



# Sandpiper e-News

## ROGATIONISTS TO ESTABLISH COMMUNITY IN SHEPPARTON SOUTH

In November, two priests of the Rogationist Fathers of the Heart of Jesus will establish a community at St Mel's Parish, Shepparton South and will also serve St Malachy's Parish, Nagambie.

In an announcement last week, Bishop Shane said he was delighted that the Rogationist Fathers have agreed to establish a community of their priests in Sandhurst, and he is grateful to Fr Peter Taylor and Fr Tony Hill for generously facilitating this new arrangement by concluding their own ministry in the Parishes of Shepparton South and Nagambie.

The Sandhurst Community of Rogationists will be led by Fr Rene Ramirez RCJ, who has just concluded an appointment as Parish Priest of West Footscray, Maidstone and Braybrook. Fr Rene will be assisted by Fr Ruel Desamparado RCJ, who is preparing to travel to Australia from the Philippines. Their appointments will come into effect on Saturday 4 November.

The Rogationists were founded in Italy by St Hannibal Di Francia in 1897. They are dedicated to nurturing vocations to the priesthood and religious life, and to spreading greater awareness for all vocations in the Church. They are involved in parish ministry, education of youth, and social assistance, especially for children, orphans and the poor.

The St Matthew Province of the Rogationists is based in the Philippines and also has communities in Australia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, South Korea and Vietnam. They have been present for nearly ten years in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, caring for the Parish of West Footscray, Maidstone and Braybrook, and recently also for the parishes of Melton South and Bacchus Marsh.

"As we prepare to welcome the Rogationists to our Diocese, we look forward to being inspired by

their dedication to the Rogate command of Jesus: 'Pray (Rogate) therefore to the Lord of the harvest so that he may send out labourers into his harvest' [Mt 9:37-38; Lk. 10:2]," wrote Bishop Shane in his announcement.

*Note: The word rogation comes from the Latin verb rogare, meaning "to ask", which reflects the beseeching of God for protection from calamities.*

### SANDHURST MISSION AND PASTORAL COUNCIL

#### Get to know Christine Sebire

Christine Sebire wears many hats. An Echuca parishioner for many years, she is a wife, mother and dairy farmer. A former Pastoral Associate; teacher; and trainer of teachers, she is now also a Member of the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) and is one of three lay people (and the only woman) appointed to attend the College of Consultors.

Christine is interested in finding ways to support parishes to be outward-facing places of nurture; to help people discover the relevance of faith in their lives; and for Catholics to "not be so quiet" about all the great things we do.

Relating to her own faith life, Christine believes community and social justice build faith just as much as they are built on faith. For Christine, viable parishes provide people with an experience based on affirmation and belonging which extends beyond the parish.

"Our parishes need to be, not just places where you go to Church but, places that nurture us and places that are relevant to our life," says Christine. "This is my main motivation to be part of the SMPC – how, as a Diocese, do we support parishes

to foster that sort of climate in their communities?"

"Yes, we need tradition, yes we need knowledge; it's not about how many people are in our pews, it's about how many people feel parish is important to them."

Christine shares her personal story to illustrate the importance of creating parishes which are, as she says, "for everybody". Christine and her seven siblings were raised in the thick of the St Mary's Echuca community where her parents were immersed in parish life, and she was active in youth programs and ministries. "The parish was my world," she explains. "At that time, my faith wasn't as important to me as the support and nurturing of that community."

After leaving Echuca as a young adult, Christine didn't attend Mass. "It wasn't a rejection of the Church or faith, I just didn't have that community," she said.

After years working in Far North Queensland Christine returned to Echuca as a single mother, determined to give her daughter a sense of belonging and love from a parish which she had always felt as a child. "My daughter's school was very supportive, and the Parish Priest passed no judgement. We just fitted straight into the parish!" she said.

Within weeks of returning to Echuca, Christine was asked to join the Sacramental Team. "It scared the pants off me, because I hadn't been to Mass in a while, yet I felt this was a real opportunity for me to return to the Church completely," she said.

Christine started teaching at St Mary's Primary School and became a Religious Education specialist. Accreditation courses, including some facilitated by the Diocese, instilled the confidence and knowledge for her to continue with her work, not only as a Religious Education teacher, but in her parish as well.

Christine served as Pastoral Associate at St Mary's Echuca for eight years where she endeavoured to inspire others to create a warm, welcoming, and outward-facing community in which joy itself was an evangelising factor.

Tapping into the Catholics who no longer attend Mass, making faith relevant, and communicating what the Church is really about are major challenges for any diocese and a focus for the SMPC. "At the last SMPC meeting, we agreed that communicating about the 'servant church' of today and overcoming preconceived ideas about parish life is a major challenge. We tried to reimagine what the Church in Sandhurst could look like as a welcoming and outgoing Church and how we communicate that," said Christine.

"According to the Australian census there were about 3000 people who identified as Catholic in our area. You don't identify as Catholic unless it actually means something to you, so how do we reach out to those people to let them know that we care, to make a link? Not to make them come to Church, but to reach out so that they feel they belong. Then, if they feel we have something to offer as a community, they might decide to come to Mass and be part of that community."

Christine says she found it very encouraging that Dr Elissa Roper, the keynote speaker at the Diocesan Assembly held in February this year, spoke about "opening up" the Church and creating new avenues of entry. "She was totally speaking my language!" laughed Christine.

"Over the generations we have unwittingly created a situation where people believe they are unworthy, or need to be holy, or need to know theology. We need these people – and all of us to know – that to be worthy we just have to live our faith. How can we "Open our doors", as Pope Francis says, open the doors, not only so people can come in, but so we can go out into the community? We need to be better at doing that and we need to be better at telling everyone about the good things we do."

Christine says social justice is a key to helping people find the relevance of Church in their lives. "I had tremendous Religious Education teachers in my last years of school; they really brought faith to relevance and to real life situations." She summarised, being active in community for a common cause seeking justice, leads us to find relevance in Catholic teaching and this, in turn, leads us to faith.

