service.

Archbishop Peter Loy Chong travelled all the way from Fiji to officiate at the Jubilee Mass, his high regard for Mons. Peter was highlighted during his homily where he recounted his time in the Seminary when Monsignor Peter was Rector of the Pacific Regional Seminary in Suva Fiji. The Archbishop was joined by clergy from the Sandhurst Diocese, Melbourne Archdiocese, interstate and overseas clergy from Fiji and New Zealand.



Adding to the celebration, the vibrant and tight-knit Samoan community played a central role in honouring Monsignor Peter's Diamond Jubilee. Dressed in traditional Samoan attire, members of the community showcased their rich cultural heritage through an awe-inspiring dance performance during Mass and at the dinner.

Local dignitaries and community leaders also attended the event to extend their congratulations and appreciation for the invaluable contributions made by Monsignor Peter to the spiritual and social fabric of Shepparton. Many cited his selfless dedication as a guiding light for others to follow and emphasized the positive impact he had on fostering a sense of community and unity.

Following the Jubilee Mass a dinner was held at the GV Hotel in Shepparton where tributes were expressed by a number of people, including former Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst, Phil Billington. A special presentation was made by the Samoan community as they prayed over Monsignor before he joined them in dance on the stage.



The celebration concluded with a heartfelt speech from Monsignor Peter, expressing his gratitude for the support and love he received from the community over the years. He humbly acknowledged that his journey as a priest would not have been possible without the unwavering support of his family, the congregation and his fellow clergymen.

The Diamond Jubilee of Monsignor Peter Jeffrey will undoubtedly be etched in the memories of

all who attended, as an inspiring testament to a life dedicated to faith, compassion, and service. His legacy will continue to shine bright, inspiring generations to come in their own spiritual journeys and acts of kindness.

On behalf of the Catholic Education Sandhurst community Monsignor Peter was gifted a one-hour joy flight over the Goulburn Valley region.

SANDHURST MISSION AND PASTORAL COUNCIL

Gathers in Shepparton for Second Meeting

The Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) met in Shepparton for the second time last month. After weeks of personal formation and preparation, members were well prepared for the meeting. After group discernment and “spiritual conversation” the Council recommended a Chair, a member to attend Diocesan Finance Council meetings and two lay representatives to attend meetings of the College of Consultors. The Council also started to focus on the strategic direction of the Diocese, considering the recommendations made during the Diocesan Assembly in February this year. Dr Chris Cotter writes ...

By Chris Cotter

The second meeting of the newly formed Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) was conducted in Shepparton at St Brendan's Parish on 14 and 15 July 2023. Members of the Council came well prepared having completed two important "homework" tasks following the inaugural meeting on 27 and 28 April. The first task invited the Members to reflect prayerfully on the requirements of three diocesan leadership positions:

- two lay people (Members of the Council or not) to attend meetings of the College of Consultors.
- one Member of the Council to attend meetings of the Diocesan Finance Council; and,
- the position of Chair of the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC).

At the commencement of the Council meeting on Friday 14 July, Bishop Shane announced Mrs Christine Sebire (Member of the Council) and Mr Brendan Lindsay (St Brendan's Parish, Shepparton) as appointments to attend the College of Consultors, and Mr Mick Chalkley as an appointment to the Diocesan Finance Council. After a period of group discernment and "Spiritual Conversation", Members of the Council made recommendations to Bishop Shane for the Chair of the SMPC. On Saturday morning, it was announced that Mrs Gabrielle Downey would be Chair of the Council.

The second "homework" task required Members to prayerfully reflect on the recommendation to the SMPC for concrete action from the Diocesan Assembly held on 15 February 2023 in Kialla. You can read the transcribed, collated and thematically organised recommendations in this edition of the Sandpiper e-News. Informed by these recommendations from the Assembly and in light of the Strategic Directions described on page 29 of the Final Report of the Preparation and Consultation for the SMPC, the Members of the Council have now begun to work in three strategic 'interest groups'. Each of these groups

will bring to the August meeting of the SMPC a set of activities that could be further refined and eventually implemented to operationalise the Strategic Directions in the Final Report. In the meantime, the SMPC Executive (Bishop Shane, Mrs Gabrielle Downey and Dr Chris Cotter) will meet to prepare for the next meeting of the Council.

Mr Dean Mason facilitated our first two meetings, and with great care and expertise assisted the Council in its initial formation and gradual development into a body that is truly committed to listening, discernment and action on behalf of the whole Diocese and in service of the mission.

Please continue to pray for the Council and look for updates via Sandpiper e-News.

The full report can be accessed via the Diocesan website.

WORLD YOUTH DAY Sandhurst Pilgrims gather at 27th World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal

35 young adults from across Sandhurst have joined hundreds and thousands of pilgrims from dioceses around the World at World Youth Day events in Lisbon, where they are participating in five days of worship, activities, and fellowship.

There are 354,000 pilgrims from at least 143 countries officially registered for the event, so no doubt Sandhurst pilgrims will return to their parishes with a heightened sense of global solidarity. Although World Youth Day is gigantic in scale, with masses of people literally bumping into each other on the streets, World Youth Day is anything but impersonal. Pilgrims are seeking true encounter with Jesus and authentic connection with each other, as Cardinal Manuel



Clement, the patriarch of Lisbon, reminded them at the Opening Mass on 1 August:

“Let us learn from Mary to greet each and every person. Let us intensely put it to practice this World Youth Day ...The new world begins in the newness of every encounter and in the sincerity of the greeting we exchange, so that we may be people among people, in a mutual and constant visitation.”

