

# V.Catholic viewpoint†

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DIOCESE OF ARMIDALE

## *Bishop Kennedy meets Pope Francis*



# An encounter with Pope Francis



## The Bishop Speaks

In late June I undertook my first *visit ad limina apostolorum* normally referred to more simply as an *Ad limina* visit, which all Bishops make to Rome to visit the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul and to meet with the Holy Father the Pope. The visit also includes meetings with the leadership and senior staff of the various ‘dicasteries’ which are offices that assist the Pope in governing the Universal Church in their various areas of responsibility.

Bishops traditionally made these visits every five years but in recent decades the visits have become spaced further apart with the last visit by the Bishops of Australia taking place in late 2011, just a few months before I became bishop of Armidale.

The highlight of the visit was the morning we celebrated Mass at the Tomb of Saint Peter in the crypt of the impressive Saint Peter’s Basilica before meeting with the Successor of Saint Peter, Pope Francis. I, with all the other Australian Bishops rose very early that morning for a quick breakfast and time to change into our formal episcopal attire, as protocol still dictates formal attire when meeting with the Pope. We travelled to Saint Peter’s in buses to arrive at 6.30 am for our 7.00 am Mass which we all concelebrated with Archbishop Coleridge our principal celebrant and homilist.

After Mass we gathered in a tight group around Saint Peter’s tomb, known as ‘the confession’ and together made our profession, or confession, of faith by reciting the Apostles Creed together. This was a very poignant moment and even an emotional experience for me.

After Mass there was a little spare time before our audience and meeting with the Pope. A number of us gathered at a small café just outside Saint Peter’s Square for a good Italian coffee. We were served by the friendliest Filipinos who seemed to own and

manage the café. In our colourful robes we attracted quite a bit of attention from the passers’ bye!

Seeing and photographing one of the colourful Swiss Guards is a must for every pilgrim and tourist visiting Rome. As we were being ushered through the Vatican Buildings and courtyards to meet the Pope, we were lucky enough to come across a whole troop of Swiss Guards on their way to a changing of the Guard. They may have been less in number than one sees at Buckingham Palace, but I must say they were far more impressive in their uniforms designed by Michelangelo.

Entering the audience room for our meeting we each had the opportunity to meet and greet Pope Francis personally, as we also did at the end of the meeting when he gave each of us a gift – a medallion and some rosary beads. I was able to assure him that the people of Armidale hold him in our prayers.

The word that best describes our more than two-hour meeting with Pope Francis is that it was an ‘encounter’. We encountered him and he encountered us! After some initial words in English he switched to Italian and was aided by a very skilled and relaxed interpreter. The conversation was free-flowing and he was happy to answer any and all of our questions and to discuss whatever issues we might raise.

The things we discussed together included the Church’s work to eliminate child sexual abuse and to accompany survivors; ministry to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; the forthcoming Plenary Council; the Sacrament of Confession; the participation of the lay faithful in the mission and governance of the Church; the importance of the Bishop’s relationship with his priests; and the need to find new ways of witnessing to Jesus Christ in a country deeply influenced by secularism and sometimes even hostility to the Church.

Front Cover: Bishop Kennedy meets Pope Francis in Rome



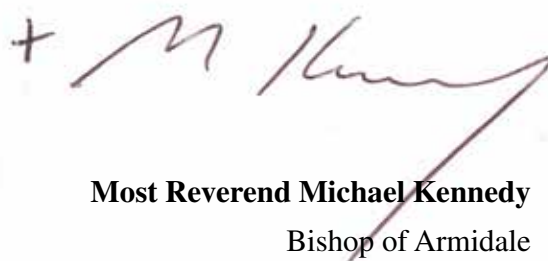


I had the sense that the Pope was well-aware of and understood our situation in Australia and that we are not alone in the difficulties we face. Throughout the conversation - or encounter – which was often serious, we also shared some mutual humour and some laughs. It was an encounter of joy, fraternity, shared responsibility, and encouragement. I left the meeting having had a tangible experience of the Successor of Saint Peter strengthening and encouraging the Bishops as successors of the Apostles.

I felt that the Ad limina visit also helped the Australian Bishops to grow in our communion with each other as individuals and as a group. This was greatly helped by a five-day silent retreat we made at the beginning of the visit. We spent our days together in prayer and reflection, breaking the silence only around the dinner table in the evening. It is a reminder that true and deep communion between people of faith is based on our shared experience of faith and our

relationship with God – not on conversation and chit chat, though these things certainly help too.

As much as I enjoyed my time with Pope Francis and my brother Bishops, I am very glad to be back home among the Priests and the faithful of the Diocese of Armidale.

+ 

**Most Reverend Michael Kennedy**  
Bishop of Armidale

# Snapshots from Bishop Kennedy's Ad Limina Visit in Rome



*Selfie with Bishop Columba Macbeth-Green in a café in Rome*



*The Bishops wait outside the audience room for their encounter with Pope Francis*



*Bishop Kennedy with Sr Carmel Spratt, Canon Gillespie (Rector) & Sr Bee Kennedy at Beda College in Rome*



*Four Bishop Michael's: Bishop Michael McCarthy, Bishop Michael McKenna, Bishop Michael Morrissey and Bishop Michael Kennedy*





*The magnificent view over the lake whilst on retreat in Ariccia just outside Rome*



*The Australian Bishops celebrate Mass in the Chapel of St Peter Chanel at Domus Australia*



*Visiting St Mary Major Basilica with Bishop McGuckin, Bishop Kennedy, Bishop Randazzo, Bishop Umbers, Bishop Saunders & Monsignor Entwistle*



# First Holy Communion

## St Edward's Parish, South Tamworth

St Edward's celebrated the Sacrament of First Holy Communion with the candidates from Year 3. What a special day in the faith life of our candidates who received Jesus for the first time in Holy Communion. May they know His love for them and go and share that love with others.