## College of Consultors

Christine is aware of the significance of her appointment to attend the College of Consultors, especially as a lay woman. "It's a responsibility I take very seriously, and I acknowledge Bishop Shane's broad thinking to make such an invitation," she said.

Bishop Shane appointed Christine and Brendan Lindsay (St Brendan's Shepparton) as lay participants to attend the College of Consultors on the recommendation of the SMPC. Dr Chris Cotter (Director of Mission and Pastoral Life) also attends the meetings.

Reflecting on her first meeting of the College of Consultors on 1 August, Christine said she was warmly welcomed by the Consultors and felt that her contribution was valued.

The three appointed lay participants do not vote in formal canonical decisions; nevertheless, they fully participate in discussions and the decision-making process of the College of Consultors. Christine explained, "We have the right to speak as we see fit and I very much feel that what I say in a meeting is taken into consideration when the Consultors are voting."

"The responsibility certainly isn't lost on me!" says Christine. "I'm mindful that parishes differ so much and within parishes there are diverse congregations. How do we embrace all of those elements? It's an enormous challenge and it is very humbling."

Contact Christine and the SMPC by:  
email: [smpc.admin@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:smpc.admin@sandhurst.catholic.org.au)  
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*NOTES: According to Canon Law, [Can. 502 §1] The College of Consultors assists the Bishop in the governance of the Diocese in accord with the provisions of Church Law.*

*In Sandhurst, the College of Consultors is formed by Fr Vijay Bandanadam ALCP/OSS, Fr Brian Boyle EV, Fr Andrew Fewings, Fr Jake Mudge, Fr Joe Taylor VG and Fr Junray Rayna.*

*While the Bishop presides over the College, he is not a member of it and, as such, he does not vote on matters brought before the College. The College of Consultors also provides for the administration of the Diocese if the See is vacant or impeded.*

## INDIA

### Catholic India – A Rising Global Voice

Christians have a long history in India and have traditionally yielded broad influence in society due to their work in missions, schools, aged care and health care.

According to the 2020 Census of the Anuario Pontificio (Pontifical Yearbook) the number of Catholics in India was 21 million, equating to 1.55 per cent of the Indian population. Catholics in India are generally very engaged with their faith, over 55 per cent regularly attend Mass and 90 per cent support their Church financially.

While the Catholic population in Australia is decreasing, both in actual numbers and as a percentage of the Australian population (19.9% in 2021), the Church in India is thriving. As the number of Catholics in India continues to outpace overall population growth, it is projected that there will be 30 million Catholics in India by 2050, making it the seventh largest Catholic country in the world.

### Bishop Shane's Indian Odyssey

In August this year, Bishop Shane spent ten "fascinating and eye-opening" days in India, where he visited the families of Sandhurst priests, Fr Vijay Bandanadam (Benalla); Fr John Paul Pasala (Tatura); Fr Uday Marneni (Wodonga Parishes); and Fr Jophin Joy (Numurkah and Nathalia). "It's really valuable to understand something of the background of our priests," said Bishop Shane, acknowledging that he now has a deeper understanding of the challenges our Indian priests face when adjusting to life in Australia. Bishop Shane also expressed how pleased he was to personally let the families of these priests know how much their sons and brothers are valued by people in Sandhurst parishes.

"India is extraordinary – to speak of it as a country is a bit of a misnomer. There are 28 states, each with their own cultures, their own climate, their own geography, and their own languages ... In fact, they call people from other states 'migrants'," said Bishop Shane describing his experience.

Bishop Shane was struck by the “great energy and great commitment” of the people in India, which he observed in their work ethic and their commitment to faith, family, and community. For Bishop Shane, this was particularly evident in the exuberant way he was warmly welcomed into the communities he visited.

Bishop Shane received a traditional welcome at every official visit, this included being garlanded with fresh flowers and receiving a ceremonial shawl, which was usually wrapped around his shoulders to the delight of everyone present.

In India, garlands represent peace, love, purity, and passion, and are given to acknowledge the gifts the recipient brings. Ceremonial shawls, symbolise India’s rich cultural heritage and have been used ceremonially at official events for hundreds of years. Shawls specific to the style and artistry of the region are given to demonstrate the respect and gratitude a community holds for the recipient.

“In one parish, there were four separate groups who needed to welcome the Bishop,” explained Bishop Shane, “So, I was given four garlands of fresh flowers, and four ceremonial shawls.” It wasn’t just official parties who exuberantly welcomed this unusually tall and fair Australian. Word of a visiting Bishop could travel through communities more quickly than a Bishop’s entourage. Bishop Shane recounted one such occasion while visiting Fr Jophin Joy’s family in Kerala.

“We were getting ready to go to one of our planned destinations and Jophin’s Dad says, “Oh we should call in to just look at the Church on the way.” “Ok.” So, it took us about half an hour to get to the Church and, by the time we got there, half of the parish had already gathered to meet us!” laughed Bishop Shane, noting that it was an occurrence which was typical of his experience in the smaller towns he visited. From Bishop Shane’s expression, it was clear that he too was infected with the joy of such spontaneous greetings.

Amongst the joy in India, there is also hardship. Bishop Shane witnessed the precarious nature of many peoples’ lives – visiting a Day Labour Market and observing the manually intensive labour methods employed in construction and agriculture for example. “Life is hard; there are so many people and limited resources – people

make the most of the resources they have. They don’t complain; they are hardworking and seize every opportunity available to them, be it school, a job, or a spot on the road!” said Bishop Shane.

Bishop Shane’s ten-day itinerary was jam-packed. He spent most of his time in the smaller towns around Hyderabad in Telangana State, visiting the families of Fr John Paul Pasala, Fr Vijay Bandanadam and Fr Uday Marneni. He also spent time with Fr Jojappa Pasala ALCP/OSS, the Provincial of the Holy Spirit Fathers (the Order to which Fr Vijay, Fr Jophin and Fr Uday belong), who is based in Hyderabad.