Cardinal Clement has taken Pope Francis' lead referring to Mary, the Mother of Jesus, as a model for young people to follow drawing on the theme for the 27th World Youth Day – “Mary arose and went with haste” (Luke 1:39).

Pope Francis apparently chose the theme because he sees Mary as a model for “young people on the move”, who are more concerned about others than themselves.

“She is a woman of Easter, in a permanent state of exodus, going forth from herself towards that great Other who is God and towards others, her brothers and sisters, especially those in greatest need, like her cousin Elizabeth.”

In his official message for [World Youth Day 2023](#) Pope Francis wrote:

“After the Annunciation, Mary could have focused on herself and her own worries and fears about her new condition. Instead, she entrusted herself completely to God. Her

thoughts turned to Elizabeth. She got up and went forth, into the world of life and movement. Even though the astonishing message of the angel had caused a seismic shift in her plans, the young Mary did not remain paralysed, for within her was Jesus, the power of resurrection and new life. Within herself, Mary already bore the Lamb that was slain and yet lives. She arises and sets out, for she is certain that God’s plan is the best plan for her life. Mary becomes a temple of God, an image of the pilgrim Church, a Church that goes forth for service, a Church that brings the good news to all!

To experience the presence of the risen Christ in our own lives, to encounter him “alive”, is the greatest spiritual joy, an explosion of light that can leave no one untouched. Mary sets out immediately, anxious to bring the news to others, to bear witness to the joy of this encounter. This too is what caused the haste of the first disciples following the resurrection: “[the women] left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and ran to tell his disciples” (Mt 28:8).”

If you’ve been following Sandhurst pilgrims on social media, you’ll see that they are certainly outward-focused and keen to share their joy with their parishioners, friends and family back home.

Sisi Prisilia, from Sacred Heart, Corryong said she is excited for the opportunity and is really looking forward to embracing Jesus and the spiritual experience while surrounded by thousands of like-minded young adults from around the world. “I’m especially excited to see the Pope!” she said.

Let’s hope Sisi was standing next to Mason Crosier, from St Brendan’s, Shepparton when he snapped a picture of Pope Francis as he drove by.

The WYD experience includes a visit to Fatima and a post-WYD retreat at Avila in Spain. The Sandhurst pilgrimage is led by Sandhurst Youth Ministry Coordinator, Ruth Lawlor. The chaplain is Fr Jackson Saunders (St Brendan’s, Shepparton). Fr Rob Galea is also at World Youth Day serving in Ministry.

WANGARATTA 160 YEARS WELL CELEBRATED



By Peter Murray

In May Fr Nathan, Parish Priest of St Patrick's, Wangaratta, and Robert Waterman, Parish Council member, ran a 9-day Novena. Several priests and parishioners who formerly served the district were in attendance. The peak occasion of the fortnight was a festive Saturday, 20 May, to celebrate the founding of the Wangaratta Mission (later Parish) by Fr George Devitt Galen in 1863.

Earlier in the year the Parish Council, led by chairman Franco Cudini and secretary Mary Garlick, set up task forces and called on several individuals with expertise to ensure a memorable day.

Bishop Shane Mackinlay was principal celebrant for the 11 a.m. Thanksgiving Mass with ten other priests as co-celebrants and another ten in the congregation. Many had served in the Parish including Fr John Ryan, a local boy who was ordained and said his first Mass during St Patrick's week-long Centenary celebrations in 1963.

Dignitaries able to be present included retired Bishop Les Tomlinson and former Anglican Bishop of Wangaratta John Parks, Tim McCurdy MLA for Ovens, Deputy Mayor of the Rural City of Wangaratta Harry Bussell, the Presbyterian Minister for Wangaratta Region and Adrian Johnstone CEO of St Catherine's Aged Care.

At the beginning of the Mass Peter Murray gave a brief outline of the reasons for and the agenda of the festivity. He pointed out that the focus was on the achievements of 160 years. Coincidentally, he also felt we should also acknowledge that this year marked 180 years since the first recorded baptism of a local, Mary Jane Davenport. Plus it is 170 years since the first priest, Fr Patrick Smyth, briefly resided in the village before moving to the population centre of the Ovens Mining District, Beechworth.

Peter added that ten years ago Monsignor John White was gathering ideas for the Parish's 150-year celebration. Tragically his plans, other than a Mass and the launching of a history, fell by the wayside when he was incapacitated and forced to retire due to terminal cancer.

After the 160-years Mass, which was blessed by the voices of a Melbourne Filipino Choir and a full congregation, more than two hundred filed into the hall. There they sat down to an excellent luncheon managed by Alison King and Christine McMahon and their team of volunteers.

Most carried a brochure that summarised the Wangaratta and Moyhu Parishes' background and their facilities – schools, churches, hall, Delany Chapel, etc. Over the decades St Patrick's original district had been subdivided in whole or part into a dozen parishes.

Not surprisingly, many dallied on their way to the luncheon because on the short way from church to hall many old acquaintances struck up conversations and shared stories.

As people passed through the supper room, most took time to consider purchasing commemorative wines, inscribed pens, or copies of the parish history, *As the Spirit Leads* by Peter Murray. Moira Hill and her helpers had all the memorabilia well organised.

Moira's daughter Simone Kirwan had done much in preparing local press articles as precursors to the occasion.