Special thanks to Fr. Paul McCabe, Deacon Paul Manvell, the Year 3 teachers from St. Edward's School and all of the lovely parents, friends and parish members who made this such a beautiful celebration for our children.

*Maye Hatton receives First Holy Communion from Fr Paul McCabe*



## St Francis Xavier's Parish Narrabri

Fifteen Year 3 children received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion in a beautiful, reverent celebration. The children were well prepared by the Stage 2 teachers and Father Sabu Pulimalayil. It was lovely to see so many family and friends supporting the children on such a cold, windy morning.

*The First Holy Communicants with their teacher, Mrs Michelle O'Connor, Principal Mr Michael Ball and Parish Priest Father Sabu Pulimalayil*



## St Nicholas' Parish Tamworth

*St Nicholas' First Holy Communion candidates from the Saturday Vigil Mass.*

The children of St Nicholas' Parish Tamworth received the Sacrament of First Holy Communion on the Solemnity of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. The candidates were 86 in number. Two Masses were therefore held because the church could not accommodate such a large number of candidates, their families and parishioners at one Mass. The first group attended 6.00pm Mass on Saturday, and the second group attended 9.30 am Mass on Sunday. A big congratulations to all the candidates and a huge thank you to Fr Chris Onuekwusi for presiding over each Mass.

## Catechists bring Light & Love of Christ Jesus to children



*Leonie Hansen & Anne Bowden teaching catechetics to Coby, Kayden and Byron Hobden at Kootingal Public School.*

We are truly blessed to have some amazingly generous people working in our Diocese, bringing the Light and Love of Christ Jesus to hundreds of young people who attend State schools in our region.

These Catechists (135 in all) teach Special Religious Education (or Scripture as previous generations may have known it) sharing the gift of their faith and give so generously of their time each week during school terms, are an excellent example of what it is to “spread the good news of the Risen Christ” in this day and age within The Church.

They faced quite a difficult time this year following the updated Procedures introduced by NSW Department of Education for the provision of SRE in state schools taking effect from Term 1. It is pleasing to have been able to comply with all the requirements of the Department as an Authorised Provider. As required, the Diocesan website has been updated to provide all criteria that our Catechists, student’s parents/guardians or any other interested party may require.

I am currently encouraging and supporting Catechists across the Diocese to undertake the mandatory training required, and hopefully many of our Catechists will go on to complete the additional Modules available on the new training site, to add to their own skills set to best serve this most important Ministry within the Diocese.

There is a movement now gaining momentum across the State both from the Teachers Union and other groups who are seeking to have Special Religious Education removed from State Schools. This, despite the fact that 99% of residents in NSW state that they support values being taught to school students. 84% of those surveyed believe

that Christian heritage has been influential in shaping values that we teach children and finally that 71% of parents in this state opt to have their children taught SRE in Primary Schools.

Please pray for our Catechists and their Ministry. If you or someone you know is interested in joining the ranks of our amazing Catechists, please let your Parish Priest know of your interest and he will be happy to assist you in your enquiry.

*Deacon Paul Manvell*

*Diocesan Spiritual Director & CCD Coordinator*



*Kerry Stellar and Fr Samson Koyipurath with Year 5/6 Catholic scripture at Ben Venue Primary School.*



# Some Capuchin Visitors

Fr James Grant from South Brisbane brought Fr Robert Barhato, from California, and Fr Waldheim D'Costa Rodrigues, from Goa, to Armidale to see Bishop Torreggiani's vestments. The three priests are Capuchin Friars as was Bishop Torreggiani who holds great interest in the Order as he was one of the first Capuchin Friar's to come to Australia and made an outstanding contribution to the Church in the pioneering days, namely consolidating the Diocese of Armidale. Bishop Torreggiani's appointment was controversial at the time because he was not an Irish priest but an Italian and a religious Friar! He is also well known for being shot at whilst celebrating Mass here in the original Sts Mary & Joseph's Cathedral on Christmas Eve of 1884. We still have his vestments that sport the bullet hole!



*Fr Robert Barhato, Fr Waldheim D'Costa Rodrigues & Fr James Grant admire the portrait of Bishop Torreggiani*



*Fr Roel Llave, Fr James Grant, Naomi D'Arcy, Fr Robert Barhato, Bishop Michael Kennedy, Fr Waldheim D'Costa Rodrigues, Elizabeth O'Brien & Grant Devine*

