

# KIT@Kippax

To be on earth the Heart of God



49  
years  
young

IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY  
**St John's Kippax**  
26 February 2021



## Time out for reflection

### Reflection and Planning Morning

On Saturday morning 13 February members of the Parish Pastoral Council, Finance Council, Liturgy Team and SJACare Group met for a morning reflecting on how we accompany each other in continuing Christ's mission.

In the "Joy of the Gospel, Pop Francis talks of the art of accompaniment as sacred: *The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious and laity – into this "art of accompaniment" which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (Ex. 3:5).* #169 Evangelii Gaudium – The Joy of the Gospel.

Accompaniment is more than walking with the other. It is intimate and intentional; it is dynamic and life changing.

Each parish group present at the formation is developing a strategy and focus for their ministry with the goal of integrating a pastoral plan for 2021.



**"To be on earth  
the Heart of God"**

## The Front Cover

### Decree

So as to cater more adequately for the spiritual welfare of the people of the Belconnen District in the Australian Capital Territory, having consulted the diocesan Consultors and the Priests' Senate, I hereby divide the present parish of St. Matthew, page, as from the 26th February, 1972, and erect the new parish of St. John the Apostle, Belconnen West.

The neighbourhoods of Higgins, Holt, Latham, Macgregor and the group housing area between them, as well as the undeveloped neighbourhoods to the North will constitute the new parish for the time being. The remainder of the present Parish of Page will constitute the Parish of Page as from the 26th February, 1972.

I hereby entrust the new parish of Belconnen West to the Missionaries of the Sacred heart, who will be responsible for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the parish, in accordance with the prescriptions of Canon law and the customs and regulations of this Archdiocese.

Given at Canberra on the 11th Day of February, 1972

**Thomas**

**Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn**

### Beginnings

The founding parish priest was Fr. Harry Morrissey msc whose appointment lasted ten years – 1972 – 1981. The first mass was celebrated in the assembly hall of the Higgins Primary School on 27 February 1972, with Bishop Morgan presiding. Frs. John F. McMahon, Harry Morrissey, Joseph Chown and Patrick Cusack (parish priest of Page), concelebrated. For the next twelve months, parish life centred on the house at 1 Starke Street which the Archdiocese had purchased.

### Memories

One of my first 'roster' activities was as a member of the cleaning team. In those days our Church had an uncovered wooden floor and stackable chairs throughout. Each Monday evening the floor had to be polished and the chairs, which had been stacked after the last Mass on Sunday, were then re-set. I am still on the church cleaning roster.

**John O'Heir**



### Parish Prayer

Lord Jesus,  
You have chosen us as your  
beloved disciples,  
and called us to love one another  
so that the world will believe  
that you are real and alive today.

Teach us, this family of St John,  
to find the pathway of true love  
so that we experience together  
the joy, hope and energy  
that comes from sharing our gifts  
and giving our lives.

St John the Apostle,  
model of every disciple,  
lead us to the heart of Jesus,  
and inspire us to spread His love  
wherever you call us to be.

**Amen**

# Lent at home

Lent is the season of spiritual preparation before Easter. It is a time when Christians observe a period of fasting, repentance, moderation, self-denial, and spiritual discipline. During the Lenten season time is set aside for reflection on Jesus Christ—to consider his suffering and his sacrifice, his life, death, burial, and resurrection.

A Lenten Program for the Diocese of Broken Bay to prayerfully reflect on the Sunday Gospel readings is accessible online at

<https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/parish-community/catholic-life-faith-formation/lenten-program-2021>



## Blessing of the Candles



### The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

2 FEBRUARY

This feast has various names, meanings, and overlapping traditions. It is also known as the Purification of Mary and the Feast of Candlemas, marking forty days after Christmas, the end of that liturgical season.

