

Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

Fr Steve Bohan returned to God (5 July 1948 - 22 August 2023)



Fr Steve Bohan died peacefully in Yarrawonga earlier this week. Born and raised near Benalla, he was a priest of Yarrawonga Parish for 23 years of his 50 years of priesthood. He retired from actively serving the Diocese as Parish Priest of Yarrawonga in July this year, on his 75th birthday.

Bishop Shane asks for us to, “Pray that Fr Steve might now enter eternal life with the God in whom he placed his trust, and that his family and parishioners might be comforted in their loss.”

A concelebrated Funeral Mass will take place at Sacred Heart Church, Yarrawonga at 11.00 a.m. on Thursday 31 August, 2023.

BISHOP SHANE MAKES PASTORAL VISIT TO INDIA

Bishop Shane recently made pastoral visits to the families of Sandhurst’s Indian priests. The families of Fr Vijay Bandanadam, Fr John Paul Pasala, Fr Uday Marneni and Fr Jophin Joy were delighted to warmly welcome Bishop Shane to their homes and Bishop Shane was very pleased to personally let their families know how much their sons and brothers are valued by Sandhurst communities.

Bishop Shane said his journey was “fascinating and eye-opening” and he has gained a deeper understanding of the challenges our Indian priests face adjusting to life in Australia. It is important, given we expect our overseas priests to understand us, that we too, make efforts to better understand them and embrace the gifts they bring.

Stay tuned for the next edition of Sandpiper e-News where we join Bishop Shane on his Indian exploration more closely.



MULTI-FAITH CHAPEL AT DHURRINGLE PRISON

A PLACE TO BRING THE DIRT, THE PAIN AND THE PROMISE.

Sandhurst Prison Chaplains recently gathered with multi-faith Chaplains, and staff and prisoners of His Majesty's Prison Dhurringile, to bless and dedicate a new multi-faith chapel. All present prayed, in their own way, to bring grace, hope and love to the prisoners they serve, united in their joy for the promise ahead.

Representatives of each faith group were given the opportunity to pray a prayer or a read a text from their Sacred Books. Monsignor Peter Jeffrey, shared this:

"We gather today to bless this chapel, to set it apart, so that it will be a place where we can bring the stories of our lives –the dirt, the pain and the promise – and know that here they can be held and changed, by grace, hope and love."

Joining Monsignor Jeffrey and Chaplains from other faiths were Sandhurst prison chaplains, Fr John Paul Pasala (Parish Priest at Tatura); Denice Bourke, Multi-Faith Regional Liaison Chaplain for Hume, (Sacred Heart, Tatura); and volunteer chaplains, Debbie Turvey (Sacred Heart, Tatura) and Agnes Murphy RSM (St Brendan's, Shepparton). Senior Prison Chaplain, Mary O'Shannassy CGS OAM was also present.

Since 2007, when the first dedicated prayer and worship space was blessed, Chaplains from different faiths have worked side by side, to provide opportunities for women and men resident in both public and private prisons in Victoria, to come together to practise their faith.

Eight Faith Denominations: – Catholic, Anglican, Greek Orthodox, Salvation Army, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist and Uniting Church of Australia – have agreements with Corrections Victoria to ensure that no resident, who so requests, is ever refused access to a Chaplain of their faith.

Most of the prisoners at Dhurringile, a minimum-security prison 10 km south of Tatura, are in the final stage of their sentences. There are currently ten to twelve Catholic men who seek the services of prison ministry which includes gathering in worship every Friday.

Fr John Paul Pasala visits the prison to celebrate Mass every second Friday and on alternate weeks, Prison Chaplains host a Liturgy with Holy Communion.

For these men, access to chaplains and opportunities to connect with their faith community are integral to successfully transitioning into life outside of prison. To feel forgiven, to feel belonging and acceptance from a community and to feel loved by God, transcends rehabilitation. This is best expressed in the words of Monsignor Peter Jeffrey when he read this Statement of Purpose:

In this chapel are the elements of earth, fire and water. These have been symbols, since time began, of the most fundamental realities of our world; that life is, at once, fragile and resilient. They remind us of the things that are most fundamental about each of our lives.

*We are human –
Fragile and flawed,
Needing a place to belong to and a people to be part of,
Reliant on forgiveness and mercy,
Dependent on the promise that life can begin again.
Because while earth, fire and water are the building blocks of the world,
They are only brought to life,
By a breath of grace and hope and love.
So, we gather today to bless this chapel,
To set it apart,
So that it will be a place where we can bring the stories of our lives –
The dirt, the pain and the promise –
And know that here they can be held and changed
By grace, hope and love.
What is this place?
A place to weep ...
A place to rest ...
A place to be still ...
A place to laugh ...
A place to see ...
A place to listen ...
A place to be ...
A SACRED PLACE*

There was much joy experienced in the gathering united by much more than that which divides.

A few weeks after the opening, Bishop Shane visited the Dhurringile Prison Chapel. "It was a beautiful celebration," said Denice Bourke. We'll hear more about that visit and Prison Ministry in a future edition of Sandpiper.



ST KILIAN'S ANGELS RETURN HOME AFTER 30 YEARS



"In early August two Angels returned to the parish of St Kilian's just as quietly as they had left," writes Diocesan Archivist **Dr Donna Bailey**. The Angels, a little worse for wear, still retain their hauntingly ethereal qualities and will once again watch over the people of St Kilian's.

"On the predella stand two angels, one in an attitude of supplication, the other in that of adoration. They each hold a branch candlestick and are turned towards the altar."

The Angels were thus described by an Advocate correspondent of June 1890 who offered a short account of Bishop Reville's recent fourteen-month sojourn to Ireland and Europe, and which specifically listed the several devotional items that he had returned with, that then adorned the St Kilian's Pro Cathedral sanctuary. They included a Dublin crafted, polished brass, three-tier candelabrum that could 'receive' 50 candles, 'two [German made], massive brass candlesticks, ... furnished with pure wax candles' that

could 'place the light ten feet high', a life-sized statue of the Virgin Mary and two smaller angelic figures that faced each side of the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Counsel. The statuary, wrote the correspondent, came from 'the first house in Munich.' (Our preliminary research on the surviving statuary indicates that they may have been made by Mayer & Co. of Munich).

The Angels, guardians of the St Kilian's altar, stayed in situ until, we understand, circa 1982, when they were removed so that considerable renovations of the church could begin. Beautifully sculpted, and quite pleasing to the eye, they would likely have been admired by generations of Catholics for just short of a century.

