

ST PAT'S MATTERS

A magazine for parishioners and friends of St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta



Christ our Hope in the Winter of Life

July 2019 | Issue 99

Editorial

Coverage of two major events dominate this issue: the celebration of First Holy Communion at 9:30am Mass on the Feast of Corpus Christi and the **HOPE**-themed *Light Up St Pat's* spectacular.

Aside from these two features, there are more diverse articles to whet your interest and curiosity. The Rev. Deacon Pirotta shares his story. Frank Duff covers the Centenary of the Knights of the Southern Cross and the organisation's renovation of their founders' graves. Judith Dunn takes us back in time to reveal the amazing priestly ministry of Mgr John Rigney. Olana Lal of Teen Credo writes about her memorable experience at WYDPanama last January and Melissa Fardella reports on Junior Credo activities during Term Two. On the Hospitality front, 'veteran' Cora Mercado and 'novice' Alex Shaw give their reasons for joining this ministry outreach. Rod Hilliker attends a celebratory function remembering East Timor's Independence in 2002.

The article Modern Mary will not only resonate with mothers and the *Live Christ Share Christ* report on Pentecost might encourage readers to consider attending upcoming Formation presentations.

Included in the spread on Adoration Matters is a probing, faith testing extract from Fr Goedert's *"Why Eucharistic Adoration?"*

The two submissions about 'Church' will hopefully stir the collective conscience: Kiriya Aguilera writes about *The Broken Christ* and Belinda Bugo sent in the question, *"Why Go to Church?"*

And find out in RCIA Matters who were the three people initiated into the Catholic Faith on Easter Sunday.

In tune with the HOPE theme of *Light Up St Pat's*, let's end by reflecting on Romans 5:5:

Perseverance develops a tested character, something that gives us hope, and a hope which will not let us down, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given us.

M. Polizzi

THE FEAST of CORPUS CHRISTI



As Catholics, we celebrate this feast to proclaim the truth of the transubstantiation of bread and wine during Mass into the actual Body and Blood of Christ.

The proposal of having all night Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for this Feast was put to Fr Bob Bossini by Genevieve Lee, a member of Credo. Father gave the idea the thumbs up.

Genevieve liaised with Dominic Franssen as to the correct procedures to follow in terms of liturgical practice and set up of the space.

This wonderful opportunity was advertised in the bulletin, encouraging parishioners to come for **A Holy Hour of Adoration**, or longer if they wished to spend more time

with the Lord. A roster assured there was always someone keeping watch.

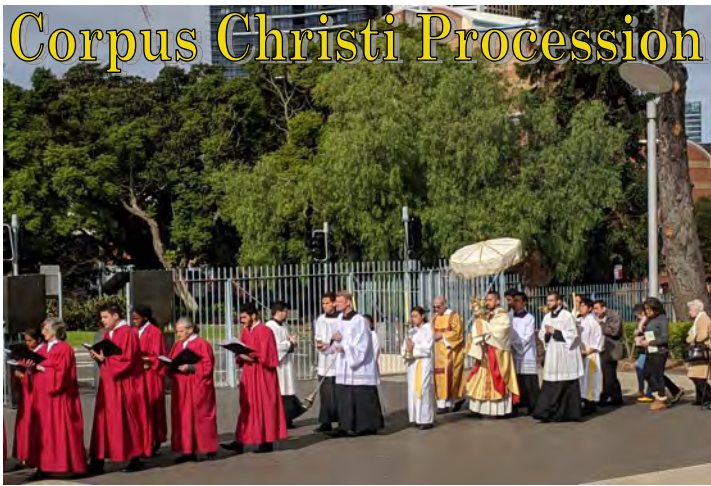
During the night a steady stream of worshippers came and went. The periods of silent Adoration were interspersed with reflective music and devotional singing led by Anthony Silvestrini, and around 3am Bernadette Ching organised a group to sing the Diving Mercy Chaplet.

Adoration began after Vigil Mass, on June 22nd, concluding with Benediction before 8am Mass on Sunday.

Then in keeping with tradition, following 11am Mass Fr Chris Del Rosario carried the Blessed Sacrament in solemn procession around the Cloister, returning to the Chapel for Benediction and The Divine Praises.



Corpus Christi Procession



WHY EUCHARISTIC ADORATION?

by Fr. Robert Goedert, O.P.

We Catholics are different because we take Jesus Christ at His word.

We believe that Jesus gave us His own body and blood in the special sacrament we call the Holy Eucharist.

We Catholics actually believe that Jesus is really present in this sacrament!

For us Catholics, the Holy Eucharist is not just a symbol.

It is not just a memory.

It is not just a promise.

It is really Jesus Christ.

The Holy Eucharist is not some 'thing'.

It is some 'one'.

It is Jesus, our Lord and our God.

This is what we mean by the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

This is why we call the Holy Eucharist "THE BLESSED SACRAMENT".

(This is a selected extract from Fr Goedert's article.)

Ely Gallardo shares her experience of Adoration:

On Sunday June 23rd I had the most awesome experience, attending overnight Adoration of the Blessed Eucharist for the first time. I came with my friend Berni Ching and Frank and Stephen about 2:30am. We started with prayers and then sang the Divine Mercy Chaplet. The music was provided by Berni. It was so moving and very solemn I was very emotional at the start, I couldn't get hold of myself. I felt the Lord was there with us. And the Angels were singing! I was very happy and inspired and didn't even feel tired.

After our time with the Lord we had planned to have something to eat in the hall, but unfortunately it was locked, so I invited my companions to my place for early breakfast. Most of the food was provided by Berni, who was kind enough to think of everything.



R.C.I.A. Matters

Belated congratulations to the three candidates who became Catholics on Easter Sunday.

Welcome to St Patrick's Cathedral Parish.



A Day to Remember: Barbara Chaplain, Mitchell Levick and Joseph Khoury with Deacon Willy and Father Bob Bossini after the 9:30 am Mass during which they were confirmed and received Holy Communion for the first time.

They were called candidates because they were already Baptised, whereas the Catechumens initiated at the Easter Vigil received the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist.

The photo below includes family as well as RCIA team members Anna Bui (3rd from left) and John and Diane Starkey, (far right).



Up until Pentecost all the newly initiated continued to meet for a period of reflection called Mystagogy. During this time, the meaning of the Sacraments is explained to those who have newly received them. While this fourth stage marks the closing of the RCIA chapter, it is the very **beginning of living a new life** as a fully initiated and participating member of the Catholic Church! A life called to an ongoing mystagogy, an **ever deepening conversion to God.**

SACRAMENTAL MATTERS



In receiving First Eucharist, these children completed the second of the Sacraments of Initiation into the Catholic Faith. Baptism was the first, Confirmation will be the final step.



The children came with
REVERENCE, AWE and JOY
to receive Jesus for the first time.
Let us all follow their example when
we come to the Table of the Lord
for Holy Communion:
Let us bow in reverence,
cup our hands for His Precious Body
and joyfully proclaim **AMEN**
when we receive Him.

St Patrick's Parish Community
congratulates these children
who received Jesus for the first time
in Holy Communion
on the Feast of Corpus Christi.

Please pray for them and their families
to be true to the Faith.

Steven George Abraham
James Agostino
Makenzie Lee Alchin
Ava Dru Orcena Bernardo
Aurora Broadbridge
Clare Maree Camenzuli
Giselle Coelho
Troy Paul Daniel
Alberto Remii de los Santos
Leo Jean de los Santos
Shania Dig
Christian James Donaldson
Hannah Tangiora Dunwoodie
Aiden Ebrahim
Maya Katherine Hughes
Kieren Stephen Hughes
Franco Ierardo
Christian Antonio Jreij
James Arthur Kerr
Lara So-Yeon Kim
Noelani Maritina May Lee
Joshua Anthony Toufic Manago
Tiffany McCloskey
Mya Mohini Naidu
Joshua Sleeva Narisetty
Chanel-Antoinette Pereira
Shavene Dinelka Wellambage Perera
Keira Nikita Rodrigues
Michelle Rose
Keith Sebastian Royan
Donnacha Gerard Ryan
Lara Abigail Samar
Gabriel Vincent Simaitis
Cooper Jack Willis Skinner
April Soh
Liam Stojkovski
Madeleine Talbot
Zavier Damon Taroco
Leilani Patricia Taupau
Annelise Kie'eteau Tenner
Gunther Manusiu Tenner
Germain Rod Toledo
Gabiella Grazia Volante
Maria Juliana Vyttingco

Ms Bernadette Fabri, Principal of St Patrick's Primary School, wrote in the school's weekly newsletter about this important sacramental moment — for both the children and their parents — that took place on the Feast of Corpus Christi. (Published with permission.)



