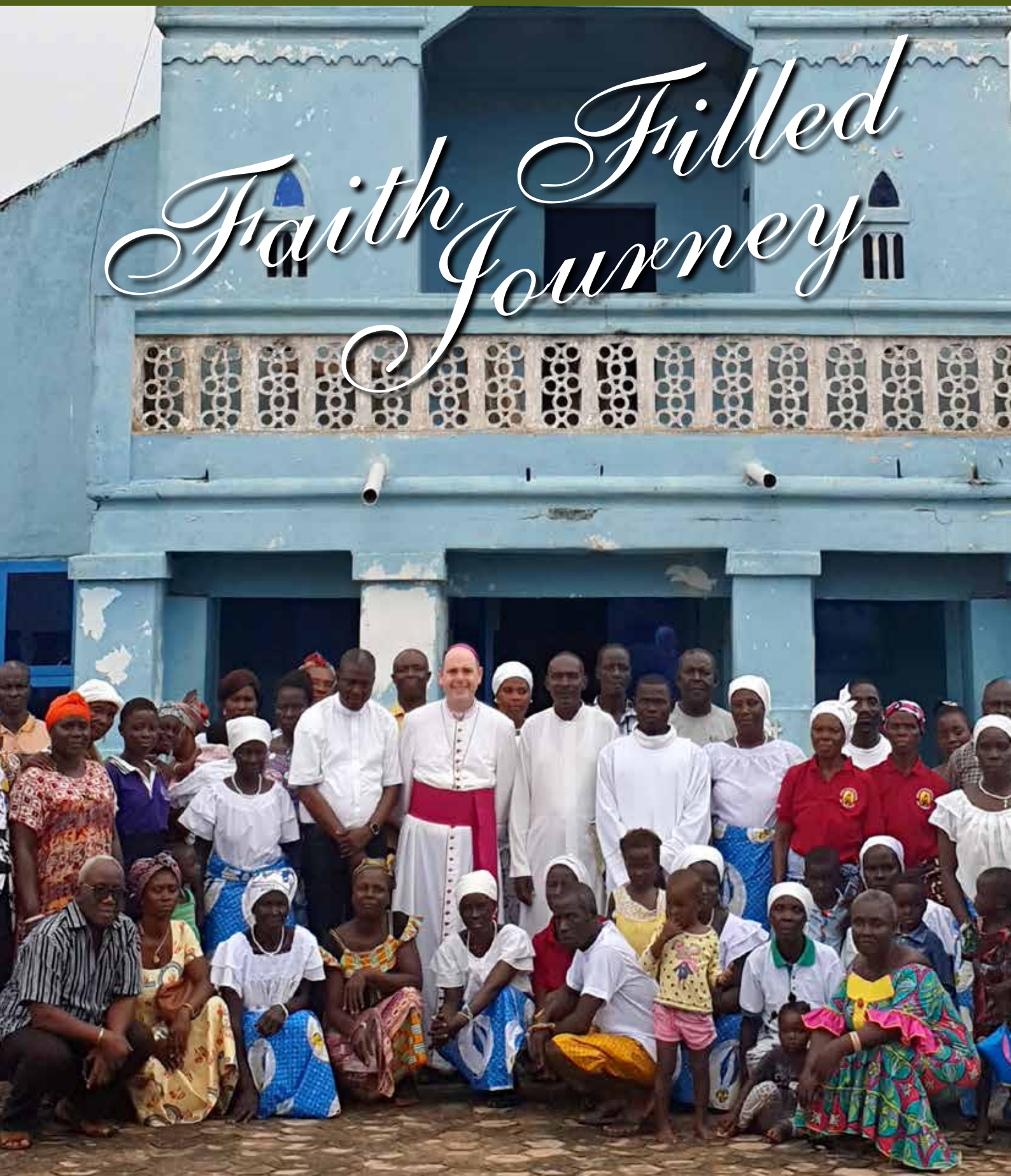


## Filled Faith Journey





# I am not an individual. I am a person!



## The Bishop Speaks

*This is an edited version of the homily Bishop Kennedy gave to Australian pilgrims at the recent World Meeting of Families in Dublin, Ireland.*

We have all heard, witnessed and learnt so much this week during the Dublin World Meeting of Families; so much for us to remember. A few of the things I heard that really struck me were:

First, regarding marriage. “Love is a decision, not a feeling; I decide to love and to be loved.” Another couple said, “we are just 2 imperfect people trying to love each other”. The Priest Chef expressed it differently when he said “Marriage is about fidelity, not perfection. On your wedding day you vow to be faithful, not perfect.”

Second, regarding parenthood. An Irish couple said

“when we were younger we wanted to change the world. Now we just change nappies!” Another man said, “the greatest gift a father can give his children is to love their mother”, and “children who are lovingly corrected, feel loved and cared for.”

And lastly, regarding the whole Church. Many of us heard Bishop Barron say that when one of us fails, the rest of us – the Church – follow the way of Jesus, which is not to exclude and cast-off the one who fails, but to be merciful and reinstate him or her.

This is how good families treat the so called “black sheep of the family”. Families have learnt from Jesus and the Church, but the Church also learns it from families. Families, whatever your degree of imperfection and brokenness the Church wants you; the Church needs you.

*Bishop Kennedy with the Hyland Family*





But if all of this, and everything else we heard these few days is too much to remember, there are two things I know I will never forget. One is the three words Pope Francis gives us for happy family life: “Please, thank you, and sorry”. The second thing I will never forget is you, the couples and families on this pilgrimage. Your humble and sincere witness to love and to marriage and family life is extraordinary and has touched me deeply.

Parents, seeing your patience and kindness for each other and your children. Kids, seeing your respect and obedience toward your parents. Mums and Dads travelling alone without your spouse and kids, hearing the way you speak about them in their absence. And seeing the joy and delight you all take in each other.

Seeing all this has been and is a powerful Gospel. This is the *Gospel of the Family* that Pope Francis wants us all to continue living in our communities back home. This is the Gospel that, amidst so many shadows and clouds, is transforming the world – for now ever so subtly, but like a snow ball it is growing and will continue to grow.

The words of Jesus in today’s Gospel passage seem strange during a gathering of families: “Call no man on earth your Father” (Mt 23:9). You might think I’ve been deliberately avoiding them! I haven’t. I’ve been saving them for last!

We are not meant to take every single word of the Bible literally, not even every word of Jesus. This is one such passage. Otherwise we’d be in the ludicrous situation of calling our Mums mothers but not our Dads fathers! Even the Bible itself often

refers to people as “fathers”, either by blood or by faith.


We call our Mums Mothers and our Dads Fathers, not just as titles, but because it’s who they are – it sums up their very identities.

Cardinal Tagle said something beautiful about this during the week. He said that each of us is not an individual but a person. An individual exists in isolation and distances himself from others, whereas a *person* exists in relationship with others and finds his or her identity in those relationships.

So, who am I? I am not an individual! I am a son, a daughter, a brother, a sister, a husband, a wife, a mother, a father, a priest, a nun, a bishop. There is nothing better in life than to be one or more of these things. It is who we are. They are the relationships that make us who we are.

And every one of us is a son or daughter of God who is *The Father* possessing both paternal and maternal qualities, the one from who all fatherhood and motherhood comes.

Let us bask in our relationships with each other and in our relationship with God and pray that these bonds may be strengthened today through our sharing in this Eucharist.

  
**Most Reverend Michael Kennedy**  
 Bishop of Armidale



# A year of Jubilees



*Cutting the cake: Paul Welchman-President of Parish Council, Maree Holland-Principal of St Joseph's School Wee Waa, Father James Poovathinkal, Alison Hatton-REC at St. Joseph's Wee Waa, Judy Rily-REC at St. Francis Xavier's School Narrabri, Michael Ball-Principal St. Francis Xavier's Narrabri.*

## Silver Jubilee

In September St. Francis Xavier's Church, Narrabri, was full of parishioners from Wee Waa and Narrabri along with many priests from our Diocese and beyond to help Father James Poovathinkal celebrate his 25th Year in the Priesthood. Students and parishioners then enjoyed a picnic lunch together with a sausage sizzle and cake on the lawns of St. Francis Xavier's School.



