Father Tuan Tran

a priest forever
Dear Reader,

From a frosty and cold Armidale a warm welcome to you all.

Once again thank you for your contributions to this Winter Edition of Viewpoint. A notably larger edition with the coming and goings of the diocese - the Ordination, school sport and Conferences. As always if your news items are ready before the closing date please forward them onto viewpoint@armidale.catholic.org.au or drop them in the post.

I hope that you all have an enjoyable and safe school holiday break and look forward to seeing you in the Spring edition.

Cheers, Julie

---

### Bishop’s Major Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>June</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25th</td>
<td>Diocesan Finance Council meeting</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28th</td>
<td>Confraternity Christian Doctrine Commission</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th – 5th</td>
<td>Wilcannia – Forbes Diocese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th - 31st</td>
<td>World Youth Day Pilgrimage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Return from World youth Day</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th</td>
<td>St Alberts College Board Meeting</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>St Alberts College Founders Dinner</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th</td>
<td>“An Evening on Vatican II” Talk</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Uralla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th</td>
<td>Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>“An Evening on Vatican II” Talk</td>
<td>Moree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>St Philomena’s School Visit</td>
<td>Moree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Mungindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Moree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th</td>
<td>Wilcannia – Forbes Diocese</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st – 22nd</td>
<td>NSW Catholic Education Commission</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23rd – 24th</td>
<td>Australian Catholic Marriage &amp; Families Conf.</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th</td>
<td>Attend menAlive Weekend</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29th</td>
<td>“An Evening on Vatican II” Talk</td>
<td>Gunnedah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31st</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Narrabri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>Gunnedah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Father Melville Diamond Jubilee</td>
<td>Manilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th – 5th</td>
<td>Bishop’s Commission for Pastoral Life</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Visitation and Confirmation</td>
<td>Quirindi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11th</td>
<td>“Walking with Love” Seminar</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th</td>
<td>McCarthy Catholic College</td>
<td>Tamworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>East Tamworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th</td>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>S.Tamworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th</td>
<td>NSW Catholic Education Commission</td>
<td>Sydney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th</td>
<td>Confraternity Christian Doctrine Commission</td>
<td>Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st</td>
<td>Catholic Women’s League Diocesan Conf.</td>
<td>Guyra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Bishop Speaks

The Unspeakable Crime of Abortion

In mid-May the trial of American abortionist Dr Kermit Gosnell came to a conclusion when he was found guilty of the first-degree murder of three babies in his clinic in a poor Philadelphia neighbourhood. He was sentenced to life in prison. He had been accused of killing seven babies who survived abortions and one mother who had died during an abortion. Former abortion clinic employees testified that Dr Gosnell routinely performed abortions past the state’s 24 week limit, and that on occasions he used scissors to cut the spines of babies who survived the abortion still moving, whimpering, or breathing. In fact, his crimes are so sickening that even the abortion lobby has disowned and denounced him.

However sickening the details of Dr Gosnell’s crimes, they should not distract us from the reality that every abortion is wrong and evil. Even the abortion that is carried out in full compliance with state law in a clean and sterile clinic and in which the procedure goes exactly according to plan is the deliberate killing of an innocent human person. This is why Blessed Pope John Paul II said of abortion: “No circumstance, no purpose, no law whatsoever can ever make licit an act which is intrinsically illicit, since it is contrary to the Law of God which is written in every human heart.” (Evangelium Vitae 62)

There are two elements to the story of Dr Gosnell that are additionally disturbing. The first is that the atrocities at the Women’s Medical Society where Gosnell performed his abortions occurred because politicians and bureaucrats shirked their statutory obligations. According to a Grand Jury Report, after the 1994 election of pro-choice Governor Tom Ridge “the Pennsylvania Department of Health abruptly decided, for political reasons, to stop inspecting abortion clinics”. It seems the bureaucrats did not want to enforce the laws because disagreeable discoveries might have brought abortion into disrepute. Kermit Gosnell deserves to spend the rest of his life in jail. But what about his enablers? In shielding abortionists from the law, these people have exposed the notion of “safe, rare and legal” abortion as a farce. The rule of law has been corrupted for the sake of the pro-choice, anti-life ideology.

A second disturbing element is the media reporting of this story, or rather the lack of media reporting. It received virtually zero coverage on both American and Australian television. At the height of the Gosnell story I saw news commentators on the ABC discussing the terrible gay-bashing of Christopher Bryant, the editor of a British gay online magazine, in a London park. Yet I saw and heard nothing of the abortionist’s terrible murders. Such media bias is not new. When was the last time you saw or heard in the mainstream media a ‘bad news’ story about the abortion industry or a ‘good news’ story about pro-life advocates? I bet it’s been a while! Why would people who believe in legalised abortion want to shed light on the terrible things that do happen during legalised abortions? Such bias is one reason why more and more people are turning to the alternative media, largely via the internet, for their news.

As well as taking the life of the child, abortion also has devastating effects on the life of the mother. In her groundbreaking book ‘Giving Sorrow Words’ published in 2000, Australian author Melinda Tankard Reist gathered the stories of some of these women. A recurring theme in many of their stories was that they felt isolated and trapped in their situation of an unplanned or difficult pregnancy: they felt they had no choice, thus exposing the whole myth of the ‘pro-choice’ lobby.

Later this year in September, Armidale will be hosting the ‘Walking With Love’ seminar which trains ordinary people like you and me to talk to and support women who may be considering abortion so that they feel they do indeed have a choice; that they can make the choice for life. You will find more information about this seminar on page 6. Do come along if you can; you just might save the life of a mother and child.

May God bless you all.
Yours in Christ the Lord,

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Armidale
"I feel a buzz", was how Bishop Michael Kennedy expressed his great joy after celebrating Mass with about 75 young people and 25 adults at the annual “Discovery Youth Camp”. The Celebration of the Mass was a central part of the program, which was held in the April school holidays at Lake Keepit Sport and Rec Camp near Tamworth.

A group of teenagers and young adults from Armidale, Uralla, Sydney and Crescent Head, gathered to spend four days seeking to deepen and strengthen their relationship with God. During the time the young people participated in a number of different activities using music, drama, discussion groups, sport and games.

The main focus was on the talks. This was a time to listen and learn from others, on topics such as “Sin”, “the work of the Holy Spirit”, “Are You God Centred?”, the “Price Tag of Sex” and “Responding to God”.

Afternoon activities included options like the high swing, archery, canoeing and art. Each evening praise and worship was followed by a talk and the opportunity for prayer.

The youth left the camp renewed and refreshed. The adults all left, feeling uplifted by the attitude and behaviour of the young people.

Discovery is convened each year by The Good Shepherd Fellowship, an ecumenical, covenantal and charismatic group who seek to serve God and make Him central to their lives. The camp has been run annually for 18 years and this year saw the first of our second generation young people come through.

We would like to thank Bishop Michael Kennedy for making himself available to celebrate the Mass and the Armidale Diocesan Investment Group (ADIG) for their generous help. Our thanks also to Monsignor Wayne Peters for his continuing support and encouragement.

Contributed by Cheryl Leggatt

Fabulous Discovery
Benedictine Abbot visit Armidale

On Anzac Day Father Abbott Phillip Anderson and Brother James Middeldorp, from ‘Our Lady of Clear Creek’ Abbey, arrived in Armidale for a short stay. Accompanied by Fr Glen Tattersall from Melbourne they were on an investigative trip to Australia.

Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey is a Benedictine monastery located in the diocese of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

It was founded in 1999 by Notre-Dame de Fontgombault, a French Abbey which belongs to the Solesmes Congregation, as does Clear Creek.