Dear Parents

Last Sunday, children from our school received the Sacrament of Eucharist for the first time - their First Holy Communion, at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta. This is the third group of children from our school to receive this very important sacrament this year; the first group being those that attend Our Lady of Lebanon Co-Cathedral, Harris Park, (held over two Masses). It is always wonderful to see all the children and their families, including their extended family, making this a priority on Sunday. For all children this will be a day they will never forget.

In his homily, Father Bob Bossini, Dean and Parish Priest of the Cathedral reminded the congregation of how very special receiving the Eucharist is and how like all good things we can sometimes take the Eucharist for granted. He connected the feast of Corpus Christi - a very important feast or Solemnity, to other feasts such as Trinity Sunday and Pentecost, where Christ is made present to his disciples. **Just like these early followers we too are called to be nourished by Christ and in doing so be 'Christ-like' people; people of service to others, showing them strength, healing and love.**

Father made special acknowledgement of the children and their families on this special day of their First Holy Communion and our prayer for them is that what they felt last Sunday; the joy and wonder of receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, can be remembered every time they receive Eucharist. We pray that the nourishment of our Lord will give them the love and wisdom to be kind, forgiving and compassionate children and that Communion will be a regular part of their lives. Thank you Father Bob for your spiritual leadership.

May I take this opportunity to thank Ms Meg Gale, the sacramental coordinator and her team at the Cathedral for ensuring that all the children were well prepared and to Mrs Standring, our Religious Education Coordinator for the many meetings she attended in support of the Parish Sacramental Committee. Thank you to Mrs Venitia Rodricks for the preparation of the choir and to the teachers who attended. I would also like to particularly thank the many parents who brought their children along to sing in the choir. This year the choir was very well attended and Father noted that like a good red wine they are sounding better and better over the years. I really appreciate the trouble parents took to bring their children along when everyone is so very busy. I felt so proud of our community; coming together in support of the parish and school. Thank you!

Can I ask you all to keep in your prayers all the children who made their First Holy Communion this year and to pray that their families will continue to gift them with a faith that is true and active.

May God continue to bless you for the work you do in parenting your children and grant you wisdom, patience and hope in this very important role.





Sacramental Programme Report

by Meg Gale, Co-ordinator

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2019

Sunday 23rd June dawned cold but bright. It was *Corpus Christi*, the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, when the Church celebrates the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist and the day perennially designated for the children of St Patrick's Cathedral Parish to receive First Holy Communion.

After a week of rainy and otherwise inclement weather and with a forecast for the same scenario, the weather itself defied the forecast and we were blessed with beautiful sunshine, as if creation itself was joining us and raising its voice in praise.

At the 9.30am Sunday Mass, concelebrated by Fr Bob Bossini and Fr Christopher del Rosario, we, as a parish community, joined our hearts and voices in praise with the 49 First Communicants and their families, who had completed their preparation through the Sacramental Programme.

Once again, we were so blessed to be joined by the talented St Patrick's Primary Choir who gave a terrific turnout, filling the choir stalls to bursting. Led by Mrs Venitia Rodricks, the presence of our school choir always makes the occasion of First Eucharist just that much more special, as they guide the congregation in singing school hymns chosen specifically for the day. After Mass the traditional group photo was taken in front of the Cathedral's main entrance. Then the children, with their families and friends gathered in the Cloister Function Room where Fr Bob presented the children with their First Communion Certificates.

Our celebration of First Holy Communion is always a busy day for the Sacramental Team but this year we were blessed to have our numbers boosted by Credo youth. The team would like to say a special thank you to Mindy Mercado and Stacie Touche, who were there helping with ushering and containing the many visitors who joined us on the day.



The St Patrick's Primary School Choir, under the guidance of their teacher Mrs Rodricks, enthusiastically led the congregation in the singing of hymns during Mass.



The celebration of First Communion has brought our candidates to the end of a programme of formation which started in October last year and which has not only prepared them for First Eucharist, but has also seen them prepare for and make their First Reconciliation, as well as complete sessions which taught them more about the Sacrament of Baptism. Please keep our First Communicants in your prayers as they continue to grow in their faith. And let us pray that in a few years they will continue their journey coming to complete the Sacraments of Initiation with the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Upcoming Preparation

We will continue this year's sacramental program with the Sacrament of Confirmation and are currently taking registrations for this sacrament. Children 10 years or older who have made their First Communion are eligible to register for preparation for Confirmation. Sessions commenced on Tuesday 23rd of July with a parent-session led by seminarian Matthew Dimian, while the second session on the 30th of July will be led by Fr Chris del Rosario. The two initial parent sessions look at the theology of the Sacrament of Confirmation as well as the place and symbolism of this sacrament and also the Rite of Confirmation.

The team at St Patrick's continues to work with St Oliver's Parish at Harris Park and will again welcome children from the Parish and School to the preparation sessions here at the Cathedral.

The children involved in preparation will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at 7pm Mass on Friday 30th August.

St Patrick's Sacraments of Initiation Team thanks the parish for their ongoing prayers for our ministry and the children we are instructing.

Sacramental Calendar for Confirmation 2019

Confirmation 1	7:30 pm Tuesday 23 rd July 2019
Confirmation 2	7:30 pm Tuesday 30 th July 2019
Confirmation 3	4:30 pm Saturday 10 th August 2019
Confirmation 4	4:30 pm Saturday 17 th August 2019
Practice for Confirmation	4pm Saturday 24 th August 2019
Confirmation Ceremony	7pm Mass Friday 30 th August 2019

PARENTS' COMMENTS re FIRST EUCHARIST

We look forward to publishing what parents have to say in the next issue of St Pat's Matters.

PARENTS! A MUST READ:

go to page 23 for Brian Neroy's concerns about helping his son prepare for Confirmation.

God often works in mysterious ways!

Brian asked if he could write something in this issue, especially to align with the preparation sessions. The submissions deadline had passed, but the day before going to print there still was a blank page.

What to put on it?

Obviously, it was waiting for the article from Brian, a devoted father!

MUSIC MINISTRY

ARTS

OUR LADY'S CONCERT

Way back in May on Sunday 26th, members of St Patrick's Music Ministry gave a concert in the Cathedral, to celebrate the month of Mary, with afternoon tea in the Cloister Function Room afterwards thrown in for good measure.

Not only did they donate their time and musical giftedness but also generously handed over the concert proceeds for the support of the parish.

The whole affair was indeed a veritable feast for the ears and nourishment for the spirit as well.

The repertoire showcased both the choir's superb vocal ability and prowess of the musicians.

Director of Music, Bernard Kirkpatrick welcomed everyone, and as MC gave a brief informative intro into each item.



THE PROGRAMME

ORGAN PRELUDE:

Sonata No 1
by Mendelssohn
performed by Eric Grella

AVE MARIA by T.L. Victoria
performed by Choir

O SACRUM CONVIVUM
by T Tallis
performed by Choir

REGINA COELI LAETARE
by J.D. Zelenka
performed by Choir

ORGAN INTERLUDE:

i) Chorale Prelude on St Mary
by Alex Rowley
II) Priere a Notre Dame
(from Suite Gothique)
by Leon Boellman
performed by Bernard Kirkpatrick

CARMEN RHAPSODY

by M Webster
Flute Ivy Wallace
Clarinet Steve Parkinson
Piano: Glenn Waworuntu

TOTA PULCHRA A ES MARIA

by Anton Bruckner
Tenor Solo: Frank Maio
Organ: Tim Coorey

AVE MARIA by F Schubert
Tenor Solo: Johanne Perera
Organ Bernard Kirkpatrick
Flute: Ivy Wallace

ORGAN POSTLUDE:

TOCCATA (from Suite Gothique)
by Leon Boelman
performed by Patrick Newman



The majority of items — in singing and musical composition — paid tribute to Mary, including two compositions of "Ave Maria".

The imposing organ recitals by Eric, Bernard, Tim and Patrick filled the Cathedral void with grand music.



But a surprising divergence from the sacred was **Carmen Rhapsody**; with Ivy on flute Steve on clarinet and Glenn on piano, captivating the audience with the rendition and their exceptional musicianship.