Early in his visit Bishop Shane travelled south from Hyderabad to Kerala State to visit Fr Jophin Joy’s parents in Manakadavu, a small town one hour’s drive from Kannur airport. He was captivated by the lush tropical landscape. “It is beautiful; there are tea plantations, coffee plantations, banana plantations, it’s very exotic,” he said. Returning to Hyderabad via Karnataka State, Bishop Shane was surprised to catch a glimpse of wild elephants, a herd of deer, and acres of sunflower fields.

Fr Jophin Joy reported that Bishop Shane had been somewhat sceptical when first told that Indian priests speak English when they get together. “This trip surely has given Bishop Shane an understanding that knowing just one language will not help while travelling through India!” said Fr Jophin. “In most cases – even with our accent, which is very much influenced by the other languages we speak – English is the only language that connects us together.” [There are 22 scheduled languages in India, 96.71 per cent of the population speak one of these. There are incredibly 121 identifiable mother tongues with 10,000 or more speakers, which can be broken down into 19,500 dialects.]

While in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, Bishop Shane spent time with Fr Maria Paulraj SVD, the Provincial of the Society of the Divine Word and met the Bishop of Indore, Chacko Thottumarickal, S.V.D, who is also a priest of the Society of the Divine Word.

Fr Uday Marneni said he thought Bishop Shane would be surprised to learn that all 250 families in his village of Bheemanapally, Khammagudem in the Diocese of Nalgonda, about 80 km south-east of Hyderabad are Catholic. The Church is in the

centre of the village and is central to their daily lives. "People in my village are devout. Every year we have at least one ordination in our village," said Fr Uday. Catholics settled in this village generations ago, considering it a safe haven. Many in this village, including Fr Uday's family, became Catholics under the influence of Italian missionaries many generations ago. Bishop Shane noted that it was not uncommon in India to have 'twin villages' in which residents lived in communities of people sharing the same faith.

Bishop Shane found India to be "extraordinary and fascinating". Apart from the obvious fruits of strengthening relationships, and secondary to the good company of India's people, Bishop Shane enjoyed the cuisine – although he was diplomatically coy about which regional Indian dish he most enjoyed. "The food was great, I loved the food," he said. "Apparently the only spot you can eat real biryani is in Hyderabad. We did have biryani in another place but – 'No, no, no, that's not real biryani.' So, we had to go to a special spot in Hyderabad for biryani."

Fr Vijay Bandanadam's delightful daily account of Bishop Shane's visit to India can be read [here](#).

This weekend, why not download and try [Fr Vijay's chicken biryani recipe](#). It won't be real biryani, but you can imagine the colourful sights, sounds and aromas of India, and say a prayer for the people Bishop Shane visited, as you cook.

Namaste.

## A Memorable Journey through India



Fr Vijay Bandanadam accompanied Bishop Shane throughout his pastoral visits in India and wrote a delightful daily account of this journey of a lifetime.

## By Fr Vijay Bandanadam

7 August

Exploring Culture and Beauty In the heart of a warm Indian night, our journey began as we arrived in India, greeted by the welcoming embrace of Mariapuram Parish in the Hyderabad Diocese. The vibrant spirit of the land was already evident, setting the tone for the adventure ahead.

On the first day of our arrival, we visited Fr John Paul Pasala's family, where Bishop Shane received a warm welcome, garlanded with fresh flowers and given a ceremonial shawl in the traditional way of Telangana State.

In the evening, Bishop Shane and I visited Rev. Fr Jojappa Pasala, the Provincial Superior of the Holy Spirit Fathers ALCP/OSS, the Order to which Fr Uday Marneni, Fr Jophin Joy and I belong.

8 August

As the sun broke the horizon, our path led us to Kerala's picturesque Kunnur District where Fr Jophin Joy's family welcomed us with open arms. We were instantly captivated by the lush greenery and breathtaking beauty that surrounded us. Nature's serenity was a soothing balm to our souls, and the visit left an indelible mark on our hearts.

With the sun setting, we embarked on a journey to Wayanad District's Pulpally, home to our Minor Seminary. We celebrated a solemn Mass for the young seminarians, their faces alight with hope and determination. Exploring the area, we marvelled at the sacred spaces of convents and parishes, soaking in the rich history and culture that permeated the land.

11 August

Our travels took a new direction as we ventured to the vibrant city of Indore in Madhya Pradesh. The Society of the Divine Word (SVD) Provincial House became our haven, providing an opportunity to connect with Fr Maria Paulraj SVD, and fellow priests, including my brother, Fr Sleevaiah SVD. Amidst discussions and laughter, bonds were forged that transcended borders and backgrounds.

12 August

In the shelter of the SVD House, we prepared for a once-in-a-lifetime experience. Our path led us to the bustling heart of India – New Delhi.

13 August

The day brought us to the iconic Taj Mahal, a masterpiece that humbled us with its grandeur. A special VIP security detail accompanied Bishop Shane, a testament to the respect and honour India holds for its distinguished visitors.

14 August

As the sun rose, Delhi's treasures awaited. From the towering Qutub Minar to the historical Delhi Gate, the city unfolded before us like a tapestry woven with stories of the past and hopes for the future.

15 August

A day of dual celebration – the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary and India's Independence Day – a unique confluence of faith and patriotism. We shared a profound Mass with the Veeravelly Parishioners. Bishop Shane's presence brought warmth and joy to the hearts of the congregation. His appreciation for diverse cultures, foods, and the beauty of the land was evident, bridging gaps and fostering a sense of unity.



Image above: Bishop Shane with Fr Vijay's Family.

In the afternoon we visited Bhimanapalli Kammagudem to catch up with members of Fr Uday Marneni's family who were very excited to meet Bishop Shane. Once again, Bishop Shane was welcomed in a traditional way. In the evening the Bandanadam family enjoyed a fun-filled family get-together.

