

# The Gippsland Anglican

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## Mixed news on rental affordability

Sally Woollett

Anglicare Australia is calling on the government to raise the rate of welfare payments for good. The call is made as Anglicare Australia releases its Rental Affordability Snapshot.

The Victorian Snapshot, conducted as part of the national Snapshot on 21 March, included 31 local government areas (LGAs) across metropolitan Melbourne and 48 regional Victorian LGAs. All Gippsland LGAs – Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Latrobe, East Gippsland, South Gippsland and Wellington – were included.

In the Snapshot, rental affordability is defined as rental costing up to 30% of a household's total income. Both the Victorian and national snapshots showed

that there is still a chronic shortage of affordable rentals compared to 2019 – even after recent welfare increases.

Residents of regional, rural and coastal areas of Victoria fare better overall. With the coronavirus supplement income, of the 3263 rental properties listed in regional Victoria, 47% are affordable and appropriate for at least one household type living on income support. A household where both adults are entitled to the increased payment can access 38% on average of affordable rentals, compared to just 3% without the payment.

Latrobe is the only LGA in Gippsland to be in the top 10 most affordable LGAs in Victoria for households on minimum wage or on income support. Taking the coronavirus supplement into account, both Latrobe and South



*Baw Baw is among six Gippsland local government areas, all of which were included in Anglicare's Rental Affordability Snapshot*

Gippsland LGAs make the top 10 for households on income support. A household in Latrobe where both adults are entitled to the increased payment can access 56% of affordable rentals, compared to 12% without the payment. However, the picture is not the same for all groups in the Latrobe region: a single person on an age pension or disability support pension can access only 3% of affordable and appropriate rentals, even with the coronavirus supplement.

According to the Victorian Snapshot report, a trend following on from previous years is "the very low number of unique properties in the top regional and rural LGAs despite the high proportion of affordable and appropriate rentals. This means that while low income earners may not be priced out of the rental market in these areas, they nevertheless are likely to be competing for a very scarce resource."

Anglicare Australia Executive Director, Kasy Chambers, said the increase should be open to everyone on government payments – and that it should be permanent.

"We must raise the rate of these payments for good. If they are halved

in six months – and if pensioners and people with disability are left out – renters will be pushed even deeper into poverty and homelessness."

In the Victorian context, Paul McDonald, CEO of Anglicare Victoria, said "Both state and federal governments could alleviate some stress for people doing it tough with a couple of simple changes. Continue with Job Seeker payment levels for 2021, while pumping funds into social housing stock to transition the homeless from temporary shelter during COVID-19 to ongoing affordable stock."

Ms Chambers said that more must be done to help people on the lowest incomes.

"We're asking people to stay at home – so we must invest in homes for people who need them most. Nobody should be squeezed out of the market during a health emergency."

"That's why we must invest in affordable housing. Our shortfall is massive. We need 500,000 new affordable rentals across Australia."

*With Maiy Azize,  
Anglicare Australia*

### The Snapshot across Australia



- Just 1.5% of rentals are affordable for a person on the new Jobseeker payment (formerly Newstart), which has been doubled for six months in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Without the increase, not a single rental would be affordable for jobseekers in Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Darwin or Canberra.
- Pensioners and people with disability have been left behind, with no increase to their payments.
- Just 1% of rentals are affordable for a person on the Age Pension.
- 0.5% of rentals are affordable for a person on the Disability Support Pension.



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## GIPPSLAND DIOCESE VACANCIES

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## The Gippsland Anglican

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# The opposite of faith ... ... is not doubt; the opposite of faith is certainty

This is one of my favourite sayings, and – over the years – congregations and students have heard it often enough to finish the sentence for me.

It has also been said, to the point of becoming a refrain, that ‘we live in uncertain times’. As people of faith, perhaps we are well equipped to embrace uncertainty rather than to fear it?

We have faced uncertainty around the re-opening of churches and op shops: the timing, the process, the restrictions. We have faced uncertainty around worship: the format, the take-up, unfamiliarity with new modes of delivery. We have faced uncertainty around our finances: as households, as ministry centres, and as a Diocese. We have faced uncertainty around pastoral care: the impact of isolation, the challenge to our sense of community, the limitations on ministry with the bereaved.