The Lord Jesus Christ, forty days after His birth, in keeping with the biblical significance of the number forty and with Jewish custom, was presented in the temple in Jerusalem by His parents, Mary and Joseph. Saint Luke's Gospel recounts the story. After the Presentation, Jesus was to enter the temple again as a boy and later as an adult. He would even refer to His own body as a temple which He would raise up in three days. Jesus's life was a continual self-gift to God the Father from the very beginning to the very end. His parents did not carry their infant Son to a holy mountain, a sacred spring, or a magical forest. It was in His temple that the God of Israel was most present, so they brought their son to God Himself, not just to a reflection of Him in nature.

This feast day is celebrated every year in our parish and parishioners are invited to bring their prayer candles to be blessed. The candles used on the altar for the coming year are also blessed at this ceremony.

### Blessing Prayer

O God, source and origin of all light,  
 who on this day showed to the just man Simeon  
 the Light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
 we humbly ask that,  
 in answer to your people's prayers,  
 you may be pleased to sanctify with your  
 blessing + these candles,  
 which we are eager to carry in praise of  
 your name,  
 so that, treading the path of virtue,  
 we may reach that light which never fails.  
 Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen**



# The Reluctant Flyer

By Eric French

"You'll never get me up in one of those things," said Claude to his friend Con. They were standing together looking upwards and marvelling at the wonder of flight.

"Why on earth not?" said Con. "They're fast, you get a superb view from up there and they're perfectly safe. We see regular flights every day – must be lovely."

But Claude was not convinced. He'd always been nervous about flying and had decided long ago that he would never go up. It was surprising really because, although he'd lost contact with his parents, there was a rumour of flying history in his family and he and Con often climbed trees or stood on cliff edges with no fear of height.

Claude and Con had been friends since early days. They lived on the edge of the bush and spent a lot of time there – its environment very much a factor in the contentment of their lives. They had become expert in finding bush tucker which they enjoyed and they were largely self-sufficient with access to a magnificent vegetable garden where the two spent many happy hours. They were vegetarians and were completely satisfied with the variety of delicious food that garden and bush provided.

In their idyllic world, the pair tended not to think about what they would do when they grew up. They didn't really want to leave this place to pursue careers although Con thought he might like to be a flyer one day if he could undertake the necessary training.

"I'll take you up when I get my licence," he used to tell Claude.

But Claude was not keen. "Oh no you won't – not in one of those things," he would reply. But really both were content with their current situation – they had a simple outlook on life – and were not too bothered about the future.

One day Claude complained to Con about feeling a bit off-colour – nothing serious at first. He seemed to be losing energy although his appetite was sharper. He was eating more, putting on weight but feeling increasingly lethargic. It got steadily worse until Claude just wanted to sleep and the fun seemed to have gone out of their lives.

"You need a break," said Con. "Get away for a while and relax."

"I think you're right," agreed Claude. "I'll look for a place to rest and take it easy – that should fix me up."

He said goodbye to Con and set off on a walking holiday. He had not gone far when lethargy really started to get to him. He found a secluded spot and decided to camp there. He built a small enclosure. He slept.

Claude woke, having no idea how long he'd been asleep but, looking around, he noticed that the shelter he'd built was no longer satisfactory – it was crumbling around him. He scrambled out feeling much better and stood breathing deeply the sweet bush air. Then he noticed something very strange. From his shoulders, extending down his back, there now projected a pair of beautiful wings. He was bewildered but found that he could move them by flexing his muscles. He enjoyed doing this and the beat of his wings grew stronger and stronger. Suddenly he felt himself lifted from the ground. He was flying! He turned this way and that way letting the air currents lift him high above the earth. He learned to control the direction of his flight and could go where he pleased.

His life was now perfect except that he missed his friend Con. He decided to head for home. When he reached the familiar surroundings he saw Con in his favourite tree. He called to his friend.

"Con, you were right. This is the greatest thrill – the view is wonderful and the freedom indescribable. Oh how I wish you could join me up here!"

Con smiled back, "How did that happen? Who taught you to fly?"