To the right of the entrance of the hall was a display of early baptismal and marriage register pages, plus enlargements of photos mainly drawn from the amazing albums compiled by the Brigidine Sisters between 1890 and 1960s. Also presented were photographs of the extensive 1960s constructions which were taken by Fr James Byrne while he was living at St Patrick's and before he acquired his own presbytery at Our Lady's Parish, South Wangaratta.

Many gathered around the display after the luncheon. Some sought copies or the actual displayed photos! Some did so because they recognised forebears. There were also some gasps as ladies recognised themselves or their mothers in the blue veils of the Children of Mary. One elderly man recognised his grandfather as an altar server. That's a sharp eye!

Once everyone was settled, punctuality-driven MC Franco Cudini called on Peter Murray to speak of his recent research on Fr Galen. Peter explained how our first parish priest was a person of mixed but useful experiences. Though young, he had moved from isolated County Donegal, to education at religiously-split County Cavan, to priestly studies in industrial Durham, UK, and finally to pioneering Melbourne to find his brother.

Bishop Goold convinced him to stay in his infant diocese. He became assistant to the Principal of St Patrick's College and was ordained by the bishop in July 1863. About six weeks afterwards Bishop Goold sent him to Beechworth.

While in Ireland and Durham, George Galen became an admirer of the neo-gothic architecture of Augustine Pugin. By chance Pugin's former understudy, William Wardell, was designing St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne; he was later to design a replacement for the burnt St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney, too.

The enthusiastic young Fr Galen struck up a friendship with Wardell and persuaded him to design St Patrick's Church, Wangaratta. Sadly, after six years of struggle Fr Galen succumbed to tuberculosis before he could celebrate in his church.

Fr Thomas Egan completed the roofing and furnishing the year after. Four years later St Kilian's, Sandhurst, St Joseph's Beechworth and St Patrick's Wangaratta became the earliest parishes of the new Diocese of Sandhurst.

Bishop Shane spoke of later developments in the parish and noted the strenuous efforts in the past to pass on the faith and meet the needs of a varied and growing population. He had done his own reading and research thoroughly, for which the audience expressed much pleasure.

An unexpected highlight followed with the so-called *Three Amigos* (Fr Nathan, Fr Junjun and Mons. Cris) revealing how well they could harmonise singing an Aussie favourite, *The Seekers' Georgie Girl* – with gusto and only a slight Filipino accent! We later heard they had been practising for hours in Wodonga.

Under Fr Nathan's watchful eye, Bishop Shane then displayed how well he could stab and slice the 160-year cake – not '160-year-old cake' as one participant suggested as he took a grinning mouthful.

Presentations ended with the drawing of the raffle: First prize, two nights for two at the scenic *Chrysmont Guesthouse* at Cheshunt went to Lorna Cheong; second, an *Aroma Deli* hamper was won by Colleen O'Brien; third, a *Booktique* voucher was handed to Margaret Sartori and a quilt to Dianne Kerr.

MC Franco thanked the donors, particularly Arnie and Jo Pizzini, and Tony Molinaro. Finally, he acknowledged all helpers and attendees who had made the occasion so memorable. Informal gatherings lasted well after the formal arrangements.

FR ARTHUR MAURICE GLEESON

Commemoration of a burial in Bendigo Cemetery

By Mal Nolan

On Sunday 30 July 2023, Bishop Shane presided at a ceremony at Bendigo Cemetery to mark the erection of a tombstone on the grave of Fr Gleeson, previously unmarked, although he had died in 2003.

Arthur Gleeson was born in Adelaide on 20 September 1915. It was during the First World War and it appears that his early life was a period of much difficulty. He attended school at Kapunda, a small town north of Adelaide until he was fourteen, by which time the Great Depression was commencing and it was a case of taking any sort of work available for the next ten years or so. When the general mobilisation of manpower occurred in 1941 during the Second World War, he had been working as a barman in a Sydney hotel. He formally enlisted in the Second Australian Imperial Force in April 1941 and was assigned to the Army Medical Corps. For the remainder of his service, he worked as a medical orderly and operating room assistant in a variety of military hospitals in New South Wales, Victoria, West Australia and Queensland, attaining the rank of Corporal.

In March 1945, he joined Australian and American troops en route to Morotai, an island then part of the Dutch East Indies and located south of the Philippines and east of Borneo. This was a major battle area involving the recapture of the Philippines. In July, Arthur was involved with medical units associated with the invasion of Borneo. During this time, he became ill and was evacuated to Australia in late December 1945. He was discharged from the Army in March 1946.

Arthur was involved in a variety of jobs after the war. He worked selling religious books and operated a mobile service through many areas of New South Wales and Victoria for some twenty years. In that era, it was the custom for many



Catholics to buy missals and devotional books. There were also many small convents and religious houses in country areas that he served.

About mid-1975, Arthur became a seminarian, later joining the Diocese of Sandhurst and, at the age of sixty-five was ordained a priest on 22 October 1980 at Sacred Heart Cathedral. He spent periods at St Kilian's, Wangaratta South and Beechworth. While in Bendigo, he was chaplain at Bendigo Prison. He was very successful as a prison chaplain, probably assisted by his wide experience of life before becoming a priest.

Fr Arthur died at Bethlehem Home for the Aged, Bendigo on 24 July 2003.

Monsignor Frank Marriott initiated the move to place a headstone on his grave and collaborated with the Bendigo Branch of the Returned Services League in doing this. RSL officials attended the ceremony along with about thirty people and local priests to pay tribute to their returned colleague. The Last Post was played by a bugler. The event was reported in the Bendigo Advertiser, but Catholic readers may have been puzzled by confusion at some terminology used in the report.