The Clear Creek monastery was founded as an outreach from the French monastery and now it is looking at a new venture in Australia. Their visit included Brisbane and Sale dioceses along with Armidale Diocese.

Father Abbott said: “It was a rare pleasure for me to be able to visit Australia and to encounter its many enchantments, both in terms of the human beings that inhabit this continent and with regard to its natural wonders.

Brother James Middeldorp (a native of Adelaide) and I were on a trip of exploration in view of a possible monastic foundation, although this would not occur for some years.

We saw many beautiful spots, including several in the Armidale area. The rest is in the hands of Divine Providence.”

Whilst in Armidale Father Abbott celebrated a Latin Mass at the 7.00 am Friday Mass.

Around 30 people, including Bishop Michael Kennedy, attended the Mass.

If you would like to know more about their monastery, their website at http://clearcreekmonks.org has more information including videos of various ceremonies.
A seminar will be held in Armidale in September which will train those who wish to support women and their partners and families faceting a decision about abortion, or who have had an abortion.

The Bishops Commission for Pastoral Life of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference commissioned this work in 2007, as a response to recommendations made by the Bishops Taskforce on Pastoral Responses to Abortion.

The workshop will:

- Explain the approach of Walking with Love
- Learn how it has been applied in some capital cities
- Hear from women on their experience of an abortion, keeping the child, having a child with a disability, giving a child for adoption, or a partner’s experience
- Present advice and practical suggestions for local application from organisations that are supporting mothers, and
- Provide an opportunity for participants to discuss in groups some practical steps to be taken locally. Discussion groups will be arranged around common interests of participants eg parish, diocese, education, counselling.

There is no charge for the workshop however there may be a charge for the workshop dinner on 11th September and you will need to arrange your own accommodation and travel.

To register: contact Bruce Ryan Executive Secretary Bishops Commission for Pastoral life by email: pastoral.life@catholic.org.au

More information about Walking with Love can be found at http://www.walkingwithlove.org.au/
Visiting Danthonia

Bishop Kennedy recently had the pleasure of visiting the Bruderhof community at Danthonia near Inverell. The community is well known for the magnificent signs they produce – some of our parishes have used them for their parish signs.

During the visit the Bishop had the opportunity to meet and speak with the community members, and for a while became babysitter for young Forrest Moody who was just 7 weeks old!

Bishop Kennedy was also able to hear the Danthonia home-school choir years 1 – 8 sing the Alleluia Chorus and described the experience as ‘truly inspirational’.

Bishop said “As you were singing I was thinking of the importance for us to praise and glorify and worship and to adore God with our whole selves our whole being. We worship God with our bodies, with our voices, with our actions, with our heart, with our whole soul, with our whole self.

I suspect that’s probably something that is at the essence of your life, and certainly should be that everything we do, we do with our consciousness of praising and worshiping God.”

Because that is actually our first duty as human beings to realize that we are human and God is God, and that if we don’t fulfill that first duty that we have as God’s sons and daughters to worship him and to love him, we’re not going to get anything else right. So, it’s marvelous to see that in you, and I get that sense in my own spirit that is very much part of your life here of worshipping and loving God.

Bishop Kennedy spoke on the themes of family; the purpose of each life; praise, worship, and prayer; and the task of mission to a world very similar that of early Christianity. Bill Wiser from the Bruderhof community said “These are wonderful themes and he spoke right from his heart with no script at all. It was truly inspiring and moving to hear.”
The Archdiocese of Sydney as a way of marking the end of the Year of Grace and highlighting the Year of Faith and the 50th Anniversary of the start of Vatican II hosted the ‘Great Grace-Receiving Vatican II Today’ conference.

The name for the conference ‘The Great Grace-Receiving Vatican II Today’ was taken from the writings of Blessed Pope John Paul II who described Vatican II as ‘the Great Grace of the Church for the 21st Century’.

The Conference was held in Sydney and has been described as a national conference of international significance and the most important religious gathering in Sydney since the city hosted World Youth Day back in 2008. The Conference not only looked back at the momentous events and teachings of Vatican II bequeathed to the Church 50 years ago but also looked ahead to its vital and continuing legacy into the future.

The conference featured thirty intensive workshops with nine keynote addresses from some of the world’s most renowned theological minds and authorities on Vatican II.

Keynote speakers included: Cardinal Marc Ouelett PSSS (Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, Rome), Cardinal Pell (Archbishop of Sydney), Archbishop Arthur Roche (Secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship & the Discipline of the Sacraments), Archbishop Allen Vigneron (Archbishop of Detroit USA), Archbishop Mark Coleridge (Brisbane), Archbishop Philip Wilson (Adelaide), Professor Anthony Kelly CSsR (Australian Catholic University), Professor Anne Hunt (Australian Catholic University), Professor Tracey Rowland (John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family).

Video podcasts and audio versions of the keynote addresses are available online at http://www.thegreatgrace.org.au/

The conference was well received and attended by over 800 people from across Australia and New Zealand. Representatives from the Diocese of Armidale included: Fr. Anthony Koppman (Guyra), Lee Herden (Catholic Schools Office), Kerry Steller (Catholic Schools Office) Rickie Withers (CCD Office), Carol Wheaton (McCarthy Catholic College Tamworth), Chris Garden, Elyse Beck and Eddie Sadgrove from the Ss Mary and Joseph’s Cathedral Parish along with Fergus Fitzsimons of Centacare New England North West.

“As the years have passed, the conciliar documents have lost none of their timeliness; indeed, their teachings are proving particularly relevant to the new situation of the church and the current globalized society.” (Pope Benedict XVI, 20 April 2005)
Around forty Aboriginal people, including adults and 21 “under 20s” – ranging from University student to 2 “babes in arms” – recently enjoyed a weekend at Yarrawarra Cultural Centre, near Woolgoolga. The flexible program included various activities, such as prayer-times and Mass, as well as a presentation on Aboriginal dances by one of the Yarrawarra staff members, who visits schools and teaches students how to plan and perform these dances.

Parents and grand-parents, uncles/aunts travelled with the young people, providing supervision but also learning a lot about their culture, spirituality, and history. At one stage, there were separate men/boys and women/girls sessions, to encourage the adults to pass on to the younger generation their experiences and wisdom. There was time also for art work for both adults and young people, and craft work with beads in the Aboriginal colours. Weather prevented swimming, but there were some peaceful moments in the beach area. For some children it was their first sight of the seaside, and the inevitable sand castles appeared.

There were plenty of light moments, and lots of laughter, as for example on the first night, when people relaxed around the “camp fire”, and those of the older generation shared many stories and funny experiences, and some of the younger people clearly enjoyed learning, some for the first time, about the “old days” of their grandparents, and relatives.

The weekend was organized by the Armidale diocese Aboriginal Catholic Apostolate, headed by Aunty Gloria Leigh, with support from semi-retired priest, Fr Ron Perrett. A much appreciated helper also was Jodie Herden, Aboriginal Education Assistant at McCarthy Catholic College, Tamworth. The group expressed great appreciation to the bus drivers, who had a difficult job on the way from Tamworth to the coast, negotiating vehicles in heavy rain and thick fog at times.
Knowing our history

Cardinal Sir James Freeman
Fr Ron Perrett shares his personal recollections

Bishop Freeman would probably like to be remembered as an ordinary Australian, and an ordinary Catholic priest, from a typical Aussie family, son of a Sydney tram-driver, never lost “the common touch”, rising to the highest rungs on church and civic ladders. Ordained a priest in 1930, by the time of his retirement in 1983, he had been made a Cardinal. He took part in the conclaves to elect Pope John Paul I, and soon afterwards, Pope John Paul II and was knighted in 1977.

