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DIOCESE OF ARMIDALE



World of Youth

In the Presence of God



The Bishop Speaks



Sometimes we have moments that we might call ‘God moments’, when we feel God’s presence very keenly and when we feel very close to God. It can come when we are walking through a forest; holding a baby; or listening to music. Through an experience of our senses God somehow reaches through and touches our soul. These are special times that we wish could last for longer or perhaps never end.

Sometimes these “God moments” come to us more directly during our prayer. It’s when the Holy Spirit transports us beyond effort and formulas and we talk and listen to God in our soul without any words being exchanged. These are those rare moments of prayer when we just *feel* God. These too are moments that we delight in for as long as we can before getting back to life’s chores.

The Apostles Peter, James, and John experienced a “God moment” during the well-known event of Jesus’ transfiguration which we will hear at Mass in the early weeks of Lent which begins soon. These three Apostles were privileged to see Jesus transfigured in their presence: his face shining like the sun; his clothes becoming as white as the light;

they themselves being enveloped in a bright cloud; and hearing the voice of God the Father say, “This is my Son the beloved, he enjoys my favour, listen to him.”

Knowing that they are having a unique encounter with God they fell with their faces to the ground, they exclaim how wonderful it is to be there, and they want to build three tents there to prolong the moment. They wanted to linger on the mountain top with God for as long as possible before getting back to life’s chores.

How interesting it is that the Apostles who want to linger with God on the mountain top can’t wait to get away from him in the garden. When Jesus is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane all his Apostles except one flee in haste. Yet even at that moment of suffering and trial they were just as much in the presence of God, for it is the same Jesus on the mountain and in the garden, they just didn’t *feel* it.

A challenge for us is to be able to find and sense the presence of God just as much in the agony as in the ecstasy, in our trials and our victories, in moments of both sadness and joy. For didn’t Jesus say, “I

COVER PHOTO: Emily Smith, St Joseph’s Tenterfield and Jonathan McCallum, St Philomena’s Moree with local Panamanian Dancers who were performing at the Vocations Fair as part of World Youth Day.



am with you *always*”? When the family is fighting, when work is stressing, when a friend is dying, when I’m struggling to keep faith, when people are attacking me, God is with me and God is loving me. Certainly, in these moments we sense or feel His divine presence in a different way to our mountain-top experiences, but it is no less real. It can be even stronger.

Another challenge for us is to be able to find and sense the presence of God when we meet and encounter somebody else who is suffering: the person suffering. For didn’t Jesus say that whatever we do for the least of our brothers and sisters we do for him?

Knowing he was in the presence of God at the Transfiguration Peter said, “It is wonderful for us to be here”. Am I able to say these words not only when I’m having a beautiful “God moment” but also when somebody is asking me for help or when I’m having a particularly rough day? Or do I turn and run?

An often overlooked but important event on the mount of the Transfiguration that day was Jesus going up to Peter, James, and John as they lay

prostrate on the ground and simply touching them saying “stand up, do not be afraid”. This is my favourite part in the Transfiguration story because it’s the ‘Divine touch’ of God reminding us of his gentle and compassionate presence in our lives.

This gentle Divine Touch of God comes to us in a most particular way in the Eucharist at Mass. When we come to Mass to worship Him as the Apostles did on the mountain, when we truly participate in the Mass with our voice, our gestures, our minds and our souls, when we are properly prepared for Holy Communion, those quiet and still moments during Mass can be truly wonderful moments when we sense God’s presence and love. Such moments will not always come to us, but when they do, we should enjoy them as a gift from God and not be in a hurry for the moment to pass. At these and other ‘God moments’ we should linger awhile with God!

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Armidale

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Australian Pilgrims at World Youth Day Panama

WYD 2019 Panama

World Youth Day (WYD) is a worldwide encounter with the Pope which is typically celebrated every three years in a different country. WYD is open to all young people who want to take part in a festive encounter with their contemporaries centered on Jesus Christ. This event is an opportunity to experience in first person the universality of the Church; to share with the whole world the hope of many young people who want to commit themselves to Christ and others. World Youth Day is a unique way to deepen your faith and grow closer to Christ, by means of prayer and the sacraments, together with thousands of other young people who share your interests and ambitions.