I'd sure like to be together like we were before but it's impossible. I'm only a caterpillar! I can't fly and not only that but during the last day or two I've felt a strange lethargy. I have no energy despite a growing appetite and I'm putting on weight. I think I need to get away for a break."

**NOTE:** ERIC WROTE THIS STORY AFTER SEEING A CARTOON OF TWO CATERPILLARS GAZING UP AT A BUTTERFLY. HE USED THE CAPTION AS HIS FIRST LINE.

# KIT Quiz 2 The 'Day'

- 1 **Mount Sunday, NZ** is the film site for 'Edoras' in the movie \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 **Monday Bay** is a modern calligraphy, script or \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 **Tuesday Island** is a mecca for surfers in the P\_\_\_\_\_.
- 4 **Wednesday Island** (Torres Strait) has one building; a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 **Thursday Island** (Torres Strait) is part of the P\_\_\_\_\_ of W\_\_\_\_\_ Archipelago.
- 6 **Mount Friday Formation**, part of the Gawler Craton, is a geological area located in which Australian state?
- 7 **Saturday Island** is the title of a 1952 romantic, war film starring T\_\_\_\_\_ u\_\_\_\_\_.
- 8 **Whitsunday Passage** Based on his journal date, Cook believed that he discovered and named the passage on Whitsunday. As the International Date Line had not yet been established, the day of discovery was actually Whit \_\_\_\_\_.
- 9 **Pentecost Island**, part of V\_\_\_\_\_ u\_\_\_\_\_, is most famous for the custom known as 'land diving' which influenced today's extreme sport of \_\_\_\_\_ jumping.
- 10 **Rapa Nui**, an island off Chile, is also known as \_\_\_\_\_ Island.
- 11 **Big Diomedé and Little Diomedé**, islands in the Bering Strait, sit on opposite sides of the International Date Line. What are their nick names?



**ANSWERS** 1 Lord of the Rings 2 font 3 Philippines 4 lighthouse 5 Prince of Wales 6 South Australia 7 Tab Hunter 8 Whit Monday 9 Vanuatu; bungee jumping 10 Easter Island 11 Yesterday Island, Tomorrow Island



## Newest AUS Citizen

**Congratulations to Fr. Kimi who became an Australian Citizen on Monday 22 February 2021.**

If you hear Kimi using words like....Bonza..... Cobber..... and, She'll be right..... you will know he is practising his Aussie language.



## News from a Roving Correspondent

Some cake makers of the St John the Apostle Community 'cooked up a storm' in February. Their efforts were applauded and rewarded at the annual baking competition held at the February meeting of the Belconnen Branch of the Country Women's Association (CWA) of New South Wales.

Congratulations to Jenny Maher, Robyn Erickson and Maryanne Ferguson for achieving three 1st and two 2nd prizes in the competition. All three cooks are eligible to represent Belconnen CWA in the upcoming Monaro competition to be held at Adaminaby on 16 March and, through the intercession of St Honoré of Amiens the patron saint of bakers and confectioners, might even represent Belconnen at the CWA of NSW State Conference in Bega in May.

The St. Honoré cake, usually known by its French name Gâteau St-Honoré, was created in 1847 at the Maison Chiboust on the Rue Saint Honoré in Paris by that establishment's pastry chef, Auguste Jullien. This torte has a puff pastry base, topped with pastry cream and whipped cream, surrounded by profiteroles dipped in caramelized sugar, their flat sugary tops resembling the halos of saints.



At 8:30am mass recently I noticed a musical undertone... it began with a little giggle, then a whisper, and suddenly a small shriek.

A gurgle as a baby told her mother a story, then a whimper, joined by something a little louder until there came a piercing cry.

Like the ringing of tiny bells came the jingle of car keys as they were surrendered as a peace offering. And throughout it all the "shush sshhh" from parents, alternating with murmurs of negotiation.

The glorious sounds of the smallest members of our congregation ebbed and flowed and underscored the mass from start to finish....oh what joy to hear them all as a part of our celebration of Christ in our midst.