Most readers would know that the Vahland designed church, said to be the largest timber church in Australia, was constructed as a temporary church, or Pro Cathedral, in 1887, replacing an earlier stone church (circa 1857-1887). Some of the earliest furnishings have survived and the Shrine and the Virgin Mary statue remain, whilst the whereabouts of the candelabrum are unknown.

Although there are those who see an historic, devotional ideology clashing with current theology, it nevertheless seemed important to follow up on a strong lead of where the angels may have spent their last 30-40 years.

Indications are that during the early 1980s the Angels were placed in the brick stables behind the presbytery and were left there, 'lying in the straw' for several years before disappearing. No record was ever made of their quiet exit from the parish, and if a fuss was made, the current archivist does not know about it.

In 2015 we heard that they were residing in a private home, caretakers still, but caretakers of a studio, or a home library, rather than an altar. And so began the quest to have them returned to their rightful home. The privacy of those who assisted in locating them, as well as the family who cared for the Angels must be respected, and thus the story of their re-discovery, ends here.

On 8 August this year, the Angels returned to the parish of St Kilian just as quietly as they had left.

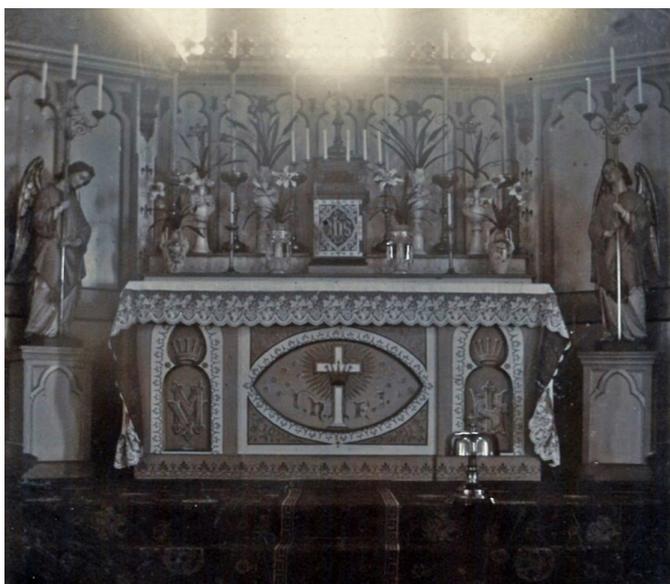
Fr Junray Rayna says of their return,

“Our Parish is excited to have such valuable pieces of the St Kilian’s Church history returned. We thank those who have worked to locate and return the Angels. We will look at where best to place the Angels within the Church over the coming months.”

Thankfully, the Angels have not been restored; as one friend of the diocese has noted, ‘the wrong person could have made a real mess of them.’

They are now a bit worse for wear, but authentic in their Gothic style appearance and a reminder of a very special time in our own Catholic story. In their infancy they occupied what was then a newly constructed Pro Cathedral and, at the helm, of the Church, a recently ordained bishop.

The Angels were devoted upon by a congregation of the predominantly Irish faithful and their provenance is strongly attached to the Second Bishop of Sandhurst, Stephen Reville.



The Angels stand guarding the St Kilian's Altar.

*Quarter plate Albumen print: August 25, 1894
Sandhurst Diocesan Archive Collection.*

Note: As a result of his 1889-1890 journey, Bishop Reville not only brought back the beautiful devotional items described in this story. A man strongly committed to Catholic education, he arrived at Sandhurst in March 1890 having secured the services of several Irish priests, and with two communities of Mercy Sisters. The Mercy Sisters went on to establish convents and run Catholic schools at Bendigo and Yarrawonga.

Dr Donna Bailey is the Diocesan Archivist.

SANDHURST MISSION AND PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) will gather in Shepparton for their third meeting on Friday 25 and Saturday 26 August 2023.

At this meeting they will continue their work on the Diocese of Sandhurst's 150th Anniversary celebrations, Mission and Pastoral Outreach, strengthening connections, formation of the faithful and the equal dignity of men and women. Please pray for the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council.

PRAYER FOR THE SANDHURST MISSION AND PASTORAL COUNCIL

We turn to Mary, our Mother of Good Counsel and patroness of our Diocese, as we seek to become a more missionary and pastoral Church: people of faith, hope and love for our world. May we be led by the same wisdom and courage sent by the Holy Spirit to guide her along unfamiliar paths and through challenging decisions. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen

Our Lady of Good Counsel,
pray for us!

HOW AUSTRALIA GOT ITS (EUROPEAN) NAME:

A strange tale with remote connections to our Diocese of Sandhurst

By Brian Coman

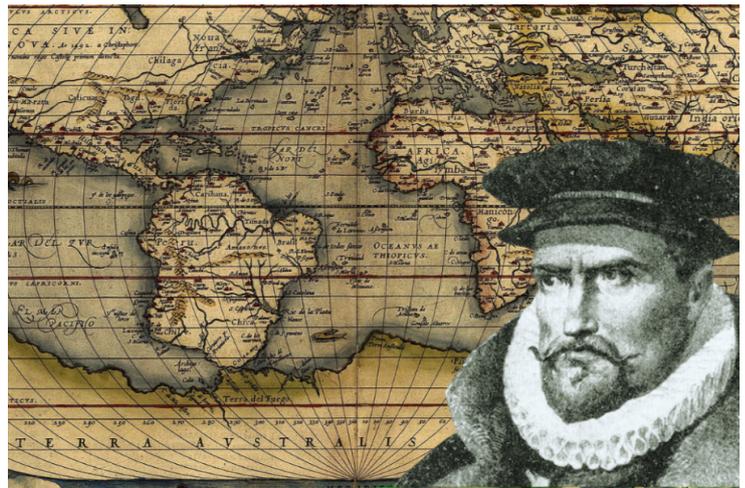
Most people assume that the name Australia, assigned to the island continent by European explorers, is simply a modified and shortened form of terra australis incognita – ‘the unknown south land’. This Latin title is often seen on ancient maps and dates back to antiquity. Some say that the Greeks postulated the existence of a great land mass in the south to ‘balance’ the land mass of the northern hemisphere. But australis is not the same as Australia, so why the difference?