Thanks to all participants for a wonderful afternoon of entertainment. Credit to Ivy Wallace for being the instigator, sowing the seed.

THE PERFORMERS

THE CHOIR

SOPRANO 1:

Detine Moyi,
Lauren Stephenson
Bianca Thio,
Perpetua Yeo

SOPRANO 2:

Simone Aikins,
Clair Cook,
Maria Oei,

ALTO 1:

Marcelle Droulers,
Krishmalie Perera,
Ivy Wallace

ALTO 2:

Tim Coorey,
Paolo Grella
Ezra Kuhn

TENOR 1:

Martin Hartley,
Frank Maio,
Peter Nguyen

TENOR 2:

Harley Aw,
Cam McAuley,
Johanne Perera

BASS 1:

Sam Verceluz,
Alex Stevens

BASS 2:

Eric Grella,
Brian Wright.

ORGANISTS

Alex Stevens,
Bernard Kirkpatrick,
Tim Coorey
Patrick Newman

FLUTE

Ivy Wallace

CLARINET

Steve Parkinson

PIANO

Glenn Waworuntu



This Cathedral Spectacular premiering in 2017, returned for the second time in July this year partnering with Parramatta Council's Winterlight Festival across the road in Prince Alfred Park.

The original reason for our Cathedral Parish pursuing this undertaking remains unchanged: the desire to connect with the diverse, ever increasing populace of our fast developing city, attempting to forge a stronger relationship with the wider community beyond church.

For 16 evenings, from July 6, a series of projections illuminated the façade of St Patrick's, continuously beaming the themed message of **HOPE** until 10pm nightly, inviting parishioners and visitors to come and view the light display and take time to reflect on its significance and its meaning in their own lives.

Sydney Bouhaniche, (an artist from Sydney's Vivid Festival), created the **Light Up** design, collaborating with St Pat's Events Team as to the message they wanted the projections to convey. Sydney also incorporated four artworks, (see page 11) by **Ekaterina Samoletova**, a Year 12 Visual Arts student from the Maronite College of the Holy Family.

Other events featuring on certain nights throughout the festival included an organ recital by Director of Music, Bernard Kirkpatrick, an open choir rehearsal, two special family nights with BBQ, games and activities for kids, a night of Prayer and Adoration, Cathology Live faith talk by Dr Robert Tilley and a live performance by worship duo Gus & Iggy.

THE HOPE THEME:

Interpreting the MESSAGE:

The various projections of the Light Up showed both the diversity and unity in understanding the concept of **HOPE**, and undoubtedly the images spoke to different people in different ways.

The images below and on the bottom of the next page portray the simple story of a young girl searching for hope.

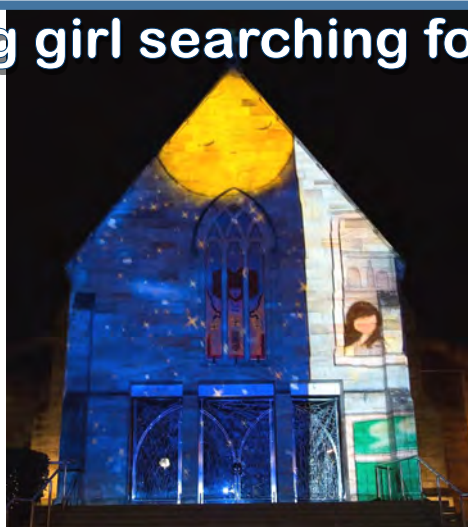
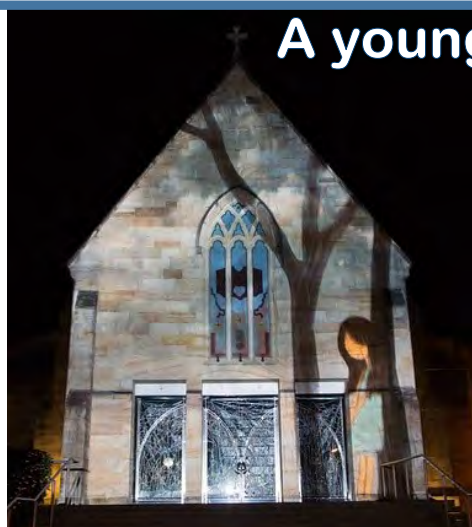
In between, at random, were Ekaterina's four pictures exploring life, love and loneliness (on page 11) and a range of religious images.

Whilst the young girl's story and Ekaterina's pictures possibly resonated with many viewers, for Christians watching, the "holy images" would have definitely shouted **HOPE**: e.g. Michelangelo's image of God creating man; Mary saying 'yes' at the Annunciation, to be the Mother of Jesus Christ, the hope of salvation for mankind; the grown Jesus with a child in hand, signifying His promise that He would be with us in all circumstances of life.

What about the image of Mother Teresa of Kolkotta, representative of all those who unreservedly reach out in love, to be beacons of **HOPE** to those in need; or that of the two disciples, who could be the ones who met Jesus on the way to Emmaus; or maybe it's two setting off to evangelise and spread the Good News?



A young girl searching for HOPE.....





Light Up Sponsors

PAYCE FOUNDATION

The Major Sponsor of the initial *Light Up* event in 2017, PAYCE Foundation

has come on board again this year. St Patrick's Cathedral Parish is indebted to them for their ongoing support of this event and their commitment to a vision in line with their own desire to see a world where disadvantage and misfortune do not limit potential or quality of life.

The PAYCE Foundation's vision is to transform lives by empowering individuals, organisations and communities; working "with" rather than for "charities"; to address factors contributing to hardship within a community.

People were able to view a video, screening at the side of the Cathedral steps, showcasing some of the PAYCE FOUNDATION'S philanthropic works.



And like Payce Foundation, the City of Parramatta Council has generously sponsored the Light Up St Pat's for a second time.

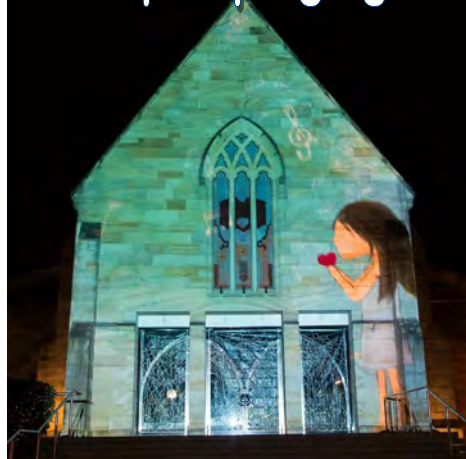
We thank them for their support and that the Cathedral Parish community can partner with Council in future community endeavours.



Fr Robert Bossini, Dominic Payce and Parramatta Councillor, Andrew Jefferies, on opening night

PAYCE Foundation Director, Mr Dominic Sullivan, said the foundation was proud to join with St Patrick's Cathedral and Parramatta City Council in bringing back this exciting light projection attraction to the 2019 *Winterlight Festival* programme.

.....Like the girl, will we keep hoping against all odds?





Stepping into the Deep!

Evangelising can be daunting, particularly for First-Timers!

So Olivia Lee, Co-Ordinator of *Light Up*, wrote up a "Tips List" as a guide, for those brave volunteers daring to cross the road and hand out leaflets to revellers at *Winterlight*.

Her valuable tips.

Evangelisation at its core is about meeting people where they are at and walking with them at their pace.

1. *All you have to do is extend the invitation — you do not need to have a conversation about faith on any level, unless it comes up naturally.*
2. *Always smile and remember that rejection is not an indicator of your worth as a person.*

Points to remember when it gets tough:

1. *Why are we doing this event? What is at the core of why we are giving up a moment in our lives to do this?*
2. *If it's worth giving a moment of your life to do this, then it's worth doing it with courage.*
3. *Offer up any hardship, rejection you encounter for a special intention: a friend, your evangelizing partner, someone struggling etc.*
4. *No struggle is ever left meaningless.*

*Thank you for giving up your time to sow seeds that you might never see bloom.
We appreciate you!*

Melissa Fardella also made a pocket list of tips for Welcomers to carry around

Evangelisation Conversation Starters:

- * Smile & wave.
- * We have.....coffee...jumping castle.
- * Welcome.
- * How are you?
- * Have you been here before?
- * Would you like me to take a photo for you?
- * Make a compliment.
- * Invite people into the Cathedral.