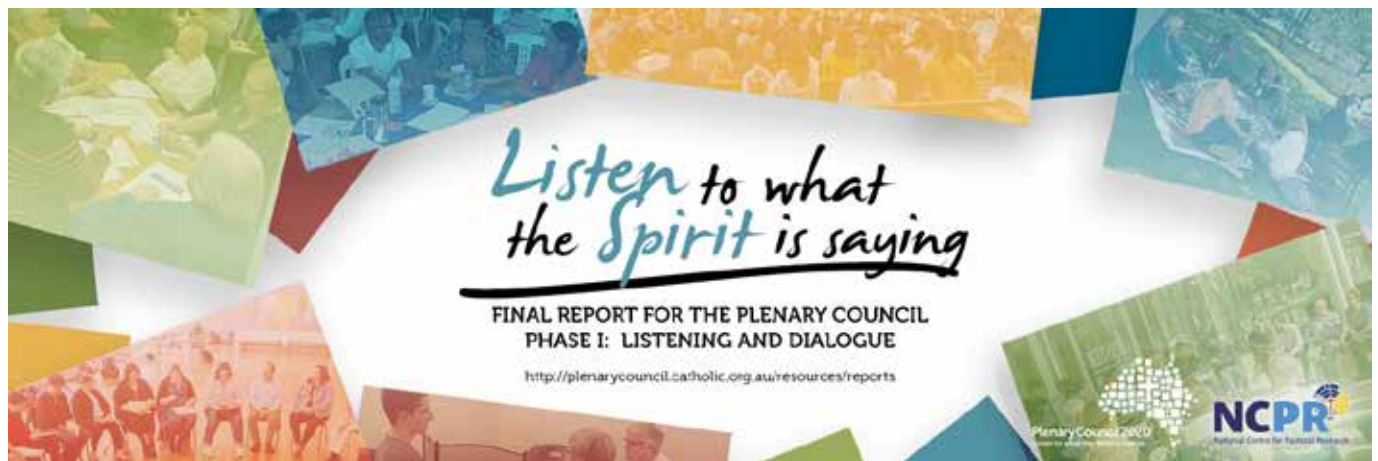


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## FINAL REPORT CAPTURES THE VOICES OF 222,000 PEOPLE

The National Centre for Pastoral Research has published the final report of the Listening and Dialogue phase of the Plenary Council, capturing the voices of more than 222,000 people. The 314-page report provides insights into the 17,457 individual and group submissions received from May 2018 until March 2019. It also outlines the Listening and Dialogue process, including the questions asked, the research methodology and the preparation of the final report.

Perth Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB, president of the Plenary Council, said he hoped when people read the report they “will be encouraged by the passion and commitment which the invitation to enter the journey has generated in such an extraordinary way. In the first phase of our journey, this listening has produced an extraordinary treasure of ideas and proposals which represents the heartfelt response of many people,” he said. “The great challenge ahead of us now is to ‘catch’ the voice of the Holy Spirit within the passionate, hopeful but sometimes contradictory voices of God’s people.”

National Centre for Pastoral Research director Trudy Dantis said the Plenary Council has already been one of the most ambitious research projects the Church has ever undertaken. “For the bishops to invite the people of God in Australia to respond to such a broad question was a courageous move and the response was overwhelming,” Dr Dantis said.

“We could not have predicted the number of voices from which we would hear, but we were able to use high-level research and analysis tools to understand the threads and topics on which people spoke. This report is faithful to the stories told, the questions asked and the opinions shared.”

Archbishop Costelloe acknowledged that the invitation to open listening and dialogue, and the honest and open reporting of what arose from that, means that people “may be challenged, and even disturbed” by some of the responses.

“The ongoing journey of the Plenary Council provides us all with an opportunity to deepen our own reflection in the light of what other members of the Church have expressed, as together we now enter into the next phase of the journey: the Listening and Discernment phase,” he said.

Plenary Council facilitator Lana Turvey-Collins said the second phase of preparation – Listening and Discernment – will begin in earnest in August. It is after that time of discernment, which will run for several months, that the agenda for the Plenary Council will begin to emerge.

Archbishop Costelloe said the Plenary Council has been an exercise in being open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, with the Council’s theme coming from the Book of Revelation: “Listen to what the Spirit is Saying.”

That ought to continue in the coming months, he explained. “As we now enter into the crucial phase of Listening and Discernment [...] may we be open to the wisdom of the Holy Spirit who will lead us into the fullness of the Truth (cf. Jn 16:13) and eager for that gift of humility which will equip us for the opportunities, the challenges and the joys which now lay ahead of us,” Archbishop Costelloe said.

The final report of the Listening and Dialogue phase can be found on the Plenary Council website: <http://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/resources/reports/>

# Chugby 4 Charity 2019



*St Albert's contingent of Rugby Chicks*

The men and women of St Albert's College and our broader community were all smiles before, during and after the annual 'Chicks Rugby' - Chugby 4 Charity game on Friday 12 July.

Shrugging off the Armidale winter conditions the St Albert's girls took to the field in the name of charity. Under the Bellevue Oval lights and under the eyes of an enthralled crowd, the girls put on one heck of a show in which they piled on an impressive score against the Robb College girls!

The St Albert's team proudly donned special jerseys in the colours of *Where There's A Will* which would later be auctioned off to fundraise for the wonderful charity. *Where There's a Will's* mission is to effect cultural change in the Upper Hunter through improved literacy of wellbeing and mental health in our schools, families

and community with the vision of having a mentally fit Upper Hunter community with a core value of wellbeing. St Albert's hosted the charity's founder and chair, Pauline Carrigan and Jane Callinan, for the evening and were proud to put on such a colourful show for *Where there's a Will*. The students have enjoyed working with such a noble charity partner and look forward to ongoing fundraising efforts for *Where there's a Will*!

Thank you to the St Albert's supporters who braved the icy conditions and congratulations to the St Albert's chugby players and coaches on a magnificent performance!



*Jason Lincoln, Pauline Carrigan, Jane Callinan, Ash Flint & Jack Inder*



# Alpha In Moree

This year a group of five rather excited yet slightly nervous parishioners eagerly welcomed nine participants to our first six-week Pilot Alpha Course at our Parish Centre here at St Francis Xavier, Moree. We were very thankful for the parishioners who participated in the pilot course as it gave us all a chance to have a taste of what we hope to do in the future to reach out and share with our brothers and sisters the joy of experiencing a personal relationship with Jesus and the Holy Spirit from within our Catholic tradition.

The Alpha course is an interactive course which seeks to introduce the basics of the Christian faith through a series of talks and discussions. Each night following the routine of, a dinner, a video input, a frank discussion and as the course progresses a concluding prayer. It began over 40 years ago at Holy Trinity Anglican Church Brompton in London when someone asked the curate, "What is Christianity?" and he invited the person to dinner so he could explain. Over the years that simple invitation has evolved into the eleven-week course as we experience today.

It is an interdenominational interactive program that introduces people to having a personal relationship with Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit. Any Christian group or denomination can facilitate the program but where it becomes Catholic is in what happens after the eleven weeks have finished and how well participants can be welcomed into the life of a parish.