*Fr James Poovathinkal celebrates 25 years as a priest.*

## Golden and Diamond Jubilees

St Joseph's Parish Gunnedah shared morning tea with their wonderful Sisters of Mercy to celebrate their year of Golden and Diamond Jubilees. The Mercy Associates made a special presentation to Srs Gabrielle (60yrs) and Christine (50yrs) to honour their vocation and work in the community. Sister Judy was not present at the morning tea but did also celebrate her Golden Jubilee (50yrs) this year. All three sisters travelled to Alstonville earlier in the year to celebrate with the Sisters from the North Coast. Reflecting on the past 50 years as a Sister of Mercy,



*From left, Sisters Denise Laverty, Judy Breen, Frances Moran, Christine Belling, Larelle Laverty, Gabrielle Foley, Front: Mary Moran, Marie Heffernan, Nola Larkin.*



*From left, Ruth Clarke, Val Kelly, Sr Gabrielle Foley, Parish Priest Fr John McHugh, Sr Christine Belling and Joan Coker.*

Sr Judy said one of the greatest privileges has been to listen to the stories from students, parents, friends and especially farming families.

"These powerful personal experiences were often permeated by raw pain, deep sadness or, on other occasions complete joy and gladness," Sr Judy said.



*Bishop Kennedy was received into Fr Kingsley's family home.*

## Nigeria – Owerri, Fr Kingsley Etoh

Bishop Michael Kennedy's visit to my home town in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria, was initially meant to be low-key, but it turned out to be an outright fiesta. People from my village and parish saw it as once in a life-time event and therefore were determined to make it special.

All and sundry turned out to the airport to welcome the bishop. There were all kinds of uniforms differentiating one group from another. There were also different traditional dances on display.

At my family house, people were eager to shake hands, introduce themselves and take photos with the Bishop. To emphasise how they perceive the position of the Bishop as a spiritual father, they insisted that he must bless and sprinkle them with Holy Water.

The Bishop, on his own part, never missed the opportunity to learn a couple of things about the Igbo culture, especially the way visitors are received; the way the Kola Nut is presented and blessed before it is consumed.

At the parish premises, the Bishop was given a chieftaincy dress and the title of "Enyi Oha 1" which means "The Number One Friend of the Community". To the surprise of everyone, the Bishop also joined the women in their traditional dance. This singular act delighted all the on-lookers.

I am so happy that the Bishop made this trip to my home town because at the end of the day it made my people happy. They have been talking about it since last month. I do believe that it will remain in

their mind for a very long time. It was also a unique privilege that the first Mass to be celebrated by Bishop Michael Kennedy on African soil happened to be in my village.



*A reception for Bishop Kennedy was held at Fr Kingsley's home Parish, St Peter's Catholic Parish Onyeaghalanwanneya. Parish Priest Fr Francis Onyekwere, Fr Canice Okere, Fr Kingsley Etoh, Bishop Michael Kennedy, Fr Damian Nwanna, Fr Kizito Obinna, and Fr Cajetan Opara.*

### Visiting Africa

Bishop Michael Kennedy travelled to Nigeria and Ghana to visit the Dioceses, Bishops, families and communities of our priests. He was accompanied in each Diocese by the priests of that Diocese attending events and celebrations. They have shared the following accounts and photos. Bishop Kennedy thanks Fathers Francis, Christopher, Thaddeus, Kingsley and Joseph for their and their families and friends' hospitality whilst he travelled around Nigeria and Ghana. "It was a marvellous trip to undertake and it has provided me with a glimpse into the lives and culture of the African people." Bishop Michael Kennedy



# AFRICA VISIT

## Nigeria – Onitsha, Fr Christopher Onuekwusi



*Bishop Kennedy is presented with the welcoming Kola nut at Fr Christopher's family home.*

In my tradition (that is Igbo culture), the Kola nut is a symbol of welcome. When a visitor visits a family, the first thing that is presented to the visitor is the kola nut. It is a sign that the visitor is welcomed. Otherwise, it is an indirect way of telling the visitor that he is not welcomed. So, the Bishop did not only bless the Kola nut when it was presented to him at different places, it was also interesting seeing him eating the kola nut. That made the people very happy as you can see in the pictures. The Kola nut is usually presented together with the 'Garden-eggs'.

It was also interesting for the people to hear the Bishop speaking Igbo language. He addressed the people at different places by beginning with "Otito Diri Jesus",

meaning.. "Praise be to Jesus". This is usually our way of greeting the people of God, and each time the Bishop said that, it was followed with a loud applause. It is also good to remark that, after being dressed with the chieftaincy attire, the Bishop greeted the elders and other chiefs in the usual traditional way, and that is by a special type of handshake, using the walking stick, the elephant tusk, or the traditional fan. In fact, the people were very happy with the bishop, not only because of his visit, but also because of his ability to relate very well with the people. It was very obvious that he was very relaxed with our culture, and he also expressed his appreciation to the people as a group and to different persons, by saying "Daalu" in Igbo language, meaning "Thank you".



*Jude, my brother; Jacinta, my sister; Chief Christopher Onuekwusi, my father; Fr Christian, my brother; Fr Christopher, myself; Bishop Kennedy; Michael, my brother; Mrs Monica Onuekwusi, my mother; Florence, my sister and John, my brother*



## Nigeria – Onitsha, Fr Thaddeus Ike



*Bishop Kennedy with a few members of Fr Thaddeus' family, back home in Nigeria*

While in Archdiocese of Onitsha, Anambra State, Nigeria, Bishop Michael Kennedy was received and hosted by the Archbishop, Most Rev Valerian M. Okeke at the Basilica of the Most Holy Trinity Onitsha. He was given a red-carpet reception by the Archbishop and a few members of the Presbyterate including religious of the Diocese.

In his itineraries, he visited the Holy Family Youth Village. This is a massive student hostel built by Onitsha Archdiocese to help university students embrace holistic formation. He also visited the families and Parishes of Frs Christopher Onuekwusi and Thaddeus Ike. The families and various Parishioners were overwhelmed with joy seeing Bishop Kennedy in their midst. He blessed their sacramentals and Holy Water as memorabilia. He also planted an ornamental tree to make the visit memorable. They enrobed him in African traditional attire in different communities and dotted his head with African chiefs red cap. He celebrated morning Mass and prayed at the relics of the Blessed Michael Iwene Tansi (Nigerian Saint in the making) situated inside the Basilica

Church. Most of the places he visited displayed a cultural dance for him and gave him special and significant gifts. The Bishop witnessed rain fall in Nigeria. The memory of his visit is a good one, though too brief and the people were clamouring for a repeat. Thanking God for this visit, we pray for the flourishing of God's kingdom on earth.



*Bishop Kennedy planting a tree in memory of his visit*

## Nigeria – Calabar, Fr Francis Afu



*Fr Francis with Bishop Kennedy and his former Bishop in Calabar who accepted him as a seminarian.*



# AFRICA VISIT

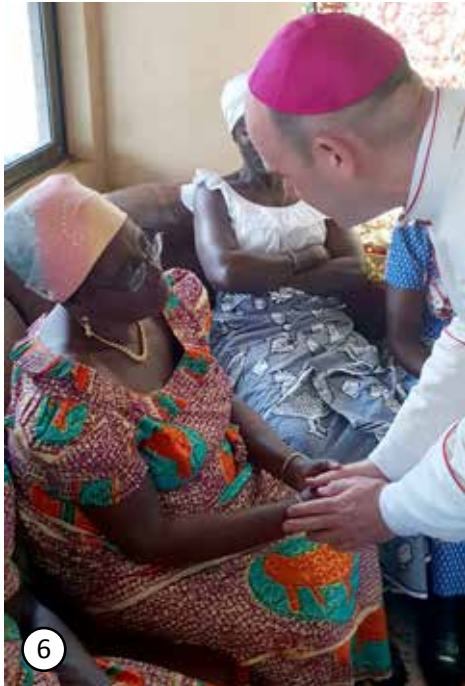
## Ghana – Kengen – Fr Joseph Armah's home Parish



1. A cross section of the parade of Knights and Ladies of Marshall as well as their cadets mounted in honor of the Bishop before the beginning of the Sunday mass
2. Bishops Kwofie and Kennedy on their way for the Sunday Mass.
3. A cross section of the congregation during the Sunday celebration
4. (L - R) Fr Joseph Armah, Fr Joseph's Aunt Ann, Bishop Kennedy, Father Joseph's mum and Fr Joseph's home parish priest, Fr. Anthony



# AFRICA VISIT



6



7



10



8



9

- 6 Bishop Kennedy greeting Fr Joseph's mum in their family home.
- 7 A group photograph with St. Theresa's Society
- 8 A group photograph with cadets of knights of Marshall
- 9 Bishop Kennedy blessing Fr Joseph's favourite teacher in primary school
- 10 At the gate of the seminary Fr Joseph attended

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# 104th Migrant and Refugee Sunday - Tamworth



*Fr Paul with the Vietnamese Choir, Filipino Community Choir and St Edward's Parish Guitar Group*

Migrant and Refugee Sunday was a very special day at St Edward's Parish. The church, made colourful with flags and images from around the world was full with parishioners and visitors, many clad in national dress. In the words of Grahame Tighe, president of the pastoral council: "It was humbling to see so many people from various countries coming together to celebrate our faith and to listen to the life journeys which brought them to Australia."

