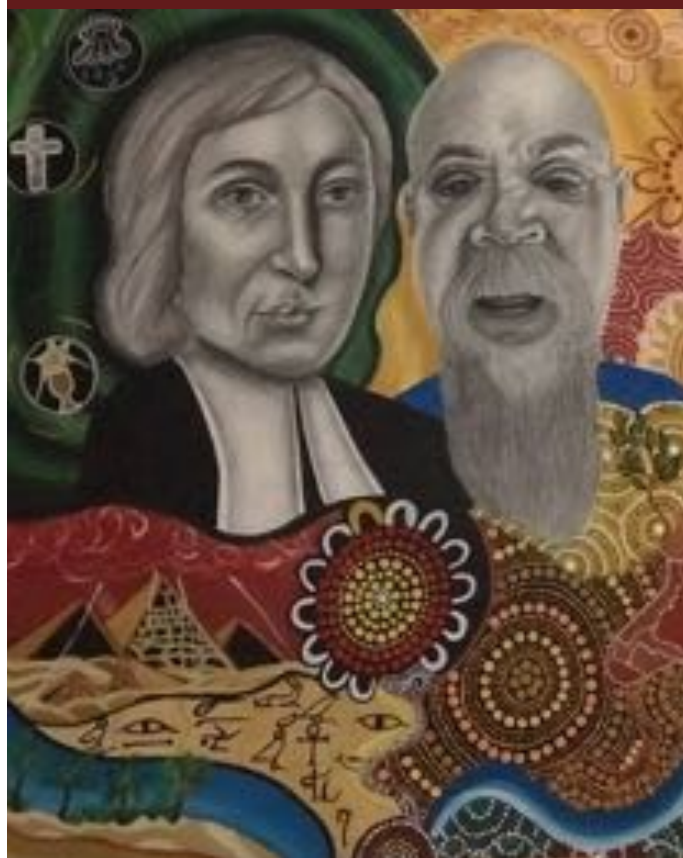




THE BRIDGE

A RESOURCE FOR AUSTRALIAN CATHOLICS
STRIVING TO SHARE THEIR FAITH
AUGUST 2019

God has chosen you to make him known to others.
St John Baptist de la Salle, Meditations 146.2



IN GRATITUDE

Now in its 60th year, the Catholic Enquiry Centre responds to enquires about our Faith by phone, mail and email. It offers information and free materials and connects enquirers to their local church.

As a measure of our sincere gratitude to all who support our work, please be assured of our regular prayers for you and your families. We hope and pray that your giving is richly rewarded, both in this life and in the life to come.

For more information about how to make a bequest please contact us directly.

ABOUT THE COVER



Wirt-Keyiny (We Are One)

This painting depicts Aboriginal and Liturgical art in a story form. The centerpiece showcases La Salle's school founder, St John Baptist De La Salle and Mr Desmond Headland Snr, an Elder from the Whadjuk Mardoon Nyungar Tribe.

La Salle College, Perth, resides on Whadjuk Nyungar Country.
Aboriginal and Christian Liturgical Art Competition
1st prize Secondary Group Submission: La Salle College, Perth
Contact us for further information.

If you love your printed copy, that's great. But if you'd like to use less paper then email us today and we will email your next issue.



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COVER IMAGE: Wirt-Keyiny

VOL 1 No.6 AUGUST 2019 ISSN 2209-7287
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To aid the Catholic Enquiry Centre in its mission
in Australia

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AUGUST 2019

FROM THE DIRECTOR



THE GREATEST THING
WE CAN ASK OF OUR
OLDER CATHOLICS IS
THAT THEY CALMLY CALL
US BACK TO WHAT IS
IMPORTANT

HARVESTING THE WISDOM

Along with many others, I've been involved in preparations for the upcoming Plenary Council, the first session of which will be held towards the end of next year. There are a number of things from these preparations that I will take with me as this journey continues. Among them will be an experience I had in my own parish a few months ago.

I had been invited to assist a fellow parishioner in facilitating our parish discussion and dialogue session. Gathered together in the parish hall people were gradually organised into manageable groups, ready to discuss and put forward their response to two or three questions, the central question being: what is God asking of us in Australia today?