We were inspired when a small group of Moree parishioners, who had attended workshops at the Ignite Catholic Youth Conference in Brisbane, began to get together to plan and pray. The Canadian priest, Father James Mallon's book, *Divine Renovation* was also a catalyst for our group as was listening to the Divine Renovation podcasts that come from St Benedict's parish in Nova Scotia, Canada.

The Alpha program would not have been a success without our fellow parishioners' prayers and Fathers Abmar Dumayag and Kingsley Etoh's support. We can only give thanks to the Lord for the incredible way our five-person team worked so well together. The team is expanding now with some of our recent participants joining the Alpha Team. Next year we hope to run two



**Mark Humphries, Monsignor Shora, Nora Carrigan & Maureen Wong at an Alpha Intensive at the Maronite Centre Harris Park.**

separate 11 week courses, where we hope to include people who have not been part of our Parish Journey.

Meanwhile we are planning to hold monthly 'Pot Luck Nights' where we can invite the parishioners to share a meal, a Catholic video with discussion and prayer. It's still 'early days' yet, but to work with the Holy Spirit to create a vibrant, missional Parish is our dream.

***"Alpha opened my eyes to the wonders, complexity and simplicity of God's love."***

***"I feel renewed and energised to keep going in my faith."***

***"I found the community spirit within the Alpha Group very supportive."***



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## St Mary of the Angels - 100 years of education

A century of education is a remarkable achievement and in May this year, St Mary of the Angels school Guyra did just that. On July 7, 1919, Ursuline nuns started a small school in their Guyra convent which they ran for 50 years. In 1969, the Sisters of Mercy took over the school and then in 1980 it became a lay Catholic school.

Over 200 people attended a special four-course dinner followed by a mass the next morning, officiated by Monsignor Wilkes. During Mass, Monsignor unveiled and blessed a centenary plaque to mark the occasion.

ADIG was asked to be a sponsor and was proud to be able to mark this momentous achievement and to be part of these celebrations.



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# The Renaissance of Marriage

The Renaissance of Marriage (ROM) Conference was held in July 2019. This conference is a national gathering of Catholic workers and volunteers who engage directly and indirectly in the areas of marriage and relationship formation. It was the 5<sup>th</sup> ROM conference held since its inception. The ROM conference exposes delegates to some of the nation's best Catholic thinkers and practitioners on the broad topic of Catholic Marriage formation along all its stages. Pope Francis calls us to turn our attention to the practical applications of the magnificent theology of Catholic Matrimony in today's world and this year at the ROM19 conference there was discernment and discussion on how we, as the people of God and leaders in his Church, can continue to build a vibrant Catholic marriage culture in our many communities.

At this year's conference our own Bishop Kennedy gave an *Impact Talk* on the Explore Program which runs in the Diocese of Armidale. The *Explore* initiative was developed in the Diocese of Westminster, England, and has been run there since 2000 to assist senior high school students to reflect on the meaning of marriage and relationships. Volunteer married couples come to the classroom and answer the questions of senior high school students about their marriage. They are not there to teach the students, to give advice, or to generalise about marriage. Nor do they give their opinions about aspects of marriage, about controversial issues, or about Church teachings. Their task is to simply answer young peoples' questions about *their* marriage. Young people are invited to enter into dialogue with and investigate

the relationships of ordinary married couples who speak from their own married experience.

A married couple from the Diocese of Armidale, Pilar and Joseph Brown, and Lee Herden, CSO Head of Mission and Evangelisation, also presented along with Bishop Kennedy at a *Deep Dive* workshop giving their personal experience from taking part in the Diocese of Armidale's *Explore* program.

## Joseph and Pilar Brown share their experiences of the Conference:

It was a welcomed invitation. We participated in the 'deep-dive workshops' where we had the opportunity to speak about our time in front of students at O'Connor Catholic College, discussing intimately our marriage, faith and family life. Our presentation delved into why we accepted to participate in Explore as well as the impact that Explore has had on the students and on us as a married couple and as parents.

Speaking at the conference was a positive experience; it was encouraging to see an audience full of faithful Catholics, asking great questions, and eager to understand the potential of the Explore program, especially how it might be suitable in their parishes to help young people come to appreciate with more clarity the wonderful sacrament of Holy Matrimony. The high point of the conference though was Mass in St Benedict's Church. Inside there is a beautiful statue of Our Lady Help of Christians. We recommend popping in if you are in Sydney.



# Are you a comfortable Catholic?

Do you think you have a comfortable life? The answer for the majority of us (as people living in a first world country) is a resounding yes. Think about it - if we're too hot or too cold, we turn on the air conditioning or the heater so that we can exist in a certain space more easily. If you can choose to sleep on a bed or the floor, you will always choose the more comfortable option. If I go to an event where there are five people with whom I am already well acquainted, and a hundred other strangers, I will always mingle with the people that I know - at least initially, because I'm more at ease doing that than trying to make conversation with somebody new.

I, for one, really dislike feeling uncomfortable. But that feeling is, extremely important. Being out of your comfort zone pushes you to widen your comfort zone, and I think this can apply directly to our mission as Catholics, the

mission of sharing with all people the love of Christ. The decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, which was published during Vatican II, states that: "The characteristic of the lay state being a life led in the midst of the world, and of secular affairs, lay men are called by God to make of their apostolate, through the vigour of their Christian spirit, a leaven in the world." One of the best ways to make a 'leaven' in this world is through authentic relationships with the people around you. I think it is really easy to become hesitant to interact and encounter people because talking to someone you don't know can be really uncomfortable. But we need to work with that feeling because so much good can actually come from discomfort.

Take an example from my own life. Hindsight has allowed me to see that God has actually thrown me straight into

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uncomfortable situations, which I have always tried to wiggle my way out of. But that's precisely the point. When you are made to feel uncomfortable, you have to actively do something - whatever it may be - to make yourself comfortable again. A clear instance of this for me comes to mind and involves my decision to attend university. The choice was between a secular university that all my friends were going to, or a Catholic university where I knew absolutely no one, in a location relatively isolated from everyone who was important to me.