As our journey neared its end, we returned to Hyderabad, where the fragrant aroma of Hyderabad Biryani welcomed us. The flavours were a culmination of the tastes, scents, and memories we had gathered along the way – a

fitting end to a remarkable journey that had touched every sense and emotion.

In the wake of our travels through India, we carried back, not only souvenirs and photographs, but a treasure trove of experiences that would forever link us to the heart of this enchanting land. Our visit had transformed into a story woven with threads of culture, spirituality and beauty, leaving us with memories to cherish for a lifetime.

## **MIGRANT AND REFUGEE SUNDAY** **24 September 2023**

Every year since 1914, on the last Sunday of September, Catholics around the world have celebrated World Day of Migrants and Refugees. The day provides an occasion to focus on praying for people who have left their homeland, especially those who had little choice but to do so; supporting and advocating for migrants and refugees; and, celebrating the gifts migrants and refugees bring to new lands.

### **"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay"**

"Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay" is the theme for World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2023. In choosing this theme, Pope Francis aims to foster renewed reflection on the right to remain in one's homeland, the right *not* to migrate.

*"The fact that many persons are forced to migrate demands a careful consideration of the causes of contemporary migration. The right to remain is older, more deeply rooted and broader than the right to migrate. It includes the possibility of sharing in the common good, the right to live in dignity and to have access to sustainable development. All of these rights should be effectively guaranteed in the nations of origin through a real exercise of shared responsibility on the part of the international community."*

## **Unity in Diversity: the Changing Face of the Sandhurst Presbyterate**

As we focus on Migrants and Refugees this weekend, let's not forget to pray for those in our midst who pray for us. Of the 31 priests actively serving in Sandhurst parishes 18 (58%) were born overseas. These migrant priests are men of profound faith; they are highly educated and dedicated to the communities they serve.

They leave their family and friends behind to venture into the unknown with a desire to serve

where needed. They are a far cry from the cynical notion of men from the developing world used to fill the homegrown priest void. In fact, they reflect the changing face of Australia at large, and meet the needs, not only of Australian-born Catholics, but of the ever-increasing number of migrants to Australia, many of whom are Catholic and many who have kept our parish and school doors open.

More than half of all Australians are first or second-generation migrants. So, it makes sense for at least some of our clergy to represent the same culture and language groups as some of the people in their pews.

When the Rogationists arrive in November, there will be ten Filipino priests actively working in Sandhurst parishes. Of the eight diocesan priests, five completed their priestly formation at Corpus Christi College in Melbourne, four are incardinated to the Diocese of Sandhurst, five now have permanent residency and at two have become Australian citizens.

As well as leading their parish communities, Filipino priests hold leadership positions in the Diocese; Fr Nathan Verallo is the Director of Vocations, Fr Novelito Lim is Dean of the Western Deanery, and Fr Junjun Amaya is a member of the College of Consultors and Dean of the North East Deanery.

Migrants from the Philippines make up 1.2 per cent of the overall Australian population and are the fifth largest culturally and linguistically diverse community in Australia. 76 per cent of Filipinos in Australia are Catholic, so they have a significant impact on the Church in Australia, especially in regional areas such as Pyramid Hill where they represent 20 per cent of the town's population and have been credited with saving the town from "imminent ruin".

Filipino migrants have shaped Australian society since they first started migrating to Australia in the 1870s to work in the pearling and sugar industries. In the 1950s Filipino migrant, Lorenzo Gamboas, was credited with changing Australian attitudes to immigration, which eventually helped destroy the White Australia Policy (which was officially renounced in 1973).

For Filipinos, whether they are building new lives in Australia, or working temporarily, the comfort of a priest from their homeland, even if from a

culturally different area, must be a blessing they never anticipated. For Filipino priests working in Sandhurst, it is perhaps a delightfully unexpected mission to be priest to a congregation filled with fellow Filipinos so far away from home.

The vibrancy our Filipino migrants, both priests and lay people, bring to many of our parishes is never more evident than on Feast Days and at Migrant and Refugee Sunday celebrations.

There are four Indian priests serving in the Diocese of Sandhurst. If we include a priest from the Syro-Malabar Eparchy, who is resident in Shepparton, there are five. These priests, all relatively new to Australia, are already making welcome contributions to their parishes and have stepped into leadership roles. Fr Vijay Bandanadam is a member of the College of Consultors and Fr John Paul Pasala is the Dean of the Goulburn Valley Deanery.

Migrants from India represent a quarter of all migration to Australia between 2016 and 2021. In 2021, 2.8 per cent of Australia's total population were Indian migrants, forming the second largest migrant community in Australia. India is now, no doubt, Australia's number one source of migrants – the first group ever to push the UK out of the top spot. Over the last twenty years, migration from India has increased five-fold and will continue to do so, especially with recently signed bilateral migration deals and strengthening diplomatic ties.

In the past, migrants from India were predominantly Christian, but today they are as diverse as the Indian population itself. These days approximately 18 per cent of migrants from India are Christian.

In Australia until recently, a person's religious affiliation could be correlated to their ethnicity (or social class); the Catholic Church was initially associated with Irish migrants, for example, then Italian and east European migrants and then Vietnamese. Today, there is not such a strong association between a migrant's ethnicity and their religion.

At the end of the day, where a person comes from has little to do with the contribution, they make to the communities they (hopefully) chose to live. At the Ninth Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Colloquium on Ethics and Migration in 2019,

Bishop Vincent Long OFM shared his thoughts on the contribution of migrants to Australia.

“Migrants and refugees always bring energy and dynamism to a new country ... We are what we are and who we are today – a dynamic, young prosperous country – because of the love of freedom and the love of fundamental human values on the part of our new Australians.”

As a Vietnamese ‘boat person’ who was sent from a Malaysian refugee camp to Australia – a country he knew nothing about – Vincent Long spoke of the contribution of Vietnamese migrants to Australia.

“We, the Vietnamese boat people have been generously accepted in this country, and haven’t done too badly since ... Most of us are well settled and doing our bit for the country. We have practically cornered the bakeries, the hair salons, the manicure, and the waxing businesses. We are making our presence felt even in the Australian Church too ... we are the new Irish!”