In fact, the name Australia almost certainly has its origins with the Portuguese explorer Captain Pedro Fernando de Quiros, who had sailed in search of the ‘great south land’ in 1606. Unlike most other explorers and adventurers of that era, de Quiros was motivated almost entirely by spiritual concerns – saving the souls of those who lived in lands where the Christian message had not hitherto been received. These natives in the south, he said, were not savages, but our brothers and sisters who stood in need of the saving message of Christianity.

Captain Quiros was in the employ of the Spanish monarch and set sail in late 1605 to discover this fabled south land and claim it for Christ. The names of his three ships gives some indications of his religious zeal. The first ship was the San Pedro y Pablo (St Peter and Paul), the second the San Pedro, and the third, Tres Reyes Mayos (the Three Magi). Quiros had carved heads of the saints on the prow of each ship, ensuring that wherever they sailed, the saints would be leading them! The captain of the Tres Reyes Mayos was Fernando Torres, the first European (as far as we know) to sail that stretch of water which now bears his name.

Most history books will tell you that de Quiros did not reach that continent we now call Australia but rather, had landed on the largest of those islands we now know (collectively) as Vanuatu (formerly, the New Hebrides). One historian begs to differ and that historian was none other than Cardinal Patrick Francis Moran, the very same Cardinal who formally blessed and opened our Sacred Heart Cathedral in Bendigo in 1901.

As an historian, Moran was no slouch. He produced the first real history of the Catholic Church in Australia and was well regarded by his peer historians. However, when he wrote a paper (delivered to the Historical Society of NSW) claiming that de Quiros



had landed at or near Port Curtis (now Gladstone in Queensland) it was ‘a bridge too far’, and most of his non-Catholic colleagues dismissed the idea out of hand. But the Cardinal was undeterred and even published his claims in a small pamphlet put out by the Australian Catholic Truth Society (ACTS). Older readers will well remember these ACTS pamphlets, usually housed in racks in the narthex or portico of the local church. From my own memory they were priced at something like threepence or sixpence. Even so, they were not big sellers and I can remember brown and curled pages, long held in their little niches of wood.

I will return to the Cardinal’s claim a little later but would first like to give a little more information on de Quiros and his discovery. When he made landfall on what he thought was the shores of the Great South Land, his first action was to have a ‘church’ erected (no more than a crude canopy over an altar constructed by Franciscan monks who were part of the expedition) and a wooden cross raised. Then he took possession of all the land, south to the pole, in the name of the Holy Trinity, The Catholic Church, St Francis, St John and, lastly, the Spanish Crown. Included in this solemn dedication was special mention of Our Lady of Loreto, whose shrine in Italy de Quiros had visited prior to his journey. Here it is worth remembering that our own Sacred Heart Cathedral has a special interest in Our Lady of Loreto, with symbols representing the Marian Litany of Loreto on the wall of the Lady Chapel. No less than four Masses were said on that day in 1606 and it was altogether a most solemn occasion.

De Quiros named the new land Austrialia del Espiritu Santo (to this day, the main island in Vanuatu is called Espiritu Santo or just ‘Santo’). The name ‘Austrialia’ was chosen because it refers to ‘The House of Austria’ from which came the Hapsburg monarch of Spain, Phillip III. This was later mistakenly rendered as ‘Australia’ and when Matthew Flinders produced his charts, he

suggested this as a more suitable alternative to 'New Holland' or 'Terra Australis'. Even so. The name did not achieve full recognition until 1830 with the publication of The Australia Directory in England.

For all his undoubted skills as a sailor and navigator, de Quiros had little knowledge of human psychology. He had supposed that the natives of the new land would welcome him and immediately embrace the Faith. Not surprisingly, they regarded the new arrivals as intruders and actively tried to repel them. This was the first problem. The second problem concerned his own men. Although greatly moved by the religious ceremonies associated with their landing, many of the crew of the three ships soon became somewhat disillusioned with the whole business and de Quiros was not good at public relations in the secular realm. Eventually the whole enterprise fizzled out and the ships left for home. There is some possibility of a mutiny, but we shall never know. We know only that de Quiros was forced to leave and was never to return. This is despite his many later attempts to raise money for a further expedition.

One of the best-known scholars of the Spanish expeditions into the South Pacific is Celsus Kelly (1900 – 1975). He was born in Shepparton, and we can rightly claim him as having come from our Diocese. He later became a Franciscan monk and devoted many years to researching the role of the Franciscans in these early exploratory journeys. He was the first to translate the journal of one of the monks associated with the expedition of de Quiros and is an acknowledged expert in the field of European exploration of the South Pacific.

And now, back to Cardinal Moran. His claim that de Quiros had landed on the Queensland coast is not altogether without substance. I cannot here recount all of the arguments but suffice to say that many of the descriptions given by de Quiros seem to fit poorly with the geography of Vanuatu but fit much better with the coast around Gladstone. However, there are problems. The descriptions of the native inhabitants and their common foods fit poorly with the Australian Aborigines but much better with the South Sea Islanders. Moran's argument here is that de Quiros was referring to the natives in toto – that is to say, of all the people he had encountered during the voyage south. It is not a particularly convincing argument. Modern day historians reject the claims made by Cardinal Moran but the truth is that we will probably never know for certain if his claims are true. Perhaps we should leave the last word to Patrick O'Farrell (History of the Catholic Church and Community in Australia):

It was no mere antiquarianism which led Cardinal Moran to assert ... that Australia was first discovered

... by de Quirós. De Quirós had made his voyages into unknown seas in the belief that he had been chosen by God to discover 'terra australis', ... and to bring its inhabitants into the true church under the patronage of the Holy Spirit. Moran saw himself, and his Irish church, following in the wake of that holy voyage, with the same vast missionary hopes to capture a new world for Christ'.

We might reflect that our own Diocese formed part of that missionary hope.

There is one final connection to our Diocese worth noting. In many of our Parish churches, some of the older and more popular hymns chosen are from the pen of James MacAuley (1917-1976). He was an Australian poet and a convert to Catholicism. He wrote a very long poem called Captain Quiros, now rarely quoted but eminently worth reading. Here is a snippet:

Terra Australis, heartland of the South,
In the Great Lauds your myriad creatures raise
May there never be wanting the singer's mouth
To give words to that canticle of praise

Which from all beings pours forth to the Spirit.
And from our broken toil may you inherit
A vision to transform your latter days.

A suitable reflection in the spirit of Laudato Si'.

APOLOGY FROM THE EDITOR

In the last edition of Sandpiper e-News, I incorrectly credited the story about Wangaratta's 160th anniversary to Paul Murray. It was Wangaratta parishioner, Peter Murray who wrote the story. My apologies for this oversight,

Katrina Strong, Communications,
Diocese of Sandhurst.