The Diocese of Armidale was represented by 16 pilgrims at the WYD 2019 in Panama. Fr Francis Afu and Lee Herden led the group; Jonathan McCallum, Moree; Katie McMeniman Moree; Emily Smith Glen Innes; Isaac Selvey Armidale; Danni McCusker Barraba; and Rebecca Russell Barraba; on their pilgrimage.



Armidale Pilgrims with Fr Francis Afu and Lee Herden in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City where Fr Francis said Mass within a Chapel which OVER LOOKED the main nave.



WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019



Australian and Thursday Island pilgrims join together



Mexico City, where the pilgrims were able to join in an Aztec welcome and healing ceremony. This was lead by four people bedecked in amazing feathered headdresses and demonstrated the Aztec understanding of the world.



People who made World Youth Day

Contributed by Rebecca. Rebecca is currently studying a Liberal Arts Degree at Campion College in Sydney.

I really do believe that you can come to know God through the people around you.

Having recently attended World Youth Day in Panama, this seemed to become a theme that I came to recognise in many different contexts, and at the final mass Pope Francis stated succinctly something that I had been pondering over the course of my pilgrimage, "It is through real faces that the Lord becomes present."

Jesus Christ existed to communicate the transcendental love of God to the world. And I really truly believe that we, as humans, can be a means of communicating that same love to others. I know this to be true because I experienced people loving our pilgrimage group the same way Christ does, with boundless generosity, unrestricted humility and immeasurable kindness.

When we arrived in Los Angeles after a 14-hour flight from Sydney, it was 6am. Note here that most of us had not slept at all on the flight. We got a bus straight out to the parish of St Euphrasia in Mission Hills, and we were met with our first instance of incredible generosity. Though it was very early, a group of parishioners were in the hall cooking up a big breakfast for us, ready to eat when we arrived. After eating what Americans classify



Rebecca Cooper and fellow Australian pilgrims at their LA Homestay with Jioia and her carer Evelyn. Eddie Sadgrove is from Armidale and Henry Buckman from Tamworth.

Despite their age and various health problems they offered their house to four strangers from Australia for 9 days. I find it difficult to converse with a stranger for more than 10 minutes, let alone have four stay in my house for an extended period of time. I was blown away by their eagerness to share what they had with us.

During our stay there, I witnessed their deep faith in and high regard for Christ, which seemed to run like electricity through the very foundations of their household. No doubt us staying there cost them a fair bit financially, not to mention how much time and energy they had to expend by feeding us and providing accommodation, and yet every night when we came home they were up, waiting, ready to chat and make sure we had everything we needed. They ministered to us with such kindness, so that their home became our home within a matter of hours. I was flawed by how comfortable I felt in a complete strangers' house.

Ministry is relational, and this concept seemed to recur again and again throughout the trip. Most people encounter God through one of us; through the relationships that we make with people, through the time that we find to spend with someone who might be feeling low, through giving generously to people you have never met by housing them for more than a week, or making time to catch up with someone you have known for years.

And the best part about this is that we can replicate this kind of generosity in our own lives, by sharing what we have every day, whether it be a piece of cake at work, or supporting a friend in their time of need when you could find a hundred reasons to be 'too busy.' Too often we walk blindly past people in need, I know I'm guilty of doing that on an all too regular basis. How easy is it, really, to stop and ask that person who is crying if they are okay, or to offer them a cup of tea. You don't have to invite them into your home for a week and provide for their every need, but if they needed a place to stay, would you offer?

I really do believe that you can come to know God through the people around you. And we should all try to be that face of loving kindness, and utter generosity, in the little things we do every single day.



Fr Francis and Isacc Selvey arriving in Panama

as breakfast foods - mostly bagels and doughnuts - we were introduced to our host families. Me and three other pilgrims were sent to stay at an elderly couples' home. Jioia (pronounced joy-ah) and Sam were both 86, and they had a carer who was an older lady named Evelyn.