*God doesn't call the qualified.
He qualifies the called.*

Light Up St Pat's

A Reflection by Volunteer Krishmalie Perera

As winter's July nights darkened, people young and old, with family and friends were attracted to Parramatta Council's *Winterlight* Festival in Prince Albert Square. They were lured by the fun and good times awaiting them in the joy rides, the bright lights, good food and company, unaware that just across the road a people and place were determined to seize the opportunity to bring 'hope' to their lives. St Patrick's Cathedral community did just that this winter, creating an atmosphere of welcome, hospitality, love and joy to those who walked through the Cathedral's gates.

As the Lord sent his disciples in twos to go out to the world, so we as representatives of St Pat's community, were sent across the road to *Winterlight* to bring the joy of the Gospel to those who might have never heard it. Working as a team gave us strength and confidence and a pure joy and excitement to approach people and invite them to take some time out to see the lights displayed on the façade of the Cathedral. The sheer receptivity of people of different faiths, ethnicities and backgrounds took us 'evangelisers' by surprise.

On the Cathedral's premises, the giving hands of our many volunteers, their welcoming, friendly, open-heartedness created an atmosphere of love allowing the stranger to feel quite at home. There was something for everyone: for the children a jumping castle, face painting and games, to toasting marshmallows at an open fire pit for child and adult freely offered, while food and drinks were available for a very reasonable price.

To evangelise one has to first listen, — listen to people's story and/or allow them to bring up questions that they might have. A conversation I had with a gentleman of Hindu background particularly struck me. Most of the conversation revolved around sharing our stories: of his attraction to universal good and my desire to deepen the knowledge of my faith and live it more deeply. The conclusion? Sharing about our youth group and then directing him to the right person, with whom he was able to enquire further about the youth group for his children.

A remark from a person, who had just visited the Cathedral and was back again at *Winterlight* in the park succinctly summed up the work the Lord had entrusted us to do... "*It was perfect, I'm not sure what we're doing on this side*".

We are mere instruments in the vineyard of the Lord; it is God who stirs the mind and heart of the stranger. I do not know how many hearts were changed on the day of Grace and Mercy (Adoration) when many came into the candlelit church, to witness the gentle praise and worship of people of all ages praying to a God who loves; to spend time in silence, to observe, to light a candle and perhaps even pray their first prayer. This was what "*Light Up St Pat's*" was offering: a glimpse of the Divine, a stirring of the heart to seek the One who is our hope.

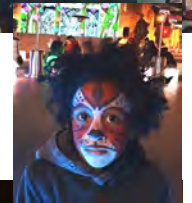
Krishmalie has been a member of St Patrick's Cathedral Choir since May 2018.



The Passing Parade
So many great moments captured!



Which to feature?



Artworks by Ekaterina Samoletova

WELCOMING MATTERS: *meet Deacon Roderick Pirotta*

Last issue Deacon Wilfredo Limjap penned a farewell to St Pat's parishioners.

In this issue we learn a little about Deacon Pirotta, our new permanent deacon, thanks to his gracious acquiescence to our request for his 'story'.

I was born in a small village in Malta called Naxxar, on the Feast of the Transfiguration. My Mum always told me that I was born while the statue of Jesus with Moses and Elijah on each side was coming out of the Church to process through the streets of a nearby village, called Hal Lija. It is a long tradition that at the time when the statue appears on the main door of the Church, a noisy fireworks display takes place. What an entrance to this world!

I am the fourth of six children and I always enjoyed somewhat more autonomy and independence compared to the strict parental upbringing of my eldest sister and two older brothers. I learnt to play the clarinet from the age of 10 and was able to earn some money by playing with different bands in the village fiestas during summertime.

Church has always been my second home and through my whole life, God has always surrounded me with holy people to inspire me and direct me in my spiritual life. In 1980, I had the opportunity to work with the Sisters of Mother Theresa in Palermo. This was a turning point for me. Prayer became part of my daily routine and I started to associate myself more closely with the Jesuits, whose novitiate was a few hundred metres away from my home in Naxxar.

My desire to become a religious brother also intensified. In 1983, at the age of 21, I joined the Jesuits. The 30-day Ignatian retreat brought about my great attachment to the Person of Christ. Eventually, I was sent by the Jesuits to Dublin to do nursing for 3 years. However, just before my nursing final exams, at the age of 29, I asked Fr General in Rome to be dispensed from my vows. Very difficult times followed after leaving Religious Life, but despite all the insecurities and uncertainty, my trust in God never wavered.

I eventually immigrated to Australia in 1991 as a single man with my nursing qualifications being a great asset. My sister and my two older brothers had also migrated to Sydney years before, followed by my youngest brother in the year 2000. The other younger brother and my father still live in Malta.



In 1993, I met my wife Kathryn through the Patrician Social Club here at St Patrick's Cathedral Parish. We were married a year later. We celebrate our 25th Wedding Anniversary

this year in November. Unfortunately, we were never able to have children, but this just strengthened our understanding of each other and commitment to be more generous to others. I continued to work part time as a Clinical Nurse Consultant, specialising in Dementia and Mental Health of the Older Person. My job brings me very close to Christ, the suffering servant and the Eucharist.

I was ordained as a Permanent Deacon on the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter on 22 February 2019, here at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta. The diaconate formation was challenging but rewarding at the same time. I loved my academic formation which included 5 years of Theological Studies at the Catholic Institute of Sydney (CIS). My Jesuit formation has never left me and my desire to serve the Father's Son, Jesus, and 'to be placed' with Him brought joy and peace in my heart; each time I ponder about these thoughts. I remain Ignatian at heart and the Ignatian Spirituality is ingrained in my daily life as I serve in my diaconate ministry.

The title "deacon" comes from the Greek word "diakonos," which means "servant." The vocation of deacon carries the profound responsibility to pour out one's life in service to others, just like Christ, who came "not to be served, but to serve." The Second Vatican Council emphasized the Church as Servant to all humanity, in its every condition, weakness and need. As a response to this vision, the Church restored the order of deacons as a concrete sacramental sign of our Lord Jesus Christ, in and at the service of the world. Through this ministry, the deacon serves as a reminder and a challenge to all the baptized, who are called to imitate Christ in their care for others. As Saint John Paul II said, "the service of the deacon is the Church's service sacramentalized."

Through their ordination, deacons share, to a lesser extent, in the threefold apostolic ministry of the bishop: a ministry of Word, of Sacrament, and of Charity. Deacons are official teachers and preachers of the Gospel, they preside at celebrations of baptism, funerals, matrimony and they visit the infirm, the imprisoned, and the needy. They do not celebrate Mass, hear confessions, or anoint the sick. As such, the Deacon is important in the life of the Church today: he serves the successor of the Apostles, the Bishop, in his Ministry, to lead God's people in the true worship of God.

Prior to my ordination, I ministered for many years in Holy Spirit, St Clair and during my diaconate formation at St Nicholas of Myra in Penrith for 3 years. After Easter this year, I was assigned here to St Patrick's Cathedral.

Without any doubt, at first, the experience was quite challenging and daunting. The rituals, singing and formalities of serving in the Cathedral's Liturgies were overwhelming.

continued next page

Some Memorable Moments of Ordination



Continued from previous page.

However, I am a quick learner and I can say that I already feel quite comfortable in the role. The most important thing for me, is that I am getting to know the people who have made me welcome. I have started ministering in St Thomas Street Aged Care Facility and soon, we will be starting a new group for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA).

My vocation of a deacon, which I encourage others to consider, is the 'driving force' of the Church's *diaconia*; a special witness to Society and the configuration to Christ the Servant. The Church's engine is underpowered without deacons. **There are no part-time deacons; this is not a profession, but a mission for life!**

Post Ordination:

Roderick with Bishop Vincent, his brothers, Wilfred, Harold, Geoffrey, sister, Alice and wife Kathryn.



Giselle writes about making her First Holy Communion



In our preparation sessions, we learned about how Jesus got baptised. We also learned how to receive the bread and wine and what to say after the priest says the Body of Christ or the Blood of Christ.

I felt very nervous because I would be receiving my First Holy Communion in front of a lot of people.

I also felt excited because I have wanted to taste the bread for a long time.

After Holy Communion I said a prayer to make sick people better.

It is important because you are receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus and we remember how he gave the bread and wine at the Last Supper before he died.