Thank you to all the parents who bring their darlings to mass so that we can share in their vitality and be reminded of our own little darlings who are now grown.

## Presence

Contentment is his symphony of life.  
His face proclaims communion with his God.  
With quiet confidence his ways are wrought.

He is not daunted by the task that lies ahead,  
though hard the road and toilsome be the effort of each moment.

He has taught for three fruitful years  
a way of life so full of love and care that no one has ever heard before.

A way that leads to unity and peace,  
an end to strife and murmurings of war,  
a final fashioning of happy humankind.

His labours are transparent to us all;  
He has sown the seeds with salutary care.  
Do we, ungrateful, nail Him to a tree?

**Eamonn Murtagh**

# HEARTS IN ACTION

## MINISTRY PROFILE **Altar Society**

The ministry of the Sacristan has a broad range of duties in maintaining the sacristy and preparing for the celebration of the liturgy. The ministry is more about being Martha rather than Mary, a practical, hands-on service that requires organisational skills knowing not only what the Church uses in its various liturgies but also where these items are kept so that these can be organised and used to their fullest potential within the liturgical life of the parish.

The Altar Linen Society comes under the umbrella of the Sacristan and is a very important aspect of the running of the sacristy, ensuring that the altar linen, vestments, are always clean and available. Our parish has a dedicated group of eight parishioners; Margaret Ferguson, Pat Gilchrist, Margaret Stanford, Mary Cruickshank, Gabe Culhane, Maresa Laird, Sabina Van Rooy and Maryanne Ferguson, who volunteer their services to ensure the altar linen is washed and ironed every week for the celebration of mass.

### Patron Saints of Ironing

The smell of freshly ironed linen is a joy to some. It certainly was for my mother. She liked ironing. Crisply pressed shirts. Pleated skirts. Cotton dresses, tablecloths, napkins, tea towels, pillowslips and dozens of handkerchiefs all received the attention. Perhaps it was the training received during her six year tailoring apprenticeship. Pressing and pleating. Smoothing and tacking. Patience, care and precision are key to the outcome of one's labour.

I did not inherit the 'sewing' gene. My twin sister did. I inherited the 'ironing' gene, especially the 'square ironing' gene. Ironing square and rectangular cloth is my forte. Altar Society members share the 'square ironing' gene. The fruits of their labour can be seen at each Mass. The altar and credence table cloths, the towels at Baptism, the corporal placed on the altar, the finger towel used by the priest and the purifier that wipes the chalice are laundered and ironed with care by Altar Society members. If you share the 'square ironing' gene and would like to join the Altar Society, please contact St John's office staff.

And for those who are wondering, along with the ironing saint that lives in your household, there are five patron saints of laundry workers – St Clare of Assisi, St Hunna (Una) of Alsace, St Lawrence of Rome, St Martha of Bethany, and St Veronica.



Thorns and bulrushes, along with the tools of Christ's passion on a Lenten chasuble



Multiple floral motifs on a chasuble dating from the French revolution.



Passionflowers represent Christ's Passion and sacrifice, red is worn on the feast days of martyrs.

Watching my mother make and repair vestments for my local parish in South Australia opened my eyes to a rich tapestry of ecclesiastical design the stretches back centuries.

During research for my PhD I had the opportunity and privilege to visit several heritage vestment collections in NSW and Victoria. I was struck firstly by the variety of design and manufacturing techniques and secondly by the constancy of design motifs. Flowers and other plants feature prominently and help to tell the story and teachings of the Church. Each motif is symbolic and this symbolism has remained consistent for centuries.