Golden Jubilee Celebrations

Brian and Denise with their children Justine, John, Sandra and Angela.

Brian and Denise Sullivan were married in St Mary's Church, Casino on 11th January, 1969. They were married by Fr Garry Reynolds who is now stationed at St Patrick's, Church Hill in Sydney. They have lived in the South Tamworth Parish for thirty eight years. They have been heavily involved in parish and community life throughout this time. They renewed their marriage vows at Mass said by Father Paul on the day of their anniversary. Their four children, Justine, John, Sandra and Angela, their husbands and wives and their eight grandchildren were home for a family celebration shortly after the anniversary. Congratulations Brian and Denise, you are truly blessed!



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Bishop Michael Kennedy with Lee Herden at the launch of the new Stage 6 syllabus

Syllabus takes new approach to religious education

Armidale Bishop Michael Kennedy, syllabus project officer Janina Starkey and Maitland Newcastle Catholic Schools Office launched the new “Stage 6 Studies in Catholic Thought” at Mary MacKillop Place in North Sydney in November 2019. The new syllabus is aimed at better meeting the needs of senior students wanting to learn more about their Catholic faith. It will replace the six existing Catholic studies courses currently being taught in NSW and the ACT.

The syllabus is designed to further develop the skills and knowledge students have acquired in religious education courses they have undertaken from kindergarten to Year 10. It will also provide students the opportunity to focus on a religion of their choice that has made a significant contribution to the world – spiritually, ethically, politically, and socially.

The new syllabus will also help students to make sense of everyday life in the broader context of mystery, complexity, confusion and awe while allowing them to deepen their understandings about the Scriptures and the traditions of the Catholic community.

All bishops across the states have committed to implementing the course in their dioceses over the next few years. Mr Damien Roff will be the first teacher in the Diocese of Armidale to implement the new syllabus in 2019.

Mr Roff stated, “O’Connor Catholic College Armidale is a pilot school for the new Studies in Catholic Thought (SICT) syllabus. Year 11 are our first cohort in this exciting new course.

They are currently enjoying the liberal arts approach to their learning with the first unit “The Human Person”. Teachers have received professional development in preparation to teach this course and are looking forward to engaging with this distinctly Catholic content.”

The new course will be supported by high-quality professional development, substantial resourcing and ongoing monitoring by religious education teachers and leaders of Catholic schools.

Original story: CathNews.com

It's been a Great Life Fr Tom Shanahan

It was evident from the various speakers at Father Tom Shanahan's funeral that he was rightly and justly held in very high esteem by all who knew him and benefitted from his pastoral zeal, wise counsel and priestly administrations, perhaps none more so than the veterans and their families for whom he held particular care and concern for and with whom he shared a unique fraternal bond. The charity and generosity and other virtues motivating these were evidently deep, genuine, widely appreciated and of significant social and personal spiritual value. In addition to these virtues, important though they are, perhaps the greatest of his works was accomplished at the altar and in the breviary with so many mementos no doubt of the living and the dead during the course of sixty-two years in the priesthood.

From Bishop Michael Kennedy's Homily for Father Tom Shanahan's funeral

Eighty-six years ago, on the 3rd October 1932, just 2 days after his birth, Vincent and Barbara Shanahan brought their son Thomas here to Saint Nicholas' Catholic Church to be baptised with water *into* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. That day Thomas Harold Shanahan became a Son of God and his immortal soul was enlightened with the light of Christ, symbolised still today by the light of the Paschal/Easter Candle burning above his mortal body. Sixty-two years ago, on the 24th July 1956 at the youthful and enthusiastic age of 23 (almost 24) Fr Tom was ordained a priest here in Saint Nicholas' Church by Bishop Doody.