WORLD YOUTH DAY

A Diary of World Youth Day 2023 – Part One

Sandhurst Youth Ministry Coordinator, Ruth Lawlor, believes the future of the Diocese is in good hands. “The Sandhurst World Youth Day Pilgrims are the most amazing beautiful group of people, they will be wonderful leaders,” she said.

From Lisbon, to Fatima, to Ávila, Ruth shares a daily rundown of the pilgrims’ inspirational World Youth Day journey.



Saturday 29 July – Our Journey Begins

Excitement was in the air(port!). Maybe a little bit of nervousness as well, especially for our first-time travelers!! Very smooth flights, no delays, decent food, good length of time in Abu Dhabi to stretch legs. Not much sleep – was that more due to how uncomfortable planes are? Or were we too excited? Maybe a bit of both! Some pilgrims tried to get the whole plane to applaud the pilot on landing. It didn't really catch on.

Sunday 30 July – Arrival in Lisbon

We landed in Lisbon around 7:30 a.m. so the whole day was ahead of us. Having cleared customs, many pilgrims made a beeline for Portuguese Tarts while we waited for the whole group to make it through. Definitely delicious and the first of many! Arriving at the Hotel, we were surprised to find most of the rooms ready for us already. A few had to wait a little longer, but everyone had their rooms sorted soon upon arrival; it meant pilgrims could get changed out of their travel clothes (some had a quick nap!) and get ready to go and say hello to Lisbon!

Pilgrims split up in groups and went to explore. Some made it to the river and found the amazing Arco da Rua

Augusta (a Memorial Arch to commemorate the city's reconstruction after the Earthquake in 1755); others headed straight to the shops to explore and stock up on water and snacks; and some managed to visit the beautiful Sé de Lisboa (Lisbon Cathedral) and a nearby church, Igreja de Santo Antonio de Lisboa (Church of St Anthony of Lisbon/Padua), which is either a Church built where he was born, or the Church in which he was baptised (competing stories but cool either way!).

Gathering back together in the evening, we joined together to celebrate Mass with Fr Jackson. Prior to beginning, every pilgrim offered up something they were grateful for, ensuring our celebration was full of Thanksgiving. Pilgrims were also invited to prayerfully set an intention, a hope, or a prayer for their own personal pilgrimage experience. With a specific space set aside for this in their Pilgrimage Journal, they were encouraged to refer back to this regularly to reflect on everything they were experiencing.

Mass was followed by a delicious Portuguese meal at a local restaurant. (The Octopus was delicious, although most played it safe with steak or pasta!) Pilgrims were eager for sleep in the evening with a big week ahead of us. Our final two pilgrims managed to join us late in the night, having already been in Europe for a week or so prior. Very happy to finally have us all together!

You can see photos of our highlights from each day of the pilgrimage on the Sandhurst Youth Social Media pages – both Instagram and Facebook. We encourage you to check them out!

Monday 31 July – Pilgrimage to Fatima

The Hotel had a delicious buffet breakfast with so many different options, pilgrims were spoilt for choice. This meant that we knew we would start every day with good food and would be well prepared for whatever came our way during the days ahead. Some stuck to bacon and eggs, while others were delighted to try all the Portuguese Breakfast Pastries and Cakes (including the delicious Portuguese Tart!). Trying the different food is all part of the cultural experience of WYD and some pilgrims embraced this wholeheartedly!

Getting on the bus for Fatima, our tour guide for the day was able to give us some fantastic insights into Lisbon, Fatima and Portugal in general. She was especially proud of how close the Airport was to the City and how easy the

Public Transport system makes it for tourists and locals to get around the city – it's only 20 mins on the train from the airport to the heart of Lisbon!

After a brief history lesson from Ruth about the events of Fatima, pilgrims joined together in praying the Rosary. Miggy, who regularly leads the Rosary online for St Kilian's Parish, and Fiona, who had thoughtfully laminated some cards to assist everyone in praying together, led the pilgrims in prayer, offering thoughtful meditations on the Joyful Mysteries – particularly apt given the WYD theme focuses on Mary and the Visitation. For some pilgrims, it was their first time praying the Rosary and they took the time afterwards to ask questions of other pilgrims about what the Prayer means to them. For all the pilgrims, it provided a space to meditate on both the whole WYD pilgrimage and that day's specific journey to Fatima and what they were hoping and praying for that day.

Arriving at the Shrine of Fatima, pilgrims were given their first glimpse of what WYD would be like – the Square was full of young people. Definitely not something we are used to seeing in Sandhurst Churches and events. This was possibly the moment that it started to sink in that there are many young Catholics around the world. A quick tour of the Shrine, particularly visiting the older of the two Basilicas, the Basilica of Our Lady of the Rosary. This is where the three seers of Fatima, Sts Jacinta and Francisco, as well as Sr Lucia, are buried. Unfortunately, due to the large number of people in the Basilica it was not possible at this time to visit their graves, but we were able to see the beautiful art and architecture of the Basilica.

Our next destination was the Square to celebrate Mass, along with thousands of other young people on their way to WYD. The Bishop of Leiria Fatima presided and our own chaplain, Fr Jackson, was able to concelebrate along with the many other priests present with their respective pilgrimage groups. The Bishop, Mons. José Ornelas, spoke of Mary as a "pilgrim on mission", because of the journey she took in life, "accompanying the mission of the Church in the diversity of the peoples of the earth". He also invited the young people present to be like Mary in service and mission for the Church and for the whole world.

After Mass, pilgrims had some time to explore the Shrine in their own way. Given its size and the number of people it was not possible to see everything, so pilgrims needed to prioritise what they most wanted to see. Most were able to visit the Chapel of the Apparitions and the new (and very large) Basilica of the Holy Trinity, and

some were able to explore the Shrine Museum and other chapels around the Square. Pilgrims saw a section of the Berlin Wall, a Museum dedicated to Rosary Beads, and more shops dedicated to Catholic statues, Rosary Beads and other Fatima souvenirs in the town than you can imagine.

After a quick lunch, the pilgrims made their way to the beginning of the Caminho dos Pastorinhos (The Way of the Little Shepherds), a path through the countryside from the children's homes to what is now the Shrine's location. The walking path features the Way of the Cross and was a tranquil and easy walk as a group through the beautiful Olive Trees. While we didn't stop and pray at every station, we were able to walk the whole path, including stopping to see further Apparition sites at Valinhos. Pilgrims enjoyed the opportunity to leave the built-up town area and enjoy beautiful scenery and some prayerful moments along the way.