Among the speakers was Moses, a Karen from Myanmar, who had spent seventeen years in a refugee camp, before getting a refugee status in Australia. Another was Yessy from Columbia. Many of her friends and relatives had been killed in the civil war which has raged for fifty two

years. Moses and Yessy are grateful that they now live in Australia and urged us to celebrate and give thanks for our freedom and our way of life.

This gratitude was expressed in the Prayers of the Faithful read in the Columbian, Vietnamese, Filipino, Karen, Thai and English. Grahame reflected that "The readings, prayers and singing in various languages was a joy to hear, making us appreciate that we are part of a Universal Church and that our faith should have no barriers."

After Mass all adjourned to the parish hall to mix and mingle and share food and stories with migrants and refugees from many cultures. All who attended were privileged to be part of such a happy, prayerful and meaningful celebration.

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*Some Filipino youth*



*Jimena and Valeria Ramirez from Colombia (enjoying Filipino ice cream), mother and child in Colombian National Soccer Team uniform*



*Rev. Tony Winter (Uniting Church), Annette Winter and Genevieve Maher*



*Fr Christopher Onuekwusi with Parishioners from St Nicholas' Parish, Mrs Rajeev and her children (Catherine and Daniel), Mrs Philomena Muoka, Rizalie Ongley, George Anosike, Andrea Anosike, Linda Igbenije and Elise Smith, celebrating Migrant and Refugee Sunday in traditional dress*



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# Saint Thomas More Parish Werris Creek celebrates 100 Years



*Father Vic Ignacio and parishioners with the 100 Year Celebration Tartan*

Saint Thomas More Parish in Werris Creek celebrates its 100 year anniversary in 2018. The parish arranged a number of activities to help in this celebration which focused on the main event, the celebration of Mass and the blessing of the new Parish Office by the Bishop of Armidale, Bishop Michael Kennedy. This was followed by a lunch at the Werris Creek Golf Club where all parishioners and visitors were able to reminisce on old times, renew friendships and generally celebrate together this significant milestone.

In order to have a lasting memory of the 100 year celebration The Crofters Weaving Mill, Spring Ridge, designed a Tartan to recognise the Celebration of the anniversary of the formation of the Werris Creek Catholic Parish 1918-2018 and the beginning of a New Era by the parishioners in their faith journey.

The tartan colours reflect the spirit of the Catholic faith by using the liturgical colours centred on the Eucharist combined with the natural agricultural attributes of Werris Creek.

The Tartan was officially registered by the Keeper of the Scottish Register of Tartan and a woven sample of the Tartan is now retained in the archives of the Registrar.

Parish Priest Father Vic Ignacio and a number of parishioners visited the Crofters Weaving Mill to ceremoniously cut the Tartan from the loom, a great occasion marking a milestone for the Parish.

Father Ignacio commented "The first centenary celebration of Saint Thomas More Parish of Werris Creek is a significant reminder of God's loving presence to us. May God continue to bless each and every one and lead us to a journey to a brighter, faith-filled and hopeful future through the intercession of Saint Thomas More, our patron Saint."

The parish also joined in on the 50 Year celebration of the Werris Creek Swimming Pool with a float in the parade and a market stall where memorabilia was available and raffle tickets for the first handwoven knee rug in the new tartan from 100% mohair were purchased. Photos of the celebrations will be in the December issue of Viewpoint.



*The Saint Thomas More 100 Year Celebration Tartan on the Loom*





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## Clergy Assembly September 2018

The clergy all came together once again for their biannual Clergy Assembly with the Bishop. It is a chance to stay updated with each other and the requirements of our Diocese. Bishop Tony Randazzo, Auxiliary Bishop for the Archdiocese of Sydney, came to lead sessions in Child Protection and Professional Standards whilst Fr Mark O'Brien, Associate Professor in the Department of Biblical Studies at the Catholic Theological College, lead sessions on the Psalms. The clergy were also able to socialise and pray together, strengthening their vocation as a group

*Diocese of Armidale clergy line up with Fr Mark O'Brien*



*An opportunity to socialise with Bishop Tony Randazzo: Fr Sabu Pulimalayil, Fr Kingsley Etoh, Fr Barry Leech, Bishop Tony Randazzo, Monsignor Edward Wilkes, Fr Christopher Onuekwusi and Fr Steve O'Shea*



## Retirement of Sue Bell, St Joseph's Warialda

Mrs Sue Bell has announced her retirement after 18 years of service to St Joseph's Warialda. Sue started work at St Joseph's in 2000 and has worked in the classroom as an education assistant, library technician and more recently as an administrative officer. A Mass to celebrate Sue's service to the St Joseph's community will be held on Thursday the 15th of November at St Patrick's Church Warialda at 12 noon. A retirement lunch for Sue will be held on Saturday the 17th of November at St Joseph's School hall at midday. Please RSVP to Joe Dimech (school principal) at [jdimech@arm.catholic.edu.au](mailto:jdimech@arm.catholic.edu.au) or Lisa Moore at [lmoore@arm.catholic.edu.au](mailto:lmoore@arm.catholic.edu.au) if you would like to join us to celebrate either or both events.



# Around 'n About

## Skyping about Science

At St Philomena's School Moree, our Year 9 and 10 cohort recently came together to undertake a serious investigation into the big questions Science and Geography can pose. To address this challenge, they were joined by renowned Australian scientist Dr. Karl for a Skype session. He spoke with the students for 45 minutes, covering questions such as: "Why do towels get dirty when we only use them after we've cleaned ourselves?", "If I broke a bone, would it heal stronger than before?", and "If water is clear in colour, then why is the ocean blue?". While this was many students' first experience of Dr. Karl's particular brand of scientific process, the reaction was overwhelmingly positive, with many taken aback by his extensive knowledge and humour. The Year 9 and 10 community at St Philomena's would like to thank Dr. Karl for giving us the opportunity to share in his wisdom.



*Brennan Cumberland, Chloe Brazel, Bethany Vonhoff, and Chloe Makim Skyping with Dr Karl.*



## First Holy Communion

St Joseph's West Tamworth celebrated a very special day for many of our Year 3 students who received the sacrament of the Eucharist (First Holy Communion) for the first time. The children were very well supported by Fr Anthony, their families, staff, catechists and parishioners. Special thanks to our wonderful Parish Priest Fr Anthony and the Year 3 teacher, Mrs Ryan.

*St Joseph's West Tamworth First Holy Communion recipients with Fr Anthony Koppman and Deacon Peter Harrison*

## Prac Students at St Joseph's Tenterfield

Josh Harkin and Nicholas Kartsiotis have escaped the city as fourth year practicum students from the University of Notre Dame in Sydney and have been gaining teaching experience at St Joseph's Tenterfield since the beginning of term 3. Mr Harkin has been teaching Stage 3 and Mr Kartsiotis Stage 2.

*My time at St Joseph's has been AMAZING! I love having a class of 42 respectful, collaborative, confident and can-do students and being able to work with some equally brilliant educators in the process. It's just a whole heap of fun every day! I've learnt so much and hope my students would say the same. - Josh Harkin*

*I would like to express my gratitude to the staff at St Joseph's for welcoming me as an early career teacher by*



*Photo: Josh Harkin on the left and Nick Kartsiotis on the right*

*providing an open channel of communication and regular feedback throughout my professional experience. I look forward to teaching opportunities in the future. - Nicholas Kartsiotis*





## Confirmation in Manilla

The gathering for Confirmation at St Michael's Parish at Manilla was a special occasion for the participants and their families and the church community. Bishop Michael Kennedy welcomed the participants and thanked them for accepting their new responsibility to be mature members of the church community with all the gifts of the Holy Spirit to guide them on their journey through life. The participants joined together in the school hall to celebrate with their families and sponsors with a lovely display of food provided by the mothers. It was a lively gathering and was enjoyed by all those present. The Principal and teachers who prepared the participants were pleased with the outcome on the day.