He lived out the words of Rudyard Kipling, praising those who “can talk with crowds and keep (their) virtue, or walk with Kings” and not “lose the common touch”. He was a welcome speaker and he met the Queen when she visited Armidale.

However, his own ideal was the Gospel call to all of us to “to serve rather than be served”, and as his secretary who worked with him very closely for over two years, I saw him mix with people of all social strata, respectful to all, kow-towing to none. He was not one who sought power – I think he was not comfortable with the weight of authority he had to carry. He lost half a stone from the time he was appointed as Archbishop of Sydney until he took up office.

When Bishop Freeman came to Armidale, he had already served as an Auxiliary Bishop in Sydney, and was involved in radio talks and writing a column in the Catholic Weekly. He was 61 when he became Bishop of Armidale, three years after the Second Vatican Council. Some might say he was so deeply embedded in the pre-Conciliar models of priest and Bishop that he could not be expected to “change his stripes” in any major way in the post-conciliar church. But his way of being a Bishop was in some ways ahead of his preconciliar contemporaries, as he was not one to “stand on ceremony” and he embodied the call of Vatican II for bishops to see their priests as “brothers and friends” (Decree on Priests, n.7), just as Christ Our Lord called the Apostles “friends” not servants. Likewise in regard to laity, he seems to have lived out the conciliar call on the Bishop to be “father and pastor”, and to “stand in the midst of his people as one who serves”.

When Bishop Freeman first came to Armidale, his relatively brief addresses were something of a shock to our Diocese, as Bishop Doody’s talks were never brief. Bishop Freeman was of that rare breed of speaker that said a lot, and said it well, in few well-chosen words, avoiding the style of providing “a river of words, but a trickle of ideas”.

Bishop Freeman painstakingly crafted his addresses and delivered them without consulting his notes. He was blessed with a ready sense of humour and a quick wit. He was a gentle and compassionate leader.

He was so appreciated in Armidale that he was invited to receive the ancient honour of “Freedom of the City of Armidale”. In typical humorous comment he noted that it entitled him “to sell fish in Beardy Street without a license!”.

Check out our Diocesan website

armidale.catholic.org.au
How many times have you received something special from a complete stranger? What’s it like to receive a gift from someone you have never met? We sometimes take for granted when a stranger lets us into the queue at the supermarket or when you are waiting to enter a busy road and another motorist stops their car and waves you to enter their lane of traffic.

The world is full of people who give the gift of generosity in a generous and joyful way to help another. God’s generous gift to all mankind was to give us his Son. A universal symbol of what we all strive to live for. To bring good to the world, to live our lives focused on the light of Christ. As Pope Benedict XVI said “If we invite Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great.”

As young men and women prepare their life ahead, they search, ask questions, wonder and dream of their future life. There are questions of Marriage, Single life, Religious life, Priesthood.

To give is to do so joyfully with an open heart, not to expect that it will hurt us but will help us grow, to give whether it be a smile to a stranger or to offer your life in a religious vocation to the Church will bring great joy to the heart of the giver.

It is important to know and believe that God is not out to take something away from us but that he rejoices in your gift of ourselves to him a simple act of kindness or through the Church in our community.

The joy I celebrate each day as a priest is knowing in my heart, I have to the best of my ability, somewhere, somehow given a glimmer of hope to a lost soul, I have through my ministry helped a person see the way out of darkness into light, I have offered the gift of comfort to someone in the time of grief. And the gift I treasure the most in my life as a priest is Celebrating the Sacraments and the most beautiful of these is the Holy Mass with my congregation.

As priests are called to give and share their lives joyfully, so too all peoples are invited to give joyfully to one another. We all live out the sacraments gifted to us from Baptism to Confirmation, Marriage and Ordination.

The Church is made up of all kinds of people. From the Laity to the Ordained Clergy. Everyone has the opportunity to live out their lives in the splendour of Christ. The light of the world.

May we treasure the joy of giving in the hearts of all and never be afraid to accept the invitation that comes from God. May we be generous in sharing these gifts!

God our Father, we pray that those you are calling to serve you as priests and religious, may be ready to receive your invitation to accept your gift to the church and the world.

May we open our hearts to hear your call and answer it with generosity.

Through Christ Our Lord.

Amen

Fr Anthony Koppman
William Ronald Clegg MBE OAM was one of the great figures in Gunnedah’s history through the 20th century.

Although he retired from public life when he stepped down from Gunnedah Shire Council in 1999, his community spirit remained on show through the glorious floral display that he continued to maintain on the roundabout outside his home which is affectionately known as “Cleggie’s roundabout”.

He was elected to Gunnedah Municipal Council in 1956 and retired in September 1999, after 43 years’ continuous service. He was Deputy Mayor for five terms and Mayor from 1969 to 1980.

When the Gunnedah Municipal and Liverpool Plains Shire Council were combined to form Gunnedah Shire Council in 1980, he was the first President of the new body, remaining at the helm until September 1982 when he stepped down because of a bout of ill-health.

Bill Clegg’s civic career paralleled that of former Mayor Frank O’Keefe MP – between them Frank and Bill were at the helm of Gunnedah for more than 30 years. Though very different in stature, and even in method, they shared a passion for the advancement of the town.

For almost 20 years (1969-88), Bill was Namoi Division Controller for State Emergency Services, co-ordinating the valley response to a series of major floods through the 1970s.

His involvement with SES was recognised in October 2000 with the naming of the new headquarters of SES and Rural Fire Service (RFS) as the Bill Clegg Emergency Services Centre.

He was the driving force in setting up the North West Tourist Association in 1963, attending the first official state tourism conference at Manly in 1964, when the NSW Council of Regional Tourist Associations was formed and was the second person to be elected Vice-President, a position he held for 16.

In 1983, was presented with the Ron Murdock Memorial Award for services to tourism and was honoured with life membership of the NSW Tourist association in 1989.

Bill’s father Colin came from Broken Hill and his mother Ada (nee Nader) was from the southern highlands. Born in Goulburn, on September 9, 1929, Bill, grew up an only child - his younger brother Fred died in infancy from whooping cough.

Bill spent his early years in Barraba and moved to Gunnedah with his parents when he was eight. He was a proud ex-student of St Xavier’s School and St Mary’s College and the Sisters of Mercy held a special place in his heart.

Bill’s father saw active service with the AIF in New Guinea and during those long, weary war years, Bill became a symbol of hope for many families as he recorded messages from POWs on the Japanese Radio Shonan, and passed them on to grateful relatives in hand-written letters.

Bill entered the workforce as an employee at Clegg and Tyrell and when Tom Tyrell died in 1949, he formed a partnership with his father. When the business was sold to Good Year in 1965, the Cleggs opened Gunnedah’s second motel, the Red Chief.

He never lost his enthusiasm for radio, however, working as a casual announcer at Radio Station 2MO for about six years.

Over a period of more than 40 years, there was hardly a local organisation that did not benefit from Bill’s energy, experience and enterprise – the war memorial pool, the indoor heated pool and the Remembrance Grove.

Away from Local Government, Bill was a devout Catholic and a staunch supporter of St Joseph’s Parish and the local Catholic schools. He attended the inaugural meeting of the Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement in August 1947 and was a delegate at the national conference. He served on the national executive until 1957. Bill told many people that he applied the principles of the YCW to his role as Mayor - see judge act.

Bill was a founding Board member of the Armidale Diocesan Investment Group.