Fr Tom was a dedicated, prayerful, and hard-working priest who lived daily the gift of himself to God and the Church. He was a humble man who stayed above petty-politics and just got on with what needed to be done. He was a gracious man who accepted disappointment and suffering without complaint. He was good company; a happy man living the joy of the Gospel long before Pope Francis reminded us that true Christians are not sourpusses. It's also been evident to me that Fr Tom was a first-class Uncle to his nephews and nieces, a good brother, and a devoted son.

But the love of Fr Tom's life has been, and no doubt still is, the Lord Jesus. Fr Tom loved him enough to lay down his life for Him who two thousand years ago lay it down for him. Fr Tom obeyed Christ's command to be the light of the world. But Fr Tom knew that he was not really the light - he did his best to reflect the light of Jesus Christ.

Extracts from Father Richard Gleeson's eulogy for Father Tom Shanahan

I have known Fr Tom Shanahan most of my life. I first met him as an altar server in St Francis Xavier's Parish Narrabri in 1961 when he was an assistant priest from February to October of that year.

I was in Year Six... we never forgot Fr Tom...he was a bit scary I might add!! But on one occasion, ten or so of us had trouble tackling him on Number Two Oval at 'footie' training after school. I remember him laughing as clearly as yesterday- as he tried to fight us off. Wonderful days now past.

Fr Tom is what my generation would call a solid 'old time' priest. He worked hard for the Church of the Diocese of Armidale - and loved it. He did his work for the Lord and his Church in the parishes and overseas at War.

Fr Tom was a man of daily prayer and he loved his family.

It is clear that Fr Tom was deeply moved and affected by his military chaplaincy of 1965 to 1970 some five years. He always remained a chaplain to those who have served their country.

His so-called retirement was in Tamworth - living in the family home, and once again in his home parish of St Nicholas. In Tamworth he was heavily involved with the RSL serving a term as President, proudly marched on ANZAC Day, never missed the dawn service, and the other Tamworth Remembrance services in the Town Hall. He had a great love and true dedication to returned service persons and their families. Especially in times of sickness, need, and death. He was a man and a priest of the people. He understood what *the Good Shepherd who knows his sheep*, and what *Emmanuel a name which means God with us* was all about in the New Testament.

‘Celebrating his 54th year in the priesthood in July 2010 Fr Tom is quoted in the Northern Daily Leader as follows: “When I was a kid growing up, Mum and Dad were very involved with the church, and we were always seeing the priests”, he said. “Becoming a priest is something that’s planted in your mind, like a seed that’s planted in the ground and you don’t know how it grows. When I was at school, we had visiting priests and brothers who came around and spoke to us about vocation. I was also an altar boy. “A highlight (of my life) was definitely being ordained”..... “It’s been a great life.”

Extracts from Sandra Lambkin’s tribute, Senior Vice President of Tamworth RSL sub-Branch

Father Thomas Harold Shanahan was appointed as an Armed Forces Chaplain in 1965 with the Royal Australian Army Chaplains Department. He served at

Wacol in Queensland, the Recruit Training Battalion at Kapooka and at Holdsworthy NSW until, in late 1968, he volunteered for service in South Vietnam. He was attached to the 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. The Battalion sailed from Sydney on 8th February 1969, on the aircraft carrier HMAS Sydney, and arrived at the Vietnamese port of Vung Tau. Father Tom served out of Unit Headquarters, Australian Task Force at Nui Dat and was one of a number of Chaplains with the Australian Forces. He left South Vietnam on 5th March 1970, having served a total of 391 days in country.

During his association with the Tamworth RSL sub-Branch, Father Tom not only served as a committee member, hospital visitation officer and funeral celebrant but he was a keen speaker at the various schools in town, extolling the virtues of military service and encouraging students to honour and respect our war dead. He was also a delegate to the New England District Council of RSL sub-Branches (NSW) and was a fierce advocate and defender of veterans and their rights.

The Tamworth RSL sub-Branch is proud to have had a member of the calibre of Father Tom - and in 2010 we recommended him for the honour, duly awarded, of Life Membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia. His selfless and continuous membership and service exemplified the ideals of our organisation. In 2013 he was further awarded with a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to the RSL and ex-service community.

