

CATHOLIC Voice

ARCHDIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN
FREE | No. 366 | DECEMBER 2021



Wishing all our readers a Christ-filled Christmas

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Praise for
end-of-life
care**

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stronger in
2022**

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Archbishop's Message
Archbishop Christopher Prowse

Rejoice! Hope gives-birth to Christmas joy

WE will not forget 2021 in a hurry! We come to the end of this momentous year and the beginning of 2022 with many mixed emotions. People generally speak of feeling a kind of tiredness, even exhaustion.

It is true. We have had an extraordinary year! Often I hear of people using words such as fragile, lonely, uncertain, and tired of risks and challenges in daily living, and so on.

Of course, globally, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected us all in a host of different ways, all of them challenging.

For the Catholic Church, other issues abound as well. For example, our challenges with intrusive political legislation in formerly sacrosanct areas dealing with, for instance, euthanasia, and religious freedoms.

For the Catholic Church, the challenges of learning to engage with each other in a spirit of synodality (walking together) is new to us. This is especially seen in the consultations around the Plenary Council of Australia (first Assembly), and the international Synod on Synodality. Locally, we are still assisting people affected by bushfires and drought in our parishes.

Yet, into all this mess, we continue to be inspired by HOPE. It is a gift innate to humanity. Taking away hope leads only to the lonely road of despair. Hope is the mother of joy.

In recent weeks, a great example of hope giving birth to joy was offered to us all. It was the finding of Cleo Smith. This beautiful 4-year-old little girl from



Carnarvon, Western Australia, inspired the world with hope and joy.

Family, friends, local Catholic parishioners and police never gave up hope over the almost three-week ordeal. Their hope was well founded.

People around Australia speak of strong emotions of happiness and absolute rejoicing on hearing of her safe return. These are always the fruits of hope. They are summed up in one word: joy.

At Christmas time and the New Year, we celebrate this hope and joy experience in the most extraordinary encounter of God becoming one with us in Jesus, the child of Bethlehem.

The hope over millennia that the God of all loving kindness would enter into our humanity is fully realised in Jesus. That is why Emmanuel (God with us) is such a joyful Christmas word.

The Angel tells Mary to REJOICE.

John the Baptist leaps with JOY in the womb of his mother, Elizabeth when the pregnant Mary arrives at the visitation.

Mary MAGNIFIES the Lord in her greeting to Elizabeth

Already there is so much joy exploding around Australia at the opening up of our country, as lockdowns seem to be ending. We always hoped for this moment. It is happening now.

Let us not be too distracted by expressing our joy alone in exaggerated retail frenzies or overseas and interstate holidays.

Let us make this Christmas and New Year period now one of the greatest in memory. All our hopes and joys find their source and fullest expression in thanking the Lord for realising our deepest hopes and needs in sending us Jesus.

Our Churches are opening up to more people. If possible, express this hope and joy by celebrating Christmas and New Year Masses in your local parish Churches.

To all, may Christmas and the New Year be a time of deep blessing for you and your loved ones. Make sure we all have a good experience of rest and refreshment over this time. We all really need it!

God bless you always!

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By Patrick Langrell



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'Plenary Deacon' celebrations

Inaugural
Tim Fischer Oration
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
AUGUST 2022
www.tfo.org.au

With John Anderson

Archbishop's Diary: December 2021 - 2022

SUNDAY, 5 DECEMBER 11.00pm Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral Second Sunday Advent	SATURDAY 25 DECEMBER The Nativity of the Lord - Christmas Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral.	Deanery, Eden (Solemnity of St Mary of the Cross)
SUNDAY, 12 DECEMBER 11.00am Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral Third Sunday Advent	SUNDAY, 6TH MARCH, 2022 Rite of the Elect, St Christopher's Cathedral	SUNDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 2022 Marian Procession, Galong
SUNDAY, 19 DECEMBER 11.00am Mass, St Christopher's Cathedral Fourth Sunday Advent	SUNDAY, 24TH APRIL, 2022 Multicultural Mass, 11am, St Christopher's Cathedral	SATURDAY, 12TH NOVEMBER, 2022 Catholic Charismatic Teaching Day with Archbishop, Haydon Hall, St Christopher's Pastoral Centre, 55 Franklin Street Forrest
	SATURDAY, 13TH AUGUST, 2022 St Mary MacKillop Pilgrimage, Coastal	

CATHOLIC
VOICE

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Cover picture: Special thanks to Holy Family Early Learning Centre in Gowrie. Pictured are Reuben Glyntzos, Evelyn Briguglio, Sophie Vaughan, Logan Taylor, Oliver Price, Emilia Jackson, Brody Bicherton and Sophie Winbank.

Support services needed more than ever this year

FIONA VAN DER PLAAT

EVEN though Christmas is never easy financially for Ebony Juatowitch and her family, it's usually a happy time. But they are struggling to find the joy this year.

Ebony's grandfather, "who has been my male role model all my life", has been in hospital most of the year and was back home receiving end-of-life care only weeks before Christmas.

Her grandparents are the heart of the family and the shadow hanging over them has Ebony and her mother Gabrielle, who lives with her, dreading Christmas this year.

To counter that, they have tried to focus on making it a special time for Ebony's five-year-old daughter, Mackaylee-Rose. "She doesn't really understand what's going on and we're trying to make it all about her," Ebony said.

The Covid lockdown has made it more difficult to make lay-by purchases, as she might usually do to manage the cost of presents, and filling the Christmas table is a formidable expense.

Ebony is grateful, therefore, for the assistance she is and will be receiving from St Vincent de Paul Society and other charitable organisations.

Vinnies' Kambah conference members have contacted her to see what she might need in a Christmas hamper and the family will build their Christmas lunch around what they receive. Vinnies members also regularly check up on her and her family. "They're great," Ebony said. "They talk to me and ask how my grandfather is going, and they say they'll pray for him."

Vinnies Canberra/Goulburn Territory President John Feint said providing targeted hampers through local conferences is



Ebony (center) with her mother Gabrielle, and daughter Mackaylee-Rose.

a key part of Vinnies' two-pronged approach to Christmas assistance. The other prong is the Christmas Appeal, which is aiming to raise \$275,000 to offset the costs of hampers as well as Vinnies' other services to people in need.

These services are needed more than ever this year because of the impact of Covid. Reports from the ACT Council of Social Services and from research by the Snow Foundation and Hands Across Canberra in the past three months have shown levels of poverty and hardship have risen to more than 9 per cent of the population.

"The calls for assistance [to Vinnies] have increased since JobSeeker payments have been phased out," John said. To make matters worse, the NSW Food Bank, which

usually provides hampers that local conferences can adapt and add to, is unable to do so this year, which John put down to increased demand and fewer donations from businesses hit by lockdowns.

John said his Gowrie conference, and others, are conducting donation drives through their schools and parishes. "We try to customise hampers to suit the needs of families," he said. "We try to make it a real gift of love for that family."

Donations of food and gifts (including vouchers, especially



for teenagers) can be made through local conferences or Vinnies shops, and donations to the Christmas Appeal can be made through vinnies.org.au. People who need assistance in the Canberra region can call the Vinnies helpline on (02) 6282 2722.

Seeking support for mothers and babies



KARINYA House, which provides emergency accommodation for mothers (including pregnant women) and babies, is seeking donations for Christmas, which will this year include Christmas lunch prepared by workers at the house (instead of the usual sponsored lunch at the Southern Cross Club).

Karinya's executive officer Belinda Munn said they had received a "huge response" to the call-out for gifts for the women and babies, but now need financial support for the services the house provides. Donations can be made through karinyahouse.asn.au.

Meanwhile, Marymead, which supports children, young people and their families, is keen to spread the Christmas joy after another hard year.

It is seeking financial support through its Christmas Appeal or donations of gifts for children and young people. Gifts (including vouchers for young people) can be arranged individually or through workplaces and dropped at Marymead (255 Goyder Street, Narrabundah). Financial donations can be made online through marymead.org.au. For information, go to marymead.org.au or email marketing@marymead.org.au.

When a struggling family run out of options, they face terrible choices...



DONATE NOW

Please call 13 18 12 or visit vinnies.org.au/christmasappeal



Vinnies
good works

Principal's role 'part of who I am'

BY FIONA VAN DER PLAAT

IN the past two years, Erin Marmont has led a school through bushfire threats, had a baby, guided another school through a COVID outbreak, worked with Catholic Education and marshalled her own five children through lockdown and remote learning.

While she would be the first to admit it hasn't been easy, it has strengthened her belief in the value of communication and community.

"People who know me know I love a challenge," she says, as she prepares for her next one – as principal of St Anthony's Parish Primary School in Wanniaassa.

It will be her first position as principal, having acted as head at St Gregory's in Queanbeyan and St Clare of Assisi in Conder, where fires and COVID were thrown into the mix.

"This is where I wanted to be in my life right now," she says. "My wish for the pinnacle

of my career was to be principal of a Catholic school in Canberra, but first I wanted to make sure I was equipped with the right skills."

She has gathered those skills from a bachelor and two masters degrees in education and RE from Australian Catholic University in Canberra and various teaching and project roles in the Archdiocesan education system.

She is also passionate about parental engagement and has been involved in Catholic School Parents Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn since it was formed in 2014.

Viewing the COVID challenges from a parent and

educator's perspective, she is even more convinced that nothing beats 'real' connection. "Because we've been so technology-based in our communication, I'm looking



Erin Marmont with students

forward to reigniting the presence of parents in the school," she says, looking towards the new year at St Anthony's.

Overseeing home learning was a challenge even for an experienced teacher, as Erin wrangled the different personalities, approaches and abilities of her own four school children, aged between 9 and 13.

"One of the biggest challenges for my children was the lack of social connection," she says. Not even loosening the reins on the household's usual restrictions on devices so they could stay in touch with friends could replace the emotional benefits of being together in playgrounds and sports teams.

Connection and community are important to Erin as a parent and educator. She believes 'synodality' has helped the Archdiocesan schools negotiate the obstacle course of

the past couple of years.

"Journeying together with hope is a vision that Catholic Education has stood by – working together, acknowledging and supporting each other.

Acknowledging that home learning was "a tough gig", adjusting expectations and setting sights on "just getting through each day" were all helpful ways of reassuring teachers and parents alike.

Erin is looking forward to fostering the same approach, hopefully in more settled conditions, in her new role.

"As a principal, you can't do it on your own. You know you'll have a good team around you and support from Catholic Education ... and good communication between the school community and the parish."

And, as always, she is relishing this challenge. "I believe my role as a principal is a vocation," she says. "It's part of who I am, not just a job, and I'm content and happy with it as part of my life."

Sharing the hope of Christmas with Christian Refugees

In the face of suffering and persecution, particularly in the Middle East and Africa, the numbers of refugees, especially Christian refugees, has spiked.

For close to 75 years the support of Christian refugees has been a major pillar of the work of *Aid to the Church in Need* (ACN). These are our brothers and sisters in faith, born in the same baptism, but unable to live their faith and life freely. **ACN is supporting displaced Catholic families by attending to basic needs such as food and medicine, but these families also hunger for the healing power of the sacraments and the pastoral support of the Church.**

As such, the help we provide is not only material. Our support of priests, sisters, catechists, and **all those working to build up the faith offers true consolation and hope to those in desperate need.** From vehicles for priests and religious to offer pastoral care, to the provision of faith resources, to faith via radio to gifts for children this Christmas. These projects and many like them aim to reach Christian

refugees, so that in this season of waiting for the Christ Child, they too may receive the gift of hope and consolation.

Can you give a Christmas gift to Christian refugees?

Aid to the Church in Need

ACN AUSTRALIA

Aid to the Church in Need is the only international Catholic charity dedicated to the spiritual and pastoral support of suffering Christians. Each year ACN supports some 5000 projects, helping to keep the faith alive where it is at greatest risk.

To donate scan the QR code, visit www.aidtochurch.org/advent21 or return the coupon

Yes, I want to give a Christmas gift to Christian refugees.

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My personal details: (BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE)

Title: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

CV4

Send the completed form to **Aid to the Church in Need** PO Box 335 PENRITH NSW 2751.

Thinking of home

COVID's reach has extended into so many areas of our lives and no more so than preventing families from gathering. It's been especially tough for our overseas born priests who will be apart from their families this festive season. The Catholic Voice invited four of them to share their thoughts about their families at this time.