I remember when that question was formulated by the planning committee months before. It wasn't the original question that we had come up with, which had been much more to the point and prosaic: probably more like 'what do you think the Church needs to do over the next few years?' However, as the possible questions had been bounced around during that planning meeting, it became increasingly obvious that God was being left out of the equation. And so a much more difficult question was arrived at: what is GOD asking of us?

While happy with this development we were aware of two possible problems: how would people interpret 'us', and how would we all get in touch with what God wants with any degree of certainty? It was decided that each group or individual could interpret the 'us' referred to in the question in whatever way seemed sensible to them...which has proved to be the case, and has subsequently provided some interesting insights into how Catholics either do or don't instinctively relate to their parish, their community, or the church of which they are a part. The God question has proved to be a little trickier.

Which brings me back to the experience in my own parish. As the different groups were presenting the outcome of their discussions, having put up their bullet points on the inevitable butcher's paper,

it became clear that one group had chosen not to address the God question. I found myself wondering why.

In that group was Fay (not her real name). A parishioner well on in years who had, I'd noticed, already indicated that she was too old to contribute much in terms of getting practical things done around the parish. She'd also gently made the observation that she'd known many wonderful priests in her life and was wondering if we were all being just a little hard on them...

So when her group had decided not to respond to the God question, I decided to dig a little further. Why? The answer was as simple as it was profound. The group had decided, in response to Fay's leadership, that they couldn't answer that question. They could say what they wanted as individuals and as a group. They could say what they believe God should want of them and of us. But they couldn't say with any certainty what God is asking of us now and into the future. Their preferred response to that question was silence.

It brought me face to face with the calm wisdom of age and experience. I wouldn't want to assert that all older people have this. Rather, I simply call us to celebrate it when it is there. In terms of how we are to go about living and sharing our faith today, the greatest thing we can ask of our older Catholics is that they calmly call us back to what is important: gently speaking the truth and letting their personal integrity bring peace to those situations that cause us angst. Yes, those of us a little younger than Fay need to get up and get doing, but we do it knowing that God's in charge and that we can't claim to be acting in accord with what God wants without having our hearts fixed on God...in silence. Fay teaches us that.

HOW WOULD WE ALL GET IN TOUCH WITH WHAT GOD WANTS WITH ANY DEGREE OF CERTAINTY?



SHANE DWYER

Director
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MISSION PROJECTS

In this issue I would like to share with you responses from two enquirers who took up our offer of a free copy of Call and Response: An Introduction to the Catholic Faith.

The book is a great tool and I highly recommend it. It's not hard going or full of jargon; rather it states the facts and gives a simple and concise message on the Catholic Faith and is great for "newbies."

I spent about 20 years in a Pentecostal church prior to converting to Catholicism and I cannot begin to tell you the joy I have found. I miss the lively music and preaching of the Pentecostal style at times, but have found more joy and peace where I am now at. Where previously I had a "head knowledge" I am now deepening my "heart knowledge" and the book has contributed significantly to that.

Anonymous.



Karin, friend and sponsor, and Bev.
St Macartans, in Morningside, Victoria

Not long after I started reading the book, I made enquiries about the RCIA process at the local Parish, and started participating in the lessons. All my questions were answered very thoughtfully by the RCIA Co-ordinator, and I loved the many discussions we had. Since then I'm delighted to tell you that I was baptised into the faith at this year's Easter Vigil.

It was a beautiful service, and a very special time for me. My family were all there, which was really lovely, and my sponsors were very close Catholic friends that I have known for over 30 years! I have been so blessed by the Lord, that he has led me to his Church, and very grateful to everyone who has helped and encouraged me along the journey. Thank you again for laying the spiritual foundation at the start of my journey. God Bless, I will always pray for the work you do. Kindest regards Beverley.



SHARON BREWER

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INSPIRATION GRANDPARENTING



OUR GRANDCHILDREN
KNOW THAT WE ARE
PEOPLE OF FAITH.
THEY ALSO KNOW
THAT WE LOVE THEM
AND ARE THERE FOR
THEM AS MUCH AS WE
CAN BE.

Shayne and Shanelle Bennett are like so many other Catholic parents and grandparents who have a fundamental desire to share faith with their children and pass on and nurture that faith in their grandchildren. This couple have three married children and eleven grandchildren. Both of them work full time and are the only grandparents living in Brisbane for their eleven grandchildren.