In 1976, he was awarded an MBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours for his services to the community, especially the SES. This was followed by the Order of Australia Medal in 2003.

In January 2000, Bill Clegg was presented with a special Centenary Award at the Australia Day dinner, former Mayor Gae Swain describing him as the “heart and soul” of Gunnedah.

The farewell celebration of Bill’s life at St Joseph’s Catholic Church, Gunnedah was followed by a private cremation. The SES formed a guard of honour.

**Contributed by Marie Hobson**
On the third Sunday of Easter it had been arranged that we would attend Mass at San Paolo fuori le mura (Saint Paul’s outside the walls) Basilica. The Mass was a grand event because Pope Francis was to celebrate it, and there was some excitement in the house.

We gathered at the side gate to the Basilica, having found our way through part of the large crowd, then were led to seats set aside for us in the left transept of the vast building. We were sitting with people we recognized from the Basilica staff and the shops connected with it, as well as others. Across from us, in the other transepts, some cardinals were seated and behind them some of the concelebrants.

The high altar, beneath which is the tomb of Saint Paul, was to our right, the presiding chair to our left in the apse. The apse is decorated with a splendid mosaic of Christ enthroned and flanked by the Apostles. The tiny figure of Pope Honorius III can be seen kissing the toe of Christ. Rondels of mosaic in a long frieze show the faces of the Popes up till Pope Benedict XVI. There has not been time yet to add the likeness of Pope Francis in the next blank space.

There was an enormous crowd in the Basilica. The five vast naves hold thousands of people and when Pope Francis came into the Basilica through one of its gigantic bronze doors there was a cheer. In the procession were members of the seminary - the deacons who were ministers of Holy Communion and some acolytes from the third year as well as two deacons who were to help at the altar and some of the formators. The procession halted at the tomb of Saint Paul, Pope Francis descended to the tomb and prayed. As yet we could not see him.

Behind and above us was a gallery set up for the photographers and when Pope Francis appeared after leaving the tomb and climbing the few steps to the transepts there was a flurry of shutters opening and closing. There was a beautiful Mass in Italian with the sung parts in Gregorian chant, led by the Sistine Choir and a cantor. It was an inspiring occasion and Pope Francis gave his homily with gentle encouragement.

After communion and the end of the Mass we were readying ourselves to return to the college when our Bursar brought out a sheaf of passes to meet the Pope - we had only known that he might greet us in some way, none of us expecting that we might get to meet him face to face. We were herded down the side of the building along with the Saint Paul’s staff to await him as they prepared a room for the meetings. One by one we filed in and he greeted us and asked that each one pray for him, or said a word or two, or was asked for prayers. It lasted for each one only a moment or two but everyone came away buoyant and grateful.

Philip Fleming is a seminarian for the Armidale Diocese studying in Rome

Dear God,

before I sleep

I want to thank you for this day so full of your kindness and your joy

I close my eyes to rest safe in your loving care.

Amen
Dillon's Plumbing Pty Ltd

PLUMBING
- Taps and Toilets
- Blocked Drains – Full Time Technicians
- CCTV Drain Inspections
- Vaporooter Root Inhibitor
- Burst Pipes
- Hot Water Units – Solar, Gas and Electric
- Scald Prevention Valves
- Asbestos Removal
- Bathroom Renovations
- Waterproofing
- Leaking Showers
- Septic Systems
- Waste Water Treatment Systems
- Water Pumps
- Electronic Leak Detection
- Electronic Service Location

ROOFING
We Install and Repair
- Roofs/Gutters
- Downpipes
- Flashings
- Metal Cladding

GAS FITTING
- Appliance Service and Repairs
- LP and Natural Gas Installations

TANKS
Sales and Installation
- Largest Selection in the North West
- 110 Gallon to 70,000 Gallon
- Steel, Plastic, Round, Slimline, Underground and Underdeck

Laser Plumbing Tamworth
35 Avro Street, Tamworth
NORTH WEST INLAND | NEW ENGLAND
Fax: 6765 2378
tamworth@laserplumbing.com.au
www.tamworth.laserplumbing.com.au
Phone: 6765 3235
LIc No. 52034c

“Totally Dependable”
MAINTENANCE IS OUR SPECIALTY
24 Hour Emergency Service
- Quality Work
- Prompt and Reliable Service
- Large Range of Services

Winner of the ‘Joblink Plus Quality Business Awards – Service/Trade’

Laser Plumbing Tamworth
has joined the Laser network
of companies trading as
Laser Plumbing Tamworth
There’s no change to our great team or the quality products and services that we offer, just a fresh new look and extra systems to match our growing and dynamic company.
Catholic Mission has officially launched its 2013 Propagation of the Faith Church Appeal with the theme ‘Do not be afraid... I will rescue you.’ This campaign highlights the missionary response to the desperate reality of child trafficking and child labour in India and throughout the world. All donations raised from the appeal will be used to fund Catholic Mission’s work with communities in over 160 countries around the world; providing vital support that assists whole parishes in their pastoral work.

The campaign centres on the incredible work of Sister Clara Devaraj and her fellow Salesian sisters who work tirelessly in Chennai (formerly known as Madras) to rescue young girls from the tragic circumstances associated with extreme poverty; providing them with a safe and caring environment at their Marialaya Children’s Home.

Every day countless young children are stolen from or sold by, their families into domestic work and prostitution against their will. Many are also forced to become street beggars just to survive. Some even have their precious body organs forcibly removed and sold on the black market. Distressingly, these innocent children are seen simply as commodities.

The sisters provide a nurturing home for these young, often traumatised girls, in addition to counselling, medical care, education and spiritual formation. For them, faith and action go together, so their aim is to protect these children and to encourage them to see their worth as a beloved child of God.

“Working with children at risk gives much satisfaction and makes a person fulfilled,” says Sister Clara. “It is a mission where there are a lot of opportunities to live like Jesus by being compassionate, forgiving, and caring to the youth and children who are under our care and protection without any expectation.”

For further information visit www.catholicmission.org.au/rescue. To watch the campaign DVD visit www.catholicmission.org.au/rescueDVD or contact Linda Hanrahan, Diocesan Director on 6771-3517 or missions@arm.catholic.edu.au

Rescuing children in India
A New Dean

In May this year St Albert’s College welcomed a new Dean, Ms Kate Pigram, to the staff. Kate has had a long connection to the College, being a:

- former student and graduate of the College.
- former student leader of the College
- Part Time Marketing and Promotions Officer
- Dean of the College
- Member of the College’s Senior Common Room.

Thus she brings a long standing passion and wealth of experience to her new role.

She joins the Master and Counsellor as part of the Pastoral Care team of the College and also assists the Chaplaincy Team in the religious leadership of the College.

A Sad time for Albies

In late May, St. Albert’s was rocked by 7 deaths of people associated with the College. This included a current student Elizabeth Jefford who had been killed in a car accident, and the deaths of a recent ex student, 3 relatives of students and 2 fathers of staff at the College.

As many members of the College grieved the loss of friends and relatives the true benefit of being at a Catholic College became obvious. All of the College Staff, especially the Pastoral Care Team, as well as the student leaders stepped up and spent many hours monitoring the students under their care, counselling students and providing support to them as they came to grips with the reality of the situation they individually faced.

On the 23rd May the Pastoral Team and Chaplaincy Team, with the assistance of Fr. Richard Gleeson from the Cathedral Parish held a Memorial Service at the College for Elizabeth ‘Liz’ Jefford who had been killed in the car accident on May 20th. Every student at the College attended the service along with a number of Senior Common Room members and friends of the College. There were so many that they could not fit into the Junior Common Room and spilled out into the nearby corridors.