**Fr Adrian Chan - Assistant parish priest
St Patrick's, Cooma**

Back in Singapore, I have my Mum, Dad, my brother, sister-in-law and, of course, the extended family, including my one-hundred100-year-old granny. And that's the one that I really miss not being able to see this year or even at Christmas. But I'm hoping to go back sometime later next year to see them and celebrate her one hundred and first 101st birthday. I ring them regularly and I'm never too far away from them where my heart is concerned.

When it comes to Christmas, Singapore is quite westernised. We would have Christmas turkey and pasta and maybe Asian dishes like rice. Maybe also chicken curry because it is our favourite. Midnight Mass is important to us, although this year Singapore is still in kind of a semi-lockdown and there are restrictions with the number allowed at Mass.



**Fr Yoseph (Joe) Neonbasu – Assistant parish priest
St Mary's, Young**

My family are in Indonesia with my mother and my siblings. My Dad passed away two years ago. I've got seven brothers and sisters and two of my brothers are priests.

I haven't been able to get home for two years because of COVID. I miss them and I sometimes get homesick. At Christmas my siblings go home and celebrate with Mum because she is by herself. That's normally my brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces and nephews and grandnieces. It's always a great celebration and my Mum looks forward to it.



**Fr Pale Leota – Parish priest St Peter's,
Pambula**

Most of my family is back home in Samoa. My parents are in their early eighties I last saw them two years ago. I can't wait for the borders to reopen so I can get the chance and go back and see them. The COVID restrictions are a bit different back there than here. The situation there is pretty much normal. Christmas is traditionally a big celebration for us, except I won't be able to be with them again this time. I have two siblings and a lot of close relatives like aunts, uncles and cousins.

It's truly something we have realised, missing being with the families. Being able to spend time with them, and having them support us as well, is a most vital part of our ministry.



Fr James Antony – Parish priest Corpus Christi, Gowrie

I've got my dad and one of my sisters back in India in the state of Kerala. Another sister is a nun in Germany where she heads up an aged care facility. My family is all over the world now. I normally don't go to my family at Easter or Christmas because my primary service is to the people in my parishes. I normally try to get home in January or early February and spend time with my family then.

My Dad's life revolves around the church in Kerala. It's a huge thing for families in Kerala to make nativity cribs at Christmas in their own homes, along with Christmas trees and decorations. There's prizes involved. For spiritual preparation families attend daily Mass and then gather for an extended family get-together for Christmas.



Praying with devotion, dedication and laughter

BY JULIE GIACOMIN

We have been meeting to say the Rosary each week for more than three years. When we are unable to meet in one another's homes or at the Church we agree to pray together over the phone.

Not only do we have devotion to the Rosary but we realise the value of including the intentions of family and friends. Knowing the great power of the Rosary and its history we repeat it with trust

and hope.

Having devotion to Our Lady is not unusual as many Catholics say the Rosary although there was a period when devotion to the Rosary was neglected, even frowned upon.

We make up a group of four or five ladies (sometimes only three) of various ages and backgrounds interested in developing our spiritual growth and hoping that over the years of life's experiences our faith has deepened.

We realise that our Irish,

Scottish and European family history has made us aware and we appreciate our grandparents' efforts to keep the faith by saying the Rosary when there were no priests or sacraments available.

There are always special needs in our families, extended family and friends, so we ask for the help of Jesus and Mary. Many of our prayers are answered. Then we include world events, disasters, COVID and the end of lockdown.

We pray for world

leaders and the Pope and those around him in the Vatican. The strengthening and rekindling of the Church worldwide as well as the Plenary Council are added.

With amusement, we call on St Joseph for jobs, homes and finances, St Francis for pets, St Clare, St Catherine of Sienna and St Mary of the Cross for our young ones doing exams. We ask Archangels and guardian angels to protect our grandchildren and for healing from Archangel Raphael.

One sunny Friday three of us met in a quiet park and sat on a bench. Being aware of social distancing we couldn't all fit on the bench so one sat on a milk crate that was nearby. Wearing our face masks we thought we were cool and enjoying the lovely surrounds when we looked down to see broken beer bottles and cigarette butts - so that brought us back to earth. We laughed and added to our prayers whoever had slept on the bench the night before.

‘I’m not really used to happy Christmases’



DIANNE (not her real name) believes she is more fortunate than many as she looks at spending Christmas in MacKillop House with 26 women and 11 children who have nowhere else to live.

At nearly 70, Dianne has found herself living in the home in Lyneham run by CatholicCare after a breakdown in her relationship with a son. She is philosophical about what this means at a time of year that is expected to be about joy and family.

“I’m not really used to happy Christmases,” she said. “Christmas Day is often associated with drunkenness, not enough money and being marginalised in society, and is not always a

great day for people. But you’ve just got to reach deep into yourself and try to appreciate what you have. I understand I am better off than a lot of people.”

She hoped to be able to spend Christmas Day with another son and his family, but also expected a “lovely time with a group of lovely women” at MacKillop House.

That time will be made more memorable by the generosity of people who donate gifts for the residents. MacKillop House manager Caroline Barrett said her hope was to “create a MacKillop family” for the women, aged between 24 and 69, and children who had no other family to spend

Christmas with.

The Christmas feast will revolve around cold meats and salads.

Donations of gifts such as soaps, hand, face and body creams, room scents (no candles), hair accessories and chocolate (including vegan options) are welcome. Donations of gifts can be delivered to MacKillop House (50 Archibald Street, Lyneham) between 9am and 5pm weekdays between 29 November and 10 December. It is advisable to call ahead on 0498 468 121.

Donations of food for Christmas Day can be dropped off at the house between 3pm and 6pm on Christmas Eve.

Christmas housing market anything but stable

BY FIONA VAN DER PLAAT

A WORSENING housing shortage and skyrocketing rents have St Vincent de Paul Society conferences in the regions bracing for more demand for their services over summer.

Vinnies’ Canberra/Goulburn Territory President John Feint said the lack of affordable housing was already a problem in areas such as the South Coast, particularly after the 2019-20 bushfires. COVID restrictions had made things worse as the regions became more attractive holiday destinations and alternative places to live.

“People who would normally spend money on travel overseas and other places are spending it on houses down the coast, which takes affordable housing away from the people who need it,” he said.

He said areas such as Young, in the NSW south-west slopes,

were also experiencing an increase in calls for help from people who could not find or afford housing.

Regional President of Vinnies’ Far South Coast Conference Christine Mabbott reported in October that calls to the organisation’s local helpline between July and October had grown by more than a half from the corresponding months last year.

Now, she said, the situation was “much worse”, especially as government COVID-support payments ceased, leaving many people with no income to pay rent. At the same time, demand for houses had put pressure on supply, resulting in “extravagant prices” and higher rents, “which were never that cheap in the first place”.

“One man I know, after paying his rent, had \$40 left,” she said. “How is that supposed to cover his bills and living

expenses?”

People moving to the area were also adding to the numbers turning to Vinnies for help finding accommodation.

“Some people escape from Canberra or Sydney, thinking it will be easier on the coast, but it’s not,” Christine said.

“There is work here now but nowhere to live. There’s not enough affordable social housing – there never has been, but now it’s been exacerbated by people buying up places and turning them into holiday lets.”

She said Vinnies had in the past been able to help people with a portion of their rent, but it did not have the budget to assist the number of homeless people looking for assistance as Christmas approaches.

“I reckon, just in the last week or so, our numbers [of people seeking assistance] have gone up 100 per cent,” she said.

Christine also attended a regional meeting of Vinnies conferences in mid-November, where all reported an increase in calls for help. “Batemans Bay,



Conference member Kerry Mabbot (right) with a volunteer at the Merimbula Vinnies shop.

for example, was seeing much higher numbers than we are.”

She said significant government investment in social housing in the area was needed, along with the \$65 increase Vinnies has been advocating in the JobSeeker allowance.

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Archdiocesan online Advent Program focusing on marriage & families

WALKING together
ADVENT 2021

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Facing challenges of a tough year

BY ROSS FOX, DIRECTOR, CATHOLIC EDUCATION



DESPITE the fantastic diversity of Catholic education in the Archdiocese, our schools have faced common challenges in what has been a tough year in so many ways.

We have 56 schools and eight early learning centres that employ more than 2000 teachers to serve the needs of more than 21,000 students. Our schools serve communities from Pambula on the south coast to Crookwell in the north and Lake Cargelligo to the west, covering 88,000 square kilometres.

In recent years as an Archdiocesan community we have gone through bushfires, smothering smoke and then the school-specific challenges associated with COVID.

This year was a reminder that whatever the challenges and despite great uncertainty we can and must continue to provide care and learning to our students.

This was made possible by the great skill and passion of our teachers. It was a reminder of the fantastic community and learning institutions our Catholic schools are to their families and students.

Despite the many great things happening in Catholic schools across the Archdiocese, we continue to strive for improvement in the interests of our students. This year our system of schools embarked on a long-term journey that started with the pursuit of two bold goals:

- Every child is a competent

reader

- High impact teacher practice is visible in every classroom.

These two goals drive our improvement objectives in every school. Our system's precise focus, energy and commitment in teaching and learning is realising these goals through an evidence-based approach.

We recognise that it all starts with the teacher and that they are the most important learners. We have invested significantly in their development accordingly with a focus on high-impact teaching practice informed by the science of learning.

We are calling this program Catalyst and I have been inspired by the level of enthusiasm with which our school leaders and staff have embraced it. Many teachers have spontaneously said to me that Catalyst has reconnected them with their vocation as a teacher. It will be exciting to extend this important work in 2022 and beyond.

Any reflection on a year must end with a nod to those who are retiring from the great vocation of education. It was an honour to gather with our principals to farewell those retiring from principalship. To all who are retiring this year from Catholic education, in whatever capacity, let me thank you for your contribution and dedication on behalf of the students whose lives you have indelibly shaped.

Chris Uhlmann: A call for a shared identity to meet today's challenges

BY FIONA VAN DER PLAAT

WHEN Chris Uhlmann ponders the future of the Catholic Church, his late mother, Mary, is always foremost in his thoughts.

Mary, a former Catholic school principal in Canberra, was one of the "true believers". "She and the other women were the heart and soul of the Church. These were the foot soldiers who kept the faith," says Chris, once a seminarian who still describes himself as a Catholic, albeit a non-practising one, thanks to the values his mother instilled in him.

For the Canberra journalist and author – who has worked for The Canberra Times, ABC radio and TV, co-written political novels and is now Nine's political editor – Mary epitomises the "grassroots" faithful who should be leading the Church into a new era.

"Maybe it needs to return to the roots of that small church that was revolutionary in the way it bore witness to the truth," Chris says.

He advocates a return to basics, including embracing "the original blessing of humanity. We constantly forget the message of Christ – that he was blessing the idea of being human, in all its brokenness – and demand that people behave like angels," he says.

The struggles the Catholic Church and other religious institutions face in an increasingly secular society is one aspect of what Chris describes as an Australian "identity crisis". At the heart of the crisis is a disintegration of faith in Western political, social and financial institutions.

Chris will discuss this issue at the launch of Australian Catholic University's Ethos series on public ethics and the future of Australia, on 9 December. He has explored it in the past, particularly after the



Chris Uhlmann will speak on Australia's Identity Crisis, at the launch of the ACU Ethos series of events, on 9 December, St Christopher's Pastoral Centre

"The question about Australia's identity is important as we face a country that has a clear idea of what it stands for. We have no idea about what our goal line is; about what it is we would seek to defend. What is it that we all agree on?"

global financial crisis and the Donald Trump chaos, but he says the pandemic has made it even more relevant.

"The people who have lost faith are seeking faith," he says. "It's a genuine yearning of the human spirit and people are looking for it in different ways."

This loss of faith has left Australia with no sense of what it stands for, especially as interstate (and even intra-city) self-interest fractures national unity. Chris says this undermines our place in the world, especially in relation to China as a rising superpower.

"The question about Australia's identity is important as we face a country that has a clear idea of what it stands for. We have no idea about what our

goal line is; about what it is we would seek to defend. What is it that we all agree on?" he says.

Australians need to settle on a baseline of common beliefs – Chris suggests "parliamentary democracy; rule of secular law; equality of opportunity (as best as we can achieve it); freedom of speech and freedom of association".

His own views, which he jokes are "clearly old white man", are "free-ranging". "I'd say I'm libertarian, if I'm anything," he says, while lamenting the rise of a "censorious, moralising left that is trying to rule out of court everything it disagrees with".