Morning Session:
The Holy Spirit: The Lord and Giver of Life
Presenter: Fr Bob Bossini

Afternoon Session:
Liturgical Bible Study
Presenter: Annette Hartman



Like the 2018 annual Pentecost Retreat, this year's was an all day session from 10am–3:30pm with a break for lunch, generously provided by the Parish for a gold coin donation.

Fr Bob's talks are always thoroughly prepared and this one was no exception, extending to the hand out of his detailed 14-page booklet on the topic.

The booklet was divided into 4 sections:

1. The Role of the Holy Spirit.
2. John Paul II: on the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World: [Part 1: The Spirit of the Father and of the Son given to the Church.]
3. Our Response to the Gift of the Spirit:
 - a. Pope John Paul II: 'Lord and Giver of Life' [Part II: The Spirit Who Convinces the World Concerning Sin # 6 ~ The Sin against the Holy Spirit.]
 - b. St Paul and the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Our Sacramental Response:
 - i. Baptism.
 - ii Confirmation.
- 4 Questions for Reflection and Discussion.

There was an overwhelming amount of information to digest during the time allotted for Fr Bob's talk, and that is why his booklet is an invaluable resource for later private study, review and reflection.....even discussion with friends.

Just some of the innumerable points made:

- Tower of Babel was reversed at Pentecost.
- We need to live out the salvific action of Jesus.
- The Holy Spirit leads us into mission.
- Evangelisation occurs through the presence and power of the Spirit.

One of the questions for reflection and discussion was
What has been the experience of the Holy Spirit in your life?

How would YOU answer?



Annette Hartman, like Fr Bob returned as a presenter for this year's *Pentecost Retreat*.

People were impressed by her prodigious knowledge of the history and geography of the Biblical era of both Old and New Testaments. (obviously gleaned from her career as a high school teacher of those subjects!)

Her approach was very professional, the use of the power point technique helped maintain participants' attention both visually and aurally. The wealth of information presented was an indication of the time Annette spent in meticulous preparation. e.g. the slide in the picture above reads:

***One small group of farmers and herders
 recognized only one God.
 YHWH!***

***These monotheists became the Hebrews,
 the Israelites, the Chosen People.***

The readings for Pentecost were:

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. 2:1-11
THE LETTER OF ST PAUL TO THE ROMANS 8:8-17
THE GOSPEL OF JOHN 14:15-16, 23-26

Annette presented background knowledge of each reading to facilitate people's understanding.

Participants were led through the readings using **Lectio Divina** (praying with the Sacred Texts): i.e. Lectio (listening), Meditatio (reflecting) and Oratio (personal: what has God said to you; how are you called to respond?)

A wealth of shared reflections were recorded (a whole page!) by Donna Missio whom Annette asked to act as Scribe. She did an amazing job.

Examples of comments:

Gospel: ** Keep His Word: Jesus is the voice of the Father, speaks on the Father's behalf.

**All Jesus asks us to do, He will send the Spirit to help us.

Acts: ** Jesus promised that when we need to speak up for Him, the Holy Spirit will give us the words we need.

** Speaking in tongues: a counterpoint to the Tower of Babel which caused the division of languages.

Romans: ** If we don't have the Holy Spirit in us we will "die" and be separated from God.

** The Challenge: the need to pray to the Spirit for guidance and help in times of trial.

**Witness: living in the Spirit shows we are children of God.

Will Annette be persuaded to return for Pentecost 2020?

JUDITH DUNN OAM FPDHS, continues to shed light on matters concerning St Patrick's historic Cemetery, in this article drawing us into the life of a most remarkable priest buried there, — Monsignor John Rigney. Discover how a bronze plaque came to mark the spot where he lies buried in St Francis Mortuary Chapel in the Cemetery.



MONSIGNOR JOHN RIGNEY



**HIS LIFE
WAS
DEVOTED
TO
PRIESTLY
SERVICE
AND
BUILDING
CHURCHES**

On Sunday 15 July 1838, after a voyage of 114 days, Father John Rigney and seven companions sailed through the Sydney heads in the barque *Cecelia*. They were warmly greeted by Bishop Polding as a welcome addition to the Colony as at this time there were only nine priests in the whole of NSW. These newcomers, subsequently known as "the men of '38," had a great impact on Catholic society. From their incessant labours came the formation of new congregations and the erection of churches in vast, isolated parishes. All young and relatively inexperienced, they swapped their Irish rural communities and small parish backgrounds for an immense continent with lonely bush tracks, extremes of climate, isolation and poverty.

John Rigney was born in Ballinasloe, County Galway in 1812 to William and Elizabeth Rigney. He entered the National Irish Seminary, St Patrick's College, Maynooth in September 1834. Dr Ullathorne visited the Seminary at the request of Bishop Polding in 1837 on a recruiting mission to bring priests to the Colony. Rigney, young, zealous and adventurous, responded to the call. After ordination in December of the same year he set out from Gravesend aboard *Cecelia*.

By August 1838, five of the newcomers found themselves in the saddle, riding to Parramatta together, there parting company for their assigned parishes. Father Rigney was destined for the south coast, the first priest to be appointed to the Illawarra with a parish ranging from Coalcliff to the Clyde River, Moruya. In a report into the state of the Catholic

Church in the Illawarra in 1838-46, it was estimated Rigney averaged 3,500 miles annually on horseback through the length and breadth of the area. Under his guidance, the Illawarra Mission expanded rapidly, St Matthew's Jamberoo still prizes its small silver chalice inscribed, "Fr J Rigney, Jamberoo, 10th February 1841."

In 1846 Rigney was appointed to Port Macquarie and the Macleay, including all New England, then Singleton until 1857. Although he became Dean of Brisbane it was a doubtful title as there was only one other priest in the Northern rivers of NSW and the whole of Queensland. Father Rigney and Father Hanly worked this huge area for ten years, the two priests meeting once a month for discussion and absolution. This meant a journey of two hundred miles each on horseback to meet under a certain tree, which they considered halfway between Singleton and Brisbane. Only once did they miss their appointment when Father Hanly became lost.

On the death of Archdeacon McEncroe in 1868, Father Rigney was elevated to Archdeacon of Sydney and Administrator of St Mary's Cathedral. With two other priests he supervised the building and finances of the new St Mary's, the previous cathedral having burnt down in 1865.

It being his mother's dearest wish to see him again before she died, Rigney travelled to Ireland. As he was penniless, his fellow priests gladly raised the money for his fare. On his return two years later he accompanied the Sisters of Mercy to Australia. In 1874 he brought the Marist Brothers to Australia and subsequently to Parramatta. Made a Domestic Prelate and Vicar General in 1878, he caused St Monica's Church at North Parramatta to be built in 1889 on the site of the Green Gate Inn. Father Rigney had bought it as the site for a church and school when the inn lost its license to the new Tollgate Hotel on the opposite side of the road. Father Rigney celebrated his seventy fifth birthday and Golden Jubilee as a priest in 1889, having spent fourteen years serving at Parramatta where he

completed the church and added two more at Richmond and Granville. He requested to be allowed to retire to St Brigid's, Prospect which he had built in 1883.

From St Brigid's he ministered to the then pitifully poor churches of St Patrick's Blacktown (in a temporary chapel until the permanent church was built) St Lawrence O'Toole at Prospect Reservoir (known as the waterworks church) and St Gertrude's Smithfield. To assist him getting around his scattered parish he kept three ponies, Jenny, Mousey and Nanny which he mentioned in his journal. When he died at St Brigid's in May 1903, attended to by Fathers O'Reilly and Murphy of Parramatta, he was 91 years of age and the last surviving member of the "Men of 38" His body lay in state in St Brigid's and was then taken to St Patrick's Church for Requiem Mass presided over by Cardinal Moran and Archpriest Sheehy. St Patrick's Blacktown was the thirteenth church commissioned by Father Rigney.

He has no headstone and it gradually slipped from memory exactly where he was buried. Through research I found a quote that he had requested to be buried at the foot of Dean Nicholas Coffey's coffin in St Francis Mortuary Chapel at St Patrick's Cemetery. When this was revealed, parishioners from the Illawarra raised funds for a bronze plaque to mark the spot where he lay. The 'Patrick' Bell** in the tower of St Patrick's Cathedral has a Latin inscription as a memorial to him. Cast in Dublin at the expense of the parishioners, and hung in the tower, it memorialises his life and is a reminder each time it is rung, of the many good works he carried out and the thirteen churches instigated by him from Jamberoo to Queensland.