Together the College prayed for Liz and remembered her with special mention of all the good times the students had experienced with her. This allowed many of her friends to have closure and start to rebuild their lives without seeing her around every day. A number of staff and students were able to travel to Sydney to attend the Funeral Service for Liz Jefford which was carried out jointly by her School Chaplain and Fr. Anthony Koppman from St. Albert’s.

Albies is a very close-knit community that shows incredible support for all its residents both past and present. We will remember Liz fondly and all other members of the Albies community who have died but now move on with strength and a positive outlook towards the future whatever it may hold.

Maria, Ian & William Jefford, Liz’s parents and brother, wished us to thank the wider community for all the kind words of support and condolence they have received over the last month. They have indeed been overwhelmed by this support.
This poor man cried and the Lord heard

It is a privilege, an honour and a grace for me to be fully accepted into the service of the Diocese of Armidale – me, a refugee who fled from Vietnam by boat 24 years ago and settled in Australia.

My escape from Vietnam was in 1989, by boat and by night. I left behind my parents, brothers and sisters without even saying goodbye. For their safety as they would be persecuted by the harsh regime if they had known and not denounced my escape! In the darkness of the night over the Mekong River, I boarded a boat in search of freedom – freedom from discrimination, from persecution.

The first goal I had to achieve was to learn to speak the language of the land. I studied English at the ACU. And then, I applied for my first job. I worked at the Inter-Continental Hotel Concierge Department. I was able to contribute to Australia by paying tax.

Besides that practical but ordinary contribution of paying tax, I was always anxious to offer my time and my skills to serve Australia in a more effective way according to the call to the Priesthood infused within me. To respond to that call, I realised that I needed to equip myself with a degree of Theology.

I have learnt how to approach people in the deepest needs of their being. I have done Pastoral work in various parts of Australia, and then in the UK, Italy, for the Haitian Migrants in Canada, and lately I worked in New Zealand. It has been a blessing for me to work with people in refugee camps, in Long Bay Correctional Centre, in nursing homes.

Three years ago, I was employed as a Pastoral Worker at St Nicholas Parish, Tamworth. I had the chance to work in Kootingal, Nemingha, Dungowan, Woolomin, Nundle, Moree, and lately in Armidale as Deacon.

One Sunday, I brought the Holy Communion to two elderly in Nemingha. I found their house so cold. Our prayer and the rites and conversation went on as usual. When I was about to leave them, they gave me an envelope saying: “We appreciate your visit. Please take this sum of money to pay for petrol”. That sincere gesture had touched my heart straightaway. I replied: “Thank you for your kind consideration. However, please don’t be upset if I tell you to use it to pay for your heater instead”... Their face shone with happiness. They were happy because they have been cared about. I was happy because I truly cared for them. We stood silently for a moment as if we were savouring the blessing of coming to know each other...

In that moment I understood better the words of the Psalm 34: “The Lord hears the cry of the poor”. We, the needy, care for each other in the name of our Lord Jesus! Yes, I am so blessed to be able to serve the people of this land – and my land too – in my humble way as a refugee, a poor man!

*Contributed by Fr Tuan Tran our newly ordained priest*
Focus on Walgett Parish

The “Year of Grace” for Walgett parish was indeed fulfilling as the ‘mother of grace’ our Blessed Mother watched over us all these years.

We were blessed with everything we need in life even if all our dreams did not come true. Nice to know participation in the Mass on Sundays increased.

The Sacramental life of the parish also showed signs that Walgett parish is still alive and kicking. The parish is a far and wide with long roads to travel between all the centres in which Mass is celebrated. As we travel we need to be keen and sharp as kangaroos and emus are watching you coming.

The eight places we are catering to at present are vibrant and small catholic communities. The people will always inspire anyone with their hospitality and unwavering faith. The moments we share together as a parish always brings back the memories of our active parish life.

Shaun Hamilton
Funerals

Nearly 30 years of supporting Catholic families with sympathy, dignity and respect

Tamworth, Quirindi, Werris Creek, Gunnedah, Manilla & Surrounding Districts

- Traditional or contemporary funeral services to suit your family's individual requirements
- Pre-arranged and prepaid funeral bonds available

6746 2222 All Hours

Not associated with or connected to any other funeral company bearing the name Hamilton
It is part of NSW Department Education and Communities legislation that all catechists or State School Special Religious Education Teachers (SRE) are required to teach from an approved Religious Education Curriculum. Earlier in the year the Diocesan CCD Commission with Bishop Kennedy reviewed available SRE Curriculums and following this review Bishop Kennedy has announced that from the beginning of the 2014 school year State School catechists in the Diocese of Armidale will teach from the ‘Christ Our Light and Life’ Kindergarten – Year 12 Curriculum developed and produced by CCD Archdiocese of Sydney. The curriculum provides clear and direct Catholic teaching, includes a teachers manual and student books with 32 sequenced lessons and supplementary Interactive Whiteboard resources. Catechists in the Diocese of Armidale will be introduced to the new curriculum in the second half of this year in preparation for implementation in 2014. If you are interested in the new curriculum and would like to know more about the ministry of State School catechetics please speak to your Parish Priest or Parish SRE Coordinator.

**CCRESS Meeting in Canberra**

The Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn hosted the first CCRESS Conference for 2013. CCRESS, is the Catholic Conference of Religious Educators in State Schools. During the Conference, CCRESS members were addressed by Mr. Francis Sullivan – CEO Catholic Church’s Truth Justice and Healing Council who spoke about “Child Protection, teachers/volunteers and the Royal Commission into Sexual Abuse”.

Mr. Sullivan reflected on Psalm 51—a psalm which takes you to the centre of the faith pilgrimage to the centre to the heart of God.

He referred to the process of the Psalm as spiritual basis to the process of the Council and the task of the Catholic Church. We are called to offer a shattered spirit—to offer hurt and brokenness—offer our true self. We need to remain with the process and the issue—despite the pain, hurt, embarrassment that it brings.

During the CCRESS Conference, members were also brought up to date with 2 major projects currently underway. Firstly with financial support and backing from the NSW / ACT Bishops Conference CCRESS has developed Interactive Whiteboard Lesson material and resources to support the teaching of the SRE Curriculum. These resources will be made available to Diocesan catechists with Smartboard training in preparation for the 2014 school year. Secondly, CCRESS have also been developing online Catechist training modules to help support the training of catechists to a basic standard which is required by DEC Legislation. It is hoped and expected that the training modules should be completed by end of 2013.

**CCRESS delegates from across NSW and ACT Dioceses**
Centres of Charity are operating where donated goods are collected, sorted and sold to provide funds for distribution to those in need in the community. The distribution of material assistance to those in need is undertaken by volunteer members who work in small groups called Conferences.

When Conferences, whose primary work is caring for those in need by way of home visitation or interviewing clients, in the privacy of an interview room, decide that there is a need to provide a more in-depth concentration of effort they establish a “Special Work”. Centres of Charity are one such special work and Freeman House in Armidale is another form of special work.

**St. Augustine’s Conference**

Formed in 1979 to begin the work of Freeman House to support people who at that time were mainly suffering from alcohol addiction. The record of achievement of success in assisting people to regain their dignity and resume their place in the community is a very proud one and will be further enhanced when the rebuilding of the facility is completed.

Reform is underway to support the paid professional staff at Freeman House by adding the “Vincentian” dimension of caring for clients especially as they exit the programme.