"I believe in freedom of association and freedom of speech and we need to err on the side of it being robust. We can't be shrinking violets in a democracy, nor should we be trying to rule out anything we don't want to hear or demonising the people we don't like," he says.

Chris Uhlmann will speak on Australia's Identity Crisis, at the launch of the ACU Ethos series of events, on 9 December from 5.30-7.30pm at Haydon Hall, St Christopher's Pastoral Centre, Forrest.

For details about the event go to www.catholicvoice.org.au

A culture of life shines in intergenerational living

Australia’s multicultural heritage is one of the country’s great “hidden treasures”, according to Archbishop Christopher Prowse. These “treasures” are seen in the Archdiocese’s multicultural communities who bring the sounds and colours and deep faith of their homelands to many of our parishes. They are also known for their commitment to family. DON SMITH speaks with several community representatives as they reflect on the strength of those kinship bonds, especially towards the older family members.

Thuy Nguyen – Vietnamese community
Along with other members of her family, Thuy helps care for her elderly father who prefers to live by himself following the 2020 death of Thuy’s mother.

In our culture the parents care for the children a lot. It is always unconditional in terms of the support. They are always there whenever you struggle in life. They work very hard to save and provide for their children. Their purpose in life is always, always the children. They want their children to have a good

life. They give away everything to them.
And that’s why we, the children, give back. To take Mum and Dad to the doctor, to the hospital, to events in the Vietnamese community, for their everyday activities. In our culture it’s common for the older parents to live with their children so that the children can care for them. It’s strange for the parents to go into nursing homes but this is changing, especially in Australia. My Mum died last year. My Dad lives by himself but we cook for him nearly every day. We don’t leave him by himself.

Vinnie Uriarte – Filipino community
Vinnie is a member of Canberra’s Catholic Filipino community

My Mum, Dad, my sister and myself migrated to Australia from the Philippines in 2007. Later, my grandmother came to Australia as well. We are all citizens now.
It’s part of our culture to live with our grandparents and to help them live with us at home. It’s not an issue for us to be living in the same house. We grow up following in the footsteps of our parents seeing them wanting to live with their parents. That



shapes my views, too.
We all go to church together as a family, including with my grandma. If there’s a special occasion like the feast day of the Santo Niño and for the Simbang Gabi (nine days of consecutive Masses before Christmas), we would all go together for that as well.

Prince Kulakkattu – Syro-Malabar Indian community
Prince lives in Canberra with this family. He has parents and extended family back in the Indian state of Kerala.

For us, family – especially parents and siblings – is very, very important. We will do anything for them. Even though I am away from my family for a long time, I try to ring my parents every day, sometimes even two or three times a day.
We also look after our parents financially. My father was a farmer and worked really, really hard for our home, to send us to school, for all sorts of things. He was struggling, but he managed. So now it’s our turn to support him financially because he can’t work.



We don’t like to send them to nursing homes, although that is changing. I am waiting for [the day when I receive] a call from my sister in India to tell me our parents can’t look after themselves for their day-to-day activities. Then I will go back and be with them until they’ve passed away. Our parents did great things for us and I am doing a small bit. It’s in the Bible, “Honour thy father and mother”.

Philip Ahn – Korean community
Philip, 83, is a member of Canberra’s Korean Catholic community.

In Korea we used to have a “big family” culture. When the children married and moved out of the family house one of them would still look after the parents. But these days everybody wants to be independent. They want to be with their own families. That is the kind of culture that has developed here, too, with the Korean community in Australia.
Some of the Korean community in Canberra have trouble with speaking English. I help them when they go to



places like the GP and other professionals. An issue for elderly Korean migrants that might go into a nursing home is the food. That could be an area of difficulty for them as they can’t eat food like other people who are used to eating cheese and butter and meat. They may be reluctant to go into nursing homes because of that.



Praise for end-of-life care

WHEN Sonia Di Mezza's father was diagnosed with terminal cancer he moved in with her family in Canberra. Sonia shares her reflections on the last stages of her father's life and the palliative care services provided by Clare Holland House.

In our society in Australia, what I've noticed is people are afraid of being present when a loved one is dying.

In my own Italian culture, although it is a sad time, I have found that we are not as confronted by the passing of a loved one. When we took dad into our home, although we were very saddened that our father was dying, we found the time we spent with our father in his last days to be a comforting experience. Right up to his dying day in 2019 we were able to give him culturally appropriate care and food surrounded by his family and loved ones.

But we realised we couldn't look after Dad alone and called Clare Holland House for help. They were brilliant, so supportive. They'd come, they'd help out, working alongside me as they organised his medications. They were not an intrusion at all.

When the funeral parlour came to take his body away, we actually felt this gust of wind. Even though it was a beautiful sunny day, it was like the Spirit, you know, telling us all was good.

So those last days don't have to be scary days. It could be a loving, comforting time – albeit sad - because it's saying goodbye to someone you love. The thought of having someone pass away in the house doesn't need to be a confronting experience either.

Clare Holland House was just a welcome addition to that part of our journey.



"My mother passed away in 2013 and when my father was diagnosed with terminal cancer it was really important for our family that he move in with us."

What is Palliative care?

Catholic Voice spoke to Camilla Rowlands, CEO of Palliative Care Australia, on questions surrounding care for those with life-limiting illnesses.

WE'VE heard a lot of talk in the media about euthanasia and palliative care. What exactly is palliative care? The euthanasia debates tend to be framed by those involved in the 'Bills' debate across the states around two different perspectives or options: voluntary assisted dying or suffering.

In fact, palliative care is a full package of care that provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms. It also addresses the psychosocial and spiritual aspects of care to help people to live as actively and as long as possible until death. Importantly, it's also a support system for their carers, families and loved ones. It's not about prolonging unnecessary treatment. It can be provided early after the diagnosis of a life-limiting illness and then when there's little more that can be done by other medicines.

Is it only for the elderly in their last days?

Palliative care is for anyone that has a life-limiting illness. The majority of people who die are older people, but there's a significant number of people who die of all ages. We are developing paediatric palliative

care as well in Australia.

Isn't it only provided in hospitals?

No, palliative care can take place in a person's home. There are outreach palliative care services and, of course, GPs, and primary health services and allied health such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists may also have a role in the care. There are hospices which are specifically designed to provide customised care in a home-like environment to somebody who has a life-limiting illness. Many hospitals have palliative care beds dedicated to looking after patients.

We also know that in aged care facilities the majority of people die within 22 months of entry. We're advocating very strongly to the Australian Government to ensure it embeds palliative care into aged care facilities.

Won't palliative care just prolong people's pain?

No, because the philosophy of palliative care is about quality of life. If people access good quality palliative care, treatment and support, they're able to undertake activities in their lives that have meaning to



them and spend time with their families. For some, that might be football, for others it might be parachuting, or it might be having conversations and enjoying nature.

You've been a social worker in rural Australia and worked with many health professionals. What insights do you have?

Almost without exception, people I've worked with have said to me that it's the quality of relationships with their families and their loved ones that has given the most satisfaction and meaning in the last months of life.

Often people until those last weeks can be physically active. Also people don't usually change their personalities at the end. Even though they may look different, it's important to remember they are still the same person. I learnt that hearing is one of the last faculties to go. So if you can sit and just chat to somebody, they can hear what you're saying and know that you're there.

Sarah Larkin – nurse and paramedic

SARAH, 22, graduated in 2020 with a double degree in nursing and para medicine from the Australian Catholic University in Canberra. She's now registered in both fields but currently works at the Calvary Public Hospital Bruce as a nurse. She spent the first six months of her nursing career at Clare Holland House in the specialist palliative care unit and shares her reflections of the experience.

Friends asked me if it could be sad working at Clare Holland House. It could be sad but it was really special to be involved with people at the end stages of their lives.

You really got to know the patients and the families over a long period of time.

Our role in palliative care was always to make the patients and families as comfortable as possible. We treated them as a whole person, not just managing their physical pain. We also helped them with the emotional and the spiritual aspects of their lives as well.

Sometimes we'd have people who would turn to their faith in the last stages. They might have been away from their faith for a while but in the end they wanted to find meaning and hope, to go to heaven or somewhere else when they die. And [to see that]...was really sometimes quite a beautiful thing.

I remember in primary school the golden rule was to treat people how you wanted to be treated. That shines through in my nursing, to treat others with respect and with love. My Catholic background has given me that.

Having my faith and knowing that there's a heaven and somewhere to go when we do pass away was something that really helped me.



Five ways to do Advent like a Catholic



The first Sunday of Advent is the Church’s new year, so here PHILIPPA MATYR shares a few simple ways in which you can make this season a better preparation for Christmas.

- STOP.**
Just stop. Stop scheduling Christmas parties, catch-ups, drinks, kids’ concerts, firework displays, shopping, baking, decorating, more baking, more shopping, and the million other things that crowd into this time. You don’t need to go to, or even do, all of these things, especially the ones you’re secretly dreading. I’m giving you permission – no, I’m giving you an ORDER – to choose instead just a very small selection of excellent ones. Maybe three things. Delete the rest from your diary and create some empty space there instead. You will thank me for this.
- Go to Confession.**
If you’re serious about your spiritual life, you should try to get to Confession at least once a month. A lot of us are just Christmas-and-Easter people, but you can do better. Look for a good examination of conscience – here’s one that I like. This will really help you to go to Confession this Advent.
- Clean out your house.**
Or even just your kitchen cupboards. Or your linen cupboard. Or your garage. We’ve created some blank space in the diary now (remember?), so you have the time. Sort stuff into ‘bin’, ‘donate’, and ‘keep’. This is a great time to donate any unwanted sellable things to your local church Christmas fêtes and fundraisers. If your local Catholic church doesn’t do this, then I bet the local Anglicans do (they throw a

- great church fête). You can also donate to charity shops before they close for the Christmas break. And if you think you’re too late, donate it anyway: charity shops always have a secret store of Christmas stuff out the back.
- Go to daily Mass as often as you can.**
Advent is beautiful, and it’s a great time to discover weekday Mass if you haven’t already. Weekday Masses are usually quieter than Sundays, reflective, peaceful, and a moment to step out of the rush, and breathe, and sit with God. You might not be able to do this every day. But even if it was just sometimes, I think you’ll find that you have more spring in your step, more energy, and more sense of purpose. God is never outdone in generosity.
- Make your spiritual New Year’s Resolutions.**
It’s the Church’s new liturgical year! So it’s a time for reviewing your spiritual life. Using a good examination of conscience and going to Confession are natural starters for this yeasty, fermenting process. What could you do better? Could you go to Confession once a month? Maybe get to more weekday Masses? I encourage people to download the Universalis app (very inexpensive) and start saying a bit of the Liturgy of the Hours every day. When I do this – and I am a terrible slacker – it always makes a huge difference to my daily life.

What made 2021 special?

Christmas is a time for reflection, so the Catholic Voice asked seven prominent Catholics to share their thoughts on 2021



Anna Masters, principal Merici College

Highlight of 2021?
Joining the Merici and Canberra community: getting to know students, staff and parents – I love living in Canberra. Welcoming our school dog, Roxy into my life. The return of all students and staff to campus life after lockdown.

A low point
Going into lockdown and the empty quiet on campus.

Something I have learned
The fundamental importance of our Founding Orders, the religious who still add life to our community, our Houses, Mission, Vision, Values and strength of Purpose as a community of learners.

A news event that affected me
The fall of Afghanistan to the Taliban – my heart bleeds for the people of that country, especially its women and children.

How I approach 2022
With hope, joy and determination to keep living my mission and growing our wonderful College.



Tony Stuart, prison chaplain

Highlight of 2021?
Seeing restrictions ease off and life beginning to return to normal. For us this was marked especially by seeing grandchildren for the first time in 5 ½ months. It also meant that we could reconnect with friends and enjoy playing music together.

A low point for 2021?
Watching Ruby, our dog, slowly recover from a white tailed spider bite. She had a very large wound which required surgery.

Something I have learned
I have witnessed the power of prayer and the power of small daily choices to engender profound change.

A news event that affected me
This year has seen more than a fair share of depressing COVID news, with ensuing extended lock downs and social isolation. Amidst this it has been refreshing to see Pope Francis’ consistent encouragement for people to act responsibly and demonstrate our love for each other by getting vaccinated and generally following medical advice

How I approach 2022?
With a sense of cautious optimism.