The most common plants are wheat and grapes symbolising the Eucharist. The white rose is associated with heaven and purity, and along with the lily, with the Blessed Virgin. Red roses are often associated with martyrdom. Surprisingly pomegranates make an appearance and were particularly popular with fabric designers. The seeds represent the many parts of the Church in one fruit, and the fruit itself is a symbol of new life and resurrection. Thorns, thistles and passionfruit were common motifs on old vestments worn during Lent – they represent earthly suffering and the sacrifice of Christ. In contrast, bulrushes also appear in Lenten designs, representing salvation. The three leaflets of clover symbolise the Trinity, and olive branches peace.

**Margaret Ferguson**

# Youth MINISTRY

Meet **Grace** and **Diane** who are our youth workers for 2021. They will do the music ministry on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month at the 6:00pm mass. They are looking forward to a delightful year working with the young people in our region. If you know someone in years 7–12 encourage them to “**Come and See**”. John 1:39



**SJA Youth Group Agape** for year 7 – year 12 students. They meet on the 1st & 3rd Sundays of the month after the 6:00pm mass. They share a meal, games and prayer in the parish centre.

## Agape Youth Group

### Years 7 – 12

**RSVP:**

**Grace.braybon@cg.  
org.au**

**Diane.Magnocavallo  
@cg.org.au**



*Explore your faith*

Mass at 6pm agape from  
7:15pm - 9pm@ St John the  
Apostle Parish

## YOUR IMPACT WILL OPEN DOORS TO HOPE

For those without a safe place to sleep, every donation has a **knock on effect** to help people find shelter and comfort when they need it most.

Sign up to be a Vinnies champion during March and help us open doors for those who need it most.



## VINNIES KNOCK ON EFFECT MARCH 2021

### GOODBYE DOORKNOCK AND HELLO KNOCK ON EFFECT

Over many years the Kippax Conference of St Vincent de Paul Society has participated in the annual Doorknock Appeal during February to raise much needed funds to support the work of the Society. For a number of reasons, the Doorknock has been shelved and a new campaign has been launched. The Doorknock Appeal has been replaced by the Vinnies 'Knock On Effect'.

### WHAT IS THE KNOCK ON EFFECT?

The Knock On Effect (KOE) represents the impact that the Society has through its good works. For example, while providing food meets an immediate need, the longer-term impact is the support offered to a family to help them through a tough time. This is what Vinnies calls a 'hand up'. Coupled with the food, Conference members might provide information about government programs and community services that can improve a person's situation. This gives them hope and sets them on a path to a better future. KOE is about helping to open doors to hope, learning, and healing.

KOE refers to the impact that a contribution can have on our COMPANIONS, the people seeking help from Vinnies. Like a ripple effect, an hour of volunteering may not seem much, but it can make a big difference in the life and outlook for a person who has sought help from Vinnies. A donation of \$5 may seem small, but many \$5 donations significantly support the continuation of Vinnies services.

### KOE AIMS

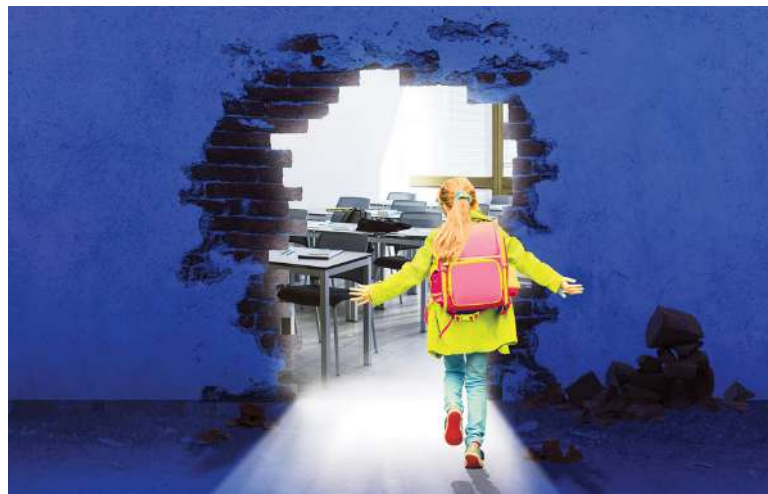
The aims of the KOE campaign are:

- REACH** Communicating the work of Vinnies to the broader community; to educate people and raise awareness of the work of the Society
- RECRUITMENT** To build the numbers of members and volunteers in the Society
- REVENUE** Fundraising activities to support the good works of Vinnies

#### AT KIPPAX WE HAVE ADDED A FOURTH AIM

- RELATIONSHIP** Building relationships between Vinnies Conference members and parishioners and indirectly between parishioners and our companions.