Judith's article continues on page 17

**** Footnote:** The editor has heard a rumour that a peal of bells is on its way to join 'Patrick'. When Judith Dunn heard the news, she commented: that it would be wonderful if St Pat's could have bell ringers like All Saints Anglican Church on Victoria Rd.

Frank Duff, a long-time member of the KSC NSW State Council, and one-time Chairman of its Parramatta Diocese, reports.

CENTENARY COMMEMORATION and minor restoration of graves by the Knights of the Southern Cross (KSC) March-May 2019

KSC is an Australia-wide federation of Catholic men founded in 1919 by Patrick Joseph Minahan, interred in Rookwood M1, and Joseph Patrick Lynch, interred in Macquarie Park.

In 1979, KSC was a founding member of IACK, the International Alliance of Catholic Knights, recognised by Rome, the Vatican, as "an international association of the faithful of Pontifical Right"

About 50m west of the chapel of St Michael, the Archangel is Patrick Joseph Minahan, (Papal) Knight of St Sylvester, died 3 October 1933, MLA (NSW) 1910-1917 & 1920-1927, aged 62, buried by his second wife Elizabeth Mary, d. 30 October 1938, aged 52.

About 30m South of the Patrick Minahan site, a double twin plot, now re-surfaced, has nine sets of remains, including Minahan's first wife, Catherine: "*Dearly Beloved Wife of Patrick J. Minahan, d. 17 June 1914, aged 44.*" [Patrick had 7 children: 5 from his first wife; 2 from his second.]

On 24 March 2019, Mass was celebrated in St Michael's Chapel, after which (at both Rookwood and Macquarie Park) commemorative plaques — placed on the graves of both founders - were blessed by Fr Paul Hilder, KSC NSW Chaplain, in the presence of Minahan and Lynch families, and Knights.

The plaques with KSC badges affixed were organised by CCC Rookwood. Below is the plaque for PJ Minahan (a similar one was made for JP Lynch's grave at Macquarie Park), prior to mounting on a sloper.



On 24 May 2019, delegates to the 8th Triennial Conference of the KSC visited M1, St Michael's Chapel, and the nearby Minahan gravesites.

Below, the Apostolic Nuncio for Australia, His Excellency Archbishop Adolfo Yllana and Monsignor Brian O'Loughlin, Chaplain to KSC Western Australia, (L) pay their respects at the Minahan grave site.



Left: PJ Minahan's grave pre-restoration and below the restored gravesite with memorial plaque installed.



At Left: The resurfaced twin plot that holds nine sets of remains, including Minahan's wife, Catherine.

Parishioners might have seen Frank Duff on Sundays floating around the Cathedral in red robes. He has been a member of the choir since before the old Cathedral burnt down in 1996! He also spearheaded the restoration of the Stations of the Cross in the Cloister.



Remembering matters to Rod Hilliker.

I recently attended the East Timorese Independence celebrations held at Wetherill Park in the outer suburbs of Sydney.

This occasion was to remember and celebrate the re establishment of East Timor dependence 20 years ago. I was invited along with 2 other ex-commandos.



← Greg Bishop, Rod and Geof Nangle an ex 1 commando who served in East Timor with Rod.

The East Timorese Ambassador, Mr Abel Guterres, the Consul General, Sergio Dos Santos, and members of the EAST TIMOR ASSOCIATION were present, as were members of their civil service, police and the military.

The majority of those attending were survivors of unspoken horrors and who had come to Australia as refugees after the Indonesian invasion in 1975, — establishing homes, setting down roots, bringing up their families and finding meaning out of darker times, and in time becoming useful citizens.

Timorese functions are usually loud, colourful and enthusiastic — and this one was no exception, We were entertained by traditional dancers and a 7-piece Timorese Band .

I was included in the opening speeches given three minutes notice to prepare, and apart from the unexpected duty elevating my blood pressure, I was told my speech went well.

The official part of the evening was followed by less traditional dancing and the opportunity to display their skills and renew friendships, with the festivities going late into the night.



← The man and woman flanking Rod are Timorese veterans. The traditional **TAIs** they are holding indicate from which district they come.

➡ Rod's daughter Kirsten is wearing a shawl that was given to him by Xanana Gusmão, the first President of East Timor.

Footnote: Kirsten has been an altar server at Vigil Mass for 10 or so years!



The February issue of *St Pat's Matters* featured Rod's in-depth coverage of the *Timor Awakening 7th Programme to help war veterans to heal emotional, moral and spiritual wounds in a return journey to Timor.* His article was recently published in *Catholic Outlook*, 24th May. A worthwhile read.

JUDITH DUNN'S ARTICLE on MGR RIGNEY cont'd from p15

Mgr Rigney has no headstone. His request to be buried at the foot of Dean Nicholas Coffey's coffin in St Francis Mortuary Chapel at St Patrick's Cemetery, is marked by the bronze plaque, (pictured) laid by parishioners from the Illawarra.



The inscription reads:

**Rev FR JOHN RIGNEY
(MONSIGNOR)**
Born at Ballinasloe Co Galway 1812
Ordained a Priest at Maynooth Dec 30th 1837
Pioneer Priest of the Illawarra (1838 – 45)
Died on May 9th 1903 in the 66th year of
his Priesthood
Erected by the faithful of the Illawarra
On the sesquicentenary (150th) anniversary
1838 – 1988

The following extract from the article in **Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrowers Advocate, 17 November 1904** tells the story of the consecration of the bell, in memory of Mgr Rigney.

"The fine bell which is to constitute a memorial in St Patrick's Church to the late Ven. Mgr. Rigney, was consecrated on Sunday by the Most Reverend the Co-Adjutor Archbishop Kelly, in the grounds of the Presbytery, where it is temporarily located. The celebration took place after the celebration of the Mass, at which the Archbishop presided etc. The ceremony of the benediction or baptizing of the bell was in accordance with the solemn rite prescribed by the Roman Catholic Church. The bell was washed with holy water, anointed with the holy oils and marked with the sign of the cross seven times externally and seven times in the interior. It was named Patrick.

The bell was hung on its mounting so that it could be rung and at the conclusion of the ceremony,

His Grace the Coadjutor-Archbishop Most Rev Dr Kelly visited Parramatta on Sunday morning to consecrate the bell to be in St Patrick's Church to the memory of the late Monsignor Rigney. When the Monsignor died 18 months ago, the people of the district decided to commemorate his long connection with the parish and as a bell was thought to be the very best means of reminding them by its tones of the great work and deeds of the late Archdeacon of the Archdiocese of Sydney, the order was placed with Mr Matthew Byrnes, the famous bell-founder of Dublin. The total cost of the bell and its erection is about £200."



Youth Matters

OLANA LAL, St Pat's sixth Pilgrim shares her experience at WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019



My experience in Panama was truly one to remember. This amazing country is filled with warm-hearted locals who constantly greeted Parramatta pilgrims as we walked the streets of Panama. Many locals passing by would express their gratitude

thanking the Australians, or any foreigner, for coming into their country. The taxi/uber rides with my small group were always interesting as each ride was a different experience — from drivers asking to take photos and videos with us whilst driving, to playing some funky tunes for us to dance to. If I had the chance to go back to that beautiful country, I would do so in a heartbeat.

I have never witnessed a culture with such a strong and rich faith. Both Mexican and Panamanian communities did not hesitate to profess their faith and what they believed in. As a pilgrim, I witnessed and observed the rich Panamanian culture of these beautiful people. It taught me things about myself and my faith which I had yet to discover.

Before attending World Youth Day, I had faith but it wasn't as strong as I would have liked it to be. As a result of my WYD experience, this all changed — my faith has deepened. I finally felt confident in knowing that God was truly present in my life. I was able to do a lot of self-reflection during the WYD week and I was constantly reminded that God will always be there for me. I felt His presence in my heart and soul, and it took quite some time to accept that. I learnt many things such as God's presence, the importance of prayer and pride for my faith.

I knew that upon my arrival back home, my regular day-to-day-routines would come back into play and honestly, I really didn't want that to be the case. I had to make sure that I implemented the lessons I had learnt at WYD into my everyday life back home.

Papa Franciso told everyone who attended the final Mass to make sure that we take what we have learnt from this experience and honestly live it out once WYD is over. It has now been 6 months since I was at WYD and my life has become so busy and chaotic. However, I always make an effort to talk to God or just make some kind of connection with Him, even if it's for a short moment.