Fr Richard Thompson, parish priest, Pearce

Highlight of 2021?

How supportive the people connected to and in my office, the parish and community have been to me personally and to our parish family. Their generosity of spirit is at times overwhelming, and nearly always wrapped in smiles and laughter.

A low point

Witnessing the divisive behaviour of those who deny the benefits of vaccines and those who refuse to accept our responsibility in regard to climate change and caring for “our common home”. I am still saddened by their selfishness and continuing ignorance.

Something I have learned

That no matter what the world may throw at us, as the People of God, the Body of Christ is strong, vibrant and more relevant than ever.

A news event that affected me

The safe recovery of Cleo Smith in WA. I felt the angst of her family for 18 days, the joy and relief of her family and the people involved in her recovery, but also the sadness and pathos of her alleged abductor.

How I approach 2022?

I want to approach 2022 joyfully, peacefully and, hopefully, restfully. The last two years have been wearying on the body, mind and spirit so I am looking forward to a gentle rejuvenation.



Ross Fox, Director of Catholic Education

Highlight of 2021?

One of my proudest achievements this year was bringing national media attention and recognition to the great work that is happening in our schools to advance learning and teaching through our transformative professional development program Catalyst.

A low point

It is difficult to go past the recent COVID lockdowns. While our Catholic schools were well prepared and had a robust remote learning program in place, it was difficult knowing that our students were not in their classrooms where we know they are best supported. Some great learning still took place but the reality of the lockdown across society undoubtedly exacerbated the inequity and inequality that exists in our society.

Something I have learned

As the father of two young boys approaching what I hope is ‘peak dinosaur interest’ I’ve learned that no Stegosaurus was ever eaten by a Tyrannosaurus Rex (they lived millions of years apart) and it is estimated more than 1.5 billion Tyrannosaurus Rex lived while they existed. That is a lot of dinosaurs.

A news event that affected me

That has to be the safe return of Cleo Smith in Western Australia. Things were beginning to seem hopeless and it was difficult to not feel the despair of the parents. At the other end of the emotional spectrum there was such great hope and joy seeing them reunited. The great work of the police and the captivating images that followed were unforgettable.

How I approach 2022?

With great hope and optimism and as an insatiably curious learner.



Sr Francesca, Carmelite Monastery, Red Hill

Highlight of 2021?

Attending the General Chapter for our Order in February (postponed from September 2020 due to lockdown) and meeting up with other Sisters at our Motherhouse at Kew.

A low point

When I learned that my very faithful school friend had only a week to live. Angela’s multiple myeloma cancer returned after 10 years in remission. An infection following a blood transfusion further compromised her immune system and sadly she died in September, leaving a devoted husband, two adult children and three grandchildren.

Something I have learned

2021 showed me how very compassionate, generous and caring our Catholic community has been towards local struggling and marginalized people over this difficult period of the pandemic. The lockdown has seriously impacted families, and especially senior members of our society. We have been keeping the emotionally and socially distressed as well as those struggling with financial insecurity and uncertainty in our daily prayers.

A news event that affected me

Images of the fearful Afghani people trying to flee their country on the withdrawal of US personnel, and the present migrant crisis on the Belarus-Poland border occupy our prayers.

How I approach 2022?

With the Lord’s grace which is St Therese’s way of confidence and trust in Christ’s merciful love. Pope Francis has been encouraging this trust and confidence in his encyclical letters and talks.



Mark Daniher, St Joseph’s, Ungarie

Highlight of 2021?

Having a wonderful week away from the farm at Noosa with precious family, conquering stand up paddle boarding in our 50s and Melbourne Demons winning the 2021 AFL flag after being long-suffering supporters.

A low point

Not being able to farewell two family members who sadly died during COVID-19 lockdowns. Restrictions prevented us from attending both funerals in regional NSW and Melbourne. We felt the pain of isolation from family at such a vulnerable time keenly.

Something I have learned

That we had taken for granted much of the freedoms of our everyday lives before COVID-19. We hadn’t realised just how precious simple things were until we couldn’t do them like a Saturday afternoon at Ganmain for footy or a quick weekend getaway. It made us realise how blessed our lives had been.

A news event that affected me

Definitely the palpable relief across Australia when little Cleo was found safe in WA. The collective delight of the nation, admiration of the WA police and finally an answer to prayer in a time when we desperately needed a ‘good news story’.

How I approach 2022?

Simply: Cherish family and friends, appreciate the rewards of a hard day’s work, learn to say ‘no’ more often and be content with each other’s strengths and weaknesses. Thank God daily for our blessings and understand that whatever happens, there is always a reason and a plan.



Kathryn Liston, Youth minister, Wanniaassa

Highlight of 2021?

Hunt for Happiness, specifically when I received the first response from a kindergarten student. The Hunt for Happiness was an initiative I put together with my sister during the most recent COVID lockdown, where we placed crosses representing the beatitudes around the schools and church and asked students to email in a picture or tag us on Instagram when they found them.

A low point

I found the start of the year the most challenging, as I was trying to work out what I was doing and build some confidence as youth minister.

Something I have learned

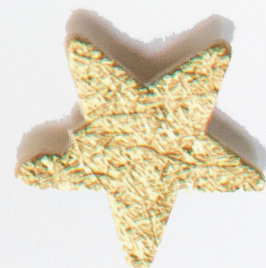
Do the things you enjoy. For others to like something you’ve got to like it first. And if you enjoy it then regardless of the outcome you’ve gotten something out of it.

A news event that affected me

I don’t have a specific one, but COVID-19 has been in the news and caused another lockdown, which impacted me and my ministry.

How I approach 2022?

Looking for fun and ways to grow; I don’t think it will be hard.



My Christmas Wish



Catholic Students from across the Archdiocese share with the Catholic Voice their Christmas Wish for 2021

St. Bede's Primary School Red Hill, Kindergarten

My Christmas wish is to spend time with my family and hopefully they will get me real laser beams.

Archer, 5 years old.

My Christmas wish is that everybody can be with somebody that they love.

Kitty, 6 Years old.

St Mary's Primary School Moruya

This year's Christmas wish is to be with my dad. I wish that my dad could spend time with me. I've never met him before so if I had one wish this Christmas it would be to be with him.

Janara.Parsons, Year 5,



St Edmund's College

My Christmas wish is for people to be together at this important time of the year. I pray for those who are poor and lonely and hope that everyone supports each other as best they can. Christus Lux Mea

Bede, Year 7



St Anne's Central School Temora

For Christmas this year I would like to see my cousins on the border of QLD I haven't seen them in 3 year because of Covid. My Christmas wish is to see them because they are the Christmas Star- they bring us to life and they make us happy.

Will, Year 5



St Francis Xavier College

After a year of isolation and division, my wish this Christmas is that we can all simply enjoy being in the presence of one another. My hope for this holiday season is that we can find joy in each other's silly stories from the year that was and the jokes that fly out of Christmas crackers.

Georgia, Year 10,

St Mary's School Moruya

My Christmas wish is that mothers and fathers, children, and friends will all be reunited as one family this Christmas. That everyone will feel love and joy with their families and spend valued time with their loved ones all together, as one big family gift.

Scarlett, Year 5



St Gregory's Primary School, Queanbeyan

My wish is for everyone to be safe and have a good day on Christmas and have care and love, stop fighting take care of the earth by not littering it's bad, God gave this world as a gift and said take care of it!

Kaylee, Year 2

St Bede's Primary School Braidwood

My Christmas wish is for everyone to have shelter to stay in and to get together and have a meal or watch movies. To make everyone feel loved and be cared for.

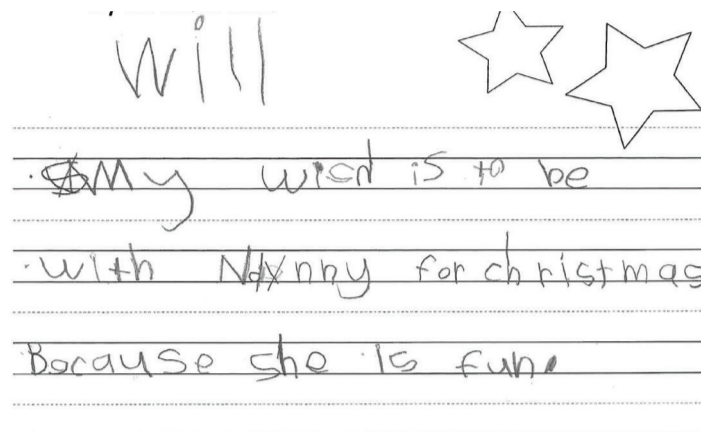
Mack year 3

John Paul II College

My Christmas wish is to get together with my family and have a nice Christmas dinner with them, also I would like to see some family members that I haven't seen in a long time.

Luke, Year 8

St Patrick's Parish School, Cooma



Sts Peter and Paul, Goulburn

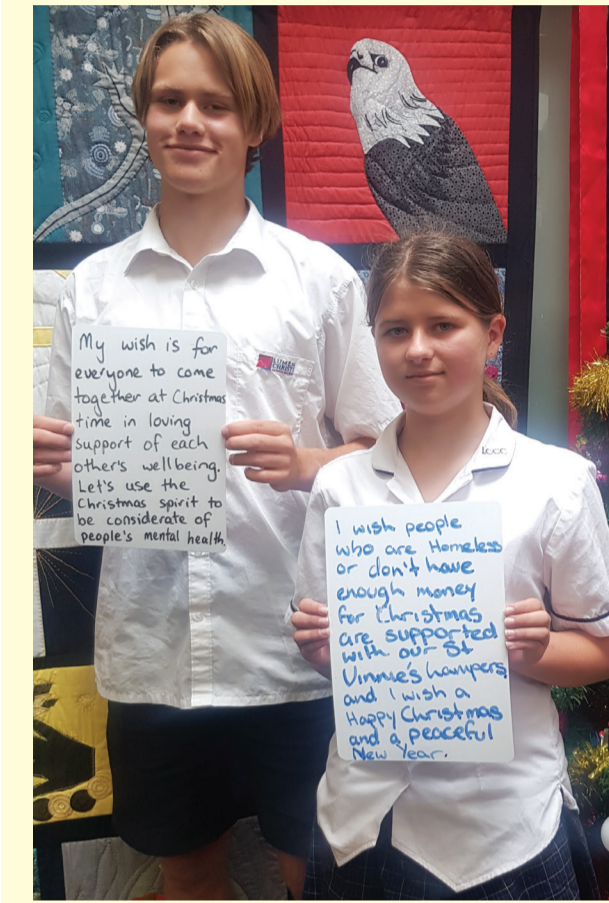
My Christmas wish Isn't hard to tell it starts with running and playing And from there it goes well

In the hot glazing sun Around the barbeque Dad shouts out to mum "A sausage for you?"

The sun starts to set People hurry inside For this time tomorrow It will be Christmas night

People walk to their beds And they sink down low For tomorrow is Christmas And it will be shouting hello

Charlize Arnold , 5/6M



Holy Family Primary School, Gowrie

My Christmas wish is that my family and I will be sitting under the Christmas tree opening presents and eating breakfast. As well as COVID going away so people can go overseas and see their families.

Liam 4R

Lumen Christi Catholic College, Pambula

My wish is for everyone to come together at Christmas time in loving support of each other's wellbeing. Let's use the Christmas spirit to be considerate of people's mental health.

Jacob , Year 12 – 2022 College Captain

St Joseph's Primary, Boorowa

My Christmas wish is for all the family's around the world to come together and have a nice time. It has been hard this year for families to be together with COVID being hard. I hope we can all come together and celebrate Christmas.