Mal Nolan, was a St Vincent de Paul worker at Bendigo Prison when Fr Arthur Gleeson was Prison Chaplain.

WELCOME FR BONIFACE



Rev. Fr Boniface Kamulegeya, will be serving in Sandhurst for two months. Originally from Uganda Fr Boniface was ordained for the Diocese of Butara, Rwanda, in 2015, where he has been a parish priest since 2016. Since his ordination, he has completed a postgraduate diploma in Human Resource Management and commenced an online course in parish administration through Villanova University (USA).

Fr Boniface has also undertaken two periods as a supply priest in Southwark, London.

After completing a diocesan program of welcome and induction, he travelled to Rutherglen where he is serving as Priest in Residence for the parishes of Rutherglen and Chiltern, until 17 September 2023.

THIRD WORLD DAY OF GRANDPARENTS

“Do you know who my superheroes are? Grandparents. Because they built a family, and then they grew older. But grandparents are wise. And that is why it is important that you talk with your grandparents.”

Pope Francis July 2023

On Sunday 23 July, St John’s Church Numurkah was packed to the rafters with young and old and everyone in between, as the parish and school celebrated World Day of Grandparents.

St Joseph’s student, Lenny, welcomed everyone to this special Mass, knowing his Nan and Great Nan, who were seated nearby, like always, had his back. Parish Priest, Fr Jophin Joy, considered the unusually large congregation of children at this Sunday Mass and proclaimed in his opening words that it was as if angels were present.

As Fr Jophin blessed grandparents and special friends, children beamed with joy, angels indeed. ‘A Song for Grandparents’ sung by four St Joseph’s students concluded the Mass.

At morning tea after the Mass, an exhibition of portraits of grandparents by students fuelled the

Church with colourful conversation. Seniors were intrigued with images of their likeness and the art-thinking behind the artworks.

Parishioner, Kerry Stone, laughed that a key factor in the success of the day was that grandparents were asked to invite a grandchild and children were asked to invite a grandparent or special elderly friend to the celebrations, “We kept the middle generation out,” she said. “I think both grandparents and children were happy about that.”

In Rome, several hours later, (when the Numurkah angels were soundly sleeping), Pope Francis presided over Mass for the third World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly at St Peter’s Basilica before 60,000 pilgrims. Pope Francis praised intergenerational exchange as a means to learn the beauty of life and strengthen the life of the Church.

Pope Francis has spoken many times of the way his grandparents enriched his life. He believes we should not forget the richness of preserving our roots and of passing them on. “Grandparents are the link between generations, passing on the experience of life and faith to the young,” he said.

Speaking to a group of children last month, Pope Francis said that grandparents were his superheroes.

“Do you know who my superheroes are? Grandparents, because they built a family, and then they grew older. But grandparents are wise. And that is why it is important that you talk with your grandparents.”

One day, the angels of Numurkah could be superheroes themselves – what gifts from their grandparents will they pass on to their grandchildren I wonder?

In 2021 Pope Francis declared that a World Day for Grandparents be celebrated each year on the Sunday closest to the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus. Pope Francis has asked for all parishes to organise a celebration in their local context.

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS

Catholics reminded to preach the Gospel always, everywhere

Catholics are being urged to “preach all the Gospel, to all the world, all the time” and to consider encounter, discipleship and mission from their Catholic foundations in a new document from the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry.

The document, *Evangelisation*, offers a scriptural and theological reflection on the proclamation of the Gospel through the lenses of encounter, discipleship and mission. It draws on seminal documents on evangelisation from recent decades, including the teachings of Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis.

“Almost 50 years ago, St Paul VI urged us to reflect on Christ the Evangeliser, but to also see ourselves as the evangelising Church,” said Archbishop Christopher Prowse, chair of the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry.

“In recent years, the task of prophetic witness and convicted proclamation of the Gospel has increasingly been seen as the work of all the

baptised, and we invite the faithful to reflect deeply and pray about that in this document.”

Evangelisation uses two well-known parables – the Samaritan woman at the well and the disciples on the road to Emmaus – as anchors for the

consideration of the themes of encounter, discipleship and mission.

made disciples and how we are called to be missionary, we can find ourselves challenged to be more and also to do more.

“The Bishops Commission felt compelled to provide something of a blueprint for evangelisation in our current context, and we commend it to the People of God as part of our journey, walking together.”

The document concludes with a reflection on St John Paul II’s legacy as a proponent and practitioner of a spirit of evangelisation.

“There is an expression that could summarise the contribution of St John Paul II concerning evangelisation in general. It pertains to the fact that all the Church, and all the baptised, are to preach all the Gospel, including all Scripture and Tradition, to all the world,” the document states.

“We are a missionary people entering into the cultural worlds of our society and we do this all the time, until Jesus comes again.

“In summary, all the Church, to preach all the Gospel, to all the world, all the time.”

Evangelisation can be found on the Bishops Conference website at www.catholic.au or downloaded directly from <https://bit.ly/Evangelisation2023>

SYNOD ON SYNODALITY

As the Church approaches the first session of the forthcoming Synod of Bishops, which will take place in October this year, Australian Catholics are being encouraged to continue their engagement with the global synodal journey through prayer, ongoing discernment and local conversations.