This pilgrim experience has helped me to grow as an individual and I cannot wait to experience it all again in 2022.

JUNIOR CREDO UPDATE

from **MELISSA FARDELLA**



Term Two started with a bang for Junior Credo. We explored the theme of Mary throughout the Month of May. The kids loved going on a hunt for Mary in the Cathedral.

Following this, we looked at our emotions through emojis, unpacked different types of friends and the meaning behind Credo.

Junior Credo meets every fortnight during the school term. Kids have fun getting to know each other, playing games and growing closer to God.

Junior Credo's work is on display in the Cloister Café area. Come and check it out.

Having Rachel Touche from Teen Credo assisting me is a real bonus.



MODERN MARY: surviving the challenging vocation of Motherhood as modern Christian women.

Modern Mary (June 2019)

The trials and tribulations of modern motherhood are infinite. I'm already exhausted with two boys aged 3 and 7. As a Christian mother, I find myself asking how on earth Mother Mary must have coped? Thrust into motherhood through no choice of her own, given the most stressful mandate a woman could ever consider: give birth to, and raise, the Saviour of the world. Never mind my work-life juggle, rushing to Aldi dragging a giant 3 year-old and praying for the week to end!

My life, as is the case for most modern mothers, is an itinerised chaos. I've fine-tuned my work-life 'balance' into a 'juggle' — a juggle whilst running, ...in a sack race, ...with heavy dead-weight children in the sack with me, ...screaming for snacks.

My former mother-in-law, a devout Catholic with 5 children, used to have a pottery plaque hanging in her kitchen that read: *"Having children is like being slowly pecked to death by chickens"*. Bless her, she was a complete basket case and who can blame her? Now that mental health awareness is in fashion, mothers are told to go fix themselves up. Thanks society!

Today, unlike in her time, I need to work full time whilst maintaining my child-cracked mental state. After work, I need to courier my kids around to their various activities which, if not maintained, will apparently result in utter failure for them and me.

My recreational reading is the one-page parents' guides on all the ways my child can be corrupted online through the latest app/online game. — TikTok, YouTube, Fortnite, SnapChat, IMVU, Houseparty, Whisper, Look...

Oh, to be living in the simplicity of my mother-in-law's time, where no one was there to tell you that 6-12 hours of TV-time was a bad thing. Her kids ate MSG, processed food and drank cordial. CORDIAL!!! I think you can get arrested for giving that to your children now.

So where do I go for that peace amidst the chaos? ..

Jesus reminds us:

*"I have said this to you,
that in me you may have peace.
In the world you have tribulation;
but be of good cheer,
I have overcome the world"*

[John 16:33]

I often argue that mothers today have less support and more responsibility. But from speaking with mothers of all ages, I'm learning that generally, the *disappointments* are the same. — The sadness felt when a child is having trouble at school, the anxiety felt at each step of their independence, the loss and grief, the isolation of everything from being home with a newborn to watching that same child exist without you.

But just like Pinterest taught me:

***"God's plan will always be greater
and more beautiful
than all your disappointments".***

The quote had a backdrop of a middle-class white male standing in solitude on a mountain-top dressed in a coat and beanie staring out at a rosy sunrise. His name was probably something colonial yet contemporary, like Jamie. Jamie clearly has the time and budget for a hike in Cambodia as well as the minimum amount of peace required for a moment of self-reflection. I don't have time for a shower, Jamie. If I end up with any residual wherewithal to reflect on anything, I spend it thinking about what to feed

my children. When I finally decide that they'll be having cereal for dinner, I spend the rest of my time ravaged with guilt, not browsing Webjet for discount flights to Cambodia.

So where do I go for that peace amidst the chaos? Jesus reminds us:

"I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but

be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" [John 16:33]

Don't know about you, but I like John a lot more than I like Jamie.

If this resonates with you, share your stories with us at modernmarymums@gmail.com

This column is a regular feature in SPM, inviting us to share these little gems. Maybe we can start a conversation about how to survive this challenging vocation of motherhood as modern Christian women?



Are we not called everyday to live for God? Did Mary not model openness to God the Father in every conceivable way? Did she leave any doubt that God's will was more important than her own? Did she run when it was difficult? Did she flee

from discomfort? Did she trust in God even when the future was uncertain?

She swaddled Him, nursed Him, guided Him through his early years. She stood beside Him... never abandoning Him... even in the most difficult moments. Now, as our Mother, would she ever abandon us?

(from a reflection by Mark Hart)

HOSPITALITY MATTERS: Jesus said, "I came to serve, not to be served."

Two members of the Hospitality Team — a veteran and a novice speak about coming to serve.

CORA MERCADO, A 'Veteran' looks back:



Cora Mercado (3rd from right) on St Patrick's Day with fellow team members: L:R: Romeo, Diosey, Cora S. Sesilia & Nestor.

Unlike St. Paul's conversion where God called him through a *blinding* encounter, God used *boredom* to draw me to join the St. Pat's Hospitality Group.

Back in 2001, just before St. Patrick's was relocated to the pro-cathedral offsite at Cumberland Hospital Grounds, my family and I were looking for a new parish church to join after moving out of Plumpton. It had always been a joy to attend the Masses at Good Shepherd, and we were looking for a similar parish to join where you would feel your faith energised after attending Mass. At St. Patrick's we found what we wanted: a welcoming church. Whenever we came to morning tea or special parish events, I found the demeanour of the elder ladies, who were serving, so sweet.

Around 2002, when the Parish was seeking primary school children interested in becoming altar servers, my youngest daughter, Jesusa, volunteered. And so, our Sunday routine came to be — come to attend Mass, wait in the car until Jesusa had finished with post-Mass duties and then drive back home.

Then when Deacon Warren Edwards, who trained the altar servers, was ordained to the priesthood, the parish asked for volunteers to assist at the reception afterwards. I put my hand up and it was at the reception I first met Marian, the Hospitality Co-Ordinator. I can't remember now if it was during or after the event that Marian extended an invitation for me to join the Hospitality Group. (By that time, the church was already in the hospital grounds and I found it boring waiting in the car for my daughter to finish duties as server). Hence when I got this invitation, I simply asked Marian the details of what was involved, turned up one Sunday morning and thus became a member of the team.

I've always thought to give back, somehow in thanksgiving to God for all the blessings He has bestowed on my family. This was at the back of my mind when I first joined. However, God blessed my family so much more in our faith journey. Renato, my husband, became involved in the choir then with hospitality; my daughters, Jesusa and Mindy progressed from junior to senior status as altar servers, with Mindy now involved in Credo Youth Ministry. As for me, I became an Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist, while making new friends along the way.



The 'Novice' is ALEX SHAW.

He's pictured with his mother on the day of his graduation from Australian Catholic University.

He writes:

Formerly a Hobartian, I moved to Sydney in 2013. After finding a place to rent, I began studying and working full-time which saw approximately 112 hours of my week occupied. After finishing my studies I started working officially as a teacher. What a dream to now have a 9-5 job, — night shifts as a forklift driver, starting midnight are not missed!

Last year whilst working at De La Salle in Ashfield I was offered a job at St Patrick's Marist College in Dundas. I graduated from ACU recently on Mum's birthday, May 24, what a special day that was!

In 2016 my nephew Maximus was baptised at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Then towards the end of 2018 after only occasionally attending Mass since my move to Sydney, I began to feel God's presence in my life more strongly.

Since the first Sunday of 2019 I've attended Mass at the Cathedral, — for the first few months with my loving sister, Catherine, until slowly I felt comfortable in such a warm community. After talking to Father Chris Del Rosario and Marian Polizzi, the coordinator, I was invited to become part of the Hospitality Team. I am a simple man who loves tea, coffee, the occasional pastry, and serving our parish community — (and of course Sunday rates are time and a half so there was absolutely no reason not to join!)

Joking aside, my experience thus far has been 'absolutely priceless'. Sundays are made that little bit better for all when you can serve a hot cuppa to a friendly face. Every team member is warm and welcoming, which is to be expected with such a caring co-ordinator.

In my early days in Hospitality, I asked Marian how I could chat with parishioners (as part of this ministry) since I'm afraid to start a conversation with people about whom I know nothing. She gave me a few tips, like simply (but sincerely) asking people how they are. I started doing this but it took a while to get used to it. In the end, **God made me realise that while serving morning tea, I could use this time to provide a listening ear, enabling another to share life's concerns, to offer prayers, to share our faith and love of God, and to share the good news that God is with us, always.** I also found that service with a genuine smile can be contagious; people tend to smile back and pass that smile onto others.