Poppy Year 6

St Francis of Assisi Primary School Calwell

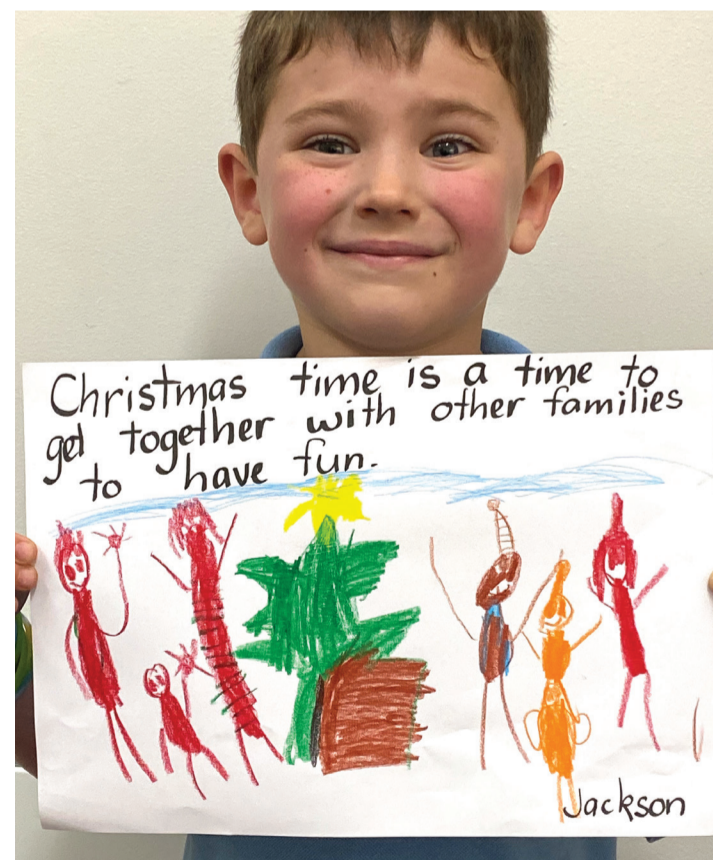
Our Christmas Wish is for everyone to celebrate Christmas with each other. After the tough year everyone has endured, celebrating Christmas with friends and family will bring out the joy and love that we have all missed sharing with one another.

Chloe and Imogen, Year 6

Merici College

It's been a tough year and I am so thankful to be able to celebrate my achievements with all my friends as we prepare to graduate from Year 12. I am also looking very forward to celebrating Christmas with my family and starting the New Year with new opportunities. My Christmas wish is for good health and safety to all our family and friends.

Gabrielle, Year 12,



St Benedict's Primary School Jackson, Kinder,

St Mary's Primary School, Crookwell

The best and most jolly time of the year, but this year with this horrible pandemic, this is the first time in a while many families have seen each other. This year my Christmas wish is for everyone to be together again enjoying Christmas with their family and friends.

Caitlyn, Year 5

McAuley Catholic Central School, Tumut

My Christmas wish is for everybody to enjoy their Christmas. I wish that people who cannot enjoy the materialistic aspect of Christmas can find happiness on Christmas day and spend it with those who matter most. I wish that people will be able to look past the materialistic aspect and enjoy time with their friends and loved ones.

Riley, Year 10

I wish to be able to travel around Australia and see Nana and pa, Gran, Gordy, my uncles and aunties. I want mum to be home for atleast two weeks straight. I wish for dad to stop having meetings during the day. I wish I could go to hobart like I did before could I wish to be with my family this Christmas.

*Abigail Bock Year 4
St Patrick's Primary School, Gundagai*



Universal Church, local celebration

BY CHRISTOPHER GILROY
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
OFFICER

FAMILIES, youth and young adults came to celebrate young people for World Youth Day on the feast of Christ the King. Pope Francis has invited Dioceses across the world to celebrate young people in the life and mission of the Universal Church.

The celebration began with a Mass led by Archbishop Christopher, who explored the openness of young people to the faith. He spoke on World Youth Day, saying that “every year there is a Diocesan celebration and this is the day for that. All around the world, young people are gathering in the Cathedral with their Bishops and, as the young people do so well, bringing people together in such a festive way.”

The festivities continue with the celebration behind the Cathedral in Haydon

Hall for a ‘picnic in the piazza’ to celebrate together. Deacon Eden Langlands, ordained only a few days prior, said that the feast of Christ the King was about a “persistent and very gentle knocking at the door, inviting me to open up and allow the Lord to enter into my life.”

The event celebrated the diversity of our faith community, with the presence of young families from the Neocatechumenal Way, Youth for Christ and Couples for Christ and a wide variety of parishes, movements and ecclesial communities who gathered on the day.

This vibrant scene of joy included a time of music and worship led by Archdiocesan music ministry - ‘Cana’ – and Youth for Christ music ministry. We look forward to deepening this opportunity to gather, pray and celebrate our young Church in years to come.



Way of the Star Advent resource



Fr Trenton Van Reesch and Christopher Gilroy

The Archdiocese, in collaboration with Belong, are inviting young people to journey through Advent into a new encounter with Christ and His Church in the ‘Christmas: The Way of the Star’ series.

The Way of the Star is a guided series of twelve sessions that include video reflections, testimony, scripture and prayer that follow the encounters that lead up to the birth of Christ.

Fr Trenton Van Reesch spoke of his hope for those drawing on this resource, as to “experience the mystery of the incarnation of God in a way they have never experienced before, or as if for the first time.”

The Way of the Star is the journey of Jesus. We encourage all to undertake this journey and to be open to encountering Jesus in a new way this Christmas.

The Christmas: Way of the Star series can be accessed for free at cgyouth.org.au/christmas





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Navigating the new ‘gotcha’ mentality

BY PATRICK LANGRELL

THE comedian, John Cleese, scheduled to debate at the famous Cambridge Union earlier this month, was “cancelled” due to a controversy involving another speaker who had impersonated Hitler (art historian Andrew Graham-Dixon). Cleese, who himself impersonated Hitler in a famous comic scene decades earlier, found himself the next victim in the long line of public figures blacklisted / de-platformed / cancelled due to their past deeds. The characteristically Cleesian irony in this tale is that the person responsible for cancelling John Cleese was...John Cleese himself.

On November 10, Cleese posted to his 5.6M followers on twitter that: “I was looking forward to talking to students at the Cambridge Union this Friday, but I hear that someone there has been blacklisted for doing an impersonation of Hitler. I regret that I did the same on a Monty Python show, so I am blacklisting myself before someone else does”

Was this self-cancellation a reasonable response to the preceding controversy - the facts of which have been disputed by the Cambridge Union student president ? Was it a brilliantly timed marketing ploy to bolster interest in his soon-to-be-released TV series on cancel culture and wokeness on the UK’s Channel Four?



“The fact remains that ‘cancel culture’ is a phenomenon extending far beyond universities. Increasing numbers will experience the chilling effect of coordinated public disapproval.”

The fact remains that ‘cancel culture’ is a phenomenon extending far beyond universities. Increasing numbers will experience the chilling effect of coordinated public disapproval. And lest we think that the targets of the new ‘gotcha’ mentality are only religious conservatives, a recent interview with atheist/evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins shows those on the left are just as afraid: “I self-censor...

More so in recent years...It’s not a thing I’ve done throughout my life, I’ve always spoken my mind openly. But we’re now in a time when if you do speak your mind openly, you are at risk of being picked up and condemned.”

How are we to understand and respond? Five simple thoughts.

First, although the expressions ‘cancelling’ and ‘cancel culture’ are new, the practices

of shunning, stigmatising and removing are very old and common in times of cultural revolution and ideological activism. As it goes, ‘there is nothing new under the sun’.

Second, there is growing consensus amongst intellectuals, public figures and celebrities from both left to right - secular to religious - that such trends are actually bad: corrosive of public debate, and civic norms that support well-functioning societies.

Third, cancellation tactics often involve an intimidatory, bullying aspect: designed to shut down disagreement and difference. They often undermine and make hollow calls for respect for all and appreciation of diversity.

Fourth, cancellation reveals a widespread degree of moral immaturity. Our own actions—anyone’s past actions--involve multiple causes and explanations, and a sign of moral maturity is the ability to assess the rightness or wrongness, degrees and culpability, without assigning people to the ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ side of history. In an age marked by decreasing agreement about fundamental values and increase in ethical complexity, our capability to carry think through past and present as a society is under-resourced.

Fifth, cancel culture reveals an unhealthy presentism: that we here and now are uniquely - as never before - able to see clearly what the wrong thing is. This is unlikely, but it is how the relativists of yesterday become today’s absolutists.

Understanding and responding to ethical issues can be significantly aided by reading or watching the best articles, books and videos, eg on cancel culture. Luckily, there’s now a website that takes the effort of research away and does it for you: www.EthicsFinder.com There’s also a whole section on Cancel Culture too. Check it out, and, disclaimer, yes, I was active in the site’s creation.

• *Patrick Langrell is Director, Portfolio, Strategy and Operations at Australian Catholic University and Editor of EthicsFinder.com*

Offer helping hand at Christmas

AS we gather to celebrate the birth of Jesus, parishes will be conducting the annual Archbishop’s Christmas Appeal at Christmas Masses.

Times of celebration make hardship all the starker. To offer a helping hand to others this Christmas can be a way of stirring the great hope of Christmas especially as COVID-19 continues to impact all our lives.

Funds raised will again be used to support the National Council of Churches’ Christmas Bowl Appeal and to help Church communities in Ethiopia, Gaza, Syria, Indonesia and Sri Lankans in India.

Further support will be given for projects in the Dioceses of Otukpo in Nigeria and Thamarassery in India along with projects of the La Salette Martha Province in India.

Continuing help will be given to Bethlehem University as well as contributing to construction of a school hall at Vanga Point

in the Diocese of Gizo, PNG.

Last year, the Archbishop’s Christmas Appeal raised \$50,000. It was distributed:

About \$5600 for projects in the Diocese of Wilcannia Forbes

\$10,000 to the Diocese of Otukpo, Nigeria

\$6000 to each of the Society of the Oblates of the Sacred Heart (OSH), the La Salette Matha Province and the Diocese of Thamarassery in India

\$5000 to Bethlehem University in the Holy Land for student assistance

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from Kiribati and Malaita in Nusabaruku, Diocese of Gizo, PNG.

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Shroud of Turin: the devil in the details?

BY DON SMITH

RUSS Breault is not one for conspiracy theories, especially when it comes to the most famous empty tomb in history. “Some people say Jesus woke up, hooked up with Mary Magdalene and moved to France. Well, I don’t think so,” he said, taking a not-so-subtle swipe at the Da Vinci Code (book and film).

Breault is an acknowledged international expert on the Shroud of Turin and recently spoke to Catholic Voice via Zoom from the United States about “CSI Jerusalem,” his 40-year quest on the Shroud’s trail.

Today, that flax cloth with its herringbone weave still resides in the little chapel next to Italy’s Turin Cathedral, enigmatic as ever with its image of an adult, bearded male apparently bearing the wounds of scourging, crucifixion and a crown of thorns.

Testing over the years has shown real blood on the cloth, with real male DNA, with no evidence of pigment or brush strokes that could be expected from an artist.

Much work has gone into how the image was formed with theories suggesting an intense, brief burst of radiation or light was involved.

For Breault, he’s most fascinated by what he sees as a slight misalignment between the pattern of bloodstains, most notably the scourge marks, and the image.

“Had this been the work of an artist, he would have applied the

image first, and then applied the blood marks according to where the image was,” said Breault. “But that is not the order of events. The blood was on the cloth first, followed by the image.”

He believes the misalignment proves there are two separate sets of images. One was from direct contact with the body and a later image by some other process that probably involves light.

“The body would have stiffened within a couple hours of death due to rigor mortis and after 24-36 hours would have relaxed again. This is the most logical explanation for the misalignment as Jesus was only in the tomb about 36 hours before the resurrection.

“It fits perfectly,” Breault said.

But less perfectly, perhaps, for those who support 30-year-old radiocarbon dating results. In 1988, three small samples from one corner of the Shroud were sent to labs in the US, the UK and Switzerland for analysis of carbon decay in the fibres.

The results came back dating the cloth to between 1260 and 1390 AD, well over a thousand years after the time of Christ.

It was an “ah ha” moment for the sceptics. This proves it’s a fake, they said, a medieval forgery, a work of art perhaps from Leonardo Da Vinci!

The results initially put a damper on further research but the Shroud and its mysteries were not to be denied.

With the release in 2017 of



Whether it’s about the blood, dust particles, pollen spores, DNA profiling, the herringbone weave, 3D imaging, the history trail, or a host of other disciplines, experts, believers and sceptics have all weighed in on the Shroud.

the 1988 measurement data and advances in computing technology, new studies have taken place to build on earlier work over the decades.

Whether it’s about the blood, dust particles, pollen spores, DNA profiling, the herringbone weave, 3D imaging, the history trail, or a host of other disciplines, experts, believers and sceptics have all weighed in on the Shroud.