**REACH + RECRUITMENT + REVENUE = STRONG RELATIONSHIPS**



## KOE ACTIVITIES AT ST JOHN THE APOSTLE

To raise awareness among parishioners, attract new members and volunteers, raise some funds, and build relationship, St John's Conference members will:

- On the weekend of 20-21 March, provide morning tea for parishioners after the two morning Masses, and snacks and cool drinks after the two evening Masses (in the foyer and outside, in accordance with COVID-19 safety procedures).
- Display information on the range of the social services provided by Vinnies to better inform parishioners of the good works of the Society.
- Present stories on some of our companions in posters and brochures in the hope that we can connect individual companion's needs with parishioners more directly.
- Present a picture of the need for help in our area and how Kippax Conference has responded to that need over the past 12 months using data from the Vinnies database and Conference reporting.
- Promote recruitment in all areas where volunteers are needed and demonstrate the need for new members and volunteers.
- Provide opportunities for parishioners to donate and get involved in personal fund raising for Vinnies through their own KOE activity.

## REACH

On Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st March, after each Mass, St John's Conference members and other Vinnies volunteers will be available to talk with parishioners about the various services that the Society provides. These include Conferences, Special Works, and the Vinnies Shops. We will provide information on activities and programs within each of these main services.

## RECRUITMENT

Our Conference at Kippax has 11 members and recently we welcomed a returned member after several year's break. Currently, only 8 members are involved in home visitation. In the first 25 days of February, we received 40 requests for help. On one day there were seven calls. This is a big load for a small group to manage effectively. We are in desperate need to bolster our membership. Current members will answer your questions about home visitation and other Conference activities. The more members we have, the more time we can spend helping our companions and the more effective we will be for them.

## REVENUE

Our 2020 Christmas Appeal for donations of food and gifts saw, as usual, a magnificent response from the parish. This enabled us to deliver hampers to 56 families and gifts to 77 children.

During 2020 the Conference conducted 427 home visitations and distributed over \$32,000 in material aid to 114 companions and their families. This comprised food, clothing, furniture, bedding, whitegoods, travel expenses and assistance with bills.

While many companions simply like to see a friendly face, the majority usually struggle to make ends meet on a Disability Support Pension or Newstart Allowance (Job Seeker). We help them with food, food vouchers for Woollies and Foodbank outlets, or clothing vouchers which they can use at our Vinnies Shops. Some companions need assistance to set up a new household, perhaps as a result of escaping domestic violence or some other personal crisis. In these circumstances Vinnies assists by providing bedding, whitegoods, and basic household furniture.

Donations help us continue our support for the marginalised in our community. You can donate to Vinnies via the KOE campaign. One way is through the KOE website: [knockoneffect.org.au](http://knockoneffect.org.au). You may register to fundraise and spread the word about Vinnies at this website as well. Please let us know if you are keen to have ago at fundraising. All money raised will go to Kippax Conference. Another way to donate is via the trusty old buckets, which will be available on 20th or 21st March after Mass.

## RELATIONSHIP

Conference members are hoping to strengthen relationships with parishioners by raising awareness and understanding of the scope of good works and services of the Society and by sharing some of the stories of our companions. We would like you to connect with those stories and contemplate how you might be able to help – share information about Vinnies, volunteer with a Vinnies activity or program, raise funds through a personal KOE activity or donate to support the work of the Society.

If you were a Doorknocker in previous years and would like to help with the KOE campaign, we would love to hear from you. We have a need for helpers, especially on the big weekend in March. Please contact James or Mike for more information on how you can help.