*Maryln O'Donnell, Isabella Bolsom, Mary O'Donnell and Melissa Bolsom*

## St. Patrick's School Walcha

Years 3-6 from St. Patrick's School in Walcha travelled to Armidale to participate in a rehearsal for New England Sings. After the rehearsal we took the opportunity to have Monsignor Wilkes lead the students on a tour of the Cathedral.

Monsignor spoke to the children about the founders of the Cathedral and its importance. Monsignor also explained the beautiful stained-glass windows and the impact the Irish had on the beginnings of Catholicism in the Armidale Diocese.

Everyone enjoyed the tour and we would like to sincerely thank Monsignor Wilkes for taking time out of his busy day to be our guide.



*Students of St Patrick's Walcha with Monsignor Wilkes in Sts Mary and Joseph's Cathedral*



## Confirmation & Baptism at Warialda

8 children from St Patrick's Parish Warialda received the sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time. Samuel Hall, Thomas Bell, Scarlett Nieddu, Os van Velthuisen, William Reardon, Molly Armstrong and Lola Barwick were the children who participated in the parish based program.

Ada van Velthuisen was also Baptised during the mass, surrounded by family and friends.

Thank you to Fr Paul McCabe for the lovely mass in Fr Joseph's absence and to Mrs Sue Barwick and Mrs Mary-Jane Guest for preparing the children for the sacrament. Congratulations to all the children.

*Samuel Hall, Thomas Bell, Scarlett Nieddu, Os van Velthuisen, William Reardon, Molly Armstrong, Lola Barwick & Ada van Velthuisen*



# Around 'n About

## St Joseph's Uralla students visit National Capital

Year 5 and Year 6 students from St Joseph's School Uralla joined with their peers from St Patrick's Walcha on an excursion to Canberra. Highlights included: meeting the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, who happened to drive up to Government House just as their group was about to leave; placing a red poppy in the wall of remembrance at the Australian War Memorial; seeing the amazing artworks at the National Gallery; and exploring the science games at Questacon. We are grateful to the staff and parents at St Patrick's who helped make this wonderful experience possible for our students. A huge thank you goes to our teacher Miss Emma Kelly for accompanying and caring for our students on this very important milestone in their lives.



*At the War Memorial L-R Back: Adrian Walters, Seth Munzenrieder, Zoe Walters, Alice Prowse, Kaitlyn Walters, Cambell Mavin. L-R Front: Shyan Dodd, Matilda Boxsell, Montana Dodd.*



## STEAM Camp

Ten Aboriginal students from St Philomena's Moree attended a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics) camp during Term 3. The camp was held in the Royal National Park south of Sydney. The camp ran for two and a half days and students participated in several workshops with a focus on Indigenous maths and science. Students explored stop motion animation, corroboree equations, string theory and 4th dimensions. An excursion to Jibbon Beach to view carvings also provided an opportunity to construct gunyahs.

*L-R: Bradley Swan, Paige Collins, Will Caccianiga, Bella O'Neile, Emily Di Donna, l'Kysia See, Kaylan Prince, Heath Caccianiga, Jacob Duncan, Jackson Gaiero.*

## Walkathon for Drought Relief

McCarthy Catholic College Tamworth held their annual Walkathon with the students from Years 7 -12 participating in a 12km walk around Tamworth. Despite the irony that stormy showers were predicted on the day, we set out to raise money for Drought Relief, managed to avoid any complications and finished our walk, in good time. We managed to raise \$14,698.40 and over \$600.00 in non-perishable food items were donated to St Vincent de Paul. Staff and students, also organised raffles, bake sales and other fundraisers which were included in the final tally.

*Environmental Council, Mr Paul Burton - St Vincent de Paul President and Mr Geoff McManus Principal McCarthy Catholic College*







## Wee Waa Family Mass

St Andrew's Parish Wee Waa celebrated Child Protection Sunday with a Family Mass. It was encouraging to see so many families attend mass and actively take part in the liturgy. The choir, lead by Mrs Anna Baird, sang beautifully and are to be congratulated on their dedication to attend practices in preparation for our special celebrations. After mass we all came together to share morning tea in the church grounds. It was great to witness all the families having a chat over a cuppa. I would like to thank all those involved in the preparation of this celebration and we look forward to celebrating Family Mass again in the near future.

*Brendan and Karlee Hatton with their children Bradley and Ebonnie during the offertory.*

## NAIDOC Celebrations

There was much excitement on Thursday 5th of July when NAIDOC Week was celebrated at St Edward's School. The children were amazed by the Smoking Ceremony conducted by Len Waters, the Primary Boys Didgeridoo Performance and some of St Edward's very talented Indigenous Dancers. There was also a liturgy and a delicious cake to share. Arts, crafts and stories were also a part of the school week. The disco held on Thursday night was an enjoyable and successful occasion with money raised going towards bales of hay for our struggling farmers.

*Jodie Herden, Sam Aitken and Indyannah Craigie*



## Mackillop Victorious in Athletics Carnival

St Joseph's School Glen Innes held their annual Athletics Carnival this term on one of the more glorious days we have had this winter.

Mackillop, Fitzroy & Penola fought out a well contested battle. This day saw four records broken, fantastic sportsmanship shown and 36 of our students making it onto the next stage at the Armidale Diocesan Athletics Carnival in Tamworth.

Mackillop came home victorious this day with a grand total of 500 points.

*(L-R) Mrs Brenda Wirth, MacKillop House Captains - Alexandra Wright & Kolby Martin*



# Conversation starters at the table

While beginning a family dinner with the highs and lows of our day can be a good place to start, a well-worded question is also an easy and effective way to connect after a long day. We hope the following 'conversation-starters' will help spark a deeper conversation about the things that matter to your family, as well as bringing joy to the dinner table.

- If you could only eat three foods for the rest of your life, what would they be?
- What would you do with your time if all electronics were taken away?
- If you could have dinner with anyone from history who would it be and why?
- If you could stay up all night, what would you do?
- If you could change one thing that happened today, what would it be?
- If you could take only three things to a deserted island, what would they be?
- Name one thing that you love most about each of your family members.
- If you could create a new tradition for your family, what would it be?
- If you had to join the circus, what act would you like to do?

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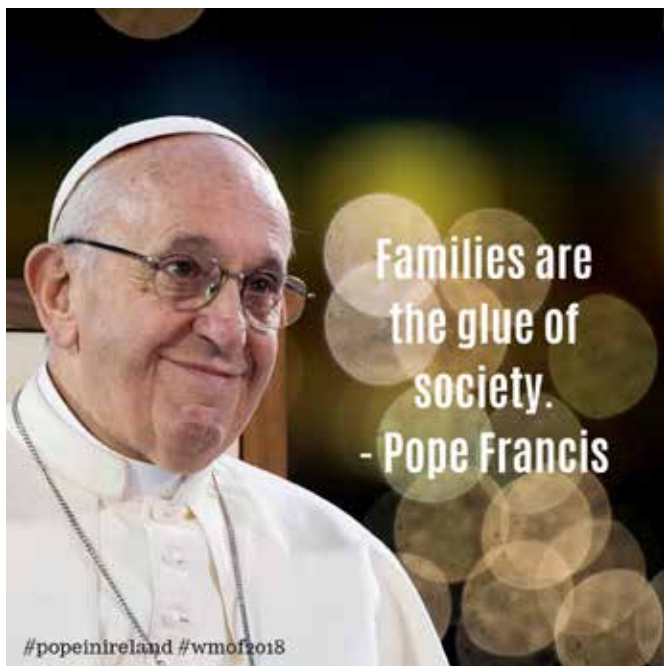


**Practising Catholic Staff,  
Honouring Catholic Funeral Rituals.**





# The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World



A large contingent of Australian couples and families have made their way to Ireland to participate in the World Meeting of Families. Mark and Tink Boyd, who are parents to seven children aged 32 to 15, from Yeppoon in central Queensland, are leading a group of almost 40 pilgrims from Queensland, New South Wales and the ACT.