Who are the new Irish today?  
And who will be the new Irish of tomorrow?

### Assimilation Is a Two-Way Process: Bishop Lyons advises Australians to learn from Migrants



The following article was published in *The Advocate* in 1952. Quoting the late Bishop Patrick Francis Lyons who spoke at the opening of a church-kindergarten at a migrant camp. It provides an interesting perspective of views towards post-war migration in Australia.

“I Hope that the Australian people will have sense enough to appreciate that the coming to our country of such large groups of new settlers,

though mainly the outcome of a horrible war, will be in the nature of a national blood transfusion if only we do our utmost to take advantage of it,” said his Lordship Most Rev. Dr P. F. Lyons, Auxiliary Bishop to his Eminence Cardinal Gilroy, speaking at the blessing and opening of a new church-kindergarten at Chullora migrant camp, Sydney, on October 19.

(The story of how the migrants had transformed this centre in the Chullora railways yards was reported in *The Advocate* on October 2.)

“One of the words that these newcomers to Australia roundly detest is assimilation,” said Dr Lyons. “They are tired of hearing that they should try to be absorbed quickly into our conditions and way of living. It is rather the Australians who might well examine their conscience about this duty of assimilation, which is a two-way process. The migrants are in danger of falling between two stools. The Commonwealth Government brought them here under a guarantee to be responsible for them for two years. At the end of that time, there is the temptation to think that this responsibility is ended. On the other hand, the State Governments are inclined to take the view that the problem is not theirs.

“The migrants who have come here represent centuries of knowledge and experience in industry, farming, engineering, the fine arts, and above all, in Christian principles and culture. They are outstanding for their fidelity to correct family life. Their many and happy-faced children are one of their best gifts to us. They have not spared an effort to find work and homes among us, but so far many are homeless and, lately, some are faced with the fear of unemployment.”

“It is important that we not only make these good people feel at home, and cease regarding and speaking of them as a land of second-class citizen but make them also full partners in our life and destiny. They will not forget our help. They are aware and grateful that Australia has given them refuge after their terrible experience in other places. They will remember that in their time of need our land gave them liberty, peace and the means of living with their children as decent human beings. They do not seek charity. They will repay any debt they owe us by giving to our young nation from the riches of their intelligence, honesty, determination and Christian faith, which

were for so long the characteristics of their life in their ancient homelands."

A link with Melbourne at the new Chullora camp was referred to when Bishop Lyons presented to the new church-kindergarten, on behalf of the Cabrini Sisters, Melbourne, a first-class relic, and a photograph of St Frances Cabrini.

The kindergarten is dedicated to the saint, who is patroness of migrants. St Frances Cabrini, said Bishop Lyons, "knew well the difficulties met by her migrant compatriots long ago in the United States of America, and she would take a special interest in the Poles, Hungarians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Italians and other new arrivals in the Chullora settlement."

The new building will provide pre-school education for New Australians' children, of whom there are about 500 in the area, and will serve also as a centre for migration priests of many nationalities in their spiritual care of families in the camp.

*This article was published in the Melbourne Advocate on Thursday 23 October 1952 (page 2)*

*It was sourced from [TROVE](#). (A publicly accessible online library database owned by the National Library of Australia).*

## **THE VOICE**

### **The Voice Referendum is still on a knife's edge**

Research released last week (13 September) by National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC), has found that the Voice referendum sits on a knife's edge with 56 per cent definitely or likely to vote yes, and 44 per cent definitely or likely to vote no, with age as the biggest differentiating factor.

84 per cent of Gen Z'ers and 69 per cent of Millennials said they plan to vote yes, while 65 per cent of Boomers and the Silent Generation plan to vote no. Gen X looks to be the battleground, with 53 per cent definitely/likely to vote yes and 47 per cent definitely/likely to vote no.

According to Sherry Balcombe, a member of NATSICC, "What's encouraging is how Australians find a common ground in their sense of equality as a society ... 79 per cent agree that it's important

to support policies that recognise the dignity of all people, regardless of race, gender or religion".

"Further, 65 per cent agree that we should be supporting policies that promote social solidarity, such as those identified by Indigenous people that would contribute to making a better life for themselves," she said.

Voting trends based on the research showed Catholics were the most likely to vote yes, although the 'Catholic vote' is still neck and neck with 52 per cent saying they will vote yes and 48 per cent saying they will vote no.

A further 71 per cent of Australians believe that governments should support local decision making so that people affected by issues have a say in the solutions and 63 per cent agree that it is fair and just to promote meaningful participation and inclusion of Indigenous peoples in decision-making processes.

"These sentiments are reflected in the Bishops' 2023-24 Social Justice Statement that asks us to listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. To hear from them about their needs and in the spirit of subsidiarity, to ensure that they are part of all decision making that affects them," said Sherry.

"As Catholics, we are called to listen to the voices of First Australians and to work towards a more just and equitable society. The Voice to Parliament Referendum provides all Catholics with a unique opportunity to come together as a community and draw upon our faith and moral grounding to make an informed decision", she said.

"While these statistics are encouraging, we have more work to do as a community to embrace the gifts of First Nations peoples and truly come together as a reconciled country."

NATSICC's [One Journey Together website](#) provides resources and information for Catholics to reference in the lead-up to the referendum. It features voices of Catholic Clergy, Religious organisations and Indigenous Australians.

## **Yes? or No? Conversation to have around your Kitchen Table (or campfire)**

Hosting a Kitchen Table Conversation (KTC) is a wonderful opportunity to bring your community together to listen, learn and reflect on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament referendum that will be held on 14 October. Get together as a group of friends, family, parish community or colleagues to start the conversation.

You will need to download the guide from the internet. Please ask your parish to assist you with this.

## **SYNOD ON SYNODALITY**

### **XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops**

The first Session of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (the Synod on Synodality), will take place in Rome from 4 to 29 October. It will pave the way for the Second Assembly to be held in October next year.