However, first and foremost to us, Father Tom Shanahan was a highly respected and much-loved member of our sub-Branch. He was just Tom - one of us. He was also a gentleman, a gentle man - and he was my very dear friend.





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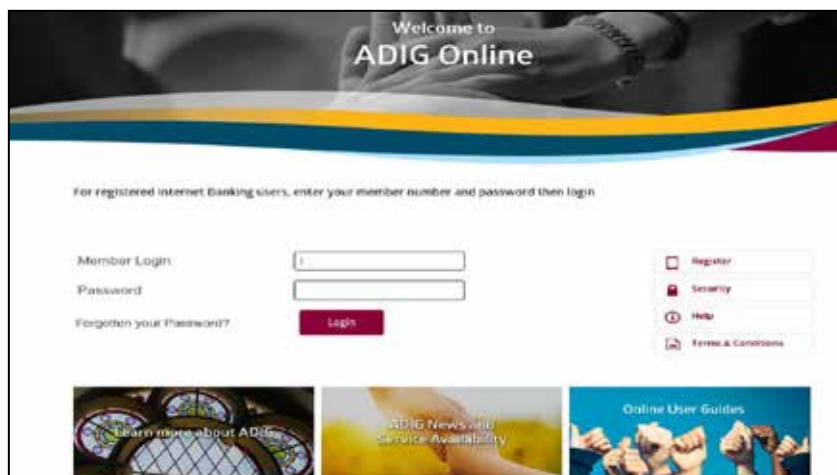
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Reach out. Give life.

Truly Eye Opening!

Following the completion of their HSC studies last year, five Year 12 students, Grace Toakley, Heidi Kelly and Kaylee Smith from O'Connor Catholic College, Armidale, and St Mary's Gunnedah students Emerson Tull and Phoebe Sumpter travelled to Malaysia on an Alternate to Schoolies Immersion with Catholic Mission. Grace Toakley shares about their experience.

We travelled to the remote village of Pa Umor, Malaysia for a ten-day immersion. We were accompanied by four teachers from our schools and our awesome facilitator, Linda Attard. Travelling to this isolated community started from Sydney and ended in a 16-seater plane flying over gorgeous mountainscape as we made our way to Barrio. From there, we drove 20 minutes over newly installed cement roads in absolute awe at the cloud-covered mountains and bright green rice fields that surrounded us.

During my time adjusting to life in Pa Umor, I was constantly amazed by the surreal beauty of the land surrounding the villages, and the genuine warmth that greeted us wherever we went. The community of Pa Umor is small and closely gathered. In various conversations with the villagers we learnt that they had only gained access to electricity and gas in the last two years. Many of them have only recently started working for ringgit (Malaysian currency) — before that the people were



Grace Toakley, Kaylee Smith and Heidi Kelly with students at the village school



The immersion group on top of Prayer Mountain

self-sufficient and relied only on the natural resources provided by the surrounding jungle. It was extremely interesting to live with a community transitioning from a traditional way of life to a more modern one, and for me it raised questions surrounding how they would preserve their culture for the years to come.

Meeting and conversing with the local people in both Pa Umor and Barrio was one of the most memorable components to our immersion. It was amazing that we were able to make comparisons and find similarities between our lifestyles, and it was so much fun to share games and presentations with the community! On our last night we were lucky enough to participate in a cultural night that saw the entire community come together to share a meal and exchange games and puzzles. I know that we all spent most of that night laughing and learning from each other, and it was an experience that I know we will always remember.

It is incredible that our trip will have made a lasting contribution to Pa Umor, especially through projects such as the shelter on their 'Prayer Mountain' where our team successfully constructed the foundation posts (harder than it looks!). We have left Pa Umor knowing so much more about our capabilities and the ways in which our actions can have a positive effect on others. We learnt much from the beautiful people of Pa Umor, through their patience and hospitality, their generosity in never hesitating to share with us and their enthusiasm to include us in community events like afternoon volleyball and church ceremonies. We are thankful to have been able to participate in this Catholic Mission immersion, and for anyone considering a similar trip we cannot encourage you enough. This experience was truly eye-opening and hope that one day we will make our way back to Pa Umor.