Synod Working Document welcomed by Australian Church Leaders

On 20 June 2023, the Secretariat of the Synod published the *Instrumentum Laboris*, or working document, for the first session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops – commonly referred to as the Synod on Synodality.

The **Working Document identifies three priorities which have emerged from the worldwide consultation phase**. These priorities are aligned with the key focuses of communion, mission and participation. The document encourages Catholics to remain engaged in prayer, reflection and ongoing discernment with this global synodal journey. Australian Catholics

in particular are invited to how the learnings of the Synod on Synodality so far can be applied in our local context.

Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and a member of the Synod’s preparatory commission, said it had been an extraordinary process to get to this point, with Catholics across the world helping shape the working document.

“Countless people have invested their hopes, their prayer, their time and their energy in helping the entire people of God consider how we can share in the mission entrusted by God to the Church,” he said.

“This is the latest, and an enormously significant, milestone in a journey which has spanned several years. It represents both an invitation and an opportunity to remain engaged in prayer, reflection and ongoing discernment with all that has emerged so far in what has been an unprecedented worldwide consultation.”

Archbishop Costelloe stressed that it will be important, as the Church in Australia is currently doing with the fruits of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, to consider deeply how the wisdom gathered through this synodal process can be applied in a local setting.

“The unfolding of the synodal journey will offer our dioceses, parishes, schools and other ministries a precious opportunity to consider how they might better carry out in contemporary Australia the mission entrusted to them by the Lord,” he said.

“The three central themes for this Synod of Bishops – communion, mission and participation – remain at the heart of this document. We are being invited to adopt them as a fundamental lens through which we can evaluate all we are doing.”

National Synod of Bishops coordinator Trudy Dantis said additional resources will be produced in the coming weeks to help the faithful support the ongoing journey.

The Future of Our Church



What could the Church look like in the future? As we pray and prepare for the first session on the Synod on Synodality it seems timely to revise on Sr Nathalie Becquart's

visit to Australia in February this year in which she described a Church where everyone is heard, everyone plays a part and, as a result, everyone participates in our Church's Mission.

Sandpiper shares a story by **Christina Gretton** from the Diocese of Parramatta.

Sr Nathalie was appointed by Pope Francis as Undersecretary of the Synod in 2021. In forums and lectures in the Diocese of Parramatta and other dioceses in Australia, she explained what all Catholics need to do in order for our Church to become 'synodal'.

What is a Synod?

A Synod is a gathering of clergy and lay people in the Church to discuss particular topics. They are held regularly and can be at Diocesan and Vatican levels. The Synod of Bishops on Synodality, called by Pope Francis, commenced in 2021. Its meetings will be held in October 2023 and again in 2024. This Synod will focus on everyone in the Church working together in decision making about the future of the Church. And "everyone", according to Sr Nathalie, means everyone, including young people, women, and others who may feel on the margins. Pope Francis has particularly stressed this, saying "enabling everyone to participate is an essential ecclesial duty," and the structure of the Synod must enable this to happen.

What would a synodal Church be like?

"It is a new style of Church, in which everybody is called to be a protagonist. It is a Church that calls

"In Australia, we have had the benefit of the Plenary Council in coming to better understand these paths of prayer, discernment and, eventually, decision making," said Dr Dantis, who is director of the National Centre for Pastoral Research.

"We will be encouraging people to take part in a prayer pilgrimage in the weeks leading up to the first General Assembly in October, at which we will have several Australian bishops, as well as lay people, present.

"Our national Synod committee will provide material to help groups that have already been formed around the country continue their efforts to see how a synodal Church can be lived out in their context."

The 15 worksheets that are part of the *Instrumentum Laboris*, and which will guide the work of the Synod Assembly in October, will also be useful for local Catholic conversations, Dr Dantis said.

Archbishop Patrick O'Regan and Bishop Shane Mackinlay will attend the Synod of Bishops as the two delegates of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP will also participate as a member of the Ordinary Council of the Secretariat of the Synod.

Ten other representatives from the Oceania region will also attend the Synod, with those participants expected to be announced soon.

Visit the Bishops Conference's Synod of Bishops website for more information: <https://www.catholic.org.au/synodal-church>

You can find the *Instrumentum Laboris* and related materials on the Synod of Bishops website at: <https://www.synod.va/en/synodal-process/the-universal-phase/documents.html>

for the participation of everybody in the Mission,” Sr Nathalie said.

“It requires humility, learning together, teamwork, deep listening, daring to speak.”

She likened it to a long journey. “As you know, when you travel from Europe to Australia, it’s a long journey. There are beautiful moments, but also those that are not. It’s tiring. You know that you will receive a lot of joy, but it’s difficult when you are tired. That is the life with Christ when we come together to be missionary pilgrims on the road.”

Sr Nathalie spoke about how the synodal path celebrates and welcomes diversity. “Synodality is dynamic,” she said, explaining that the Church in the French diocese from where she hails is different from the Church in Parramatta because of its people.

At the same time, Sr Nathalie said the Eucharist is what brings the Church together. “The Eucharist is a kind of ‘matrix’ of our system that is about being together as brothers and sisters in Christ, being in communion.”

Those with concerns:

Sr Nathalie acknowledges there are people who are worried about the Church taking a synodal direction which places a lot of trust in the Holy Spirit. Sr Nathalie said their voices, along with all voices, should be listened to. Listening to all voices and opinions is a challenge she admitted, but, she said synodality is “an open creative path that can be full of surprises, and we have to be open to that.”