This October, members will work to clarify the obstacles to synodality and the issues on which there is insufficient consensus, so that, in the eleven months leading up to the Session in 2024, work can be done to develop concrete proposals to grow as a synodal Church. Members will also discern the role of women in the Church, and the status of LGBTQI+ and remarried people.

*"We recall that the purpose of the Synod is not to produce documents, but to plant dreams, draw forth prophecies and visions, allow hope to flourish, inspire trust, bind up wounds, weave together relationships, awaken a dawn of hope, learn from one another and create a bright resourcefulness that will enlighten minds, warm hearts, give strength to our hands."*

Pope Francis, opening the Synod.

## **Bishop Shane and other Australians prepare for first Session of Synod on Synodality**

Early next month, Bishop Shane will travel to Rome in preparation for the first Assembly of the XVI Synod of Bishops. Bishop Shane is participating at the Synod in his capacity as a delegate from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. He will be joined by four fellow Australian Bishops and five "non-bishop" voting

members from Australia, three of whom are women.

This is the first synod in which lay people (and professed women) have been given voting rights.

Joining Bishop Shane at the Synod are fellow Australian Bishops: -

**Archbishop Patrick O'Regan**, also a delegate of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference;

**Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP**, member of the Council of the Secretariat of the Synod;

**Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB**, President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference; and

**Bishop Anthony Randazzo**, President of the Federation of Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania

Non-bishop participants from Australia are: -

**Dr Trudy Dantis**, Director of the National Centre for Pastoral Research;

**John Lochowiak**, Chair of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council;

**Kelly Paget**, Chancellor at the Diocese of Broken Bay;

**Professor Renee Kohler-Ryan**, National Head of Philosophy and Theology from the University of Notre Dame Australia; and

**Fr Sijeesh Pullenkunnel**, Chancellor of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Melbourne.

The first Session of the Assembly will rely on facilitators entrusted with moderating various proceedings over the four weeks of discernment.

Six Australian spiritual conversations facilitators will join facilitators from across the globe to moderate proceedings over the four weeks of the first Session.

They are:

**Dr Sandie Cornish**, from ACU;

**Fr Ormond Rush**, also from ACU;

**Br Ian Cribb SJ**, key Plenary Council facilitator; and

Susan Pascoe, Adjunct Professor, Member of the Synod Methodology Commission

Two other facilitators, who live in Australia have also been called to Rome:

Fr Asaeli Raass SVD, Divine Word Missionary (who is listed as a Fijian expert but is serving in remote central Australia); and

Fr Eamonn Conway, a priest of the Diocese of Tuam (listed for Ireland, but is Professor of Integral Human Development at the University of Notre Dame Australia).

## **"Without Prayer there will be no Synod" Pope Francis**

In the lead up to the first Session of the Synod, Australian Catholics are encouraged to continue their engagement with the global synodal journey through prayer, ongoing discernment and local conversations. Downloading the [\*Instrumentum Laboris\*](#) might help with this.

If you would like to download the Instrumentum Laboris from the internet. Please ask your parish to assist you with this.

## **Synod on Synodality – Room for Everyone in Our Church: Virtual Conversation**

On 14 September Bishop Shane led a virtual conversation *Synod on Synodality – Room for Everyone in Our Church* hosted by Garrett Publishing with the Australian Catholic Coalition for Church Reform and Yarra Theological Union.

Speaking of the upcoming Bishops Synod and referencing the *Instrumentum Laboris* Bishop Shane said, "The point of this synod is not just about what happens at the Assembly or about particular outcomes which come out of the Assembly ... it's about the synodal version of the Church, about modelling (synodality) for us ... and in a sense calling us to live synodally, and operate synodally, more and more in all of the structures and processes that we participate in. At the universal level, national, diocesan and parish levels."

When asked what synodality means for the average Churchgoer, Bishop Shane responded:

"We need to continue to talk about synodality in a way that is accessible to people and helps us makes sense of it – what does it look like when we are acting synodally?"

Bishop Shane said people experience synodality when they recognise that they have been heard. He believes the Church, especially in Australia, is seeing a culture shift. The dialogue and consultation stages of the Australian Plenary Council provided transformative experiences. "We're seeing a culture shift, not just on the way people experience the Church, but what they expect of the Church," said Bishop Shane.

Bishop Shane noted in dioceses and parishes people are seeing a shift in the way we engage in reflection and decision making; diocesan assemblies, synods and Pastoral Councils are an example of this. Explaining what synodality looks like, Bishop Shane said voting is not the way to go. "If a Parish Council is using voting and getting 51 per cent (of people) across the line, they are missing the point – that's not operating synodally."

A recording of the conversation can be accessed on the Garrett Publishing Website.

## **SEASON OF CREATION**

***God of Courage,  
do not let us be discouraged.  
Benefits brought by our efforts to change the world  
may be unknown to us.  
Our efforts to do good call forth more goodness  
which can spread, unseen.  
Give us courage to continue trying to make a  
difference.***

***Amen.***

## **Our Common Home: A guide to caring for our living planet.**

This joint initiative of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Stockholm Environment Institute connects climate change, biodiversity and sustainable resource use with the messages of Pope Francis' 2015 Encyclical on the care for our Common Home *Laudato Si'*. This guide distils the science on urgent environmental issues and explains how individuals and communities can take action to build a more sustainable and socially just future.

## **SANDHURST YOUTH MINISTRY**

### **Ruth Lawlor to co-chair newly formed Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Network**

Sandhurst's Ruth Lawlor to co-chair the newly formed [Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Network](#). The ACYMN aims to foster and support leaders in the Catholic youth ministry community and provide national leadership opportunities.

It is with excitement that the Australian Network of Diocesan Youth Ministry Coordinators, at the invitation of the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry, has developed into the Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Network (ACYMN).

The network will seek to foster and support leaders in the Australian Catholic youth ministry community. It will also provide national leadership and opportunities for collaboration within a diverse, faith filled culture of authentic, lived ministry with young people and the broader Church.