The couple previously attended a World Meeting of Families in Mexico City in 2009. "The wonderful thing about attending these events is the realisation of just how valuable families are to the Church and wider community," said Mrs Boyd, a music teacher. "As a family of seven, for many years we thought we were just getting by. Being at the World Meeting of Families with other like-minded families, with the same beliefs and enthusiasm, really reignited our passion for the Church and reinforced to us the importance of family. Family is the place where children learn right from wrong and learn how to tolerate others. They can experiment with their behaviour and get pulled into line. I don't believe we stop to think about how important families are and how families can be a great witness to faith in our communities."

Pope Francis chose the theme for the event: "The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World". The theme was central to the process that led to his post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia: On Love in the Family*. In that document, Pope Francis said: "In the family, three words need to be used. I want to repeat this! Three words: 'Please', 'Thankyou', 'Sorry'. Three essential words!"

"The life of every family is marked by all kinds of crises, yet these are also part of its dramatic beauty. Couples should be helped to realise that surmounting a crisis need

not weaken their relationship; instead, it can improve, settle and mature the wine of their union.

"One could say, without exaggeration, that the family is the driving force of the world and of history."

The gathering included a three-day Pastoral Congress consisting of a program of workshops, talks and discussions centred on the theme.

In addition to attending the conference, pilgrims explored Dublin and visited famous sites including the holy town of Glendalough, once a monastic settlement founded in the sixth century by St Kevin, and the picturesque medieval town of Kildare, the site of St Brigid's Cathedral.



*Bishop Kennedy with Charlotte, Mark and Tink Boyd*



# Mass for Rain



The congregation gathered indoors to celebrate Mass and pray for rain

Over fifty people, drawn from the Dungowan Parish and all three parishes of Tamworth, gathered at Di Brown's beautiful property on Dungowan Creek to pray for rain. The gathering was organised by the White Ant Family Group from South Tamworth and Father Paul Aguilar, Parish Priest of South Tamworth.

Due to a small fall of rain overnight the planned open-air Mass was transferred to an enclosed area in Di's home. As the people arrived they were welcomed with a cup of tea and a delicious array of cakes. At 11.00 am all assembled for the Mass for rain. It was a great privilege for those present to assist at a Mass concelebrated by Father Paul and Father Bernie Flood who were assisted by Deacon Paul Manvell who felt quite at home, having grown up in the Dungowan Valley. The singing was led

by Marie Mooney and the keyboard music was supplied by Fr Tuan

In his homily Deacon Paul reminded us that we really do live in a "valley of tears" and that hardship is often unavoidable on earth. Despite this it is right that we should pray for the rain and that we should pray for all people who are harmed by drought, the farmers, farm workers and all people whose income depends on regular rainfall. The Prayers of the Faithful were for rain and for all those who are suffering as a result of the prolonged drought.

After Mass all stayed on for a sausage sizzle and a variety of salads and sweets prepared by the ladies, especially those in the White Ant Family Group.



Fr Tuan Tran, Fr Bernard Flood, Fr Paul Aguilar & Deacon Paul Manvell



# Supporting our Farmers

## Drought Relief Donations

The Diocese was very blessed to receive some significant donations from local people, the Lismore diocese and Gympie Parish in Sydney. The money has been given out via gift cards to families struggling with the consequences of the drought to buy everyday necessities at local stores. Please keep the farmers and townspeople in your prayers and let's keep up our prayers for the drought to break.

## St Michael's Supporting Farmers Day

What a fantastic day we had with all the students dressing up in farm clothes and generously donating to help out the farmers. For a small school we amazingly raised over \$700.00 for Buy a Bale in a single day. We also collected food for the local hampers going out to farmers in the Manilla area.

A special thanks to our Canteen manager Mrs Kate Holden who also contributed by holding a sausage sizzle for the students and donating all monies raised to Buy a Bale. The BBQ smelt and tasted delicious.

Year 5/6 students have been busy making some cards to send to our local farmers to keep spirits high and show our support. These cards look amazing and noted some very heart touching words from kids. See below for a sample.

St Michael's has also been lucky enough to have received some mail from other catholic school students writing to us to let us know they are thinking of us during this tough time. Such a lovely gesture and I am sure that our students are really going to appreciate these letters, colouring in's and book marks. We will be working on sending some reply letters and thanking these wonderful people for their thoughts.

Friday ended with our school students and maybe some teachers & parents dancing up a storm to encourage some rain to fall from the sky. This was a lot of fun and very entertaining.



*St Michael's Manilla students dressed up as Farmers for the day*

## St Mary's Armidale Sending Out Smoko



*St Mary's Mini Vinnies Team packaging the Smoko for travel: Abigail Shephard, Alexis Cook, Aaliyah Walsh, Bella Lucas, Heather Bassett*

St Mary's Catholic Primary School Armidale put out a call to their community to bake biscuits and slices to send in to school on the last day of Term 3. These were then package together by the school's Mini Vinnies team. The packages contained a small container of morning tea with cards and letters written by many students from the school, offering their thoughts, prayers and best wishes for farmers affected by drought. These packages would then be delivered to farmers further west by staff member Bernadette Phelps and her family. Their aim is to drop off as many of the packages as possible to farmers on their trip west, during the holidays. It is being done in an effort to show solidarity to those farmers struggling and offer a small reprieve from the tasks they are facing each day.



# Holy Purity is the Remedy: A Message from Fr Rocky

In the midst of the storm, I want to encourage all Relevant Radio associates and listeners to promote a culture of sexual integrity, not just for clerics, but for laity as well. This will help us light a candle, when so many are cursing the darkness.

The current crisis is about sexual immorality compounded by dishonesty. This is not the first time in history. Just read the story about King David, God's chosen one.

Promoting this culture of sexual integrity begins with each of us: Holy Purity is given to us by God when we ask for it with humility. It is displayed in our conversations, our modest and humble way of dressing, our daily fight for custody of the eyes and control of our thoughts, and our conviction that human sexuality is a sacred power that God has entrusted to us for the procreation of the human race.

Temperance is the moral virtue that is needed to live chastely, and it can be acquired through time and effort, with prayer, mortification, frequent Holy Communion and regular, sincere Confession. Our Blessed Mother and St. Joseph will help too.



This would be a good moment for each of us to re-read the Catechism of the Catholic Church on the [6<sup>th</sup> commandment](#). Having a well-formed conscience in this regard will be the starting point for progress. Holy Purity is not something negative. It is a joyful affirmation that we are children of God with a destiny to be even higher than the angels in heaven.

Rev. Francis J. Hoffman  
"Father Rocky", [relevantradio.com](http://relevantradio.com)

by Lindsey Kettner

## Centacare: Caring for your family

For over a decade we have been helping families across the New England North West grow stronger and become more resilient.

We can assist your family with support, parent's and children's groups, parenting education and family and property mediation services. Our programs are accessible and culturally safe.

Call 1800 376 826 to find out how we can help your family.





# St Albert's College help Little Windmills spin



In 2018 St Albert's College aligned its fundraising focus with Little Windmills, The Country Kids Charity. 'Little Windmills is a non-profit organisation committed to the hope, health and happiness of Aussie country kids who are seriously ill, injured, disadvantaged or have special needs. They work to provide essential equipment and services to children in need and their families who support them.' The College's charity committee sat down early in the year and decided that Little Windmills' mission was one that the College and its broader community could rally behind and support.

The Charity Committee set out to arrange numerous fundraising events and fundraising opportunities. In a St Albert's first, the committee put together a charity colour run to start off the fundraising year. With the College's busy calendar, it was impressive to see donation buckets at events regularly being filled whether it be at a College formal dinner or at a Saturday sport fixture. The charity committee's tenacious efforts were almost always on display at functions and events with Little Windmills colours being sprayed across tables or subtly mixed in to a theme for a function. Even on the sporting fields, the Little Windmills logo and colours were seen in the socks of our hockey and netball teams as well as the on the custom charity jerseys of the first XV Rugby team which were later auctioned off.

In September the St Albert's charity committee's year-

long fundraising efforts were to be showcased with the inaugural Charity Long Lunch. A spread of stunning native floral arrangements adorned the tables and a feature flower wall tastefully personified rural Australia and was itself a subtle tribute to the beneficiaries of Little Windmills' work. The assembled students and guests were honoured to hear from former Wallaby James Holbeck whose humour and insight entertained all in attendance. James spoke of overcoming the pressures of everyday life and the importance of self-expression.