By the grace of God, no less, I chose the uncomfortable option. I decided to dive out of my own little bubble and into something completely foreign and it was the best decision I ever made. When you suddenly enter a community where you don't know anyone, you HAVE to push yourself to make friends. Had I gone to a university where I was already linked in with a group of friends, I would never have made the effort to get to know new people because it wasn't necessary, because I was already comfortable.

Choosing the 'uncomfortable' way pushes you to change, to grow, to adapt and more often than not helps you to draw closer to Christ. Being uneasy, means you cannot revert to an auto-pilot setting, rather you have to engage directly with what's happening around you BECAUSE you feel uncomfortable. If you cushion your life so that your every need is catered for, you never grow. And in the

midst of a secular, western society, it is so easy to do this. So, I encourage you: next time you find yourself in a situation that makes you a little uneasy, cultivate perseverance and deny yourself that which will allow you to be comfortable. Then observe what comes of it.

*Rebecca Cooper*



# Around 'n About

## Seminary Soccer

The 2019 inter-Seminary Soccer Tournament was held in Melbourne! Vianney College sent a team of young men to represent them. Peterpaul Chikezie and Victor Atuhura represented the Diocese of Armidale in this team. Peterpaul reports:

It went very well, we came 4th out of the 7 Seminaries that participated; so we didn't win unfortunately, but had lot's of fun. However, one of our Australian Seminarians from Vianney College won the 2019 Golden Boot for being the highest goal scorer with 4 goals. Seminary of the Good Shepherd Sydney took the Trophy for the first time in few years now.

*Armidale Diocesan Seminarians – Victor Atuhura and Peterpaul Chikezie in Melbourne at the Inter-Seminary Soccer Tournament*



## Werris Creek Baptism

We welcome into our Parish baby Indianna Rose Pengilley, who was baptised by Fr Ross O'Brien at St Thomas More Church, Werris Creek recently. Indianna is the infant daughter of Gorden and Matika of Doyle Street. God Parents are Melissa Hughes and Max Scott. Witnesses are Lucinda Porter and Peter Hughes. Grandparents of Indianna are Sue Pengilley of Quipolly and Bruce and Sandra Porter of Werris Creek. Congratulations Indianna.

*Indianna Rose with her parents, Gorden & Matika Pengilley, & Fr Ross O'Brien*

## Sacred Heart Boggabri Principal for a Day!

On the last Monday in Term 2, Jack Rees fulfilled a lifelong dream, where he was the Principal for the Day as being the winner from the raffle that was conducted last term for one of the school's Mini Vinnies Group fundraisers. After having some 'Kit Kat Chunkys' in order for him to get his energy levels up, Jack, in his blazer and special tie performed a number of roles that are associated with being a principal. Below is an excerpt that Jack has written from this day:

"On Monday the 1st of July I was the Principal for the Day and had to complete various tasks including: moving tables to Wayne's shed, putting earn and learn stickers on sheets, looking at what sport gear we need, working out where soccer, football and netball fields should go around the back oval, putting photos on the school page and checking how kids are going all throughout the day, plus eating Kit Kat Chunkys. It felt like a future career was lying ahead of me. I had a great day and I hope everyone else did to."

*Jack Rees performing one of his various duties as Principal for the Day.*







*Mia Croker, Luke Lowick, Bishop Michael Kennedy, Sophia Lampe and Jack Hartnett.*

## Grandfriends at St Mary's Armidale

St Mary's Primary School, Armidale celebrated the feast day of Saints Joachim and Anne with a day for Grandparents and Grandfriends. The day started with the school joining together to celebrate Mass in the Cathedral celebrated by Fr Samson Koyipurath. Many parents, grandparents and grandfriends were in attendance. Following Mass the classrooms were open to visitors to join in the morning's lessons and see what happens in our classes at St Mary's. There were many excited students as visitors filled the rooms. At morning tea time the school hall was overflowing as visitors joined together for a morning tea hosted by our P&F and set up by the wonderful St Mary's canteen ladies, Jodi Kratz and Sonja Symons. After the morning tea the various St Mary's Stage choirs put on a fabulous performance. It was a wonderful celebration for the school community.

*Diane and Allan Neary with their granddaughter Emerson*



## Tenterfield Mini Vinnies Mini Fete

St Joseph's Tenterfield Mini Vinnies held a Mini Fete in their lunch hour to raise money for the St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal. Each class was asked to provide one or more fun activities for the fete. There were lucky dips, a cupcake stall, switch'n'keep table, slime stall, pin the tail on the donkey, a treasure hunt, egg and spoon races, fishing, karaoke, face painting, buskers, 3 legged races and sack races. A fantastic time was had by all and the students raised over \$500. The Mini Vinnies executive leaders then visited the St Vincent de Paul Centre to learn about the role of volunteers and the day to day operations of the centre. Many thanks to Mrs Marlene Feltis and the wonderful volunteers for showing students around.

*St Joseph's Tenterfield Mini Vinnies students visiting the St Vincent de Paul Centre to present a cheque for funds raised from the Fete.*



### St Michael's Manilla

St Michael's Manilla's NAIDOC day was absolutely fantastic. We shared it with our guests Fleur and Lockie. The day began with a Smoking Ceremony and Acknowledgement to Country. Fleur and Lockie then presented some traditional dances and acted out some dream time stories. A big highlight with the kids was investigating the weapons. Afterwards five rotation activities occurred: Weaving, Painting, Aboriginal Games, Paver Painting and Language. It was a superbly organised day and we would like to especially thank Mrs Kristie Mitchell and Mrs Leah Thompson our Aboriginal Education Aides who organised the day.