In the face of all of these uncertainties, and more, faith has been tested; faith has survived; faith has deepened; faith is flourishing. Many of our parishes report a greater engagement with online worship during this period than before COVID-19. Many individuals have committed to meeting for

Zoom catch-ups or daily prayer, to reading the Scriptures or making time for spiritual reflection. Most of us have, of necessity, used our energies differently: to ‘reset’, to attend to ‘the blessed ordinary’ and to find greater contentment in simple daily rhythms.

There are significant stressors too, beyond the obvious health concerns associated with the virus itself: the cumulative mental health effects of containment measures; worries in relation to employment and income; the pressures of home schooling; the risk of increased family violence; the longer term economic outlook.

More uncertainty seems likely. According to research on the ‘emotional trajectory’ following a disaster such as bushfires or a pandemic, the first 12 months can see several peaks and troughs as we move through various stages of community cohesion and disillusionment into reconstruction, with the potential for setbacks and trigger events that compound grief and loss along the way.

If the 20th century began to see some of the hubris of modernity – the doctrine of inevitable human progress – being eroded, then the projected curve of that

trajectory has been further flattened by the early decades of this century. And with that comes new (or perhaps old) freedoms: the freedom for politicians and medical experts to say ‘I don’t know’; the freedom to cease trading in certainties, whether economic, philosophical or scientific; the freedom to seek truthfulness that is relational rather than propositional – above all, for those baptised into Christ, in him who is the way, the truth and the life.

Having safe spaces to make sense of our feelings and experiences without the fear of being a burden to others, engaging in the practice of meaning-making, and forming a shared sense of perspective are understood to be important components of the therapeutic process in the journey we are on as a diocesan family and a human family.

Households of faith are such places. In the words of the Elizabeth Smith hymn (*Together in Song 691*), “Faith will not grow from words alone, from proof provided, scripture known; our faith must feel its way about, and live with question-marks and doubt.”

I write this on Ascension Day. These last 10 days of the great season of Easter between Ascension and Pentecost are a kind of



‘liminal’ space liturgically. The interplay of presence and absence in the biblical stories and in the great prose of Jesus’ farewell discourse in John’s gospel resonates with our holding together of uncertainty and faith, as we await the outpouring of Holy Spirit on all flesh, and the renewing of the face of the earth.

This is not a passive process, however. The themes set before us in the latter days of Eastertide – especially those of Christian unity and reconciliation – call for deep prayerfulness, and courageous action: for faith that is willing to work in the absence of guaranteed outcomes; for hope that is grounded in promise without knowing what its fulfilment might look like; for love that can risk genuine openness.

As that hymn concludes, “Faith takes the little that we know, and calls for hope, and tells us: Go! Love and take courage, come what may; Christ will be with us on the way.”

+RM

## Prayer Diary: around the parishes

“That we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith...” (ROMANS 1:12)

### MAFFRA EASTERN REGION

St John, Maffra  
St George, Boisdale  
Rector: The Rev’d Janet Wallis

The challenges of recent months have been met with a good heart. Like other parishes, we have endeavoured to keep members of the parish in contact with each other through a phone tree. Weekly services have been distributed to regular worshippers. Several parishioners have stayed at home for almost the whole time of lockdown. Adapted worship services have now resumed.

Please pray for members of the parish as they negotiate another change.

We have missed the

work of the op shop with its opportunities for ministry to the community and the benefits to parish finances.

We are enormously grateful to parishioners for the positive response to requests to continue to make regular offerings for the work of the parish.

Great generosity has been seen in response to recent mission projects to raise funds for the Leprosy Mission and for Very Special Kids.

### MIRBOO NORTH SOUTHERN REGION

St Mary, Mirboo North  
Priest-in-Charge:  
The Rev’d Ben Johnson

St Mary’s is a supportive community of faith, with

a broad effect on the surrounding community through the secondary school Brekky Club, Brick Club (for autistic children and families), several visiting U3A classes, craft groups, Bible study groups, funeral catering, student support in Rwanda, a variety of smaller mission funding through our small change Mission Pipe, and involvement in community groups.