Russ Breault is just one in the midst of the international debate. Another is fellow

American researcher Bob Rucker, who also spoke to Catholic Voice.

Rucker brings his perspective as a retired nuclear engineer in

studying the artefact. Like others, he believes an intense burst of radiation was responsible for the Shroud’s image.

But he also believes – critically – this radiation changed the structure of the atomic structure of the Shroud’s cloth fibres by creating new, fresh carbon atoms. According to Rucker, these new carbon atoms could have shifted forward the Shroud’s dating using radiocarbon techniques by thousands of years, depending on where they were located on the cloth.

Recent peer-reviewed research, he says, proves the cloth samples used in 1988 are not representative of the rest of the Shroud and that the radiocarbon results

should be rejected.

That’s a fascinating proposition. If widely accepted, it will turn the spotlight brightly back onto the cloth’s first century AD origins and to the source of the great intrigue. As Scully and Mulder might have said in the X-files, “the truth is out there” somewhere.

The Vatican will be interested in the truth, too, but avoids going down any speculative rabbit holes or test tubes. Though it has no official position on the cloth, several popes have prayed before it, including Pope Francis who, in choosing his words carefully, described it as an “icon of love”.

Russ Breault, however, has his own way of understanding the Shroud.

“We have been bought, purchased, redeemed and ransomed,” he said.

Quoting Matthew 20:28 that Christ gave his life “as a ransom for many”, Breault calls the Shroud a “receipt” – an itemised account - of that ransom having been paid.

“You know what they say - the devil is in the detail. Not with the shroud.”

“God is in the detail,” Breault said.

For further information on Bob Rucker’s forensic approach to the Shroud, see:

www.shroudresearch.net

For Russ Breault and the Shroud, see:

<https://shroudencounter.com/>

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Milestones



Benjamin Butler, Corpus Christi, South Tuggeranong



Lacey Boyle, Mary Help of Christians, South Woden



63rd wedding anniversary Graham and Norma Beer, Sacred Heart Parish, Moruya



Baby Anton Augustine with his mother Anju Francis who featured on the cover of the 2021 June edition of the Catholic Voice



Robert Moore, Our Lady of the Annunciation, Weston Creek



55th wedding anniversary Josephine and Paul Rumery, Sacred Heart Parish, Moruya



Josephine and Paul Rumery, 1966



Valerie Brown, Mary Help of Christians, South Woden



Eden Lawless, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, North Belconnen



Deacon Mick O'Donnell, 30th anniversary ordination to permanent (married) diaconate



Ronan Doolan, St Monica's, Evatt

March 2021-June 2022

The Year Amoris Laetitia Family

BY LARA KIRK

IN his first three years as Pope, Francis held two universal synods on the family, and gathered the insights of these meetings into the apostolic exhortation Amoris Laetitia, on the beauty and joy of family life. On 19 March, the Feast of St Joseph and the fifth anniversary of Amoris Laetitia, Pope Francis announced the period leading up to the World Meeting of Families in June next year as the ‘Year of Amoris Laetitia Family’. Francis’ intention expressed in Amoris Laetitia is to place the family at the centre of attention of the Church and of society. He is calling us individually

and as a Church to a “missionary conversion” (AL229) in learning how to walk alongside families and help them face challenges confidently “because families are never a problem, they are always a gift, and in terms of the future, they are an opportunity” (AL 7). Francis also wants us as a Church to proclaim boldly the “Gospel of the Family”. That is, to hold up for young people and the world a hopeful vision of family life as a fragile but precious path to human fulfilment, because it “responds to the deepest expectations of the human person” (AL 201). Locally, a network of Catholic groups, movements and agencies who work to support marriage

and family life requested that the Archdiocese help them produce an Advent resource focussing on Amoris Laetitia. This resource, called “Walking Together”, which can be accessed at www.cgcatholic.org.au/ADVENT In the resource, 19 archdiocesan families share their experiences of the challenges and joys of family life. Tim Watson, Rector of Holy Cross Anglican Church, and his Catholic wife Kate, of Holy Rosary Parish, shared how trying and failing to love well as parents provides an opportunity to ask forgiveness, to grow in self-knowledge and to experience the joy of being accepted and loved in our weakness.

Sajay John Maliakel and Teena Sajay, of the Syro Malabar Catholic community, described how mercy includes being patient when their three energetic young boys inevitably break stuff. “If things get broken, yes, it costs money but you can always get it back, but if I break my kids’ trust in me, it’s much harder to get it back,” says Sajay. Young parents Joe and Jess Rebbechi, of St Joseph’s O’Connor, spoke of the importance of not being insular as a family and of reaching out to others even in the midst of messiness. “Just inviting someone over for a cup of tea in your messy house can be an act of mercy,” says Jess.

Catholic bishops welcome religious discrimination bill



Archbishop Peter A Comensoli

LAST month Australian Catholic Bishops Conference spokesman on religious freedom, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli, welcomed a religious discrimination bill introduced by the Morrison Government, saying it offers “a positive expression of religious freedom” that will be “an important progression towards parity with other anti-discrimination laws in Australia”.

Archbishop Comensoli has been working with other religious leaders to encourage bipartisan support for the bill. The religious discrimination bill sits alongside other anti-discrimination legislation. It protects religious belief or activity, but also the right to not have a religious faith or participate in religious events. “All Australian citizens, regardless of their religious belief or activity, should be able to participate fully in our society. They must be entitled to the equal and effective protection of the law and should not be discriminated against on the basis of their religious belief or activities in public life.”

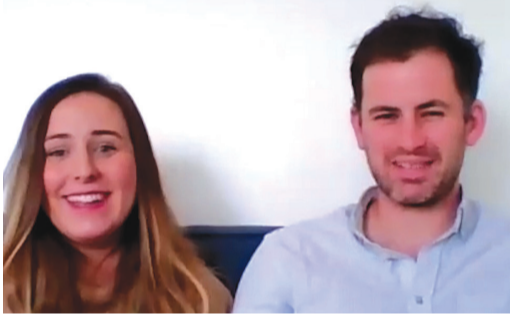
60 per cent of Australians profess a religious faith and their beliefs are an essential part of who they are. The bill would allow religious schools to prefer someone of the same faith when hiring staff to help the school maintain its ethos.



Tim and Kate Watson



Sajay John Maliakel & Teena Sajay



Joe and Jess Rebbechi

Mitochondrial donation law raises ethical, safety concerns

THE Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has asked politicians in the federal parliament to not pass a bill that would allow mitochondrial donation. A small number of families each year who are aware they carry a risk of passing on

mitochondrial disease may wish to use mitochondrial donation. Mitochondrial donation is a complex medical technique that would transfer an intending mother’s nuclear DNA into a donor egg or a human embryo made using a donor egg, to reduce the chance the intending

mother would have a child with mitochondrial disease. The different methods of mitochondrial donation lead to human embryos being created and destroyed, both for research and for clinical work. It is vital that we find better ways to help families avoid mitochondrial diseases, or find cures, but it is not clear the proposed law would help and it raises significant ethical issues.

mitochondrial donation techniques adds further issues of safety and ethics with no benefit to health. Mitochondrial donation has been legal in the United Kingdom for more than five years but there have been no reported live births there, so it is not clear if it is both safe and practical.

The legislation would open the door in Australia to three ethically contentious practices:

- The first-time researchers would be allowed to change the human genome, meaning any changes are heritable over generations
- The first time that human embryos would be created and destroyed purely for research and training, and
- The first time that a human embryo could be created from the genetic material of three people (three-parent embryos).

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A stronger 2022

Take care of your body as if you were going to live forever; And take care of your soul as if you were going to die tomorrow. -St Augustine

BY MARCI ORINGO

HEALTH is dependent on many facets. This makes up our physical and spiritual well-being and affects how we eat, sleep, manage stress, and interact with community. Health promotes personal growth, play, work-life balance and a nourishing environment (Reform Wellness Inc).

Health is also about our relationships with God, ourselves and others; the way we respond to stress; how we interact in community; and so on. There is no one-size-fits-all approach.

A holistic approach to understanding yourself is the key to being able to continue to grow into the person God is calling you to be. As St Francis de Sales said, “Be who you are and be that well. So that you may bring honour to the Master Craftsman whose handiwork you are.”

So, what are some habits that can help us to be stronger in 2022?

Start small and build a good foundation.

Rome wasn't built in a day. It takes time to build a routine. Lifting heavy weights without the proper instruction of technique will wreck you, no matter



how cool it may look. Ask for help, try an introduction to the gym program, think about what your functional goals might be.

Recover harder than you train, with adequate rest and recovery.

Seek professional help if you are not sure where to start.

Eat well but not restrictively.

Abs are made in the kitchen, and you cannot out-exercise a bad diet. Try the swap method: instead of a chocolate bar, have some fruit etc. You don't have to stop eating everything you like, it's all about balance and discipline.

Do something you like, with friends and/or as a family.

People function well in community and the best way to encourage yourself to train or exercise more is with a friend. Accountability is a powerful tool.

Families should learn to play

together! Bushwalking is a great activity and works for all ages.

Consistent and persistent.

Small changes to your routine steadily accumulate. This is far more effective than a crash and burn method. Consistency is key.

Recalibrate – if you don't reach a goal, recalibrate with a resilient mindset. Don't give up as failure is only a step to success not an obstacle.

Purpose, prior planning, patience, persistence and perseverance.

These principles also apply to building a prayer life, which when approached with the same discipline – will yield results. Placing Christ at the centre of your life and wellbeing is the cornerstone from which we can strive toward holiness in body, mind and soul.

• *Marci Oringo ACU's Campus Associate*

Sr Rosemary Hart Fruit Cake recipe

While at Eden, I was noted for my fruit cakes. It all started when I decided to make some for our street stall. They went very quickly. Whenever we had a street stall, my cakes would be sold before they reached the stall. I even had orders at Christmas.



BOILED DARK FRUIT CAKE

Put into a saucepan 1 cup sugar, 1 cup raisins, 1/2 cup currants, 1/4 cup mixed peel (or instead of the above fruit simply use 500 grams mixed fruit) add some cherries (about 10 or 1/2 packet) and glazed or crystallised ginger (about 70 grams) that have been cut into small pieces, slivered almonds (50 grams) 125 grams butter, 1 teaspoon carb. soda, 1 teaspoon mixed spice, 1 cup cold water.

METHOD:

Bring all to the boil then cool off until lukewarm. Have ready 2 well beaten eggs, 1 cup SR Flour & 1 cup plain flour, pinch salt. (Sifted about 4 or 5 times) Mix all together, place mixture in a greased & lined cake pan & bake for about 1 hour & 30 mins in a very moderate oven (170 degrees Celsius)

** After placing mixture in the cake pan, I drop it on the floor once to remove air bubbles.

** When cake is cooked using a cake tester, I remove cake from oven and pour 1/3 cup sherry evenly over the cake while it is still hot.

** Ingredients can be doubled to make two good sized cakes from the one mixture.

How to have a better prayer life in 2022

BY TIM KIRK

PLL LET you into a secret, having a better prayer life is shockingly simple.

With a few small steps you will find that, like the kingdom of God, the capacity to pray 'has come near to you' (Luke 11.9). Prayer is a gift. From God. To You. Your job is to receive the gift. You are not able to make a better prayer life by your own energy, cleverness or spiritual gymnastics. Genuine prayer in fact has only a little to do with what you do, and rather a lot to do with what the Spirit of God does IN YOU. And because the Spirit is, well, spirit, you may not feel much as the Spirit is doing it. So... don't judge your prayer time by how much you feel. In fact, try not to judge your prayer time at all. We trust in God.

Having said that, consolation in prayer is rather lovely, so if you do feel movement, encouragement, tenderness

or closeness from God, praise the name of the Lord! And on the other hand, desolations are not infrequent, so if you are distracted, tired, grumpy or restless, praise the name of the Lord! (And DON'T shorten your prayer time.)

Here is a prayer starter pack to get you up and running:

- Carve out a regular time and space in your day. My own preference is early in the morning, but you have to find a time that works for you and, importantly, that you can be faithful to each day. You might start with ten minutes, and even that might seem a long time at first, but soon it won't be long enough. If you keep going, your heart will start to hunger for a little more, and then a little more again!

- Find a chair, (I prefer one with good back support,) and sit with a straight back if you can. I like to place one open hand on top of the other in my lap, the

openness of my hands a gentle reminder of the openness of my heart to God.