*Fleur with a group of students at the weaving activity*



*Front Row: Mia Gardner, Sophia Taylor, Sophie Demery, Alexander Whitten, Tahlia Waters, Chloe Potts. Second Row: Ayden Finucane, Layla Potts, Gabriella Crawford, Abbigaille Revere, Brae Cocking, Charlotte Simpson, Archie Allan. Back Row: Miss Kim Taggart, Cruz Moffat, Maddison Wellard.*

### St Joseph's West Tamworth

This year we celebrated NAIDOC Week with the theme of 'Voice, Treaty, Truth - Let's work together for a shared future'. We celebrated with a special liturgy at St Patrick's Church, a wonderful example of working together. Miss Kim Taggart, our Aboriginal Education Assistant did an outstanding job preparing the children who performed a dance to a dreamtime story. Special thanks to Mr

Len Waters who gave the Welcome to Country. During the liturgy there was a special procession and children brought forward Aboriginal symbols to create a prayer focus. Special thanks to Mrs Dominica Bearman who organised the liturgy and prepared the children who read beautifully. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed a delicious cake for morning tea.





## St Joseph's School Uralla's visit to Ingleba.

*St Joseph's Uralla students enjoy a visit to Inglebar*

To celebrate NAIDOC Week, St Joseph's School Uralla organised an excursion to Ingleba. Ingleba an aboriginal reserve south of Walcha and is currently being developed by the Amaroo land council to educate people on the local indigenous culture. We were the first lucky school to experience their day program. It was a fun and educational day for all involved.

## Naidoc Week at St Joseph's Walgett

During the last week of Term 2, St Joseph's Walgett held its annual celebration for Naidoc Week. Students, staff and families came dressed in the colours of the Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander flags. The day began with a celebration of Mass with Fr Joe where we reflected on treating others with respect and kindness. The Year 6 students led the assembly where guest speaker Rebecca Trindall spoke about the the 2019 theme of Naidoc Week- Voice, Treaty, Truth. Auntie Faye Green OAM had been working tirelessly on hand painted boomerangs and coolamons which were awarded as prizes. Families and community members joined us for lunch. Kindergarten enjoyed an art workshop and Stages 1-3 participated in an Aboriginal Dance workshop led by Brad Flanders from the Gomeroi Dance Company. We finished the day with the St Joseph's Trivia Challenge which was enjoyed by all.



*St Joseph's Walgett Students enjoying the dance workshop*



*Celebrating with Cake!*

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## Barraba Celebrates the Feast of Jesus' Grandparents

As part of Marriage and Family Week, St Joseph's Barraba students invited their grandparents to join them for a morning. More than 50 grandparents of our 61 children attended Mass with us, celebrating the Feast of Sts Joachim and Anne (Jesus' grandparents).

Grandparents and other members of families then came to open classrooms before enjoying morning tea together. It was a wonderful time to increase our faith formation together as a school community. Everyone had such a special time and we hope to do this annually.

*Year 2 student Darci Hunter with mum, Stacey McArdle, and Grandmother Chris McArdle*

## Natural Fertility Awareness Week – How far we have come!

Natural Fertility Awareness Week is gazetted annually, and this year will be celebrated in August. It's worth looking at what has happened in the field since 1968.

Back in 1968, Natural Family Planning was in its infancy. The common method used was the Rhythm Method which was about 85% effective. There were few books or teachers – and of course no 'google' to help with research.

Back in the 1960s two Doctors from Melbourne, Drs. John & Lyn Billings were world leaders in this field. Their work resulted in the Billings Ovulation Method®.

Fast forward to 2019 and Billings LIFE has teaching centres in every mainland State of Australia, and in 43 countries worldwide. Women and couples can access private and confidential teaching which can be tailored to their situation in life, whether breastfeeding or post chemical contraception. Even couples in remote areas can access



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## Project Compassion Raises Millions to Combat Global Poverty

Thousands of generous supporters, including parishes and school students across Australia, have joined in solidarity with the world's poor donating more than \$10.8 million to Caritas Australia's Project Compassion campaign. The Diocese of Armidale contributing \$68 000.

Caritas Australia is a part of one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world. Held annually over the six weeks of Lent, Project Compassion raises both awareness and funds to eradicate poverty and promote justice across the world.

This year's Project Compassion theme of "100% Hope" highlights the role that we all have to play in the solutions to the challenges facing our communities globally.

Caritas Australia's Head of Engagement and Sustainability, Richard Landels, thanked the Australian community for their support. "By giving generously during Project Compassion, the people of Australia are showing that when we sow seeds of hope we reap the fruit of love and compassion," he said.

"For more than 54 years, Project Compassion has helped change the lives of millions people. The generosity of our supporters makes this possible. With this support, Caritas Australia is able to go wherever the challenges

are greatest, giving a voice to the most vulnerable," Mr Landels said.

Caritas Australia Lenten speaker, Super Dube, who visited Australia from Zimbabwe travelled around speaking to students from across the Archdiocese of Sydney highlighting the story of Thandolwayo, a young girl from the community of Hwange, in Zimbabwe who Mr Dube saw transform and flourish as a result of Caritas Australia's development programs there.

"The dignity of the community has been restored," Mr Dube, Caritas Hwange's Diocesan Coordinator, said. "People no longer have to worry about collecting a basic thing like water which is a human right. The project has certainly brought hope to the village."

Money raised during Project Compassion goes towards Caritas Australia's humanitarian and long-term development programs in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Pacific and with Australia's First Peoples. Last year, Caritas Australia reached over 2 million people directly.

To learn more about Caritas Australia and Project Compassion visit: <https://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion>



# Welcome Address from the Director

## System Conference 2019

From the 11th - 12th June the Catholic Schools Office hosted our **System Conference 2019** for all staff in our system of schools in the Catholic Diocese of Armidale. Here is an edited version of the Welcome Address by the Director of Schools, Mr Chris Smyth.