This March, we welcomed the Rev’d Ben Johnson and his family to our church. He will provide leadership for our community for a 12-month term initially. Please continue to pray for us as we, together with Ben and his family, discern what shall occur after 2020, and also for us as we seek

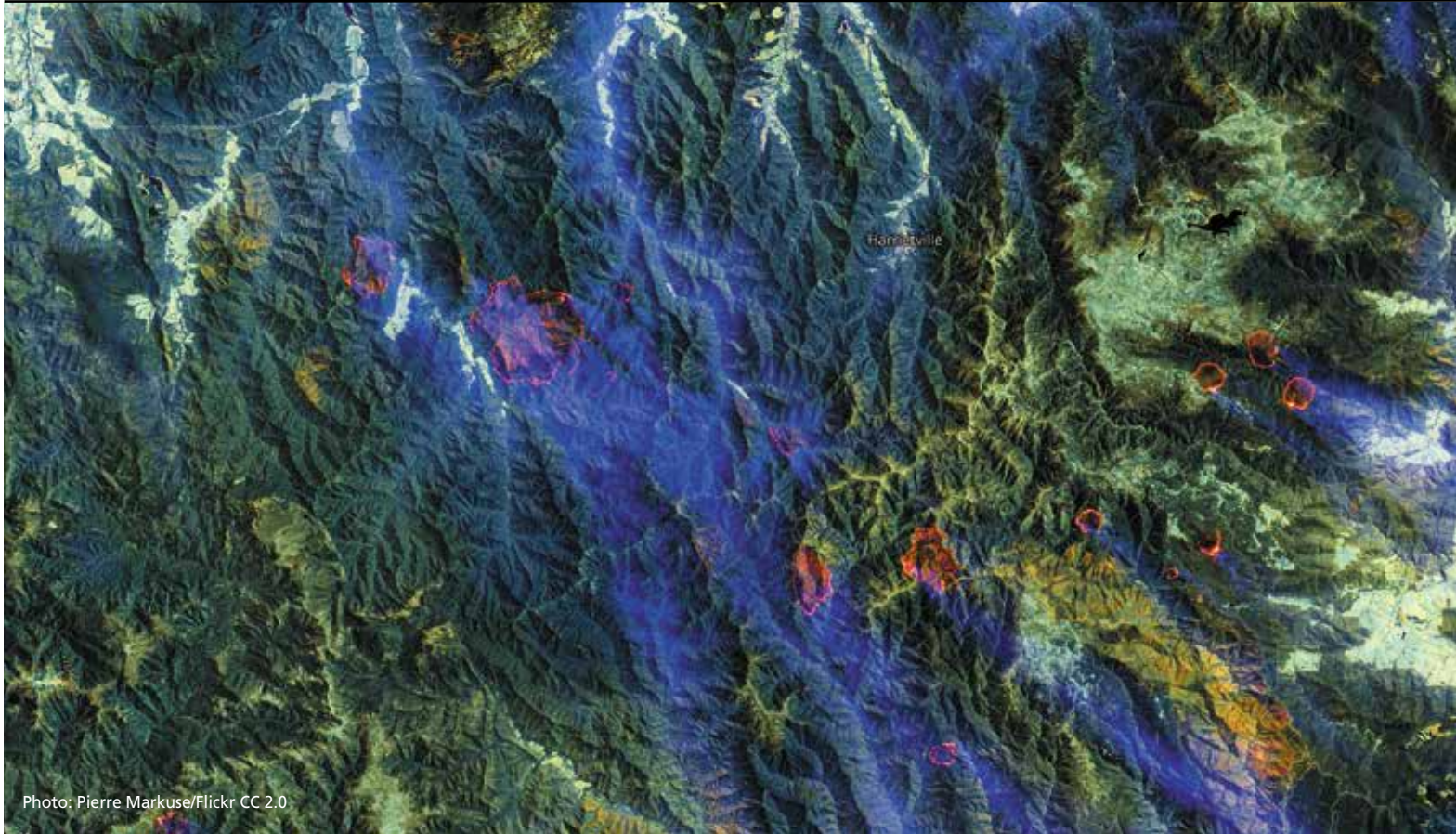
to get creative about what church might look like in this current season.