At the end of our walk, we were able to visit the childhood home of Sr Lucia as well as see through the windows into the home of Francisco and Jacinta (the line to get in here was very long and would have taken at least an hour to get through – we unfortunately didn't have that kind of time!) After a quick break for some very tasty gelato, we made our way back to the bus before our final stop of the day – a visit to the Parish Church of Fatima where the three children were baptised. It is a beautiful church, originally built in the 1500s. The Church was not as elaborately decorated as many of the churches we have seen in Lisbon; in fact, it felt quite plain in comparison, but it is clearly an active Parish. We did not stop there long, but for some of our pilgrims, visiting this simple, yet beautiful and peaceful Church, was the highlight of the day.

The drive back to Lisbon allowed pilgrims to chat about their day and ask many questions about what they had seen. Bus journeys definitely allow for some fantastic conversations, but also much needed sleep after having been on the go for most of the day. On our return to Lisbon, pilgrims ventured out into the city to find dinner using the first of their WYD Pilgrim Meal Vouchers. After a rather busy day, it is safe to assume it was another early night for the majority of pilgrims (although an "early night" is relative, given most Portuguese Restaurants didn't start serving dinner until after 8pm!).

Tuesday 1 August – WYD Opening Mass

Today we had our only free morning of the WYD Week – every other morning would be taken up with official WYD events, so pilgrims took the opportunity for a little extra sleep before venturing out to explore Lisbon. Mid-morning, one pilgrim shared a photo of the beautiful Church he'd just walked into via the group's WhatsApp

chat and very quickly many of the other pilgrims shared images of the churches they had also been exploring. There are many beautiful and ornate churches worth visiting when in Lisbon!

The pilgrims all had different places they wanted to visit while in Lisbon, so they headed out in pairs or groups to explore places of interest. Some did walking tours of the City learning more about the history and significant sites, and some went to one of the numerous beaches in the area. There was a lot of gelato eaten – it was necessary given the heat!

The Australian Gathering began in the early afternoon, offering all Australian Pilgrims, as well as our friends from New Zealand and some of the Islands of Oceania, the chance to gather together to share stories, music and prayer. Over 3000 pilgrims from Australia were present at WYD, the largest number at any international WYD (there were more Australian at WYD in Sydney 2008). Gen Bryant and her band, known to many in the Diocese now, thanks to her presence at the Diocesan Assembly earlier in the year, as well as Fr Rob and his band (including our own pilgrim Sinead!) provided some fantastic music to get everyone up and celebrating. Pilgrims shared their hopes for this WYD, offering their learnings from past WYD Pilgrimages. The reminder to be open to the experience and enter into the unknown was a consistent reminder. Archbishop Peter Comensoli was able to take the opportunity to invite all pilgrims to attend the next Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Melbourne in 2025. The celebratory feeling of the gathering really helped set the tone for what was to come as the WYD week kicked off.

Later that afternoon, heading into Parque Eduardo VII (the venue for many of the WYD main events), pilgrims were faced with large crowds, probably the largest crowd they had ever been in. It was definitely overwhelming at times, but at no point did it feel unsafe. Although exact numbers of attendees for this Mass are unknown, it was in the hundreds of thousands- estimate suggest somewhere over 300,000! We managed to find a shady spot to sit – a bit of a rarity within some parts of the park, with a decent view of one of the many screens set up across the park. It can be a strange experience to take part in this kind of Mass, where you can't see the Altar in person, you don't understand the language spoken and people are wandering around searching for their group or trying to find a spot to sit. But with the help of the WYD Prayer Book and our own companionship, the experience was joyful and uplifting. The atmosphere felt alive and there was a sense of excitement in the air (or to quote the literal translation of the WYD Theme song, there was a definite sense of "haste in the air!")

The Cardinal-Patriarch of Lisbon, Manuel Clemente, finished his homily with the following words:

“Let us learn from Mary to greet each and every person. Let us intensely put it in 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! I wish you all a happy and inspiring World Youth Day!”

(Checkout the full Homily here: [Homily for the Opening Mass of World Youth Day \(lisboa2023.org\)](https://www.lisboa2023.org)).

If you've ever wondered how Communion can happen for a crowd this large (and within a relatively short time frame too!) you may be interested to know they have pre-consecrated Hosts ready to go and begin sending Eucharistic Ministers at the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer. Each Minister was accompanied by someone holding an Umbrella (both for Sun Safety and also for people to know where to go!). Once Communion was over, the Volunteers in different zones collected the Ministers one by one forming a procession, making their way to a nearby church (possibly different Churches for different zones). It was a really beautiful sight to see the procession making its way through the crowd with everyone making space to allow the Ministers through safely.

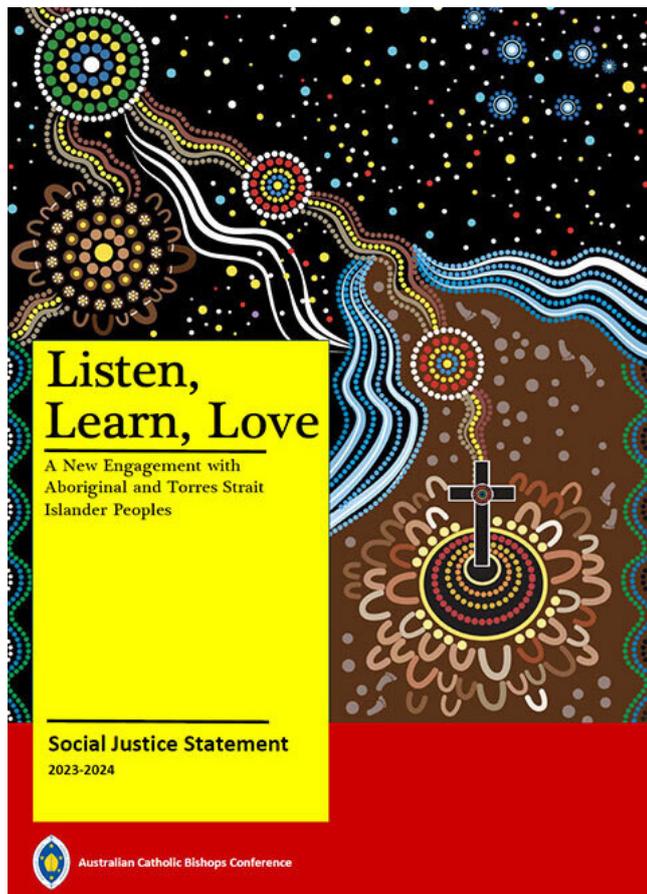
Making our way back to the hotel after Mass was somewhat difficult given the size of the crowd, but our pilgrims looked out for each other, sticking together in pairs and small groups when separated. Eventually we all managed to meet up again by pure chance in one of the back streets and then successfully made it to our very conveniently located hotel only, a block away from the park! Once we knew everyone had returned, we once again dispersed for dinner and enjoyed the electric atmosphere of WYD Lisbon in the evening.