“It is a wonderful opportunity for all of our staff to come together to acknowledge and celebrate as a Catholic Professional Learning Community. A community where teachers and staff are as concerned about the success of the students in their classroom as they are about the students in the other classes in their school and the other schools of the system. We selected the theme of ***Mission Learn Care***:

### ***Mission is at the core of our work.***

As part of the mission of the Catholic church, we have an obligation to show the face of Christ to our communities every day. We are an important part of the Church that the Australian community recognises for its wonderful contributions to Australian society in its graduates and the values they represent. We must distinguish ourselves as outstanding learning communities of faith, care and academic excellence.

### ***Learning is also at the core of our work.***

As a professional learning community, we are focussed on learning for all students and adults. The Conference provides an opportunity to reflect on why we do what we do every day in the service of young people and their families.

Our commitment to research based literacy learning that models the gradual release of responsibility for helping students gain independence is essential to student success.

### ***Care is also at the core of our work in Mission and Learning.***

Our conference is designed to remind all of us that great learning must be underpinned by strong pastoral care for all.

Students need positive relationships with a person to get to the subject. There will be no student engagement if that relationship does not exist.

***Our CSO Armidale Catholic Framework for Pastoral Care and Wellbeing*** reminds us that the pastoral care and wellbeing of our communities requires our attention to the academic, social, spiritual, emotional and physical development of everyone.

During CSW we were reminded that John’s gospel tells us of the message of Christ in his last days on earth. “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 15:12-18)

We must have schools that set themselves apart as places where quality relationships support great learning based on this Gospel message of love one another.”

**Director of Schools, Chris Smyth**



 **Catholic Schools Office**  
Diocese of Armidale

# What if you lost the most important thing....?

Many years ago as a young bride, my mother asked me what I wanted. And without even listening, I immediately began thinking of all the things I could ask for, so I might narrow down my list to one thing. However, my reverie was interrupted with advice NOT to be limited by tangible things and in fact not to choose anything 'material', but to consider 'higher order' things. Suddenly that question took on far greater significance ... if I could have ANYTHING, what did I want?

I remember realising that I wanted John and me "to be happy" (pity I didn't think to include our as yet unborn children, but perhaps that was implied). The years passed, we were happy and I didn't think much about this early encounter.

Then, when our sons were grown and making their way in the world, I asked each of them, over time, the same question. "What do you want?" Surprisingly when two sons responded with pretty much the same answer — "to be happy" — I was somewhat disappointed. I couldn't understand why they didn't have 'ambition'. I felt they could be happy AND successful. It didn't occur to me that I held a different set of values for them than I had had for myself.

Today, in a Church in Alaska, while visiting with



my nephew's family, I read a question written on a wall; "What if you lost the most important thing?" I immediately began to ruminate about what I considered to be my MOST important 'thing'. Perhaps because the question was being posed in a Church, it seemed natural to me that my answer would settle on my 'faith'.

Growing up I learned the all rote answers in religion class and I still believe that "God made me to know, love and serve him in this world and to be happy with him in the next". And so I could reconcile that desire to be 'happy' as our yearning to be with God forever. But what would happen to me if I lost my utter belief, that deep faith that helps me question, to make sense and navigate this world?

Mary Ettu

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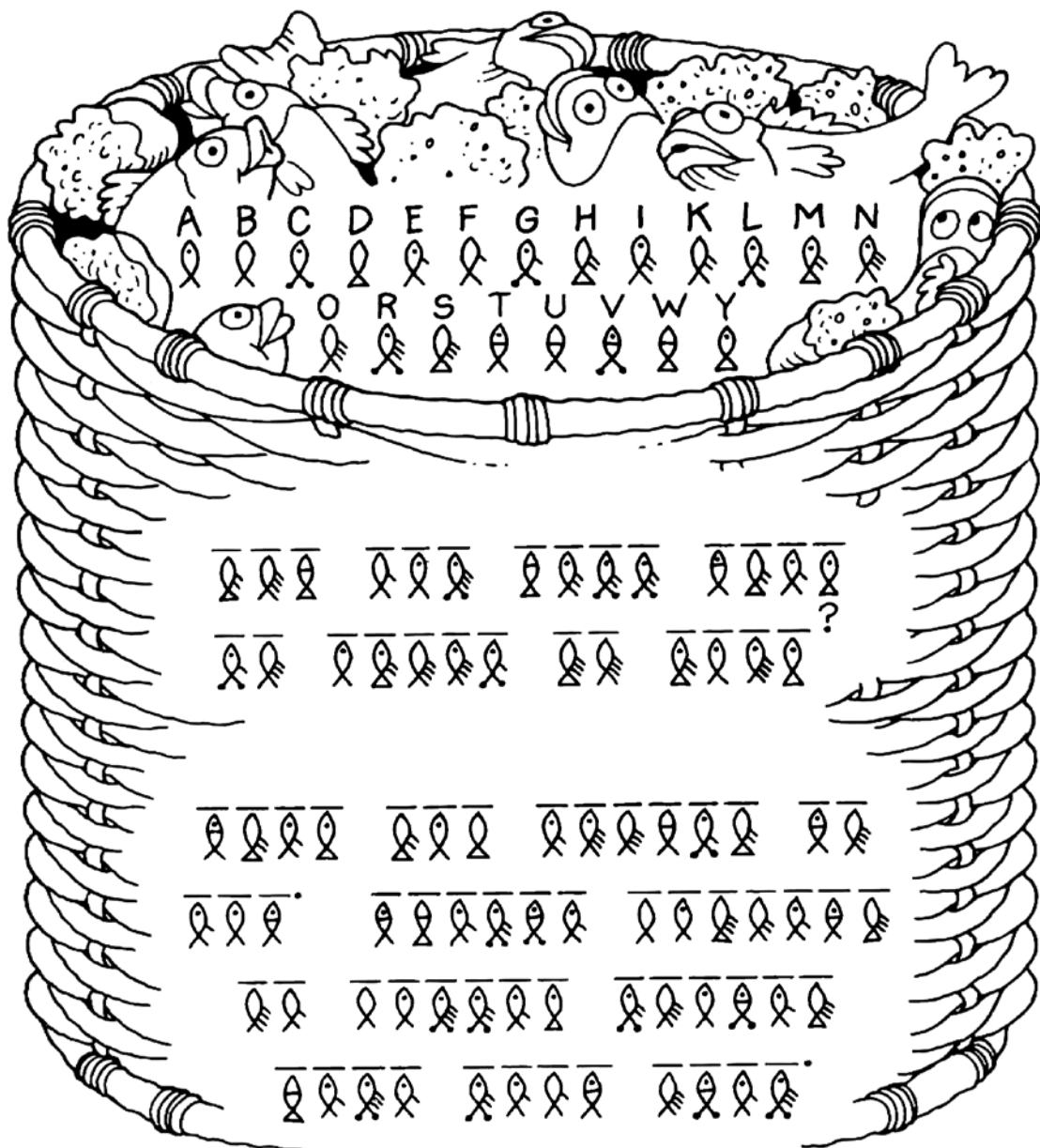
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## Three cartoon children are standing side-by-side, smiling. On the left is a boy with dark skin and short black hair, wearing a yellow t-shirt, grey shorts, and red sneakers with white socks. He has a blue backpack and is waving with his right hand. In the middle is a boy with light skin and short blonde hair, wearing a blue t-shirt, grey pants, and grey sneakers with orange socks. He has a yellow backpack. On the right is a girl with light skin and bright orange hair in pigtails, wearing a pink dress over a white shirt and pink sneakers with white socks. She has a green backpack with a yellow flower on it and is waving with her right hand.