To find out more about Catholic Mission's Immersion program, please visit <https://www.catholicmission.org.au/get-involved/immersions> or call Jacqueline Toakley (Diocesan Director) on 67718703.

Feast of the 118 Vietnamese Martyrs

Although the Church knows the names of only 117 martyrs - including 96 Vietnamese, 11 Spanish Dominicans, and 10 French members of the Paris Foreign Missions Society - St. John Paul II chose to canonise both the named and unnamed martyrs who lost their lives during persecutions in the 18th and 19th centuries. The martyrs, whose estimated number is between 130,000 and 300,000, were canonized on June 19, 1988, and given a single feast day, November 24. A young Vietnamese Martyr, Andrew Phú Yên, was beatified in March, 2000 by St. John Paul II.

In thanksgiving to God for the gift of faith, the great cultural heritage and the opportunity to work and live in Australia, members of the Vietnamese Catholic Community gathered together at Mary Help of Christians Church South Tamworth for the Holy Mass to

celebrate the Feast of the 118 Vietnamese Martyrs (117 Saints and 1 Blessed). Father Peter Thoai Ngoc Nguyen, Parish Priest of Scone NSW celebrated the Mass in Vietnamese. The Mass was attended by more than 100 Vietnamese living in Tamworth.

Towards the end of the Mass, Fr Paul Aguilar, South Tamworth Parish Priest, congratulated the Vietnamese Community for organising the celebration. Everyone gathered at the church hall following Mass and enjoyed a variety of Vietnamese food.



A beautiful gathering for all who attended

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The Sinulog- Santo Niño Festival comes to South Tamworth



Statues of the Child Jesus

Tamworth has been treated to many displays of Filipino culture during the past year. The Tamworth Filipino Community Choir has performed on many public occasions including the Lions Senior Citizens' Concert, The Multi-cultural Festival and the Country Music Gospel Concert. The Choir is supported by the FiAT Marching Ensemble and a traditional Filipino dance group.



Traditional Filipino dance group

All three groups came together in Mary Help of Christians Church on Sunday, January 27 to celebrate the most popular cultural-religious festival in the Philippines, the Sinulog-Santa Niño Festival honouring Senor Santo Niño or the Child Jesus.

As the large congregation gathered they were aware that something special was planned but few had any idea of the great musical and prayerful experience that awaited them. On the stroke of nine the choir burst into song, the marching ensemble began playing and about twenty dancers performing the Sinulog Dance and bearing statues of the Child Jesus danced their way into the church to place the statues on a table where they were blessed during Mass.

When the dancers had returned to their pews the choir lead the congregation in the powerful and prayerful opening hymn. This set the tone for the whole liturgy, one of prayerful celebration.

Father Paul's moving sermon was on the theme of home. He pointed out that our Diocese is now home to many people from the Philippines and that St Edward's Parish is the spiritual home for its parishioners, whether born overseas or in Australia. He related this to Jesus returning to his home town of Nazareth to announce that it was His mission to "set the downtrodden free and to proclaim the Lord's year of favour."

After Mass many people, regular parishioners, visitors for Country Music Week and dozens of Filipinos stayed on for a delicious morning tea.



FiAT Marching Ensemble

Around 'n About

A New Beginning

Year 7 students at O'Connor Catholic College Armidale have been busy getting used to how high school works. A new teacher and classroom for every subject, new uniforms, new peers and friends, and lots of new routines! They have been doing a great job and learning very quickly. Well Done Year 7!

Yr 7 students getting to know their timetables and each other.



Bingara's Dedicated Catechist

Kay Withers was awarded the Bishop Mathys Medal for 25 years of dedicated service to Special Religious Education in St Mary's Bingara Parish. Well Done Kay, thank you for your continued support of Catechetics in the Diocese.