In his welcome to Sr Nathalie at her lecture at St Patrick’s Cathedral, Parramatta, on 3 February 2023, Bishop Vincent said Catholics had an obligation to be open to learning about synodality.

“If, as Pope Francis affirms,” said Bishop Vincent, “synodality is the new way of being Church for the third millennium, then we must seek to

understand more deeply what it means to be a synodal Church.”

Joining Sr Nathalie at her lecture, Australia’s Ambassador to the Vatican, Chiara Porro, and CEO of Caritas Australia, Kirsty Robertson, spoke on their experience with synodality. “The BBC recently named Sr Nathalie as one of the top 100 Women of 2022,” said Ambassador Porro, “and they spoke about how a door had opened for women following her appointment.

“That’s indeed a pretty momentous decision that’s really set the tone and importance that Pope Francis attributes to ensuring that all voices are heard, whether they are women, minorities, indigenous people, or those on the margins of society.”

CARRYING FORWARD THE PLENARY COUNCIL

Sandhurst Online Workshops

On 8 and 9 August, Dr Chris Cotter and Leslie Cooper facilitated two online workshops focusing on the findings from the Plenary Council and the ways we can implement actions to support the commitments agreed to at the Council.

These online sessions started and end in prayer, and invited participants to read and reflect on the decrees, as well as share and listen to thoughts and ideas of others – a process consistent with that used at the Plenary Council.

Download the Study Guide

The Australian Catholic Bishops have published a study guide ‘Carrying Forward the Plenary Council’ and invite Catholic communities across the country to consider how the outcomes of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia can be integrated into local contexts.

The study guide can be downloaded from the ACBC website.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE CARE OF CREATION

“Let Justice and Peace Flow”

The theme for Pope Francis' message for World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation 2023 is inspired by the words of the prophet Amos: “Let justice flow on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream.”

“God wants justice to reign; it is as essential to our life as God’s children made in his likeness as water is essential for our physical survival,” he says in his message.

Pope Francis' Message for World Day of Prayer for Creation can be downloaded from the Vatican's website.

SANDHURST LAUNCH OF THE SEASON OF CREATION

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR CREATION

11.00 a.m. Friday 1 September

[Notley Picnic Ground](#)

Greater Bendigo National Park

Join Bishop Shane and Clergy of the Diocese at this special outdoor Mass to celebrate the Season of Creation on the first day of Spring and National Wattle Day! Followed by a BYO picnic lunch. Sausage Sizzle provided.

BYO Chair, lunch and water bottle. ALL WELCOME!

FROM CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Celebrating Excellence: The Bishop Joseph Grech Scholarship Awards Luncheon



By Jenni Kennedy

On August 1, the Sandhurst community came together in Shepparton to honour the exceptional achievements of 15 outstanding Year 10 and 11 students who were awarded the prestigious Bishop Joseph Grech Scholarship. This annual event is a highlight on the calendar of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd (CES), and this year's ceremony was no exception. Two of the recipients were recognised in absentia, but their contributions to their colleges were no less appreciated.

The Bishop Joseph Grech Scholarship was established to recognise and support exceptional young people within the Sandhurst Secondary Schools who demonstrate an unwavering commitment to their faith and to social justice. These students actively contribute to the vibrant life of their colleges by making a positive impact on their communities.

The scholarship holds a special significance as it is named in honour of Bishop Joseph Grech, the beloved sixth Bishop of Sandhurst. Fondly known as Bishop Joe, he was a true champion for young people and firmly believed in their ability to create a meaningful difference in the world and within the church. Tragically, Bishop Joe passed away in 2010, but his legacy lives on through the scholarship that bears his name and continues to inspire future generations.

Chief Executive Officer of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd, Mr. Paul Desmond, addressed the gathering with heartfelt appreciation for encountering such exceptional individuals. He emphasised how parents and schools can be immensely proud of the young people in their midst who are actively working to build a better society.

“I love this event because it recognises and celebrates so much of what is good in our young women and men. Those who receive a Bishop Joseph Grech Scholarship do so because they are known in their school communities as individuals who are committed, creative, independent thinkers and doers,” said Paul.

“They are young people who stand for something; they think of others before themselves; they are ones who see a need and work to address it; they work for justice and improvement for all. These youngsters are the best of role models. I leave this event annually feeling sure that the future is in good hands.”

The scholarship not only recognises these remarkable students but also provides them with essential resources to further their personal and spiritual growth. Recipients are granted funds to attend leadership and faith development programs, allowing them to enrich their knowledge, skills, and understanding of the world, or students can use the scholarship funds to support programs that contribute to the greater good, fostering their sense of responsibility and encouraging them to create positive change in their communities.

The scholarship award luncheon was filled with joy and gratitude, as the achievements and potential of the young scholars were celebrated. It served as a poignant reminder of Bishop Joe's enduring legacy and his belief in the transformative power of young minds dedicated to making a difference.

Throughout the event, stories of these exceptional young individuals and their accomplishments were shared, reinforcing the

significance of the scholarship's mission. Each recipient's dedication to their faith, their families and their unwavering commitment to social justice was evident in the projects they have undertaken and the positive impact they have had on their communities.

The Bishop Joseph Grech Scholarship Awards Luncheon not only acknowledges the outstanding young minds but also highlights the collective commitment of Sandhurst Secondary Schools and CES to foster a culture of excellence, compassion, and social responsibility among the student community. It showcases the power of education, faith, and leadership in nurturing future leaders who are passionate about creating a better world for all.