What did Andrew ask Jesus about using five loaves and two fishes to feed 5,000 men? How was Andrew's question answered? Use the code to find out. Read John 6:1-13 to find out more.



As an Extraordinary Missionary Month approaches, parishioners throughout the Diocese of Armidale will hear the story of an extraordinary missionary through Catholic Mission's World Mission Appeal. Sister Stan Therese Mumuni's work is at the heart of the appeal, which carries the theme 'Do not fear for I am with you' from Isaiah 41:10. The sister from Ghana in western Africa, who formed her own religious order, runs the Nazareth Home for God's Children in the country's north. The home rescues children at risk of harm and abandonment because they exhibit characteristics believed to be associated with the spirit world and the concept of witchcraft.

Catholic Mission's Armidale Director, Jacqueline Toakley, explains the situation. "There are parts of Ghana where some still believe firmly in the traditional custom of 'spirit children'," she says. "Whether because of physical or intellectual disability, the circumstances of their birth, or the passing of a parent, these children are considered to be possessed by evil spirits." Sister Stan established the Nazareth Home over ten years ago to address the crisis facing the Diocese of Yendi in northeast Ghana. Working with often anonymous concerned local community members and the Church, Sister Stan rescues babies and young children when the worst fate has been decided for them. Sometimes, they are brought to her at the home.

Today, nearly 80 children live at the home, where they have the opportunity to make friends, go to school if they are able, pray and play together, and have their basic needs met. Catholic Mission provides essential support to the Nazareth Home and Sister Stan's work in the diocese, as well as for many other similar programs in Ghana and around the world. Ms Toakley will share some success stories from the Home during the appeal, including that of Sarah, who at just four years of age was accused of 15 deaths in her village. A speech impediment prevented her from answering any questions, so she was cast out of her community and left to fend for herself. Eight years later, having been rescued and brought to the Nazareth Home, the 12-year-old has found her confidence and her voice and is now at the top of her class at school. "This is an important appeal because it addresses a very serious situation in Ghana and it promotes the vital work of a local church and community who are concerned about the issues confronting their own people," says Ms Toakley. "This appeal is not only about supporting Sister Stan to save young lives in critical situations, but to enable her and the Church to educate the families and communities



and encourage them to turn away from this practice."

The October World Mission Appeal will coincide with the Extraordinary Missionary Month to mark the 100th anniversary of Pope Benedict XV's Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud*, which called for a renewal of missionary spirit amid the disillusionment following World War I. "This celebration is more than just a centenary marker, it is Pope Francis urging all of us to renew our own missionary spirit today, which has been a consistent theme of his leadership," says Ms Toakley. "Through this appeal for Ghana, Catholic Mission is providing a practical way for people to be missionary and put their faith into action this Extraordinary Missionary Month. Any contribution our parishioners can make to this appeal will go toward the running costs of the Nazareth Home and providing the basic needs of the children and young people. I encourage everyone to consider giving what they can to this worthwhile program."

Keep an eye out for the World Mission Appeal in your parish throughout the Extraordinary Missionary Month in October, and please give generously. For more information on the World Mission Appeal, the Extraordinary Missionary Month or the work of Catholic Mission, please contact Catholic Mission's Armidale Director, Jacqueline Toakley, on 02 6771 8703.



# St Patrick's Walcha Brave the Cold in Carnival Spirit

The weather at the 2019 Athletics Carnival was very cool and a little damp but that did not deter the students from going in all of the events. Lots of fun was had by all.

A very big thank you to all of the parents who assisted on the day with the track & field events & for running the BBQ for lunch. The warm food & drinks were very much appreciated! Our Athletics Carnival would not be possible without the generous support of our parents.

The medals and certificates were presented to the successful age champions and runner ups by Monsignor Ted Wilkes. Scores were tallied and the winning house for 2019 Athletics was Red House! Congratulations St Pat's children & staff on a wonderful day.



*Photos from Australian Community Media*

*Back Cover: Monsignor Ted Wilkes with the successful age champions and runners up*