And with that, Part One of the Sandhurst World Youth Day Diary has come to a close. Part Two will cover more of the World Youth Day Week and Part Three will bring our WYD diary to a close, with reflections on our time in Spain.

FROM THE AUSTRALIAN BISHOPS ...

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2023-2024

Listen, Learn, Love: A new engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.



The 2023 Bishops' Justice Statement calls on Australian Catholics and people of goodwill to commit to "fostering a civilisation of love" by taking "every opportunity to join with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in dialogue about their hopes and dreams for the future. The Bishops urge us to "listen and learn" and "let love guide" us to make decisions which will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to find justice, irrespective of the outcome of the upcoming referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament.

"Let's come together in friendship and love to show all that love can not only change individual lives, but that it can change society for the better," write the Bishops.

Starting with three verbs, this year's Social Justice Statement is a call to action, as Bishop Long OFM, Chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice explained at the launch of the statement on 17

August: -

"We want Catholics to understand that Catholic social teaching and Catholic social action are not simply theoretical and academic exercises ... We hear what God is saying to us about justice by being with our sisters and brothers on the peripheries of society."

While the Social Justice Statement is a teaching document of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, a large part of this year's statement was written by members of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council. It is part of the message's exhortation to "listen".

"Listening is hard. Hearing about young people taking their lives; about so many people ending up in jail; of children still being taken away from their parents and grandparents; and about the ongoing racism is tough," Bishop Long said.

"It must be so much more difficult for these people to tell us about their painful experiences. We are deeply grateful to those who shared their stories of pain with us."

The theme for this year's statement was chosen in May 2022, well before the Voice to Parliament referendum was mooted and before the timing of a vote was proposed. While the bishops don't suggest how people should vote, Bishop Long said "Whatever the outcome of this year's referendum, we ask the Church in Australia to make efforts to lead the way for our fellow Australians" in pursuing reconciliation.

"Our attitudes and actions towards First Nations Peoples need to be grounded in justice, love and humility," he said.

"We need to listen with deep respect and learn from them about what needs to be done to improve their situations. We need to walk with them, day by day, and work with them to bring about change for the better – for their people and for all of us. "Strengthening our relationship with our First Peoples is integral and indeed critical to the strengthening of the whole nation." tives by Bishop Shane Mackinlay.

Bishop Vincent Long, Chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service –Address at Social Justice Statement Launch

“The Church in Australia will not be fully the church that Jesus wants her to be until you, the Aboriginal people, have made your contribution to her life, and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others.”

Dear friends,

Those were the words of Pope John Paul II when he gave a powerful address in Alice Springs, in 1986. He reminded us of the importance of justice, respect for cultural diversity, and the protection of the dignity and heritage of our First Nations Peoples.

Several decades have passed and the question of Australians and Australian Catholics in particular “receiving joyfully their contribution” is still relevant to us.

The Statement I launch today, on behalf of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, entitled “Listen, Learn, Love: A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples” encourages us to apply the wisdom of St John Paul to our lived reality. It offers Catholics and all Australians a constructive approach to take in relation to the upcoming referendum; even more importantly, to the way non-Indigenous Australians will engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in the months and years following the referendum.

This statement is very different from those in the past. Much of the preparation was spent listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in major cities and regional areas. From Canberra to the Kimberleys, Sydney to Wadeye in the NT, and Melbourne to Cherbourg in Queensland. We also spent time with members of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council or NATSICC, as it is called. Through this listening, we learned much about the experiences and feelings of First Nations Peoples, as well as their hopes and dreams for the future.

One of the objectives of this statement is that we want Catholics to understand that Catholic social teaching and Catholic social action are not simply theoretical and academic exercises. We hear what God is saying to us about justice by being with our sisters and brothers on the peripheries of society. By getting “bruised, hurt and dirty” from being on the streets and in the bush where they are. This has been at the heart of Pope Francis’ message to us all from the beginning of his pontificate. It is not new.

“Gaudem et Spes” or Joy and Hope is the title of the Second Vatican Council’s seminal document. It invites us to be attuned to the signs of the times. To be with people where they are and listen to their joy and hope, grief and anxiety, wherever they are. Indeed, in the Gospel itself, we learn from Jesus that following Him means being on the streets, and listening and responding to what people are saying about their lives and what they hope for.

Listening and learning is also an essential part of the synodal approach which the Holy Father is inviting us to embrace. We tried to keep this in mind, too, as we wrote this statement.

One big difference you will notice in this statement is that we Bishops step aside for a significant portion and invite members of NATSICC to speak directly to us all. This is inspired by Pope Francis’ promotion of a culture of encounter and synodality.

Listening is hard. Hearing about young people taking their lives; about so many people ending up in jail; of children still being taken away from their parents and grandparents; and about the ongoing racism is tough. It must be so much more difficult for these people to tell us about their painful experiences. We are deeply grateful to those who shared their stories of pain with us.

Yet, even with all this pain and hardship, we also heard about many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people getting on with their lives, raising families, participating in community life and doing good things. There is not just darkness; there is also light. We also heard of their hopes for the future.

While the Church has done and said some good things over many years, we need to also acknowledge that we have been responsible for the pain our sisters and brothers have had to deal with. We Bishops have apologised more than once. And I say sorry again today for all the suffering that we have played a part in causing. But sorry is not enough. At its heart, that is what this statement is about.

Whatever the outcome of this year’s referendum, we ask the Church in Australia to make efforts to lead the way for our fellow Australians. Our attitudes and actions towards First Nations Peoples need to be grounded in justice, love, and humility. “Doing justice, loving kindness and walking in humility”, as the prophet long ago urges us.