More information can be found on the KOE website: [knockoneffect.org.au](http://knockoneffect.org.au), or you can contact James Cox on 0432 563 299 or Mike Blyth on 0419 818 410



# February Baptisms

We welcome into the SJA Community of the Body of Christ the following children baptised during the month of February.

*Hudson Collis*

Son of Brendan and Natalie

*Kai Knight*

Son of Damien and Tess

## Obituary

PETER FRANCIS NEEDHAM

6 September 1947 – 29 November 2020

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER PETER WROTE TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY WHICH WAS READ AT HIS FUNERAL...

“This note is to say thanks to all those who have helped me to live my life, by being part of my life. I think that I have been very fortunate by being in the right place, at the right time, with the right people.

I feel very lucky that the MSCs chose our Parish back in 1972 and put in the groundwork work to develop and maintain a Parish focusing on social justice and friendship, and also developed strong and binding links with the Parish School. I also feel very lucky that Mercia and I decided to build our home in the St Johns Parish. I have been blessed to be guided by many amazing priests, brothers, men, and women in the Parish, all who have informed, guided, encouraged and cared for us over 48 years. Those new to the Parish would not recognise the church buildings as they are now compared with forty to forty eight years ago, however, the buildings then, and now, have always been a place of worship and friendship, learning, and reverence which have both nurtured, and focused my being.

Cancer has taught me that there are no guarantees in life - you have to look at the world and your own circumstances and those you love in a different way.

As I said earlier, I believe that I have had a fortunate life and I thank my darling wife, my family, my friends, my Parish family, colleagues and acquaintances that I have met along the way. God bless. Thank you. Peter...”

Peter’s life was one of service, working as a public servant for twenty six years and then for CatholicCare until his retirement. Peter initially joined CatholicCare to lead and facilitate pre-marriage education for the archdiocese, a program he facilitated for over 25 years. We both believed deeply in the value the program offered to engaged couples. Relationships were one of Peter’s greatest interests. He also managed the family support program at CatholicCare, as well as refugee resettlement. Over a period of seven years, he helped to settle around fifty families from Africa and the Middle East. Peter had many volunteer roles at St Johns including delivering fruit and veg to families in need for over twenty years, in addition to being a scout leader, and supporting roles with our children’s netball, cricket, and AFL.

I think the best way to sum up Peter, is that he was interesting, and interested. He was deeply interested in people, and the world around him. He listened intently to others and then respectfully shared his thinking; ‘what you saw is what you got’, a man of integrity.

Over thirty years ago Father Chris Murphy invited Peter and I to join Teams of Our Lady in a Parish based team; we will forever be grateful for that invitation. The monthly meeting was an opportunity to review and renew our marriage, revitalizing us and getting us ready for whatever came our way; taking our spiritual lives in ‘monthly bites’ kept us going. We loved the sacred space of the monthly meeting with trusted friends and members of Teams. We credited our membership in Teams to our happy, loving and fulfilling marriage.

**Mercia Needham**



# Social Justice News

## MARCH CALENDAR

<b>3 Mar</b>	World Wildlife Day
<b>5 Mar</b>	World Day of Prayer
<b>18 Mar</b>	National Close the Gap Day
<b>21 Mar</b>	International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination
<b>22 Mar</b>	World Water Day

### 3 MAR World Wildlife Day

This year, forests and their species are highlighted, with the theme: ***"Forests and Livelihoods: Sustaining People and Planet"***.

Millions of people, particularly indigenous groups, live in forested areas. Traditionally, they have cared for the forests and its wildlife but now their way of life and the forests they inhabit are increasingly threatened.

Forests are destroyed for a number of reasons, including opening up mines, taking the hardwood, and using the forest for other purposes such as farming. The Amazon lost around 5 million acres of forest in 2020 alone for cattle farming. Bushfires also destroy a significant amount of the forest and the creatures that live in it, as we have seen in Australia.