"As a family, we feel very blessed that our children have chosen to take up their own faith and are married to people who also hold faith as an important value in their personal and married lives. In this situation, our role as grandparents is to support the faith that is already nourished in their home." They recognise that this is not the case with many grandparents whose children have given up on the practice of their faith and the grandchildren may be hearing about faith for the first time from their grandparents.

Shanelle was quick to respond and share about the experience of sharing faith with their own children. "There are no guarantees when it comes to faith – it's a gift. I've seen very good parents who give of their best to their children and they choose not to continue with any practice of the faith in high school or as young adults. We don't speak as any experts; we simply speak from our own experience." Some of the things Shanelle identified were very simple. "In our house, Jesus was another member of the family. We said a prayer at meal times, prayed with our kids when they were stressed and going off to an exam. When they were little children, we would act out bible stories but always seeking to make them fun and engaging for the age of the children. Faith in God was a normal part of family life." Many of the things they did with their own children, they now do with their grandchildren.

They try and teach their grandchildren to notice God's love in the everyday. For example, when they take them to sport they will comment on the day with "isn't God good to us"; when they see Shanelle's mum in the Sisters of Mercy aged care home, they speak of how God shows his love and mercy through the Sisters; on a trip, chatting in the car with their grand-daughter, and when the opportunity arises, they will name God's love in her life.

When visited by their grandchildren they will have morning tea together in 'nanna's secret place', a creek running through an open space, where they marvel at the wonder of the beauty and are told "God made this all for you."

Shayne spoke about the importance of just being yourself and if Jesus is at the core of your life and you are committed to your faith then it will surely become visible to the grandkids. "Our grandchildren know that we are people of faith. They also know that we love them and are there for them as much as we can be. Presence is so important, especially as they get older and are wanting to be more independent. Grandparents are often a safe place to be going through the messiness of teenage years. Both Shanelle and I really appreciate the support of our own parents in being available to our children.

We need to be careful, not to project an anxiety to our grandkids about them going to church or praying. Of course, if we have an opportunity, we can take them to church and tell them why the Mass is important, or we can say a simple prayer for them and let them know that God is always near." They are also guided by their grandchildren's questions, discussing issues as they arise. For them faith is not always about prayer; it's also about how to negotiate the questions of life. When asked "why it has to be so hard" they will talk about how suffering develops one's character or a question about life and death "what happens when we die" provides an opportunity to talk about deeper issues even with children who are quite young.

"As a family, we also have to acknowledge the importance of our children and grandchildren seeing the witness of others both young and old living out their faith. We have been privileged in our involvement with the Emmanuel Community and NET Ministries which have been a big support in the visibility that they have given to a committed Catholic lifestyle. This was very important through the teenage years when our children were not so excited about faith, prayer or church. This community dimension of faith is so important. They look for other young people who are living this life of faith and sometimes they're hard to find. We are encouraged by Pope Francis' call to accompany our grandchildren, to be with them, to love them, to share our hopes and dreams with them and when the opportunity arises to introduce them to Jesus whom we seek to follow each day."

HOW DO I SHARE MY FAITH? WITH MY GRANDCHILDREN



- Give them gifts relating to our faith. If you have problems locating good Catholic music and books for young people get in touch with us. Gifting teenagers and young adults with a registration to Ignite (Brisbane and Sydney) or Australian Catholic Youth Festival (Perth) would be a great way for them to experience the Catholic faith in a setting relevant to their age group.
- Pray for your children and grandchildren. Give thanks to God for the joy they bring, and petition God to guide them back to Jesus and the faith if they have drifted away.
- Read this good little resource from the Australian Catholic Marriage and Family Council: <https://www.acmfc.org.au/resources/>
- Offer to take them to Mass. They might say no, but keep offering. You never know, one day they might say yes.
- If your grandchild has a saint's name, then send them a text on that day along with a link to information about their saint.
- Leave interesting material about the Catholic faith in places they might see when they come to visit.
- Speak about the Catholic faith in a positive way. They won't be attracted to the faith if your words are always negative.
- Let them know you are praying for them, especially when they are having a tough time (sick, in hospital, break up with boy/girlfriend, making choices about uni or career, exams).



ART & MUSIC



ANGELICO EXHIBITION, PERTH

A prestigious annual event on the Catholic school art calendar..

Primary Exhibition 5-16 August
Secondary Exhibition 19-30 August

Newman Siena Centre, 33 Williamstown Rd,
Doubleview.