**Frederic Ozanam’s Birthday.** The founder of The St. Vincent de Paul Society in 1833 was a 20 year old University student named Frederic Ozanam. In order to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Frederic’s birth on April 23rd 1813 there were celebrations all over the world in the countries where the Society has Conferences.

In Armidale a special mass was celebrated by Fr. Gleeson. On this day of celebration, for Vincentians, the newly elected President of the Armidale Region, Paul Johnstone was commissioned by Fr. Gleeson to accept the responsibilities of guiding the regional members for the next four years. The symbols of this special office - rule book of the Society, lighted candle representing the light of Christ, bible as a reference and bread as a symbol of the assistance that we give to the needy.

*Contributed by Don Hewitt*
Around and About

Blessed buildings
Bishop Kennedy, Aboriginal Elder - Elizabeth Conners, primary school captains Darcy Goddard and Joseph Thompson, Principal Val Thomas and John Mula at the the blessing and opening of six refurbished early learning classrooms at Holy Trinity School Inverell.

Sports stars at Quirindi
Huge congratulations to Nikola Holz who made it through to Polding level in cross country. Charlie Kell is attending trials for swimming in Sydney and Catriona Cox made it through to with the soccer team that travelled to Bathurst. Well done to all of our sports stars.

More stars from Walcha
Qualifiers for Diocesan team - Brhenin Sweeney (second in 12 years boys), Matilda Hall (third in 9 years girls), Joe Kermode

Life savers
Year 5/6 class at Mungindi purchased 7 Lifestraws with money raised from Term 1 morning tea fundraiser and donations. These Lifestraws are water filters that make dirty water safe to drink.
Around and About

Success!
St Nicholas Primary School Tamworth Year 6 students participated in a Leadership Day.
The students participated in a range of discussions, activities and games involving collaboration, team work. Banners were created with student’s own quotes of inspiration. Each banner will be displayed for a fortnight to remind us of the great leadership qualities we can all foster and develop in our day-to-day interactions.

Senior moments
Students from the Year 4/5/6 class at St Joseph’s Uralla have formed a Mini Vinnies group at the invitation of their class teacher Mrs Kelly Walters. One initiative of the group is to visit the local aged care facility, McMaugh Gardens, on a regular basis. The students give up their lunch break on a Monday three times per term to spend time with this lovely group of senior citizens.

Bear Hunt
Kindergarten at St Joseph’s West Tamworth have been having a wonderful time sharing the book ‘Going on a Bear Hunt’ by Michael Rosen. This week they were lucky to have a visit from THE BEAR, who had lots of great moves when joining in the reading of the story.

Warialda on the move
St Joseph’s Warialda students travelled to Tamworth to compete at the Diocesan Gala Day in netball and soccer.
The children had a fantastic day and are already working on their skills for next year.
St Joseph’s Warialda Netball Girls were ready for action as they prepared to travel to Tamworth. Both teams enjoyed the chance to compete at this level. Watch out for them in future years and upcoming events.
Family Mass

St Mary’s College Gunnedah hosted the St Joseph’s Parish Family Mass. There were a good number of staff and students in attendance and St Mary’s students led the singing and the liturgy of the word. Staff, students and parishioners enjoyed a light supper in the parish hall after Mass. This program of Family Masses assists in building strong ties between the Parish and the College and there were some very encouraging comments after Mass to indicate this objective was being enhanced this year.

St Mary’s Green Thumbs

St Mary’s Armidale has started up a Junior Landcare group this year - The ‘Green Thumbs’. We have a very enthusiastic group of 30 students. With donated raised vegetable patch, soil, gardening tools and vegetable and herb we hope to have some produce to harvest soon. We are planning on cooking and eating our vegies! Yum!

Blowing the Sax

St Francis Xaviers students represented the school at the Narrabri Eisteddfod recently. The Infants choir, school band and woodwind ensemble-saxophones gained 1st placing, Primary choir and Flutes came second, and the Clarinet group achieved a Highly Commended.

Holy Communion

Children from Mary Help of Christian’s parish South Tamworth received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. All children participated in a reverent manner and responded clearly throughout the Mass. Thanks to all who prayed for the children and all who celebrated this day with them, especially their families who came to give their support and prayers for the children.
I am now half way through my course at the University of Saint Paul in Ottawa, Canada. People in the Church tend to wonder: “What’s the point of studying canon law?”.

Canon law has a very long history in the life of the Church, really beginning with certain texts in the Acts of the Apostles. However, the present Code of Canon Law, promulgated by Pope John Paul II in 1983, traces its origins to an announcement made by Pope John XXIII on 25 January 1959 to a small audience in the Benedictine Abbey which adjoins the papal basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls. His Holiness declared that three events would take place: a Council of the Universal Church (which would become known as the Second Vatican Council), a Synod of the Diocese of Rome, and a revision of the (1917) Code of Canon Law.

My time in Ottawa has been very fruitful both scholastically and in terms of meeting priests, religious and lay people from all over the English speaking part of the Church and some of the French speaking countries. I have little to report to date in the way of travel, beyond a winter’s day trip to Montreal with my Australian classmate Fr. Matthew Muller of Newcastle in temperatures below -30C. Ottawa itself is a great city for cycling with an abundance of picturesque cycle paths. I am also fortunate to have two heated swimming pools nearby, one at the university and one at the YMCA. I do occasionally visit the statue of Canada’s first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, which stands in the grounds of the Canadian Houses of Parliament. “Sir John A.”, as he is known to Canadians, was a first cousin of my great-great-grandfather. My great-grandfather, also John Alexander Macdonald, migrated to Central Queensland from eastern Canada circa 1890.

I will make a brief trip to New York in mid-July, the home town of one of my great-grandmothers. Whilst there I’ll see Socceroo Tim Cahill play for New York Red Bulls against my “local” team Montreal. With two of eight grandparents coming from South-Eastern Canada/North-Eastern USA, I suppose I could say that I am one quarter North American!

As part of the research for my thesis, I shall also be visiting the Faculty of Canon Law of the Catholic University at Leuven in Belgium in early June. Leuven claims to be the world’s oldest extant continuously Catholic university. From there I might make the short trip on to Rome where I shall renew acquaintances at the Beda College, including our own seminarian Philip Fleming.

A message from Canada – Fr John Macdonald

Safe travels to our WYD Rio pilgrims.

May your time be full of blessings.
The purpose of menALIVE is to bring men together, to renew their faith in God, and to encourage them to become an active force within the Church.

**MEN’S WEEKEND**

This event is an opportunity for men to renew their faith and review what matters most in their lives. I look forward to meeting you there. - Bishop Kennedy

The menALIVE Men’s Weekend allows men to explore what makes them feel fully alive. The experience is powerful and dynamic. Many men are inspired and encouraged with a new sense of purpose. The weekend is organised by men in your community and conducted by an experienced team of menALIVE leaders. It is suitable for all men from 18 years of age.

**Sat 24 - Sun 25th August 2013**

Venue: St Mary’s School Hall (St. Anne’s)  
Jessie St, Armidale NSW 2350

**For more information**

Mob: 0447 172 010 or 0405 297 000  
Email: armidalemenalive@gmail.com

This is not a live in weekend - participants go home on Saturday night.

www.menalive.org.au
Rediscover God’s presence & purpose for your life

The menALIVE Men’s Weekend is an opportunity for men to explore what makes them feel fully alive.

During the weekend, the menALIVE team will share about their lives, the challenges they face and the hope they have discovered in seeking to walk this journey with God.

Perhaps the most important thing the weekend offers is space for men to reflect and opportunities to share with one another about themselves and their lives.