After an extensive consultation and discernment process that has engaged leaders from over 100 Diocesan, ministry, educational and ecclesial communities, this new network will seek to realise the missionary aspirations centred three key themes:

- fostering a spirit of community and support;
- opportunities for regional collaboration; and
- a forum for national leadership in regard to youth and young adult ministry in the Australian Catholic Church.

An important step in the establishment of this new body has been the formation of a new Interim Executive, based on a combination of experience, diversity, expressed desire, participation and availability. The executive is comprised of:

**Huw Warmenhoven** (co-chair, Alpha Youth and Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn)

**Ruth Lawlor** (co-chair, Diocese of Sandhurst),

**Josh Clayton** (Diocese of Bathurst),

**Qwayne Guevera** (Diocese of Parramatta),

**Sebastian Duhau** (La Salle Youth Ministry),

**Samantha Hill** (St Vincent de Paul, Queensland) and

**Michael Tobin** (St Peter's Catholic College, Tuggerah, Diocese of Broken Bay).

The Interim Executive, in dialogue with the Bishops Commission for Evangelisation, Laity and Ministry and a broader consultative body representative of the national youth and young adult ministry community, is currently in the process of establishing a mandate, a structure of operation and process of accompaniment that addresses the identified desires of those in the consultation process.

All who are engaged in youth and young adult ministry across the Australian Catholic Church, and who are interested in supporting the development of, and participation in, this new network are invited to attend the ACYMN Online Launch Event on Wednesday 18th October, 5:30-6:30 p.m. AEST by registering [HERE](#).

All information concerning the new network, including the emergence of the network and future events coming up are available at [www.acymn.com.au](http://www.acymn.com.au).

## **FROM CATHOLIC EDUCATION**

**Ms Kate Fogarty**

**new Executive Director of CESL**



Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd welcomes Ms Kate Fogarty to the role of Executive Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst commencing January 2024. The current Principal of Assumption College Kilmore, Kate will be well known to many in the Diocese of Sandhurst, having previously

served as Principal of St Joseph's College Echuca and Director of Catholic Identity at Catholic College Bendigo (now Catherine McAuley College) from 2006–2008.

Kate's educational background, personal capabilities, experience, and expertise ensure that she is well placed to lead Catholic education in the Diocese of Sandhurst into the future.

Kate is widely recognised as an outstanding educational leader with a reputation for seeing innovation and possibility, and the capacity and tenacity to drive and guide strategic growth and transformation. Kate's educational background, personal capabilities, experience and expertise ensure that she is well placed to lead Catholic Education in the Diocese of Sandhurst into the future.

Kate's commitment to education is evidenced in her own background of ongoing professional learning; her qualifications include Masters studies in Education, Educational Leadership and Arts (Theology), as well as an advanced leadership program at the University of Cambridge. She was the recipient of the select entry Menzies Foundation Fellowship in 2022 and was one of five Australian principals selected to work with the Menzies Foundation, the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the University of Melbourne, to build skills and knowledge in effective collective efficacy in school personnel.

Kate describes her interest in the position of Executive Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst as reflecting her strong belief "that at the highest levels of leadership, Catholic Education continues to require the voice, experience and passion of experienced educators, formed to serve our young and their communities in increasingly complex times. I believe this is especially true in our rural dioceses, where authenticity of Catholic leadership resides not just in the experience and professionalism of those appointed, but also in their capacity to build trusted, reciprocally respectful relationships that inspire and invite profound engagement with the mission of the Church. This has always been true in Sandhurst, where there has been a proud tradition of appointing smart, warm, courageous and professional educators to lead its educational community."

Kate will be well known to many in the Diocese of Sandhurst, having previously served as Principal of St Joseph's College Echuca from 2009 to 2014. This followed earlier senior positions, including Director of Catholic Identity at Catholic College Bendigo (now Catherine McAuley College) from 2006–2008.

Kate has a clear understanding of the challenges and the opportunities of regional life in a constantly changing social and educational landscape. Kate is very clear about the strength of her association with the Diocese: "Sandhurst is where I truly grew into myself as an educational leader, and it is where I was both inspired and formed into a deeper level of authentically Catholic educational leadership. I am profoundly humbled to be charged with the responsibility of building on the legacy of those who have gone before, while simultaneously walking alongside, in a new way, those who carry the flame today."

Kate's deep connections with this Diocese, her strong vision for Catholic Education, and her capacity to articulate that vision with clarity and conviction give us great confidence that she will be a passionate advocate and leader for Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd.

## A Frozen Wonderland at St Liborius



There was excitement at **St Liborius in Eaglehawk** recently, as students took to the stage for the all-school production of the Disney classic, "Frozen".

The Liborius Centre was transformed into a winter wonderland, with performances taking place over two nights to bring the much-loved animated film to life.

The show featured all the well-known Frozen characters, including Elsa, Anna, Olaf, Kristoff and the rest of the crew, as well as iconic tunes like "Let it Go" and "Do you want to build a snowman".

Under the direction of Music Teacher Claire Sexton, students showcased their acting, dancing and singing talents, delighting audiences with their performances. The striking set design and colourful costumes were also a highlight.

Congratulations to Claire and her production team, along with the talented students of St Liborius Primary School for an outstanding production.

## **"Lion King Jr" left people singing all the way home.**

St Joseph's Primary School in Quarry Hill presented the much-loved Disney classic, "The Lion King Jr" at the Capital Theatre in Bendigo during Term Three.

Audiences were transported to the African savannah, as they followed the unforgettable journey of Simba, Timon, Pumbaa, and all the iconic characters.

"We have been incredibly excited to bring 'The Lion King Jr' to the Capital Theatre stage," said Performing Arts teacher, Claire Sexton. "This is a show that appeals to all ages," she said.

St Joseph's Primary School pulled out all the stops to bring this timeless story to the stage, with a cast of talented young actors from grades 5 and 6. Some of the lead performers shared their thoughts about the show.