Visit: <https://www.catholicarts.wa.edu.au/angelico/>



AUSTRALIAN PASTORAL MUSICIANS CONFERENCE, MELBOURNE

International and national composers and presenters to inspire and provide professional development opportunities for all involved in music, liturgy and religious education.

Catholic Leadership Centre, 1-3 October

Visit: <https://www.listen-to-the-spirit-and-sing.com>

MIGRANTS & REFUGEES



MIGRANT AND REFUGEE KIT 2019

Migrant and Refugee Sunday is 25th August. This Kit reproduces the Message of Pope Francis, followed by a Message from Bishop Max Davis, Military Ordinary for Australia and Bishops' Delegate for Migrants and Refugees. The Kit then offers some tested experiences from various communities in Australia. The Kit also presents a suggested homily for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees.

Visit: <https://www.acmro.catholic.org.au/resources/migrant-refugee-kit>

PERMANENT DEACONS



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEACONS PERTH CONFERENCE

All deacons, candidates and aspirants from Australia and New Zealand, of any Catholic rite, and their wives are invited, including those responsible for deacon formation and other interested clergy.

3 - 6 Oct 2019

Notre Dame University Fremantle Campus.

Visit: <https://www.ausdeacons.org.au>

CONFERENCES & FESTIVALS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL, PERTH 8-10 DECEMBER

OPPORTUNITY TO CONNECT NATIONALLY

If you're looking for a great Christmas gift for a young person why not gift them with a ticket to this great youth event? If you're a member of a PPC why not sponsor a young person to attend this festival – invest in the future!

Visit: www.youthfestival.catholic.org.au



OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH TO CONNECT NATIONALLY

Ignite Conference is a national Catholic youth conference held in Brisbane and Sydney for adults, young people, ministry leaders, teachers, priests and religious. It's about encountering Jesus Christ and the Church, experiencing the dynamism of our faith, being equipped for living the Christian life, and being empowered to impact the Church and the world.

BRISBANE Thursday 26 September - Sunday 29 September

Visit: <https://igniteyouth.com/conference/brisbane>

SYDNEY Thursday 3 October - Sunday 6 October 2019

Visit: <https://igniteyouth.com/conference/sydney>



OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH TO CONNECT LOCALLY

A powerful night of prayer, wisdom and encounter as you hear from brilliant guest speakers, enter into worship with the CYMW Worship team and have the opportunity to go to prayer teams and the sacrament of reconciliation.

Friday 30 August, 5:30pm - 8:30 pm

WIN Entertainment Centre - free event

Visit: https://www.facebook.com/events/723934294706627/?active_tab=discussion

DISCIPLESHIP & SCRIPTURE



PARISH KIT FOR OCTOBER EXTRAORDINARY MISSION MONTH

An opportunity for reflection, prayer and support for the missionary efforts of individuals, communities and whole Church

- Personal encounter with Jesus • Testimony
- Missionary formation • Missionary Charity.

Visit: <https://catholicmission.org.au/emm>



BROKEN BAY BIBLE CONFERENCE

The Holy Spirit Through the Pages of Scripture
Journey and discover who the Holy Spirit is, and how the Spirit guides, enlivens and encourages our lives and the Church today.

11-12 October

Caroline Chisholm Centre, Bldg 2,
423 Pennant Hills Rd, Pennant Hills

Visit: www.bbcatholic.org.au/bible



DAYS WITH SHERRY WEDDELL, AUTHOR OF 'FORMING INTENTIONAL DISCIPLES'

7 September: Forming Parishes of Intentional Disciples - Parish Renewal Workshop

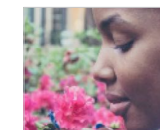
Dooleys Regents Park Sports Club,
Terrene St, Regents Park

Visit: www.sydneycatholic.org/sherry-weddell

14 September: Making Disciples in the Catholic Parish: Discerning our Mission

Caroline Chisholm Centre, Bldg 2,
423 Pennant Hills Rd, Pennant Hills

Email: faith.formation@bbcatholic.org.au



LEADERSHIP FOR MISSION

A two-year, sponsored part-time program for young Catholic women from the Council for Australian Catholic Women, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Catholic Mission, and the Australian Catholic University. For women who are inspired by the Gospel vision of justice, freedom and the dignity of the human person.

Applications close 14 October, 2019

Visit: www.leadership4mission.com.au