The experience of the weekend is powerful and dynamic and many men are inspired and encouraged with a new sense of purpose and mission.

The weekend is organised by men in your local community and conducted by an experienced team of menALIVE leaders. It is suitable for all men from 18 years of age.

For more information visit: www.menalive.org.au

about menALIVE

menALIVE is a National Christian Ministry to Men which was founded out of a response to a great need in the hearts and lives of men, and a great need in the life of the Christian Church.

The purpose of menAlive is to bring men together, to renew their faith in God and to encourage them to become an active force within the Church.

Through a variety of events and programs, men are invited to explore what God would want for their lives and how they might come to experience the fullness of life that God wants for us all.

menALIVE Men’s Weekend

Sat 24 - Sun 25th August 2013
St Mary’s School Hall (St. Anne’s), Jessie St, Armidale

Program
SATURDAY
8 am - 8:45 Registration
9 pm End of Day #1
(Morning Tea, Lunch and BBQ Dinner Provided)

SUNDAY
8:30 am Start
12:30 pm Mass
1:30 pm Finish
(Morning Tea Provided)

Investment
$70 per person ($50 per student)
Includes: Workshops (including all materials), morning and afternoon teas, lunch (Sat) and BBQ dinner on Saturday.

RSVP
by Friday 16th August 2013

Enquiries
If you have any questions please contact:
the Armidale menALIVE Team on:
0447 172 010 or 0405 297 000
Email: armidalemenalive@gmail.com

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Address

Phone

Mobile

Email

Date of Birth

Parish

Payment:

☐ I have attached a cheque for $________
Cheques made payable to: St Mary & Joseph’s Cathedral Parish
☐ I wish to be contacted to discuss other payment methods (Direct Deposit, Visa/Mastercard, Cash)

Please send your completed Registration Form (and cheque) to:
Ms Tina Clarke
St Mary & Joseph’s Cathedral Parish
P.O. Box 93, Armidale, NSW 2350
smarjos@bigpond.com
Ph: 6772 2218

RSVP
by Friday 16th August 2013
News for Women

Gardasil Vaccinations

Catholic Women’s League is disturbed about the response of the Therapeutic Goods Administration to concerns expressed regarding the Gardasil vaccinations on young women and girls.

One of these concerns is their inability to confirm whether or not, as has been reported, premature menopause in trials on young girls has occurred.

There are also reports that cases of premature menopause have occurred in the UK and the USA following Gardasil vaccination.

If a young woman is taking the contraceptive pill, it may not be until she ceases contraception in order to conceive that we will detect the full and future significance of this possible problem.

Gardasil vaccination was fast tracked, requiring only a 6-month approval process. One in three such drugs are withdrawn from the market for safety reasons. (ref: Arch Int Med 2012 online Oct 8th ).

More research is required on Gardasil and more information should be provided for informed consent, but until then advice should be forthcoming that its reproductive safety has not been assessed in women and girls.

Shame for Tasmania

The Lower House of the Tasmanian Parliament has accepted the “Reproductive Health” Bill allowing abortion for any reason up to 16 weeks gestation. Moreover, this legislation shields the abortion industry.

Doctors and counsellors may be fined or de-registered if they don’t refer mothers to someone who will arrange their abortion when requested.

World Congress of Families Declaration

The delegates of the World Congress of Families VII, assembled in Sydney Australia, affirmed that the sustained prosperity and happiness of nations rests on the foundation of strong natural families.

The declaration emphasised that a family-centred economy requires the following basic framework:

- The economy should serve the family rather than the family being a servant of the economic system and the state.

- A strong domestic, household economy is a true measure of a healthy society and the basis of a robust economy;

- Economic policies should enable families to hold productive property and to be independent of the welfare state.

- Employers and governments need to respect the needs of natural families in their wage and labour policies.

- Market policies should support and encourage entrepreneurial innovation, ensure low barriers of entry into small business, and guard against excessive concentration of economic power and financial instability.

- Family-owned businesses should be encouraged as part of a market economy.
Pope Francis has created the first saints of his reign, canonising some 800 Italian martyrs who refused to convert to Islam in the 15th Century.

The new saints include Italian cobbler Antonio Primaldo, who was killed by Ottoman forces, along with an estimated 800 others, for refusing to convert to Islam in the town of Otranto in 1480. Most of the dead remain anonymous.

“While we venerate the martyrs of Otranto, ask God to support the many Christians who still suffer from violence and give them the courage and faith to respond to evil with goodness,” the Pope said, referring to the persecution of Christians.

The new Pope also canonised Colombia’s Laura di Santa Caterina da Siena Montoya y Upegüila, and Mexico’s Maria Guadalupe Garcia Zavala, who both died in the 20th century.

The two women founded religious orders and devoted their lives to helping the poor, the sick and native peoples.

Hundreds of Colombians and Mexicans travelled to the Vatican, with some Mexican nuns in the crowd sporting wide-brimmed sombreros.

Edited from an article by AFP

14,000 Seminarians need your help

Celebrate the Year of Faith by supporting seminarians where the Church is poor, persecuted or threatened.

The promotion of priestly formation is one of the highest priorities of the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN).

Each year ACN assists with the training of over 14,000 seminarians worldwide. The African continent, for instance, unlike many Western countries, is witnessing a lively flow of new vocations in the seminaries.

But this good news is tempered by the fact that due to the current economic crisis, many seminaries in the poorer parts of the world are struggling to survive. The poverty is great and often means suitable candidates being turned away, since their families nor their bishops have the funds to support their training.

It is vital to the future of the Church that not one vocation to the priesthood goes astray due to lack of finance. They are the future of Christ’s Holy Catholic Church.

The average grant ACN gives to a seminarian is $500 – but whatever you can afford will be enormously appreciated. ACN forwards the donations directly to a local bishop or the rectors of the seminaries. You can be assured of their prayers both now and when they come to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Anyone able to help this cause will be sent a complementary Year of Faith rosary blessed by Pope Benedict XVI.

To send your donation please fill in the coupon below and tick the box if you would like to receive the complementary Year of Faith rosary. An inspirational leaflet explaining the design of the rosary also accompanies the gift set.

Aid to the Church in Need … a Catholic charity dependent on the Holy See, providing pastoral relief to needy and oppressed Churches

The Year of Faith rosary designed by the Vatican rosary makers will be sent out to all those who assist this cause and tick this box.
Members of the National Planning Team and Diocesan Coordinators for the Year of Grace from across Australia recently met for the final national meeting. The ‘Year of Grace’ was a special initiative of the Australian Catholic Bishops inviting all members of the Catholic Church in Australia to enter with them into a special year of prayer, reflection and contemplation. The meeting gave the opportunity for coordinators to share their Diocesan experience of the Year of Grace and to discern what may be some of the fruits of the past year. During the meeting, members of the National Planning Team also spoke about the special liturgy ‘Called to Holiness’ that is being planned for ‘All Saints Day’ as a way of bringing to completion to two special initiatives ‘Year of Grace’ and ‘Year of Faith’. The National Planning Team also spoke about a national survey which has been launched as an attempt to discern the fruits of the Year of Grace from across Australia and to capture the hopes and dreams for the Church from Catholics across Australia. It is expected that responses from the survey will be collated and key messages sent to the Bishops of Australia for their discernment.

Pentecost Sunday marked the official end of the Year of Grace, an initiative of the Australian Catholic Bishops. The National Planning Team for the Year of Grace is keen to identify, nurture and harvest the fruits of the Year of Grace. As the Book of Revelation exhorts us (chs. 2-3) we want to “listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.” A simple survey has been prepared, you are asked to spend a few minutes sharing your experiences.