After the lively Jack Biddle's auctioneer skills were utilised one last time, Laura Penrose as the head of the Charity Committee took to the lectern to present Shaun Mackin, Little Windmills CEO, with a cheque for an astounding Forty Thousand dollars from St Albert's College. Shaun on behalf of Little Windmills was emphatically appreciative of the College's fundraising efforts and described how far the money raised would be able to go in supporting country kids in need.

With the academic year coming to a close and the work of the Charity committee done for another year the College extends its gratitude and congratulations to Laura Penrose and her committee. The generosity of spirit and dedication of the committee not only allowed them to smash fundraising goals but also to raise awareness of the plight of rural families and children doing it tough in these troubling times.





# Sister Mary's health centre tops district in Uganda Ministry of Health survey



St Luke's Health Centre in Bujuni, Uganda has topped 81 other health centres to be named the best in its district after a recent survey. The health centre, which featured in Catholic Mission's 2017 World Mission Appeal throughout Armidale, was last month assessed by the Ugandan Ministry of Health and scored an 88.9 rating, the highest in the Kibaale District in the country's Western Province. "This opens up another opportunity to receive additional funding from the Ministry of Health as well as aid from the World Bank," reports Sister Mary Goretti, Sister-in-Charge at St Luke's.

Catholic Mission last year focused its major Church Appeal on the work of Sister Mary and her small staff at St Luke's. The primary need was for an ambulance, mainly to prevent pregnant women risking their lives to get to the health centre for delivery. Sister Mary visited St Mary's and O'Connor in Armidale, St Xavier's and St Mary's in Gunnedah and St Nicholas' and McCarthy Catholic College in Tamworth as well as several parishes during the appeal last year. She sent her thanks to the community, "I would like to thank Catholic Mission for the support which has put St Luke's Health Centre at another level." Funds raised through the appeal were allocated to the purchase of an ambulance, along with other vital equipment including a humidicrib and ultrasound machine. Extensions to the maternity ward are ongoing.

The successful assessment, which examined governance, resources, equipment and expertise, means St Luke's will

receive not only supplementary funding, but training of additional staff to support its maternal health, education, dental and immunisation programs.

"It was a very proud moment to hear such fantastic news from a project that is so close to the heart of the Armidale Diocese" said Catholic Mission's Diocesan Director in Armidale, Jacqueline Toakley. "We always receive such passionate support from schools and parishes in the diocese, so it is nice to be able to show what that support has achieved. We helped St Luke's Health Centre to stand on their own feet and now Sister Mary is running a life-changing and sustainable program, ensuring women, men and children in the Bujuni community are able to access increasingly effective health services and education in an environment that also respects their faith needs."

Mrs Toakley is confident this year's appeal will yield similarly positive outcomes for communities in Myanmar. "Our focus for this World Mission Month appeal is on education as a stepping stone to peace in Myanmar, which has been affected for decades by widespread conflict," she said. "Catholic Mission is supporting the church to build schools and train teachers to improve education outcomes for vulnerable young people. I know this is a cause that resonates strongly with our local community, and so far we have witnessed great generosity, even in the face of an ongoing drought crisis in our own backyard."

For more information on this and other Catholic Mission projects, please visit [catholicmission.org.au](http://catholicmission.org.au).



# Tenterfield's St Mary's Parish Inaugural Quilt Show

St Mary's Parish Tenterfield's Quilt Show began with champagne and canapes on its opening night, continued over the weekend. It was a wonderful success, due to the wonderful generosity of all involved.

The convenors, Dot and David Sonter and Pam Hartfield are to be congratulated for the professional and happy event they initiated. Many thanks to the Peter Allen Music Festival Committee, whose generous publicity brought many to the quilt show. Sincere thanks to our hardworking parishioners, many townspeople and the Greenbank quilters from Brisbane, all who put in a marathon effort to make the show an outstanding success.

We would like to thank again: the Tenterfield businesses

who donated our raffles - Harold Curry Real Estate; Country Curtains; Unique Ambiance; Soul Pattinson; Henry Parkes Motel; and Micky Mae Fabric, Stanthorpe; Stitch Between the Bridges, Tamworth; Betty Quirk.

We would like to make special note of the generosity of craftspeople far and wide, in loaning quilts, embroidery etc; and the two trade tables who came for the whole weekend and inspired many of us to start quilting!

\$3100 was raised over the weekend, with around 50 people attending the Opening night and around 300 people attending over the weekend. John Harridine won Betty Quirk's beautiful quilt that was raffled. A marvellous success!



*Viewers' Favourite Quilt - 1st Dalma Schaare; 2nd Victor Hanson; 3rd Marilyn Bielski.*

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## Australian Catholic Heritage in Safe Hands with Diocesan Archivists

In an age of instant gratification and short-sighted social media, the idea of preserving old books and artefacts might seem out of place, but it has been the aim of Australian Catholic diocesan archivists for decades – and for good reason. These archivists came from around the country to meet in Townsville for the 16th annual National Conference of Catholic Diocesan Archivists earlier in the year.

“These people provide vital work to our Church,” Bishop Harris said on Twitter. Townsville diocesan archivist Helen Lucas said the conference was all about sharing knowledge and methods to best preserve the history of the Church. The practice of archiving comes from Catholic canon law, which stipulates every diocese has to have an archive. Policies such as these have been the institutional bedrock of the Catholic Church.



*National conference: Attendees at the National Conference of Catholic Diocesan Archivists are with Bishop Tim Harris after Mass at St Brigid's Church, Stuart.*

The conference was held at the purpose-built Townsville Catholic Archives. Next year's conference will be held in Canberra.

# KIDS KAPERS



## BLANKITY BLANKS



Jeremiah 17:7

This is a real code-breaker puzzle. Each letter of the alphabet has been given a number, but only a few of the letters have been given to you. Write the letters you have been given in the alphabet key. Then see if you can figure out the code and write in the rest of the letters. Use the key to discover the words of the verse.

Alphabet Key:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	

"B	E						
4	24	10	38	38	10	8	
18	38		40	16	10		

46	16	30	38	10			
6	30	28	12	18			
8	10	28	6	10			

	A						
26	2	28					
46	16	30					
40	36	42	38	40	38		

18	28	40	16	10			
24	30	36	8				

18	38	18	28				
16	18	26					





# Catholic Women's League State Conference

## Do Not Be Afraid I Will Help You

Three members from the Diocese of Armidale attended the State Conference and State Council Meeting in Wollongong this year. The Theme of the Conference was 'Do Not Be Afraid I Will Help You' (Isaiah 41:10)

The Conference was held over three days and included the State Council Meeting with delegates and observers from each diocese reporting on their activities.

This was followed by the Opening Mass held in St. Frances Xavier Cathedral Wollongong. Most Rev. Peter Ingham, Bishop Emeritus of Wollongong celebrated the Mass together with Rev. Patrick Vaughan – Diocesan Chaplain of Wollongong Catholic Women's League and Rev. Ron Peters – Dean of St. Frances Xavier Cathedral.

The Conference was opened officially by Diocesan

Chaplain Rev. Patrick Vaughan and then State President Miss Ann Pereira at the Novotel followed by numerous guest speakers in the coming days; Frances Rush, CEO Asylum Seeker Centre based in Newtown; Bethany Harris, a 21 year-old working in Youth Ministry in Wollongong; Sr. Noelene Simmons who spoke on her work with the Australian Catholic Religious against Trafficking in Humans; Catherine McGrath – Australian Board Member of WUCWO; Sonia di Mezza – National Research Officer for CWLA; Dr. Deirdre Little – National Bioethics Officer; Andrea Dean – Director of the Office for the Participation of Women and Office for Lay Pastoral Ministry within the Australian Bishops Commission. The delegates were treated to lovely hospitality and were able to mingle and network with others from across the state, during breaks for morning tea, lunches and dinners. The Conference also held a Remembrance Ceremony to commemorate members who had died since the last State Conference.

## Branch News

Armidale members were in attendance at the day long 'Pray the Rosary' in the Cathedral for Our Lady's birthday and also attended Hymnfest at St. Peter's Cathedral where proceeds from the afternoon (over \$600) were given to the Yazidi refugees in Armidale to help purchase dictionaries. Plans are in hand for the 'Look to the Future Day' 18<sup>th</sup> October where they will be joined by members from Guyra branch and members of the Diocesan Executive.