Student Ruby Goggin, who played the role of young Simba spent lots of time practising her lines to prepare for the performance. "It's going to be a very good show," she said. "I love all the songs."

Fellow student, Christian Martin said that his character, Rafiki takes everyone on a journey of discovery. "He tries to help people understand the circle of life, but in a very long and tedious way," said Christian.

Elijah Sexton, who played Timon said that the message from The Lion King Jr is to always be grateful for what you have. William Esposito (grown up Simba) agreed, adding that "Some people are on the good side and are happy with what they have, and others are on the dark side and always want more."

There is no doubt that St Joseph's Quarry Hill presented a wonderful show, and we suspect that people in the audience were singing "Hakuna Matata" long after the curtains closed!

## **Annual Marian Festival**

**15 October 2023**

### **Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo**

The Marian Festival will commence at 11.00 am. with Mass celebrated by Bishop Emeritus Leslie Tomlinson. Devotions will continue throughout the afternoon. Please bring your own lunch.

### **Sandhurst Formation for Mission – Carrying Forward the Plenary Council: Decree Three: 'Called by Christ – Sent Forth as Missionary Disciples'**

#### **Via Zoom**

**6.30 p.m. Wednesday 25 October, or**

**9.00 a.m. Thursday 26 October.**

The third decree of the Fifth Plenary Council is a challenging but joyful reminder to all Catholics of the mission that has been entrusted to them through their Baptism. As disciples of Christ, the baptised are called to give loving attention to our world – marked by both sin and grace – to prayerfully read the signs of the times in the light of the Gospel, to seek to grasp the meaning of human strivings and to discern God's will under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Gaudium et Spes* nn. 3-4, 11).

Using the Third Decree of the Plenary Council as an example, Dr Chris Cotter and Leslie Cooper will work through the study guide released by the ACBC 'Carrying Forward the Plenary Council'. Participants will be guided through a process of spiritual dialogue, starting with reading the first question of the decree, praying, reflecting on it, then reviewing what their community is already doing, or could be doing to implement this part of the decree. This process is then repeated for each question of the decree.

It is hoped this will assist parishes to facilitate meetings as they carry forward the plenary Council implementing decrees.

**This is an online workshop. You will need to register online and attend online. Please ask your parish for assistance.**

## Changing Places: Public Toilet Facilities for People living with Disability

Changing Places toilet facilities allow people with high support needs to participate in all elements of community life, without having to limit their time out due to concerns about being able to access a suitable toilet. Diocesan Disability Coordinator, Mary Pianta fills us in.

Through a connection with Bendigo City Council, the Inclusion Officer, Sophie has advised me that many community members and organisations are not aware of, or have not accessed a key to the Bendigo Changing Places. These facilities are there to be used, so it is disappointing that information and details have not been shared or advertised to inform the locals who would qualify to have a key.

Then it came to mind that other cities or towns in our Diocese may be in a similar situation, so I started to investigate, and found that facilities are available in Echuca, Kerang, Shepparton and Yarrawonga.

Across Australia there are 259 Changing Places available to people who are travelling and have their own key. Exciting news is that grants of up to \$180,000 are available to build more Changing Places across Victoria. Do the appropriate people know about these? I hope so!

These very large toilet facilities allow people with high support needs to participate in community life without concerns about toilet issues. When on holidays or touring Australia, you can access information regarding the locations of Changing Places. Having a key would take away stress when needing such a facility.

Features include:

- A height-adjustable adult-sized change table
- A ceiling track hoist system – bring a sling for that!
- A centrally located peninsula toilet
- Additional circulation space
- An automatic door with clear opening of 950mm minimum
- A privacy screen

Changing Places – locations:

- Bendigo – Hargreaves Street, near Reject Shop
- Echuca – 432 High Street, in the carpark
- Kerang – Wellington Street, in Atkinson Park
- Shepparton – Art Museum, 530 Wyndham Street
- Yarrawonga – Bank Street, on near SplashPark

If you are interested, or know someone who would benefit from knowing about these facilities, use the link below, then share your knowledge. There is a form to be completed to obtain a key.

[Changingplaces.org.au](https://changingplaces.org.au)

People using Carer's or Companion Cards can also submit details to check if they fit the eligibility criteria.

Eligibility:

[Check eligibility | Companion Card](#)

How to apply:

[How to apply | Companion Card](#)

Where you can use companion cards:

[Where can I use my card? | Companion Card](#)

**Mary Pianta.**  
**Disability Contact Coordinator.**  
**Diocese of Sandhurst.**

## 2024 Study Tour: Journey with Paul: Türkiye and Greece

Join CTC Academic Dr Rosemary Canavan on a 17-day study tour to Türkiye and Greece focusing on St Paul, his mission, his journeys his engaging with his letters and the Lukan account of them in Acts in the contextual landscape.

Tour participants can undertake a study unit with CTC in conjunction with the tour for credit towards an award.

**For more details, ask your Parish to print you a copy of the Flyer.**



## Bishop Shane's Calendar

Tuesday 26 September  
College of Consultors, Bendigo

Thursday 28 September  
Research meetings, Australian Catholic University, Brisbane

Sunday 1 October – Tuesday 3 October  
Pre-Synod Retreat, Rome

Wednesday 4 October – Sunday 28 October  
Synod for a Synodal Church, Rome

Monday 30 October – Friday 3 November  
Methodist–Roman Catholic International Commission, Jerusalem

Monday 6 November  
Permanent Committee, Australian Bishops Conference, Sydney

Tuesday 7 November – Thursday 9 November  
Australian Bishops Conference, Sydney

Friday 10 November  
Interim Synodal Roundtable, Sydney

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[www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au/news](http://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au/news)

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<https://www.facebook.com/CatholicDioceseOfSandhurst/>

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[https://www.instagram.com/catholic\\_diocese\\_of\\_sandhurst/](https://www.instagram.com/catholic_diocese_of_sandhurst/)

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**GOT A STORY TO TELL?**

Call Katrina (details above)