- Invite the Holy Spirit to come. This really is as simple as saying, with intentionality, "Come Holy Spirit".

- Call to mind that God is good. He is a loving Father, "Abba", not the distant judge you sometimes fear Him to be. Remember Jesus. He died for you and was raised from the dead. He is Lord, worthy of all love and praise.

- Find the readings from the Mass of the day. There are numerous online options or, of course, your trusty weekday missal. The scriptures are anointed by God's Spirit and if you invite the Spirit to speak to you through them, the Spirit most surely will. Start with the gospel. Read it slowly, out loud if you can.

- If a word or phrase strikes you, let it resonate and ring like



the reverberating of a bell in your heart. Receive it with joy.

- Just sit for a while in the silence. Rest there. The Lord is with you. Rest. This is the part of your prayer that will grow longer as you get more in the groove over time.

- End with a prayer of thanks and praise. If time allows, remember before the Lord those you love and those you know who need God's love and light

right now.

- Do it again tomorrow!

Take on these simple disciplines and you will soon find your prayer life growing. In this Advent season as we look towards Christmas, prayer is a gift that God wants to give you.

Happy praying!

• *Tim Kirk is the Chair of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn*

Where there's a will, there's a way

Shannon O'Brien wasn't sure she would ever leave her small regional town to study at university.

Originally from Young, the cherry-growing capital of Australia located 400km from Sydney, Shannon assumed any plans of getting to university would be matched by impossible roadblocks – particularly financial hurdles.

There was also the question of what to study – Shannon simply had too many interests.

"I was thinking about arts, journalism, history, business, maybe a double degree, maybe not," Shannon said.

But after receiving a history prize in high school, ACU reached out with a suggestion to study its new Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation), offered in partnership with The Ramsay Centre.

She also received a \$90,000 scholarship to study the degree, which took "a huge weight" off her shoulders.

As a liberal arts degree, the BA (Western Civilisation) is offered to ambitious students to broaden their understanding of Western literature, philosophy, art, politics, religion, science and history, leading to a deeper appreciation of how history has shaped the modern world.



For Shannon, who describes herself as "a big picture girl", the study of Western civilisation cannot be ignored.

"It's pretty important to me that I don't leave things unfinished, and that's exactly what the study of history would be if we ignored Western civilisation," Shannon said.

"Although parts of that history are problematic in light of modern perspectives, I think that challenges to our current ways of thinking should always be welcome for the progress they

bring.

"I also think it's important to confront our flaws; we can't pick and choose which parts of history we represent and remember – if we study all the great moments, the philosophy, the literature, the science, the innovation, the art etc. then we must also study those not-so-great moments that culminated in between, and which inspired those thinkers and inventors to ask the question, 'How can things be made better?'"

Shannon said the degree had

helped her look at the world "with fresh eyes", and opened her up to areas of history that she had previously never engaged with.

"I took Modern History for my HSC, and my preferences for historical periods was very solidly Renaissance and medieval as opposed to ancient," Shannon said.

Shannon's advice to future students was to be prepared for a change of pace.

"It's not a course that allows you to float downstream – you have to swim," Shannon said.

"It requires a lot of reading, a lot of research, but if that's your strength, and you like learning all sorts of topics, then I'd definitely recommend it.

"You just have to be dedicated, open and committed to learning."

Students studying the Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) have an opportunity to study overseas, including at ACU's Rome Campus.

Shannon hopes to travel to Europe to embrace her love of art.

Shannon agrees that she's come a long way from her small town to living and studying full-time in North Sydney, and many lessons have been learnt along the way.

"My best advice for others in my situation is don't limit yourself like I did," Shannon said.

"I told myself I couldn't possibly live and study in Sydney and I thought I'd have to stay close to home as it would be all I could afford.

"There is a way, you just have to find it."

If you're interested in a study experience and scholarship like Shannon's, learn more about the Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation) and Bachelor of Arts (Western Civilisation)/Bachelor of Laws at ACU.



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Going virtual, to get going

BY ARCHDIOCESAN HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS TEAM

THE Archdiocesan Healthy Relationships team got super creative in the face of the ACT lockdown in August.

The team delivers the home-grown My Body, My Life puberty program to over 1200 primary school students each year. Under the leadership of program coordinator, Cathy Madsen, a team of specially trained, mostly university-aged facilitators, travel anywhere from West Wyalong to Bega and all over the ACT to run programs and small group discussions in classrooms. Some of the themes covered include growing up, physical changes, friendships and social pressures.

Over a two year cycle, 80% of the Archdiocese's Year 5 and 6 students get to experience the program which many schools regard as an essential part of their Stage 3 curriculum. Despite restrictions on the team being able to attend class rooms physically, teachers were still asking for the program to be delivered.

That's when the team started looking for solutions and like many people turned to technology. University students Tim Murray, Michael Seselja, Georgia Whitaker and Neve Tually worked with Cathy to develop a 70 minute virtual presentation that was

interactive, informative and as fun as possible.

The new program was launched in mid-October, and since then the team has delivered its program virtually to over 300 students across the Archdiocese. Marist students accessed the program from their homes (during the ACT lock down), while for Moruya, Batlow, Adelong, Tumut and Cooma students, the team presented virtually to classrooms via MS Teams.

Justin Bateman from St Mary's Moruya said that despite the distance, the presenters managed to make a sensitive topic engaging and enjoyable for his students.

Megan Turnbull from McAuley Central School, Tumut, was grateful that the program proceeded despite COVID restrictions. "It is great for the students to learn from presenters other than their teachers".

Kirsty Beavan, Principal of St Joseph's Adelong agreed that the students still got a lot out of the virtual presentation. "I thought they did a great job," she said.

While the team saved time and petrol money and has enjoyed rising to the challenge of virtual program delivery, they are looking forward to getting back into class rooms next year and meeting students face to face again.



The Archdiocesan Healthy Relationships team present to students during lockdown

Traditional phone call still hard to beat

BY FIONA VAN DER PLAAT

WHILE Zoom and other online platforms played their part during the pandemic, nothing beat the good old phone call for helping to keep parish-based family groups connected.

Archdiocesan coordinators of the Passionist Family Group Movement Mary and Dennis Morris said that although the groups had been separated physically for periods in the past two years, members had still provided valuable support to each other.

"It made us very aware of the relationships that have been formed in our group and we wanted to keep in touch," Mary said of her own group in St Matthew's parish in Page, which she and Dennis joined with their five children in 1989.

Staying in touch was particularly beneficial for older members of some groups who live alone. Isolation, especially among older people, has often been raised as an issue during COVID lockdowns.

"It was very important they were thought of," Mary said. "I had somebody say to me, when I rang, 'Oh, I haven't seen anyone all day'."

The motto of the movement is 'A Family for All' and members



Mary and Dennis Morris

are invited to join in whatever form their family takes. "What we define as family is whatever your household is," Mary said. The aim is for members to catch up in whatever way suits their collective interests and budgets, and to foster the spirit and support of an extended family.

She said while some groups would have connected via online platforms during lockdowns, not all members had access to such technology, so phone calls were often the way to go. Since restrictions eased, some have been meeting in parks and more gatherings are taking place as Christmas approaches.

Among the family groups

taking advantage of the latest freedoms are those in St Gregory's parish, Queanbeyan. Carolyn and Denis Connor lead a group in the parish that stayed in touch by phone during the lockdown. Online platforms were not an option because "we're just not that techie", Carolyn said.

The couple have been part of their group since it started in 1989. They joined with their three young children, who now have four of their own children between them. "We started off with around 40 people and we're now 12 or 14," Denis said. "We've seen a lot of comings and goings over the years."



Carolyn and Denis Connor from St Gregory's parish, Queanbeyan

The groups have always been valuable support mechanisms but never more so than during COVID.

Carolyn said group leaders in the parish kept in touch with members by phone, text or email.

"Due to friendships built up over many years, there were also often phone calls between members and compassionate visits when there was sickness or a bereavement," she said.

"In our own family group, several of us travel weekly for a game of Scrabble with a member

who lives out of town and doesn't go out very often.

"During the weeks that we weren't able to visit, apart from regular phone calls, we shared the daily Target words puzzle from the Sydney Morning Herald and kept up our friendly but competitive interaction. She tells me that it helped reduce her sense of isolation."

She said the groups had been busy organising get-togethers before Christmas since restrictions eased and "being able to attend Mass together again and to catch up afterwards is also a joy".

Celebrations for the ‘Plenary Deacon’

It was a time of celebration and solemn vows for Eden Langlands when he was recently ordained to the Order of Deacons at St Christopher’s Cathedral.

Alongside family and friends, over 40 clergy and Deacon Langlands’ classmates from the Good Shepherd Seminary in Sydney attended the Mass.

Deacon Eden shares with the Catholic Voice his journey to the Diaconate.

FROM a young age I was always blessed with the gift of faith and the knowledge of how important God was in my life. Growing up, my family would attend Mass on Sundays and I continued this throughout all my teenage years.

It was when I was in early high school that I first sensed the desire to become a priest. The Eucharist was very important to me, and I was amazed to think that it was through the priest that this great gift comes to us. After finishing high school, I started working in Young and it was there that my desire to become a priest returned in a very strong way. I would attend daily Mass before work and regularly meet with the priests, which was a great help to me in my discernment.

In 2016 I began formation from priesthood at the Seminary of the Good Shepherd in Homebush which has been an intense time of human, spiritual, pastoral, and academic formation.

Over the last six years I have had wonderful pastoral experiences across several parishes in the Archdiocese: in Cootamundra, Merimbula, Batemans Bay and West Wyalong.

It was these pastoral experiences where I was working and living in the parishes that really affirmed my desire to become a priest and having been ordained to the diaconate last month, I am very excited to begin pastoral ministry and continue my journey to the priesthood.



FROM THE ARCHIVES: Chronicling Adelong’s past

BY DENIS CONNOR
ARCHDIOCESAN ARCHIVIST

THE Parish of St James, Adelong dates from May 1923, when it was created from territory that had previously been within the Parish of Tumut. The new parish, which was placed under the care of parish priest Father James McDade, included three churches (at Adelong, Batlow and Grahamstown) as well as a number of rural locality ‘mass stations’, where Masses were celebrated intermittently, (usually in halls or private homes).

Father McDade served in Adelong for two years before being replaced by Father Harold Devine in 1925.

It is the period of Father Devine’s ministry (1925 to 1929) in the formative years of Adelong parish that was recently brought to attention by the discovery in the Archdiocesan Archives of an issue of the 1920s parish newsletter The

Catholic Chronicle.

The earliest parish returns show Adelong as a small parish of 250-300 regular church goers across all Mass centres, with 80-100 children attending the Catholic Schools in Adelong and Batlow.

But Father Devine’s correspondence with his Bishop (Bishop John Barry) and reporting in the one issue we have of the Chronicle, show his parishioners to be enthusiastic fundraisers who were dedicated to giving their parish a sound footing.

Writing in the Chronicle for June 1926 he spoke of the parish in this way:

‘... the spirit of Adelong Parish rings true, tested by the highest standards of Catholic tradition. The spirit which established a Convent school in Adelong nearly 40 years ago still endures amongst us.

Of Batlow, the same must be said.’

Letters to Bishop Barry during Fr Devine’s ministry in Adelong set out the following achievements for the parish:

By 1925 a presbytery for the parish priest had been provided in Adelong.

The parishioners in Batlow had welcomed a community of three Sisters of St Joseph in 1923. A convent had been provided, and by 1928 a new church/school dedicated to St Mary had been built (replacing the earlier timber church in Batlow).

The old timber church in the goldmining centre of Grahamstown, which was in a poor state of repair, had been dismantled and re-erected in a better spot on the site. On completion in July 1927 the church was re-dedicated as the Church of St Patrick.

Discovering ‘The Catholic Chronicle’

The one issue of the

4-page Catholic Chronicle located is identified as Volume 1, Number 6 and dated June 1926. The main author seems to have been Fr Devine, with the printing done by G C Watson Printers of Tumut. The price is shown as ‘gratis’.

References found in papers held by the Archives indicate that at least two issues had been produced in 1925, and that it was still being produced in 1927. We know that it ran for at least three years. Advertisers featured in the issue held include businesses from Adelong, Batlow and Grahamstown as well as from the nearby larger



centres of Tumut and Cootamundra.