- What difference has the Year of Grace made in your life?
- Share a moment of grace you have experienced
- What do you believe the Holy Spirit is now calling our Church to be and to do?
- What signs of hope and good news do you experience now in our Church and world?

Go to this website link to complete the survey: [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/yearofgrace](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/yearofgrace)

Your responses will be collated and key messages sent to the Bishops of Australia for their discernment.
What did you learn today?

It is hard to believe that we are already into June and those frosty days, it means we are nearly at the end of Term 2 at school. For many parents this means that it is time for the half year Parent Teacher Meeting.

The parent teacher interview, a twice yearly ritual in most of our school communities, is for many families their only chance to meet face-to-face with teachers. These opportunities need to be carefully planned to be as productive and collaborative as possible. So, while these meetings often take place after the twice yearly written school report, the meeting is the opportunity to provide and seek information that is not contained in that report. A meeting that simply repeats what is already in the report is a wasted opportunity.

We know that when parents and teachers work in partnership, especially when parents are engaged in their children’s learning, those children do better at school. The parent teacher interview is a great opportunity for relationship building with parents and teachers so that engagement grows in new and meaningful ways. Our students’ voices are also vital in this process as they bring a very personal perspective that can enrich these conversations.

So what can we do as parents to prepare for the meeting? Some helpful tips come from the Council of Catholic School Parents Partners4 Learning Website www.partners4learning.edu.au. These tips have been adapted from the Harvard Family Research Project 2009.

- Reflect: Think about the meeting in advance and set a goal for what you want to achieve.
- Prepare: Talk to your child. Identify questions to ask, such as: Is my child achieving at the appropriate level? What do you see as his or her strengths?
- Acknowledge the role of the teacher: Acknowledge that the teacher has many students that they are responsible for. Let them now you appreciate the opportunity to meet with them about your child.
- Be Proactive: As to see examples of the students’ work. Ask how work is assessed or graded. Ask what you can do at home to help your child. Find out what services are available at the school to help your child. Ask how the teacher will both challenge your child and support your child when he or she needs it.
- Share: Be sure to share your thoughts and feelings about your child. Share with the teacher what you think your child is good at. Explain what you think they need more help with.

A Parent Perspective

- Make an action plan: Agree on a plan with the teacher. Write it down – noting especially what you will do to support the teacher/school at home. Schedule a follow up meeting if necessary.
- Follow up with your child: Talk to your child about how the meeting went. Share what you learned. Show them how you will help them with learning at home. As for his or her suggestions.
- As parents we are recognised in our Church documents as the primary teachers of our children. The 1997 Vatican document The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium states:

Parents have a particularly important part to play in the educating community, since it is to them that primary and natural responsibility for their children’s education belongs. Therefore it is necessary to foster initiatives which encourage commitment, but which provide the right sort of concrete support which the family needs and which involve it in the Catholic school’s educational project. The constant aim of the school therefore should be contact and dialogue with the pupils’ families.

Make the most of the Parent Teacher meeting this time around, become an active partner in your children’s learning and don’t forget to ask them “What did you learn at school today?”

Catherine Ible.
Great interest in Vatican II talks
Bishop begins series around Diocese

In May Bishop Kennedy began his series of talks on Vatican II. These talks are being held around the Diocese in various parishes. Around 70 people attended the Inverell talk with many parishioners travelling from surrounding parishes. In Tamworth 200 people gathered from Tamworth and the surrounding parishes.

The Bishop presented a very interesting and informed talk on the history and documents of the Council. He spoke to the main documents of the Council and each person present was given a handout which outlined the main aspects of these documents. As Paul Manvell said in his vote of thanks, after the Tamworth talk, this was the first time a bishop had been throughout the Diocese teaching in this way and asked the Bishop Kennedy to continue the practice. All were very impressed with the presentation. After the talk the Bishop took the opportunity to meet with many of those present.
For many years I have been conscious of a link between pain and vulnerability, seeing them as gifts in my search for spirituality. But what is spirituality? Spirituality “is a pattern by which we shape our lives to our experiences of God as a very real presence in and around us”.

At 8, I contracted rheumatic fever with mitral stenosis. In postwar Britain treatments were few and far between. I spent over a year at a heart hospital school with other children. Pain was not desirable, but accepted. It was never seen as a punishment from a cruel God and the question “why?” did not occur. It simply was.

My illness persisted and when 12, I was taken to Lourdes as a sick pilgrim through the kindness of a group of Catholic nurses. I was accommodated at the Asile (the pilgrim hospital within the Basilica grounds), away from the commercialism of the town. Even as a boy it was obvious I was in a special place; I witnessed a wondrous joy even though everyone was suffering from some ailment. It was a place of hope – not just for a miracle but hope in a loving God.

Paul Tournier wrote:

“A serious illness never leaves anyone the same as before. According to the spirit in which we have accepted the illness, we come out of it morally either weaker or stronger, even if our physical resistance remains impaired.”

I am not elevating pain to a realm to which it does not belong, rather seeing it as a catalyst that can focus understanding. Pain, suffering or isolation are often at the heart of spiritual experience as witnessed by the transformed lives of many saints. Through pain and suffering our senses are sharpened and lead us to the heart of spiritual experiences. Being open to the spirit, surprise encounters occur. To some extent we are controllers, or so we think. We are often frightened of letting go, but continue to believe that we are in charge of our lives. Yet we have no real control. We do not choose illness, pain or suffering. We have over-inflated ideas of our own capabilities in ego-centric lives.

Pain and suffering can be communal. I can experience pain and suffering as a member of the body of Christ, the Church. Bishop James Riley of Cairns reflected on the present state in his Easter message:

The Catholic Church generally has found itself in that ugly place; seeming to lecture/hector the wider community, while its own house is not in good order. The Church has seriously lost moral authority. Perhaps we have become deflected – seeming to stress particular moral behaviour rather than the basics of Christian faith and life.

Now the Church is in pain and vulnerable and must live with the consequences of past actions or inaction and place itself with the suffering Christ in the garden of Gethsemane. “Take this cup away from me, but let it be as you, not I would have it” (Mark 14:36). The words of Isaiah in the psalm of the suffering servant resonate:

Listen, you Deaf!
Look and see you blind!
Who is so blind as my servant,
so deaf as the messenger I send.
You have seen many things but not observed them;
Your ears are open but you do not hear.

Isaiah 42:18-19

The Church needs to renew itself and look towards God, not look inward. Because if we, the Church, are to become agents of change and grace in the world, that change is going to be measured not in kilometers but in millimeters. Like Francis of Assisi, we need to celebrate the ordinary – to recognize its life giving power. No longer a child, I see the value of pain and suffering as it leads towards hope – at one with the other virtues of faith and love.

Contributed by John Smythe This is an edited version of this paper – the full version can be found at armidale.catholic.org.au
Kids Kapers

PETER, PETER, HUMBLE PIE EATER!

Matthew 26.31-35, 69-75

Jesus loved Peter very much, but that didn’t stop Peter from denying his friendship with Jesus. Peter was sorry and wanted to talk to Jesus. Help Peter get to Jesus by following Jesus’ special message to Peter: I forgive you. Don’t cross over your own path as you go!

The Challenge

Start

FOR

G

R

E

O

R

V

E

I

E

E

E

E

YOU

Finish

The Super Challenge

Look for eight letters hidden on the sheep, roosters and fish. Unscramble the letters to discover what forgiveness helps us make.

a _______ _______ _______ _______ _______