Kay Withers with Fr Joseph Armah presenting the Bishop Mathys Medal

Blessings from our Neighbours

Fr Matthew Attia, Parish Priest of St George Coptic Orthodox Church in Kensington, Sydney wanted to help the farmers in need. He organised a local Bunnings BBQ with help from his parishioners to raise money for the families in need from the lasting effects of the drought in the Armidale Diocese. We are truly blessed to have neighbours who can continually think of others. Thank you, Fr Matthew.

Fr Matthew Attia with parishioners from St George Coptic Orthodox Church selling sausages to help our farmers.





Marie Hobson presenting the Beryl and Ossie Campbell Memorial Volunteer of the Year award to parishioner Michael Broekman.

Five Years A Catechist

Nora Carrigan and Lalie Fletcher received a certificate of recognition from Bishop Michael Kennedy for their service to Catechetics in Moree. They have both contributed to this ministry for 5 years with dedication and devotion. The children of Moree are blessed to have these ladies sharing their knowledge of our faith.

Fr Abmar Dumayag presenting the Five-year Service Certificates to Nora Carrigan and Lalie Fletcher



Ramming it up!

Well done to the students of O'Connor Catholic College Armidale for their performances at the Armidale Ram Sales. The students were judging rams and fleeces. Lots of ribbons won!

Students of O'Connor Catholic College Armidale with their ribbons from the Armidale Ram Sales

Around 'n About

Gunnedah's very own Shrek

St Xavier's Gunnedah students presented their production of Shrek The Musical JR. last December. The family-friendly musical comedy follows the adventures of an ogre named Shrek who sets off on a quest to save a princess from a dragon. However, it turns out that in order to ultimately succeed, Shrek must battle an even bigger obstacle: learning how to believe in himself and open his heart to others.

The musical was a collaboration from the whole school. Every student performed in the musical and every staff member was also involved in production. It was a huge undertaking, but under the leadership of Leanne Herden (Assistant Principal), the production came together and was a huge hit amongst the school community.

With music by Jeanine Tesori, book and lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire, Shrek The Musical is based on the Oscar®-winning DreamWorks Animation film and the book Shrek by William Steig.



Wicked Witch - Sophie Kennedy, Gingerbread Man - Ava Fimeri, Pinocchio - Rachel Fairful



Kindergarten



Shrek - Hugh Kennedy, Donkey - Emily Pinn



Princess Fiona 1 - Olivia Osland, Princess Fiona 2 - Tahlia Smith, Princess Fiona 3 - Hannah Cygan



Princess Fiona - Hannah Cygan



Lord Farquaad - Jack Pinn

Around 'n About



Welcome to Kindergarten 2019

Kindergarten is such an exciting time for our little ones.

Introducing St Joseph's Uralla Kindergarten students for 2019: Xavier Wallace, Justin Redmond, Ariel Wake, Riley Garside. Unfortunately, Liam Hayes was absent for the photo, but we welcome them all. We look forward to being part of your learning and development.

Xavier Wallace, Justin Redmond, Ariel Wake, Riley Garside all ready to start school.

St Joseph's Tenterfield Kindergarten Class has Mrs Catie Macansh at the helm. All the students are keen and ready to develop their learning.



Excited to borrow

The St Joseph's School Glen Innes library was a busy place first day back! The school holidays had not diminished the thirst our students have for reading.

Mrs Adams has had lots of new books come into the library. Those new books are now all waiting patiently on the shelves ready to be borrowed. Some very keen children were lined up with their library bags all set to scan the shelves for those new reading finds.

*(Back) Andy Watson, Collie Cooper, Josey Brummell
(Front) Mason Jones, Lachlan Grob & Jasper McKean*

Raising children – with God

Raising children in this crazy epoch of aversion to religion can be daunting for any parent. I know, because I, too, am in the trenches of early childhood parenting. But I have to believe in two things when all else fails, and I wonder if I got anything right as a mom:

1. *parents receive special grace to raise their children*
2. *God's grace compensates for my lack as a parent*

All we need is to *ask* God for the wisdom to guide our children to holiness and to thank Him for filling the gaps where we've faltered.