We need to listen with deep respect and learn from them about what needs to be done to improve their situations. We need to walk with them, day by day, and work with them to bring about change for the better - for their people and for all of us. Strengthen-

ing our relationship with our First Peoples is integral and indeed critical to the strengthening of the whole nation.

I want to express my deep gratitude to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this country. You have shown such patience despite all the pain you have suffered.

In launching this statement today, I want to say to you, on behalf of the Catholic Bishops and the people of God in Australia:

“We love you and will walk with you on the journey of healing and justice.”

May God bless you all.

Bishop Vincent Long OFM is Bishop of Parramatta and chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

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Have questions about the Social Justice Statement 2023-2024? Chances are the Bishops have anticipated your questions and have provided a list of questions and short answers.

Since the 1940s, the Australian bishops have issued an annual Social Justice Statement, drawing on the wisdom of the Church’s social teaching on matters of critical importance to our nation. In recent years, the Statement has addressed domestic and family violence, mental health, the environment, and homelessness. The 2006 statement was the most recent to address issues facing First Peoples.

Why did they choose this topic?

Each May, the bishops choose the topic for the Social Justice Statement that will be issued in August the following year. In May 2022, the bishops recognised the need for a statement on the place of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in contemporary Australian society. That choice was made before the last federal election and before the Voice referendum was announced, but it is being released in that context. The topic is important, regardless of its timing.

Are the bishops backing the Voice to Parliament? Or opposing it?

The bishops are calling on all Australians to read the Uluru Statement from the Heart, where First Nations Peoples have expressed their wishes for constitutional recognition through a Voice. As

with elections, the bishops won’t be encouraging Catholics and others to vote Yes or to vote No, but to be informed – by their own conscience, but also by the richness of Catholic social teaching. This includes supporting the dignity of every human person and seeking the common good, so every person may have the opportunity to flourish.

Why issue something about the Voice if you’re not taking a position on it?

The origins of the statement are unrelated to the Voice referendum, but now land in this context because the Church marks Social Justice Sunday in late August. Regardless of the referendum, the bishops felt compelled to speak about the place of First Nations Peoples in our nation, acknowledging the great challenges they face, and to propose ways in which the unacceptable gaps in measures like health, education and employment can be addressed. Listening to First Nations Peoples is critical to pursuing and achieving the common good.

The Church has a poor history in terms of Indigenous Australians. Why should we listen to you? In our past, the Church and its leaders have participated in practices that did not uphold our values, particularly around the dignity of each person. We have apologised for that before and I apologise again for that. We cannot, however, be part of the solution by sitting on the sidelines. Despite some shameful behaviour in our history, we have been a force for good in the lives of so many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This statement is part of expressing our ongoing commitment in this critical area.

What has the Church done to support First Nations Peoples?

As one of the nation’s largest providers of education, health and aged-care services, and social welfare, the Catholic Church has walked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to support their flourishing. Our Church has had many vocal advocates for our First Nations brothers and sisters at various points in our history, and we continue to stand with them in seeking the best for them.

Pope John Paul II famously said at Alice Springs in 1986:

“The Church in Australia will not be fully the church that Jesus wants her to be until you, the Aboriginal people, have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others.”

Almost 40 years later, we are still striving to achieve that goal.

SEASON OF CREATION 1 September to 4 October



**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

“In this Season of Creation, let us dwell on these heartbeats: our own, those of our mothers and grandmothers, the heartbeat of the created heart and that of God’s heart. Today they are not in harmony, they do not beat together in justice and peace.

Many are prevented from drinking from this vigorous river. Let us listen then to the call to stand with the victims of environmental and climate injustice, and to put an end to this senseless war against creation.”

Pope Francis, message for
World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation

Developing an Eco-Spirituality

By Alice Carwardine

Eco-spirituality is a spiritual practice that allows us to reflect on the natural world, its beauty and God’s deep incarnation in the world.

In this moment of ecological crisis, it is essential for us to develop eco-spirituality practices that revolve around becoming intimately connected with creation and understanding ourselves, not as lords or masters over creation but, as integral members of its ecology.

One of the key ways in which eco-spirituality can grow is through the development of ecological virtues. Ecological virtues allow people to understand their relationship with the land and to behave in a way that shows compassion to our earth that is crying out in pain. However, why don’t we focus on the actions which cause the pain in the first place?

The term we could use for these actions is ecological sins, the antithesis of ecological virtues. They are actions or dispositions that disconnect us from creation and add to its pain. Seven ecological virtues (drawn from *Laudato Si’*) is an apt device because people are often quite familiar with the seven cardinal virtues: chastity, temperance, charity, diligence, kindness, patience and humility.

Pope Francis discusses the virtues that people should endeavour to build within themselves and the attributes to avoid. Some of the ecological sins are similar to, or virtually identical to the deadly sins, but the key difference is that deadly sins refer to human interactions with each other, whereas these ecological sins relate to our association with creation.

The seven proposed ecological sins are:

Disassociation from ourselves, from creation and God: Misunderstanding our integral part in creation and positioning screens between ourselves and our loved ones.

Exploitation: Deliberately destroying and wreaking havoc on our ecosystems to rape and plunder our earth’s resources for economic gain.

Harm: Ignoring the cries of the earth in a way that is not deliberate. It disrespects God as creator and damages our relationship with Him.

Inequality: Being selfish about our needs and wants contributes to global inequality, and sin directly relates to how we treat our brothers and sisters.

Waste: To be wasteful of the gifts of creation that have been given to us, as servants to the 'throw-away culture' that plagues contemporary society.

Greed: We need to be acutely aware that greed leads to other ecological sins.

Arrogance: Misunderstanding and failing to see the incarnation of God in our world.

All of these sins ultimately derive from one sin – anthropocentrism, the belief that we, as humans, are gods on this earth because we are made in His image. To some extent, we must understand that original sin is the sin of anthropocentrism; however, one of the main differences is that, through the act of the resurrection, God came to show us that we always were and always will be forgiven.

God, deeply incarnate with creation, may be able to forgive us for our actions. Creation is governed by the laws of physics and biology and, as we have already seen and continue to see, will not be so forgiving of our actions.

We can only understand the enormity of this false belief of anthropocentrism by breaking it down into its parts. The most challenging part of developing an eco-spirituality is acknowledging sin and asking for forgiveness. Over time, we can then come to repair and reconcile our relationships with one another, the Earth and our God.

Research has shown that those who live privileged lives contribute to a more significant proportion of environmental harm and exploitation; our anthropocentric dispositions are fuelled by the societal clamourings to have more, to want more, and for everything to be more convenient.