As we continue to celebrate the accomplishments of these exceptional young individuals, let us be reminded of the enduring legacy of Bishop Joseph Grech, who believed that the youth hold the potential to change the world for the better. The scholarship ensures that his vision lives on, empowering young people to become beacons of hope and agents of positive change in our society.

Staff Retreat Day

By Jenni Kennedy

2023 Catholic Education Sandhurst staff retreat focused on Catholic Social Teachings and the impact of the 'Uluru Statement from the Heart'. The presence of Vicki Clark, an OAM recipient, added depth and wisdom to the forum, providing an opportunity for Catholic Education Sandhurst staff to learn about the Yes Campaign and the proposed referendum, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the issue from an Aboriginal perspective.

The Aboriginal Education Team, with guidance from Kylie Smith, Education Officer: Spirituality, Faith Formation, created a supportive platform that allowed everyone to engage in dialogue and develop a greater understanding of why voting

'yes' is crucial. This retreat not only educated the staff about the importance of the 'Uluru Statement from the Heart', but it also empowered them to discuss the matter with others.

It is essential to acknowledge that the last referendum held in Australia was in 1967. This historical milestone marked a significant turning point in recognising the rights and citizenship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, there is still work to be done to ensure full equality and recognition for Indigenous Australians.

Vicki spoke about the time that her mother was refused service at a hotel following the 1967 referendum. The memory of her mum's hand shaking as she was told that they 'didn't serve her kind here' etched on her mind. She went on to tell us that her mother was a proud and dignified woman, who worked for more than seventeen years for the same company. She liked nice things and Vicki recalls that she never left the house without matching handbag and shoes. The refusal of service happened while they were on transit to a holiday destination and the family decided to have a counter meal instead of the usual fish and chips in the park. Vicki remembers the embarrassment and the overwhelming sadness as her mother turned around and quietly walked from the hotel, her hand still shaking.

Flash forward more than fifty years and it is the responsibility of all Australians to educate ourselves about the 'Yes' campaign. By learning about the issues, engaging in dialogue, and understanding the perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we can actively contribute to building a more inclusive and just society. But educating ourselves goes beyond mere awareness; it involves deepening our understanding of the historical and ongoing struggles faced by Indigenous communities.

"We're not going to see intergenerational trauma disappear if we're in the constitution; it's the next layer of that foundation to build a stronger race

of people in this country, the First Nations People. You either help us build that foundation or you don't. But that's your choice," said Vicki.

It was fitting that the retreat took place at the commencement of Naidoc Week, a time when the spotlight is firmly on the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The theme for Naidoc Week 2023 was 'For Our Elders: Keeping the Fire Burning.' This theme emphasises the importance of recognising and respecting the wisdom, knowledge, and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander elders.

The Aboriginal culture is an oral one, stories are passed down from generation to generation and rituals, ceremonies, men's and women's business are learned by taking part in rituals on the land where ancestors have walked and practised age-old customs for thousands of years.

Education Officer: Student Pastoral Wellbeing, Jye Warren addressed the fact that some Aboriginal people are divided on the 'Yes' campaign.

"A lot of Aboriginal People are afraid of change and the unknown. It's like anyone in the world, and because of this, they're afraid to vote yes. I think the Elders from up there have gotten together to make it clear that it is about spirituality. We don't want treaty to take someone's farm. It's about being able to utilise that land for songs, for dance and to have men's business and woman's business, to connect and to rightfully be able to practise our culture and our laws," he said.

"I was told a long time ago about how our language is dying and an Elder spoke to me and he said, 'our language and culture isn't dying, it's just asleep and needs to be woken up.' For me it's just all about spirituality and being able to get back to waking that culture up again, rather than tuck it in and sing it some lullabies and let it sleep forever."



By embracing this responsibility collectively, we can foster a society that acknowledges and respects the diverse cultures, histories, and rights of all Australians. The education and awareness gained during the staff retreat can serve as a catalyst for continued learning, advocacy, and action, to create a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are empowered, their voices are heard, and their rights are fully recognised.

Yarrowonga celebrates Feast of the Sacred Heart

By Jenni Kennedy

On Friday, June 23, the final day of Term Two was filled with joy in Yarrowonga as the Sacred Heart College and Sacred Heart Primary School came together to celebrate Sacred Heart Day. It was a day of commemoration and gratitude, as the entire community gathered to honour their shared heritage and values.



The festivities began with an inspiring Mass with Bishop Shane Mackinlay, held in the College

grounds. Students, teachers, staff, parents, and esteemed guests joined in prayer and song. The Mass was a beautiful reflection of unity and faith, creating a sense of togetherness that permeated the entire event.

Music played a significant role in enhancing the Mass, as the choir and musicians from Sacred Heart Primary School sang and provided actions to music for everyone to join in, all under the watchful eye of teacher Christine Cussen, who was farewelled following the Mass, as she retired from teaching after 50 years in Catholic Education, 27 years of which were at Sacred Heart Primary, Yarrowonga.