Jeannie Ewing



You'll never be a
PERFECT parent,
but you need to be a
PRAYING parent."

Mark Batterson

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"If we practice seeing with the eyes of Jesus, we will always be able to recognize those who need our help." Pope Francis @ Pontifex

O'Connor's Captains Cross and Dux Ceremony



Past captains handed over the leadership cross to Student Leadership Team for 2019. Our Guest Speaker was Tim Hanrahan (2016 Dux and School Captain) who encouraged all students to take up the opportunities that O'Connor provides and make the most of their time at O'Connor. The Student Leaders announced the theme for 2019 - 'The Power of Yet' encouraging everyone to continue to strive to achieve their best.

The Dux for 2018 was announced, Cameron Roan. Cameron attained an ATAR of 95.25. He achieved Band 6 result in Mathematics 2. Achieved E3 for Ext 1 Mathematics and Band 5 results in Physics, Chemistry and English Advanced. Cameron has worked with determination throughout his whole secondary schooling. He topped the academic awards for his cohort from Yr 7 through to Year 12. Throughout the HSC Cameron showed a willingness to learn and made the most of the learning opportunities presented. He was proactive in his learning, always asking questions and

seeking to more fully understand difficult concepts. Cameron's approach to his learning was a model for other students to follow and his ability to think critically extended not just his learning but others around him. Cameron is person with integrity who we know will continue to accept challenges and seek solutions.



O'Connor Catholic College students gather in the Chapel for the Captains Cross and Dux Ceremony 2019



Cameron Roan, Dux of O'Connor 2018, with his parents

100% Determination

The future does have a name... and its name is hope.

Pope Francis

Life wasn't easy for 12 year old Thandolwayo, living with her grandparents in a village in Zimbabwe.

Every morning she walked 7 kilometres, at risk of crocodile attack, to collect water. She'd then go to school exhausted.



Thandolwayo enjoys learning at her primary school

Her hopes to be a nurse seemed impossible, until Caritas Hwange helped the village to install solar-powered pumps and two 10,000 litre water storage tanks.

"Now I can bathe every day...we now drink clean, safe water and diseases are no longer affecting us," Thandolwayo says.

She can also concentrate on her education.

Water is also being used to mould bricks, with plans for a community garden and fish pond to generate better income.

"Hope is important because it makes me work harder," Thandolwayo says.

A photograph of a young girl holding a large white plastic jug above her head, smiling. The background is a blurred outdoor scene with trees.

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A Family Tradition lives on at St Xavier's Primary School Gunnedah



Year six in front of St Xavier's School in 1928. Ossie Campbell is third from the left in the middle row and his twin Joyce is second from the left in the front row.

WHEN twins Georgia and Harry Hobson started school at St Xavier's Gunnedah this year, it marked 96 years since their maternal great-grandfather Ossie Campbell and his twin sister Joyce began their education at the school.

The Hobson twins are fifth-generation students at the primary school, established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1879.

The children of Justin and Karen Hobson, the twins having followed their brothers Charlie and Angus to St Xavier's, their father and grandmother Marie Hobson, great-grandfather Ossie Campbell and his mother Ada Matilda Loss, who began her education with the Sisters of Mercy in 1885.

Back then lessons were held in St Joseph's Church until 1896, when a new primary school was constructed on

the corner of Bloomfield and Henry streets. The school became known as St Xavier's Primary School.

The Campbell twins were seven when they started school and seven years later Ossie had completed his education, leaving school in Sixth Class.

He gained a carpentry apprenticeship and years later was the foreman for builder Frank Tydd when the 1896 timber school was replaced by a modern new brick building in 1955.

This year, there are 38 kindergarten students enrolled.



Georgia and Harry Hobson with brothers, Charlie and Angus, and Mum, Karen Hobson on the first day of Kindergarten at St Xavier's Gunnedah

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BACK COVER: A window within the Church of the Fifth Apparition at Tuplatec. A simple Parish church that houses the site of Our Lady of Guadalupe's appearance to the uncle of St Juan Diego, St Bernardino.