Eco-spirituality requires sacrificing our time, our money, our reputations, and ego. For example, suppose we want to help reduce the exploitation of workers who are not paid a reasonable wage. Every time we purchase an item of clothing that is cheap because it does not come from a fair-trade source, we send a message that we value the product we purchased, and the methods used to create it.

We are also contributing to the pollution caused by the production and disposal of these items. We must then sacrifice by re-wearing, repairing, re-purposing, wearing out, handing down and thrifting our clothing. These actions help us avoid the sins of exploitation, harm and waste and build the virtues of sobriety, gratitude, and care.

Another example is when we choose to reduce the use of our fossil fuel-guzzling cars. When we

purchase fuel, we send a message that we value that product and will use it. We are contributing to the exploitation of the earth and the ongoing harm to the planet, both in the way the fuel is extracted and the emissions it produces.

When we choose to ride a bike, take public transport, walk, or at least car-pool; we reduce the harm done to the planet. We, therefore, are caring for creation.

When we spend too much time on our screens and locked indoors, we continue to disassociate ourselves from creation. We fail to sit in awe and wonder of God's work, praising His name.

When we plant a monoculture lawn at the front of our house as a symbol of status and tear out our native species to create perfectly manicured gardens, we prohibit the natural world's ability to praise God.

When we spend time in awe and wonder, regenerate the earth and allow our native species to thrive, we enable all organisms to worship God.

These actions that aim to overcome sin require purposeful reflection on our intimate connection with creation. The act of reflecting and discerning our behaviours helps us to build an eco-spirituality.

If there was ever a time when we needed to make selfless sacrifices for the earth, it is now amid ecological crisis. Through sacrifice, we see the world differently, in a way that is more intimately connected with the Earth.

Alice Carwardine holds a Master of Theology, which she uses to run Laudato Si' Action plans with schools for the Catholic Earthcare program.

This article is an abridged version of her essay "Our Ecological Sins and Making Sacrifices for Our Land", which can be read in full in *Promotio Iustitiae* no. 133, 2022/1.

This story originally appeared in the Autumn 2023 edition of the Australian Salesian Bulletin.

FROM CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Embracing Diversity at St Monica's Feast Day Celebration



As students eagerly sampled dishes and admired the colourful displays, the event seamlessly wove together the threads of cultures that make up the school's community. These interactions ignited curiosity and opened up conversations about traditions, backgrounds, and experiences, enriching the students' knowledge of their peers.

St Monica's School not only celebrated its namesake on this day but also honoured the Mercy tradition of fostering justice, compassion, hope and hospitality while showcasing the beauty of a community united in diversity.

St Monica's School embraced the spirit of unity and cultural appreciation on Friday 18 August, during the commemoration of St Monica's Feast Day. The event turned the afternoon into a vibrant showcase of cultural richness as families and students dressed in traditional clothing and shared authentic dishes from their family heritages.

Amidst the lively atmosphere, the Jaara Centre was a fusion of colours and flavours with traditional garments, decorations and dishes from all over the world including: Philippines, India, Cambodia, Bangladesh, Mauritius, Burma, South Sudan, Africa, Nepal, the Wild West USA and of course a few Aussie favourite treats.



FEAST OF THE ASSUPTION A DAY OF CELEBRATION AT MYRTLEFORD

Marian College, St Mary's Primary School and St Mary's Myrtleford parishioners joined together for a day of festivities to celebrate the Feast of the Assumption this week.

The day began with a combined schools Mass which included readings, prayers and sacred music in Italian language as well as a procession of flag bearers acknowledging the Italian tradition of 'The Palio' in honour of Mary. Fr Tony Shallue presided, sharing words of hope and optimism in the endless possibilities that lie ahead when we are connected in unity with renewed spirit.

Stella-scuola provided some most engaging live entertainment with 'Musica Maestro!' before staff and students from both schools enjoyed a traditional pasta lunch catered by St Mary's parish ladies.

It was a delight to see students from Prep to Year 12 sharing hospitality, music and some perfect Myrtleford weather on this very special day of celebrations.





Bishop Shane's Calendar

Friday 25 August -

Saturday 26 August- Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council, Shepparton

Saturday 26 August -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Mary's Church, Echuca, 6pm

Sunday 27 August -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Mary's Church, Echuca, 9:30am, 11:30am

Wednesday 30 August -

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Permanent Committee, Sydney

Thursday 31 August -

Blessing and Opening of the Saint Teresa of Kolkata Building, Australian Catholic University, Melbourne

Friday 1 September -

Diocesan Season of Creation Launch and Outdoor Mass, Notley Picnic Ground, 11am

Saturday 2 September -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St John the Baptist Church, Numurkah, 5:30pm

Sunday 3 September -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Mary's Church, Nathalia, 9am

Sunday 3 September – S

unday Mass, St John the Baptist Church, Numurkah, 10:30am

Monday 4 September -

Thursday 7 September- Sandhurst Clergy Inservice, Moama

Friday 8 September-

Blessing and Opening of Junortoun Sporting Precinct, Catherine McCauley College

Sunday 10 September -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Joseph's Church, Benalla, 9:30am

Sunday 10 September-

Sunday Mass, St Brigid's Church, Thoona, 12pm

Monday 11 September –

Blessing and Opening of new building, St Joseph's Primary School, Benalla

Tuesday 12 September -

Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd AGM, Bendigo

Wednesday 13 September -

Council of Priests, Shepparton

Thursday 14 September -

Diocesan Finance Council, Bendigo

Saturday 16 September -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Augustine's Church, Kyabram, 5pm

Sunday 17 September -

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Augustine's Church, Kyabram, 10am

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GOT A STORY TO TELL?

Call Katrina (details above)

YOU'RE INVITED to the Sandhurst Launch of Season Of Creation on Friday 1st September



Venue: **Notley Picnic Ground**, Whipstick Forest
Greater Bendigo National Park

Time: **Mass celebrated by Bishop Shane at 11 am**
BYO chair encouraged although some seating available

Picnic Lunch to follow

Sausage sizzle provided

(BYO lunch if preferred or dietary requirements preclude)

BYO water bottles – water available on site

BYO Hot / Cold beverages



EVERYONE is invited and encouraged
to come along and celebrate in this
beautiful venue. It's also
the first day of spring and
National Wattle Day!



A Mighty River
Amos 5: 24

**Let Justice
and Peace Flow**
Season of Creation 2023