I hope and pray more parishioners will heed God's call to service, and become involved in parish life, not necessarily with hospitality but perhaps in the other ministries here at the Cathedral, so that our parish will continue to foster community spirit and be ever welcoming. Hopefully they will discover that giving a little bit from God's love in their hearts can be truly rewarding, and in answering God's call to service, He will grant them blessings sevenfold in return.

Merging Matters



Credo Youth & Hospitality Team join forces



raising funds to support Credo's work



Snapshots: The Hornes' cool 'n sweet farewell.



At their 50th Wedding Anniversary gathering in the Cloister Function Room on Saturday 11th May, Beverley & Peter Horne (above left) had a Gelato Bar for their guests. Then the next day they invited parishioners to come after 9:30 and 11am Masses to polish off the remainder of the tempting treats. A smiling young Kayleigh, (Hospitality Team member) was keen to serve, along with Bev's sister.



Felicia, Kayleigh's Mum, was on hand, too, to scoop out gelato, once people decided which flavor to choose. Even choir members were keen to join the long queue snaking out the door, at the prospect of FREE ice-cream! And who wouldn't?

Sadly for St Pat's, Bev and Peter have now flown the coop to Laurieton, northern NSW to retirement and a sea change. The community has lost two wonderful committed parishioners.



TIME OUT FOR REFLECTION MATTERS

In lieu of her promised article, Kirrily Aquilera (nee McDermott), a parishioner from childhood, sent in this article she wrote on becoming a more welcoming church. Great choice, Kirrily! That she took the time to do so, in spite of unexpected family crises, is the measure of her commitment to involvement in parish life.

The Broken Christ,

In my husband Oscar's birthplace in Aguascalientes, Mexico, there is a 25-metre bronze statue of Christ that stands above the city dam. Commissioned in 2016, it is the 10th largest statue of Jesus in the world. However, what makes this one unusual is that it is broken. This crucified Christ stands suspended without a cross, with a right arm missing, and a right leg snapped off.

This Broken Christ or 'Cristo Roto' (as it known by locals) was inspired by a popular reflection written by Fr Ramon Cue, a Spanish Jesuit priest. It tells the story of Fr Ramon finding a broken crucifix in an antique shop, and filled with pity at its desecration, buys it with a view to restoring it to display in his parish.

Once home however, Fr Ramon finds himself engaged in a dialogue with the broken Christ. Christ himself pleads to be left broken. His message to the priest is that the tragedy of a Broken Christ inside a Church should stir in him and his parish the need to both 'see' and 'serve' the 'broken Christs' in their midst.

Today, at the foot of the 25 metre statue, there is a sign with the words the Cristo Roto spoke to Fr Ramon:

Leave me broken...

I'd like that when you look at me broken like this,
you'd remember many of your brothers and sisters
who are broken, poor, indigent, oppressed, sick, mutilated...

Without arms: because they are incapacitated,
left without any means to work;
without feet: because they are impeded to walk their way;
without face: because they have been robbed
of their honour and prestige.

They are forgotten... those who see them turn away
since they are like me –a broken Christ!"

The Cristo Roto statue, and the story behind it is both powerful and confronting. It reminds us that being a follower of Christ isn't just a private "beautiful" devotion, but demands a practical commitment to love radically, and see the divine image in everyone we encounter. It reminds us that if we truly seek to imitate Christ, we cannot just turn away from what we feel is ugly, dirty or broken, but to accompany and serve the 'least of our brothers', with whom Christ himself identified. For as St Teresa of Avila famously reminds us: —

**"Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes,
you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth, but yours."**

Amen to that!



A question that matters.

Why go
to Church?



A Church goer wrote a letter to the editor of a newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

He wrote: *"I've gone for 30 years now and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons but for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time, the preachers and priests are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all".*

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column.

Much to the delight of the editor, it went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time, my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But, for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals.

But I do know this: They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I would be physically dead today.

Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, I would be spiritually dead today!"

**When you are DOWN to nothing,
God is UP to something!**

**Faith sees the invisible,
believes the incredible
and receives the impossible!**

Thank God for our physical and our spiritual nourishment!

**IF YOU CANNOT SEE GOD IN ALL.
YOU CANNOT SEE GOD AT ALL.**

B.I.B.L.E. simply means:
Basic Instructions
Before Leaving Earth!

Submitted by Belinda Bugo

SACRAMENTAL MATTERS: a parent's concern

BRIAN NEROY confesses to being a nervous parent at the prospect of son Aaron's upcoming Confirmation in August. He felt compelled to share his views with other parents, hoping that they and their children will find them beneficial in their sacramental preparation. Brian takes us along for the ride as he cleverly uses analogy to explain the significance of all the Sacraments in our Faith life.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION – Good to Go!

On August 30th this year my son along with many other children around his age group will receive the holy sacrament of Confirmation. While he is going to be the recipient of some relevant teaching and instruction over the months of July / August on the significance of this sacrament, I the nervous parent am faced with the following proposition.

How does one in these modern times impress upon a sometime disinterested teenager the importance of the sacrament of Confirmation. Where does the message of Confirmation sit amongst the incessant mixed messages that life is throwing at him? How does it tie in with the other sacraments that have been bestowed upon him so far? Does he even "need" the sacrament of Confirmation?

Above all, how do I simplify all of this? So, here's what I did. I took him for a walk in Parramatta Park. Whilst we meandered through the park along with the river, I used the following analogy.

We are all travellers on the motorway called Life. Imagine the M4 going west. Only, on this particular motorway, some of us drive, some cycle, some walk.... It's a busy road to say the least. We are travelling at different speeds but we are all certainly going only in one direction. Towards being one with Him, our God who lives in the blue mountains.

It's a hard road but some of us are very

fortunate because God gave a chosen few a luxury car to use on this journey. Multiple seater utility vehicle, model: Holy Spirit. We receive this car at Baptism. We are meant to be the drivers of this wonderful vehicle while it carries us comfortably through the bad weather and over speed bumps along the way. Theoretical training to drive begins at Baptism and continues via the church and community. L-Plate certificates are issued by the church office. At the sacrament of First Holy Communion, we are handed the all-important keys to the car and taught how to operate it. This includes how to refuel the car by receiving Holy Communion regularly at the fuel depot called 'Church'. Before being handed the keys though, we are required to appear for an online test called Reconciliation. Easy test as the examiner, God, wants all of us to pass. Subsequent regular reconciliation ensures car maintenance is carried out at suitable intervals. Practical training begins and continues during the now P-Plate stage.

However, now that you own a car, have passed the online test, received the keys and are all fuelled up, are you allowed to drive independently on the M4 at the speed limit? NO! Not until you are issued your full licence. That's where Confirmation comes in. On August 30th 2019 you will receive your full driver's licence. How exciting! Imagine! In the driver's seat of your own car driving, hopefully not speeding, on the motorway.

Enjoy the drive, son and when you look into the rear-view mirror you may see me close behind. I've got your back for some time, but remember one very important thing. **With your licence and the right to drive also comes responsibility. Use your car as much as possible. It's a gift, but in return God expects a certain kind of behaviour on the motorway. Safe driving, please! Basic rule: consider others.**

Here's some of the questions you might have to address when you do meet up with Him in the blue mountains. **That licence makes you accountable.**

Did you just drive by like the priest or stop and be a good neighbour like the Samaritan? Did you tell people who are walking and struggling about your great, free gift and offer them a lift in your car? How many people did you ignore along the way and refuse to take along? Every time you despise or hurt someone, it's like putting your car into reverse gear. He may not want to know how many times you went to church and refuelled. He'll certainly want to know how many travellers you brought along with you, though. He does not want to see you alone. The prayer we were taught begins with "Our" Father, not "My" Father.

So, congratulations! Enjoy the privilege. Keep your eyes on the road, roll your windows down and let it all in. Have fun driving. It's a great car I assure you. Long lasting and reliable. God really loves you.





Hope is one of the Theological virtues. This means that a continual looking forward to the eternal world is not (as some modern people think) a form of escapism or wishful thinking, but one of the things a Christian is meant to do.

It does not mean that we are to leave the present world as it is. If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next." - C.S. Lewis