CWC Armidale have been exploring the teachings of the Church during their monthly meetings. Following their February Retreat this year which was supported by ADIG, a movie night fundraiser at the Belgrave Twin cinema was held to raise funds to continue to support the spiritual growth of women in the Armidale Parish. The night was a huge success. The group

contribute regularly to the morning tea roster for the 10am Mass at the Cathedral.

Moree have been busy raising funds with a raffle and will be running a stall at St. Philomena's Spring Fair. They are also hosting a 'Look to the Future Day' on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

Tamworth hosted a 'Look to the Future Day' in August with Father Anthony Koppman as Guest Speaker followed by a Forum on the Future of CWLA in our diocese where members of Tamworth, Quirindi and Gunnedah were joined by members of CWC East and West Tamworth.

Gunnedah have hosted an Inter Church Morning Tea with nearly 50 people attending and entertained by Gerard Broekman and his beautiful singing.

*Deirdre Andren, Diocesan President.*



*Dara Kerklaan from Quirindi, Deirdre Andren from Gunnedah and Madeleine Hayes from Tamworth at the State Conference.*



*Armidale Catholic Women Connecting Movie Night*



*Gerard Broekman entertaining at the Inter Church Morning Tea*

## Typhoon Mangkhut, Philippines

The Caritas international network is on the ground responding with emergency assistance, following the devastating impact of Typhoon Mangkhut, in the Philippines, considered the strongest typhoon this year. Caritas Australia's Senior Programs Coordinator for Emergencies, Richard Forsythe, said the quick response and long-term disaster preparedness training within the communities has assisted many who were badly impacted by the typhoon. "The Philippines is a country where many people are Catholic and there is a large church network," Mr Forsythe said. "Because we are embedded in local churches, part of the social fabric of communities, we are often the first responders, able to provide food, water and shelter to those most in need." NASSA (Caritas Philippines) and Caritas Australia's sister agency in the US, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are assessing the situation and helping to deliver essential food, such as canned goods and rice, as well as hygiene kits.

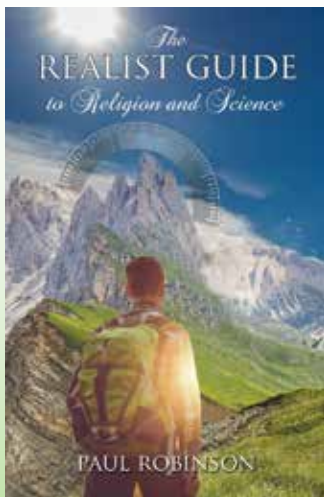
## Devastating Earthquake and Tsunami in Sulawesi, Indonesia

The Caritas international network, is also responding with emergency assistance, following a powerful earthquake that rocked central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The magnitude 7.7 quake struck just off the coast of Donggala in Central Sulawesi,



triggering an unexpected tsunami, which devastated the city of Palu, leaving a trail of destruction in its path. Caritas Australia's partners, Caritas Indonesia/Karina and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) are on the ground. Caritas Australia's Senior Programs Co-ordinator for Emergencies, Richard Forsythe, says the disaster destroyed homes and businesses in Palu and also affected remote parts of Sulawesi. "We are concerned that emergency teams have not yet reached all impacted areas, where there are no communications, and so the extent of the damage and lives lost isn't yet known," Mr Forsythe said. "Strong aftershocks have also continued to hit the city of Palu, making it hard for residents struggling in the aftermath of such a devastating quake. At Caritas Australia we want to express our solidarity with the people of Indonesia, they are in our thoughts and prayers at this difficult time."

Australians who wish to support the people of the Philippines and Indonesia at this time can do so by donating to Caritas Australia's Asia Emergency Appeal <https://www.caritas.org.au/asia>



**Why do some religious believers slaughter those who refuse to convert to their faith, refuse scientific evidence for an ancient universe, or hold God to an arbitrary being?**

**Why do some scientists believe that universes pop into existence from nothing, that aliens seeded life on earth, or that fish turn into reptiles by chance processes? The answer, for both is the same : the abandonment of realism, the human way of knowing reality.**

**In *The Realist Guide to Religion and Science*, Fr Paul Robinson explains what realism is all about, then undertakes an historical exploration to show how religion and science become irrational when they abandon realism and intellectually fruitful when they embrace it.**

***Available at Collins Bookstore for a special price of \$39.95***

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The reality of evil can be simply overwhelming. When it dawns upon us the extent to which evil has seemingly prevailed in the world and, yes, even in the Church, it can be tremendously disheartening. Nevertheless, I would argue that, despite appearances, there is more good in the Church and in the world than evil. Evil simply gets more attention.

All around the world, there are faithful priests labouring silently and faithfully. There are religious who fast and pray ceaselessly for the Church. There are parents training their children in holiness and cultivating an atmosphere of love and devotion in their homes. There are businessmen bearing witness to the Gospel in their workplaces. There are holy men and women serving the least of these in the name of Christ. Such small acts of goodness are more powerful than we think. As Tolkien, through the mouth of Gandalf, once said, *"Some believe it is only great power that can hold evil in check, but that is not what I have found. It is the small everyday deeds of ordinary folk that keep the darkness at bay. Small acts of kindness and love."*

Acts of love and generosity will never make headlines. They will never be splashed across social media or be highlighted in the nightly news. But they are real, nonetheless, and God sees them. Remember that the devil has one mission: To drown out the praise of God by distracting us from the Goodness in which we live and move and have our being. He works ceaselessly to drown out the praise due to our Creator with a howl of anger, hatred, and pain. And it seems, too often, that we allow him to succeed.

Everyday, the sun rises. The rain falls. Every moment, graces and gifts descend from our Father in heaven. Everywhere love works, patiently, silently, and unnoticed. Everywhere life triumphs over death and goodness radiates from the heart of God to his creatures. And it will never cease to do so.

Brothers, with what are you filling your mind? Evil things that stir up anger and anxiety, or good things that fill your heart with praise and thanksgiving? In these days of trial, I would encourage you to fill your mind with what is good. Enjoy the simple pleasures of life and offer praise to God for them. Savor a sunset. Rejoice in and love your wife and children. Pray and give thanks for every breath. Notice the goodness surrounding you, for it is always there. Evil and ugliness are real. But so too is goodness, and it grows still greater.

I will conclude with the words of St. Paul:

***HAVE NO ANXIETY ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH PASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING, WILL KEEP YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS.***

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

- *Philippians 4:6-8*

**Sam Guzman** [www.catholicgentleman.net](http://www.catholicgentleman.net)



# KEEPING CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AFFORDABLE FOR FAMILIES

It is important to remain informed about the government funding of Catholic schools. Below is the media statement released from the National Catholic Education Commission regarding the announcement of the new school funding arrangements.

## SCHOOL FUNDING CHANGES SUPPORT FAMILIES



Families who choose a non-government schooling option will continue to be supported after the Federal Government announced important changes to its school funding arrangements, the National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) said.

“The 2017 model created unintended consequences that threatened the future of low-fee, faith-based schools in remote and higher SES areas,” Acting Executive Director Ray Collins said.

“Hundreds of primary schools would have been forced to double or triple their fees because of the previous model’s very narrow interpretation of ‘need’. This would have rendered those schools unaffordable to most Australian families, denying them the schooling choice that has been available in those areas for decades.

“Families can only have school choice if there is an affordable alternative to free, comprehensive government schools. If the only option is a high-fee school, choice is restricted to those parents rich enough to afford high fees.

“We commend the new Education Minister Dan Tehan for recognising that the 2017 changes had jeopardised the future of low-fee, low-expenditure schools in areas where they’ve served families for generations.” Mr Collins stressed the changes will have no impact on funding levels for government schools, as they only affect funding support for non-government schools.

He said the government had accepted the Catholic sector’s position that a sector-blind, needs-based funding model would only work in practice if two fundamental issues were recognised and addressed.

“Firstly, the existing, geographically-based socio-economic status (SES) methodology - used to estimate parents’ wealth in each non-government school and therefore how much funding each school requires - was flawed because it assumed all families from the same neighbourhood were equally wealthy.

“This discriminated against low-fee schools because they attract a higher proportion of students from poorer families and therefore need more funding support. A fairer formula is now being developed.