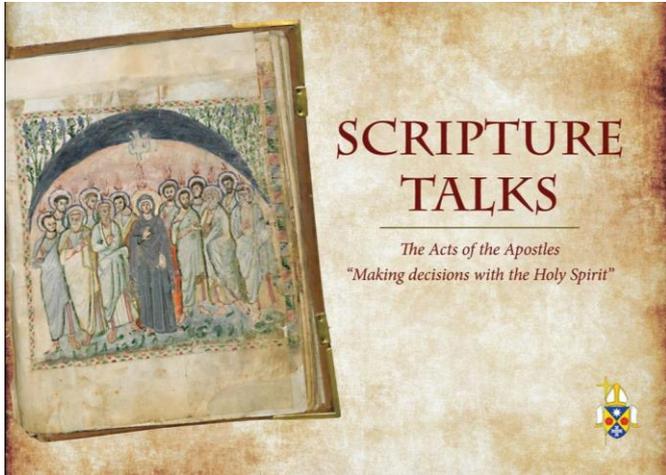
The day also served as the official opening of the Mercy Building, a fabulous addition to the College's campus. This new facility serves as the official entrance to the school and houses administration, staff facilities, meeting rooms and school library. The building was blessed by Bishop Shane Mackinlay, whose presence further enriched the significance of the occasion, despite the rain!

Following the Mass and official opening, students were treated to a BBQ lunch where the local Lions Club cooked over a thousand sausages for the students! Special guests were invited to stay for lunch in the newly opened Mercy Building and were able to enjoy a fabulous historical display in the staff area, which commemorated 60 years on the school site and featured photos, timelines and treasured memorabilia.

Sacred Heart Day serves as a reminder of the shared values and principles that bind Sacred Heart College and Sacred Heart Primary School together. It emphasises the importance of faith, love, and compassion in their daily lives and educational pursuits. Sacred Heart Day was not just a celebration; it was a testament to the enduring spirit and unwavering dedication of the Sacred Heart community.

LEARNING AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Sandhurst Scripture Talks – Recordings now available



THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES "MAKING DECISIONS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT"

Video recordings of the three one-hour Scripture Talks in this series and accompanying study resources are now available for those who register. If you would like to receive the links and material, please contact the Chancery.

SING JOYFULLY: THE AUSTRALIAN BOYS CHOIR IN CONCERT

3.00 - 4.30 p.m.
Saturday 19 August 2023
Sacred Heart Cathedral

Don't miss Australia's first and finest choir for boys, along with Bendigo's Sacred Heart Cathedral Choir and the outstanding voices of The Vocal Consort, presenting a concert of choral classics.

To book a ticket, go to:

[Sing Joyfully \(Bendigo\) Tickets, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo | TryBooking Australia](#)

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARY MACKILLOP NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE

17 - 28 October 2023

This uniquely Australian Pilgrimage will take you on a journey to places associated with Mary MacKillop's life and ministry in Victoria, South Australia and New South Wales. The pilgrimage is operated by the Sisters of Saint Joseph and Mary MacKillop Place. It will be led by Sr Anne Bond rsj, and Mr Garry McLean, the inaugural director of the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre.

"This is a unique opportunity for participants to enter more deeply into the life and spirituality of Saint Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods and to appreciate Mary's role as our first canonised Australian saint," says Sr Anne.

"The notion of going on a pilgrimage and being a pilgrim is a very ancient one that belongs to the spiritual tradition of all great faiths. It is a very personal experience, but it is usually a journey with others: seeking, listening, reflecting, and seeing the hand of God at work in our own lives."

The Australian National Pilgrimage will begin in East Melbourne on 17 October and conclude at Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney on 28 October. Along the way pilgrims will visit historic sites and towns including Portland, Penola, Robe and the Mary MacKillop Chapel in North Sydney.

Website: www.marymackillopplace.org.au/retreats-spirituality/australian-national-pilgrimage

Email: national.pilgrimage@mmp.org.au

Phone: (02) 8912 481

IMMERSION TO TIMOR-LESTE

4-12 November 2023



Catholic Mission invites adults to participate in this engaging immersion where you will learn more about the grassroots projects

supported by Catholic Mission in Timor-Leste. The immersion provides a special opportunity to return with newfound friends, a broader vision of God's Family, and a revitalised understanding of Jesus' Mission. Be prepared to be changed and challenged.

For more information go to:
www.catholicmission.org.au

SHARE YOUR STORY

To send your story:

editor@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

Diocese of Sandhurst
PO Box 201
Catholic Bendigo VIC 3550

Tel: 5445 3600

Editor

Katrina Strong: 0419 015 696



Bishop Shane's Calendar

- Monday 7 August – Thursday 17 August
Pastoral visit to families and provincial of Indian priests in Sandhurst: Hyderabad and Kerala, India
- Friday 18 August – Backhaus Trustees Meeting, Bendigo
- Friday 18 August – 50th Anniversary Mass, Principals' Association of Victorian Catholic Secondary Schools, St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, 6pm
- Saturday 19 August – Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Patrick's Church, Pyramid Hill, 6:30pm
- Sunday 20 August – Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Patrick's Church, Kerang, 10:30am
- Sunday 20 August – Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Mary's Church, Cohuna, 2pm

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Diocese of Sandhurst recognises the traditional owners of the lands upon which we live, serve and worship. We acknowledge the people of the Northeastern regions of our Diocese, Djilmathang, Minjambuta, Duduroa and Waywurru. We acknowledge the people of the Southern regions of our Diocese, the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungering. We acknowledge the people of the Northern regions of our Diocese, the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang. We acknowledge the people of the Western regions of our Diocese, the Baraparapa peoples.

We respectfully honour and acknowledge their ongoing custodianship and their connections to the land, waters and animals. We pay our respects to their culture, their Elders, past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of their peoples.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and commit ourselves to actively working alongside First Nations people for healing, reconciliation and justice.