Forests sustain the earth in a variety of ways: they remove carbon dioxide from the air and replace it with oxygen. They help to preserve soils, and their destruction aggravates droughts, soil erosion, and pollution of watercourses, and also causes extensive flooding. Logging allows rapid run-off and destroys the ability of the soil to absorb water.

Many of the products we use in everyday life contribute to the loss of forests. For example, forests are cleared and burned to make way for palm oil, which is used in margarine, chocolate, ice cream, packaged biscuits, and detergents. In Indonesia and Malaysia, so much forest has been cleared for palm oil production in the last 20 years, that 80% of orangutan habitat has disappeared.



### 5 MAR World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome everyone to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. It is run under the motto *"Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action"*, and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March.

The movement aims to bring together people of various races, cultures and traditions in a yearly common Day of Prayer, as well as in closer fellowship, understanding and action throughout the year. Women are encouraged to become aware of other countries and cultures and no longer live in isolation. They are also encouraged to take up the burdens of other people, to sympathise with the problems of other countries and cultures, and pray with and for them. They are further encouraged to become aware of their talents and use them in the service of society.

The World Day of Prayer aims to demonstrate that prayer and action are inseparable and that both have immeasurable influence in the world. This year the theme is: ***"Building a Stronger Foundation"***. Vanuatu is the host nation where women from different faiths have been working together for the last two years to prepare the programme.

## 18 MAR National Close the Gap Day

The Close the Gap campaign for Indigenous Health Equality is a highly regarded movement that has helped shape government policy. While most Australians enjoy one of the highest life expectancies of any country in the world, it is not true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can expect to live at least 10 years less than other Australians. Those who live in remote locations die, on average, in their sixties.
- Babies born to Aboriginal mothers die at more than twice the rate of other Australian babies, and
- The leading causes of death of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are preventable diseases: heart disease, kidney disease, lung diseases, and diabetes.

The Close the Gap campaign is led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and supported by mainstream health and advocacy organisations from around the country.

## 21 MAR International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination

This day is observed annually on 21 March because on that day in 1960 police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid pass laws.

The day aims to remind people of racial discrimination's negative consequences. It also encourages people to remember their obligation and determination to combat racial discrimination.

**21 March is also Harmony Day in Australia** – this Day is an Australian Government program that centres on the message that *“Everyone belongs”*, reinforcing the importance of inclusiveness to all Australians.

Ours is one of the most successful multicultural countries in the world and we should celebrate this and work to maintain it. All people who migrate to Australia bring with them some of their own cultural and religious traditions, as well as taking on many new traditions. Collectively, these traditions have enriched our nation.

## 22 MAR World Water Day

World Water Day celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. It encourages nations to take action to tackle the global water crisis to help achieve ***Sustainable Development Goal 6: Water and Sanitation for all by 2030.***

Studies by the UN in Africa and Asia show that the poorest 20% of the population spend between 3 to 11% of their household income on water. This calculation does not include the cost of the time women spend on collecting water and managing water and sanitation facilities.

Water use has been growing globally at more than twice the rate of population increase in the last century. An increasing number of regions are reaching the limit at which water services can be sustainably delivered, especially in arid regions. In the coming decades, it is predicted that water scarcity in some places will cause millions of people to try to relocate to other areas.

- Today, 1 in 3 people live without safe drinking water.
- 2 out of 5 people around the world lack basic handwashing facilities at home.
- More than four thousand children under five die every day from diarrhea diseases due to poor sanitation, poor hygiene, or unsafe drinking water.
- Untreated water is often contaminated: with heavy metals such as mercury and arsenic; sewerage; viruses, bacteria, and parasites.
- The agricultural sector consumes 70% of the world's water. Water shortages in future could affect food security.

For more information on social justice issues, the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council's website:

<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au> contains a large amount of information in the form of statements, monthly briefings, leaflets, etc.

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