“The second factor was understanding that ‘need’ not only relates to wealth; every child needs a quality education and parents need a real, affordable choice including the option of a faith-based school. The community therefore needs a public school system and a parallel, low-fee alternative across Australia if these needs are to be satisfied.”

Mr Collins said some technical aspects of the 2017 school funding model still need to be resolved down the track but today’s changes put low-fee, non-government schools on a much firmer foundation for the coming decade.

Nationally, Catholic schools educate more than 765,000 students – or one in five Australian students - in 1741 schools, the vast majority of which are low-fee schools.



Catholic Schools Office  
Diocese of Armidale

Director of Schools  
Chris Smyth







*Fr Vic Ignacio with Parishioners of Carroona Church celebrating Mass in the refurbished Church*

## Faith Raises New Roof

Parishioners of Carroona / Spring Ridge (Catholic Parish of Werris Creek) were amazed to see their small brick Church surrounded with scaffolding from earth to sky making our little church appear as a cathedral in size. Simple repairs to fix windows became a major make over with the complete reroofing and reguttering, new facer boards and 2 new handmade crosses again adorn the roof. A cement path from the sacristy to the front door will also keep feet dry when rain returns.

It is true from a small mustard seed has grown a great tree (the small suggestion to tidy up a few things on our church building) has instigated a great repair to our church building and instilled a growth of spiritual commitment in our faith community.

In August, Holy Mass was again celebrated by Fr Vic Ignacio, in thanksgiving for the blessing of our church building and for all benefactors living and deceased, which was so timely as the anniversary of the blessing of the church "Our Lady Queen of Angels" was 16<sup>th</sup> August 1936.

After Mass, a cuppa was enjoyed by all, and celebrations continued with lunch hosted at one of our spiritual family's home.

Special thanks to Chris and Paul and co-workers for their expertise in carrying out the works needed for the church. We give thanks for even in hard times the Light and Love of God shines through in many ways.

Mass is now celebrated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at 11.15am.



*Carroona Church receiving a new roof*

*Two new handmade crosses adorn the roof*



*Carroona Church's new pathway from the sacristy to the front door*

# About #TwGOD

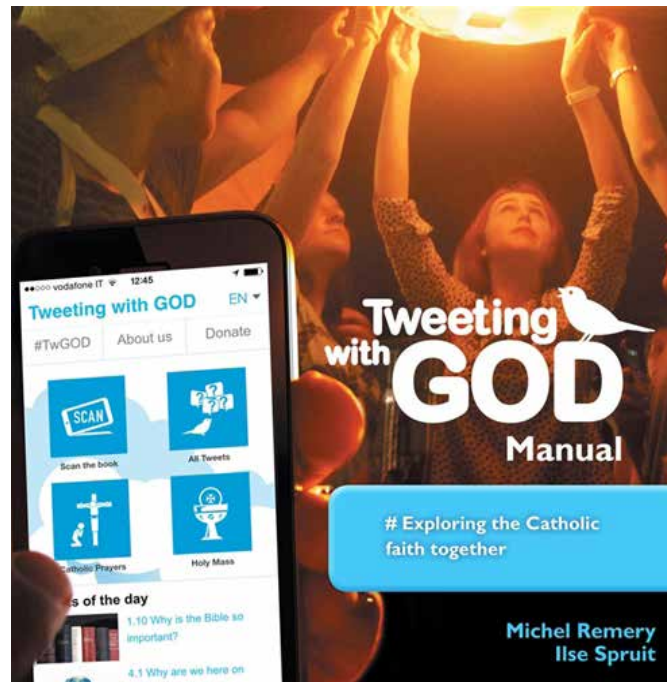
## Origins

'Tweeting with GOD' (#TwGOD) has its origin in Leiden in the Netherlands, where Father Michel Remery engaged in dialogue with young people about their questions concerning the Catholic faith. They asked their questions in person after liturgical celebrations, but also via Twitter, Facebook and other new media. During evening sessions, these young people discussed their questions amongst themselves and with their priest. All questions were welcome and no topic was taboo.

These young people were looking for the meaning of faith in their own lives. Why should I believe in God? Is it logical to believe? The meetings helped them to recognise the importance of the faith in their personal lives. They urged their priest to publish the results in two books entitled 'Tweeting with GOD'. These separate books were later combined into a single volume. The young people then suggested making the project interactive, playing a major role in this phase as well. The project quickly attracted major international interest, which led to translations of the books into many languages.

## Aims

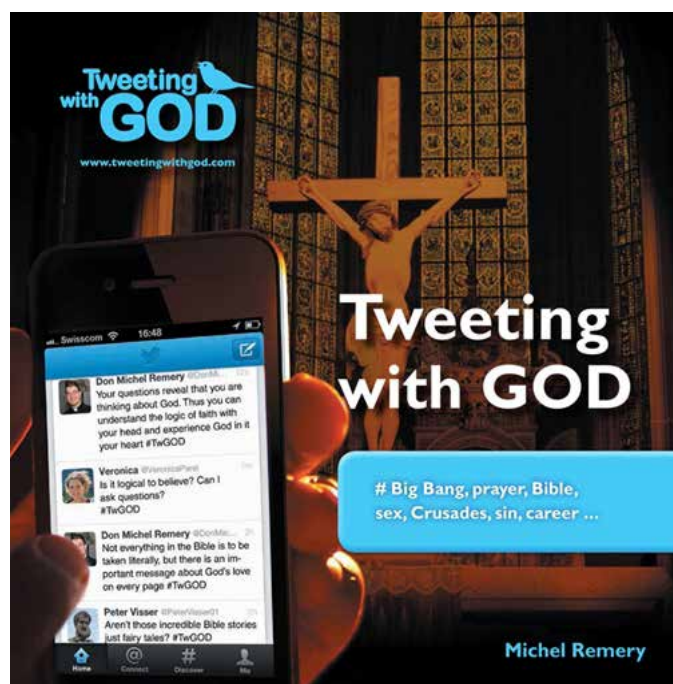
#TwGOD is aimed at demonstrating the logic of the faith and showing how everything is connected to God's love for every



individual human being. #TwGOD demonstrates the logic of the faith by answering specific questions. In doing so, we always refer to the 'big picture' and to God's love for you. #TwGOD wants to encourage you to find out who Jesus can be for you. We want to invite you to pray, to keep learning more about the faith, and to visit a local Catholic parish or community.

## Resources

The 'Tweeting with GOD' project wants to help (young) people find answers to their questions about the Catholic faith by closely integrating printed [books](#) with [new media](#). The project also includes an [app](#) which links the texts in the book to information on the [#TwGOD website](#). You can download the app from Google play or App Store. Take a look at the website [www.tweetingwithgod.com](http://www.tweetingwithgod.com) and decide for yourself.





# Catholics Around us – Alexis Cook

Alexis recently made the decision to become Catholic. She shared with us some of her insights into that decision:

**1. Tell us a bit about yourself – name, age, family, interests**

My name is Alexis I'm 11 years old and attend St Mary's Catholic School.

**2. Can you tell us why you decided to become Catholic?**

Attending a Catholic school means you do Religion and as I got older I started to really understand the faith and I wanted to be a part of it.

**3. Who or what was the major influence towards this decision?**

One of my influences was being a part of Mini Vinnies and doing Jesus' mission. Which helped inspire me to become Catholic.

**4. What sort of reactions did you get from your peers?**

Most of my peers were happy for me and gave me a lot of great advice.

**5. What was involved in becoming Catholic?**

When I decided to become Catholic it was around confirmation time, so I attended lessons with my peers and did extra 15 minute lessons with Father Sabu and two other girls.

**6. Do you have any advice for others who are thinking about becoming Catholic or those who already are?**

My advice for anyone would be, go for it! It takes a while for everything to be processed and if you ask nice enough you might be able to do it when your friends are doing their Reconciliation, First Holy Communion or Confirmation.

*Alexis Cook with her sponsor, Aunt Georgina Franklin and Bishop Kennedy on the day of her Confirmation*





Dear Farming Family's  
We are thinking of you  
in these tough times  
We hope that it rains  
for all of you soon  
We are thinking of all  
your stock and that  
they will make it  
through this drought  
praying for  
rain  
From the year 5/6 class of  
St. Michael's School  
Manilla



The thoughts and prayers of the Diocese are with all those experiencing hardships due to the drought.