Do you know anything about this parish newsletter that had its life over 90 years ago? The Catholic Voice would be pleased to hear from anyone who can tell us more about the The Catholic Chronicle of Adelong Parish.

Peace begins with ‘genuine friendship’

TO mark International Tolerance Day, the Embassy of the United Arab Emirates to Australia invited Archbishop Prowse to share his thoughts on the Human Fraternity document which was signed by Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar in Abu Dhabi several years ago.

The joint statement called for the reconciliation of people of goodwill in service of universal peace. The Archbishop was asked to share his thoughts about the documents significance for building international tolerance.

Commending the initiative of Ambassador Abdulla Al-Subousi, Archbishop Prowse said that “if we want to work for global peace, we need to act locally.

“Global peace begins with friendship. Not sentimentality but



Ambassador Abdulla Al-Subousi presents Archbishop Prowse with a gift to mark International Tolerance Day

genuine friendship. It is incredible that you, representing the United Arab Emirates comprising mostly Muslims, have invited me, a Catholic Archbishop, to speak about a Papal document in your Embassy. That’s a wow moment.”

The inaugural local gathering was one of warmth and friendship, with both leaders expressing a desire to continue dialoguing into the future.

‘Generosity, commitment’ of our catechists



Catechists gather at St Christopher's Pastoral Centre for a retreat day

AS soon as COVID restrictions began to ease across NSW and the ACT, Archbishop Christopher together with Archdiocesan pastoral leaders Christian Nobleza and Huw Warmenhoven set out to connect with catechists through a series of retreats.

Retreats were held in Canberra and Cootamundra involving up to 50 people who are involved in sacramental programs, schools of religions, children’s liturgies and RCIA in parishes, as well as special religious education in state schools.

The theme of the retreats was “Propose, not impose” with reflections and discussions based on the Archbishop’s pastoral letter released this year.

“The retreats were an opportunity to firstly acknowledge the significant contribution that our catechists make in their local communities, and secondly to offer them a space to connect with each other, and listen to what God might be saying to them”, Christian said.

Speaking particularly of mission and ministry in non-Catholic education settings, Archbishop Christopher said, “it is because of a growing network of catechists operating in state schools all across the Archdiocese that thousands of children and their families have been able to encounter the Good News of Jesus Christ and have been nurtured in faith within our Church.

It is hoped that next year will provide a fresh start for catechists ministering in parishes and schools, with new partnerships and opportunities being negotiated.

If you would like to get involved in catechetical ministries, contact your local parish, or email catechists@cg.org.au



Couragously saved from destruction by local residents during the 2020 News Years Eve bushfires, Cobargo Church celebrated its 125th Anniversary.



After nine long weeks of lockdown, ACT’s Year 7 St Clare’s students got to explore the issues of self-awareness, self-esteem and healthy relationship dynamics with the Archdiocesan Healthy Relationships Team .



Plenary Council’s First Assembly

Endeavouring to get “as close as possible to the blessed sacrament” Brigid Cooney prays outside St Christopher’s Cathedral during lockdown in preparation for a day’s session at the First Assembly.

BRIGID Cooney, 23, is one of two lay members to the Plenary Council representing the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. Brigid said she was honoured to be working with, praying with, and listening to, Catholics from all over Australia during the First Assembly.

“Each of their stories showed me that there are so many ways to live our Catholic faith. For me, the Plenary Council is an act of hope.”

Mary MacKillop’s college gift to us all



Archbishop Prowse with St Mary MacKillop College Captains and Corpus Christi parish priest Fr James Antony at the opening of the Mary MacKillop Walk - a 1 km labyrinth comprising of 14 stations depicting the life and work of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

PRINCIPAL Michael Lee described the labyrinth as a “gift from the school to the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn”.

“Mary MacKillop offers so much to young people and to people who work with young people,” he said.

“So this is a gift from this school to our Archdiocese and to people who know and love Mary MacKillop and who recognised that following her life is a better way to know Jesus.”



BATEMANS BAY:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Children’s & Family Mass; 9pm – Mass (preceded by carols)
Christmas Day: 9am – Mass; 4pm – Mass; 6pm – Vigil Mass
Sunday: 9am – Mass; 5pm – Mass;

BEGA:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Candelo; 7pm – Outdoor Family Mass, Bega (Carols from 6:30pm)
Christmas Day: 7:45am – Outdoor Mass, Tathra; 9am – Bemboka

BINALONG:

Christmas Day: 10am Liturgy of the Word with Holy Communion

BOOROWA:

Christmas Eve: 6pm

BRAIDWOOD:

Christmas Eve: 5:30pm – Mass

BUNGENDORE:

Christmas Eve: 7:30pm – Nativity
Christmas Day: 8.30am – Mass

CAMPBELL:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Mass (Outside, please bring your chair)

CATHEDRAL & ST PETER CHANEL’S, YARRALUMLA:

Christmas Eve: 5:30pm – Yarralumla; 6pm – Cathedral; 8pm – Cathedral; 9pm – Yarralumla; Midnight – Cathedral (Carols at 11:15pm)
Christmas Day: 8am – Cathedral; 9am – Yarralumla; 9:30am – Cathedral; 10:30am – Yarralumla; 11am – Cathedral; 5pm – Cathedral
Masses will use outdoor space at both Churches, numbers restricted

CENTRAL CANBERRA:

Christmas Eve: 6pm, 9pm and Midnight – St Brigid’s, Dickson;
Christmas Day: 8am – St

Patrick’s, Braddon; 9:30am St Brigid’s Dickson
Note: No Vigil Mass on Saturday evening.

CHARNWOOD:

Christmas Eve: 6pm & 8pm – Mass
Christmas Day: 9am – Mass

COOMA:

Christmas Eve: 5pm – Delegate; 6:30pm – Cooma; 6:30pm – Bombala; 8pm – Nimmitabel
Christmas Day: 9:30am – Cooma

COOTAMUNDRA:

Christmas Eve: 7.30pm – Cootamundra
Christmas Day: 9.30am – Cootamundra

GALONG:

Christmas Eve: 6:30pm
Christmas Day: 9am

GOULBURN MISSION:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Goulburn OLOF; 6pm – Crookwell; 6pm – Taralga; 8pm – Goulburn OLOF; 12 Midnight – Goulburn OLOF
Christmas Day: 8am – Goulburn OLOF; 9am – Crookwell; 10am – Goulburn OLOF
Sunday: 8am – Goulburn OLOF; 9am – Crookwell; 10am – Goulburn OLOF

GUNDAROO:

Christmas Day: 9am

GUNGAHLIN:

Christmas Eve: 5:30pm & 7pm – Children’s Nativity Mass, Holy Spirit, Gungahlin; 7pm – Mass, St Francis Xavier, Hall; 9pm – Mass, Holy Spirit, Gungahlin;
Christmas Day: 9am – Mass, Holy Spirit, Gungahlin

HARDEN-MURRUMBURRAH:

Christmas Eve: 7pm – Harden
KAMBAH:
Christmas Eve: 7pm & 9pm – Mass
Christmas Day: 10am – Mass

Sunday: 8:30am, 10am & 5:30pm – Mass

KIPPAX:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Vigil; 9pm – Vigil; 11.30pm – Carols; Midnight – Vigil.
Christmas Day: 9am – Mass; No evening Mass

LATIN MASS COMMUNITY:

Christmas Eve: Midnight – Garran.
Christmas Day 7.45am – Campbell; 10am – Garran.

MICHELAGO:

Christmas Eve: 6pm.

MORUYA:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Sacred Heart, Moruya
Christmas Day: 8am – Tuross Head; 9:30am – Bodalla; 10am – Sacred Heart, Moruya
Sunday: 8am – Tuross Head; 10am – Sacred Heart, Moruya

NAROOMA-COBARGO:

Christmas Eve: 5pm - Cobargo; 7pm – Narooma
Christmas Day: 7.30am – Bermagui; 9.30am – Narooma

NARRABUNDAH:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Family Mass; 8pm – Charismatic Mass; 11:30pm – Midnight Mass
Christmas Day: 9am – Mass

NORTH BELCONNEN:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Evatt; 8pm – Kaleen
Christmas Day: 8am – Kaleen; 10am – Evatt;

NORTH WODEN:

Christmas Eve: 6pm Vigil – Curtin (on school grounds); 9pm – Curtin
Christmas Day: 8am & 10am – Curtin

O’CONNOR:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Vigil Mass; 9pm – Mass
Christmas Day: 9am – Christmas Mass

Christmas Mass Times 2021

PAMBULA:

Christmas Eve: 5pm - St Joseph’s, Merimbula (Children’s Mass); 7pm - Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, Eden; 9pm - St Joseph’s, Merimbula.
Christmas Day: 10am - St Joseph’s,Merimbula

QUEANBEYAN:

Christmas Eve: 6pm - Molonglo St (Outdoor Mass); 10pm – St Raphael’s
Christmas Day: 8am and 10am - St Raphael’s

SNOWY MONARO:

Christmas Eve: 5pm – Adam-inaby; 5pm – Thredbo; 5pm – Delegate; 6:30pm – Bombala; 6:30pm – Cooma; 6:30pm – Jindabyne; 9pm – Nimmitabel
Christmas Day: 9am – Ber-ridale; 9am – Numeralla; 9am – Cooma

SOUTH BELCONNEN:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – St Matthew’s Primary School grounds, Page; 9pm – Aranda (streamed via Zoom at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87989327404?pwd=TmZTM2hSUE1NMnMrNGtYUzJwTFJBUT09MeetingID:87989327404Passcode:056863>)
Christmas Day: 8.30am – Page; 10am – Aranda; 3pm – Aranda (Korean)

SOUTH TUGGERANONG:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Outside SHC, Calwell; 9pm – HFC, Gowrie; Midnight – HFC, Gowrie;
Christmas Day: 8am – HFC, Gowrie; 10am – Outside, Gowrie;
Christmas Mass online will be available from 6pm Christmas Eve at this link <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCOAdf8aNPK5Vczl0GPLHixw>

SOUTH WODEN:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Children’s Mass at Marist College Canberra; 9pm – Vigil
Christmas Day: 8:30am – Mass; 10am – Mass

SYRO-MALABAR (Malayalam language):

Christmas Eve: 10:30pm at St Joseph’s, O’Connor
Christmas Day: 9:30am at St Joseph’s, O’Connor

TEMORA MISSION:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Temora (Outdoors); 6pm – Aria Park (Outdoors); 8:15pm - Barellan

Christmas Day: 8am – Ardlethan; 10am – Temora;

TUMUT MISSION:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Jugiong & Batlow; 7:30pm – Tumut, Gundagai & Adelong
Christmas Day: 8am – Gundagai & Talbingo; 10am – Tumut
Sunday: 8am – Gundagai; 8:30am – Batlow; 10am – Tumut & Jugiong

WANNIASSA:

Christmas Eve: 6pm & 9pm – Mass
Christmas Day: 9am – Mass
Sunday: 9am & 6pm – Mass

WATSON:

Christmas Eve: 5.00pm – 5.30pm – Reconcil-iation; 6.00pm – Children’s Mass; 9.30pm – Christmas Carols; 10.00pm - Christmas Night Mass
Christmas Day: 8.00am – Mass; 10.00am – Mass; NO 5.00pm Mass

WESTON CREEK:

Christmas Eve: 6.00pm – Vigil, Children’s Liturgy, Outdoor Mass in parish grounds (both Churches), St Jude, Holder and St John Vianney, Waramanga; 9.00pm St John Vianney, Waramanga (preceded by carols)
Christmas Day: 9.00am St Jude’s Church Holder (preceded by carols); 5pm – St Jude, Holder
Sunday: 9am – St John Vianney, Waramanga; 5pm – St Jude, Holder

WEST WYALONG MISSION

Christmas Eve: 6pm – West Wyalong; 6pm – Lake Cargelligo
Christmas Day: 8am – Ungarie; 9:30am – West Wyalong; 6pm – Lake Cargelligo
Sunday: 8am – Ungarie; 9:30am West Wyalong

YASS-GUNNING:

Christmas Eve: 6:30pm –Yass (School grounds);
Christmas Day: 8:30am – Gunning; 10:30am – St Augustine’s, Yass

YOUNG MISSION:

Christmas Eve: 6pm – Young; 6pm – Boorowa; 9pm – Young
Christmas Day: 9am – Young; 9am – GrenfellSunday: 9am – Young; 9am – Grenfell; 10:30am – Boorowa