### MOE-NEWBOROUGH WESTERN REGION

St Luke, Moe  
St Aidan, Newborough  
(with Yallourn North,  
Erica and Walhalla)  
Rector: The Rev’d Sathi  
Anthony

We ask for prayers of thanksgiving for the generosity of the congregation in displaying resilience and understanding amidst the current restrictions, for discovering opportunities to care for one another, for their eagerness to support the parish financially and in discovering the meaningful utilisation of technology and multimedia in order to maintain connections with the local and wider church.





Satellite view of fires near Harrietville, Victoria, on 3 January

# Generosity to fire-affected strangers “humbling”

Nicola Templeton

Anglicans giving through the Melbourne Anglican Foundation, along with donors from around the world, have contributed well over \$115,000 to the Diocese of Gippsland’s Diocesan Emergency Relief Fund to assist people during and after the summer 2020 bushfires, says Richard Connelly, Registrar of the Gippsland Diocese.

“The cost of fuel and groceries at the height of the fires was prohibitive for many, due to distance and isolation. We provided clergy with a voucher system to distribute to those in emergency need and support through pastoral care and services by locums in remote communities,” Mr Connelly said.

The fires, which began by lightning strike near Bruthen, east Gippsland in November, persisted until mid-February, burning for 91 days. Over one million acres of bush burned in the region, almost 90 per cent of the area. Bruthen, Omeo, Orbost, Cann River and Mallacoota took the brunt of the devastation, while Lakes Entrance was cut off by the fires and evacuated.

“Daily, Gippslanders lived on tenterhooks waiting for a change in the weather pattern to shift the fire away from their direction with towns coming under repeated threat by fires,” Mr Connelly said.

“With the Bruthen fire I called the priest offering help and support, only hearing that ‘all we can do is wait to see if we’ll be wiped out’. And so we’d wait.”

In the Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta, the fires devastated small communities like Walwa, Cudgewa and Corryong, 218km from the City of Wangaratta. They then stretched south-west into the Alpine region to Harrietville, Bright, Myrtleford, Carboor and Whorouly.

Starting on 30 December, the fires burned continuously for two weeks.

“The Corryong area is the farthest outlying area of the Diocese, about 85km from the closest parish. It’s only a small community and the major concern was how we would be able to respond given the need,” the Bishop of Wangaratta, Clarence Bester, explained.

“These areas were heavily impacted economically as both Corryong and the Alpine region depend on tourists for economic survival,” Bishop Bester said.

“Following the fires, \$10,000 from the Melbourne Anglican Foundation was used in Corryong to repair and fence properties damaged by the fires. We sponsored a community-building activity providing a music band and jumping castle for children and families affected. Two groups of people numbering 28 and 45 then visited the areas, enjoying morning tea, buying goods in local shops and visiting restaurants.

“We gave a small donation for petrol costs to four VCC [Victorian Council of Churches] emergency personnel who cancelled their leave to assist in the crisis. We also supported a counselling service offered by Queenslanders who came to help. Later we financed the appointment of two part-time coordinators and enabled ongoing Anglican ministry in Corryong throughout January and February.

“We would like to express our thanks to all donors who gave to the Melbourne Anglican Foundation,” Bishop Bester said.

Coordinator of the Gippsland Diocese Bushfire Recovery, the Rev’d Cathy Turnbull, said a key concern now is for people’s mental health following this summer’s horror.

“Trauma experienced can manifest itself in so many ways and is not immediately apparent. So many people will say ‘I’m OK’, but when you spend a length of time with them, you discover often they are not. We have been able to respond to needs by linking people to services and grants or providing direct help through the Diocesan Emergency Relief Fund.

“Sixty per cent of the funds have been dispersed, including those received from the Melbourne Anglican Foundation. We have a number of requests from clergy for those who have their home but lost

everything, including their income. To be able to provide immediate financial support helps people materially and reminds them that they don’t have to do it all on their own,” she said.

“Fire can sweep through an area in such short time and leave a legacy of destruction, both physically and emotionally,” Richard Connelly said. “The whole east Gippsland region has been devastated. How the community can be expected to support their church at this time is so reduced given people’s personal need for recovery. We have been continually overwhelmed by the generosity of so many people. The simple act of one person being generous to strangers in fire-affected towns is so humbling. The generosity of the Melbourne Anglican Foundation has been greatly appreciated.”

In January and February 2020 Melbourne Anglicans gave nearly \$70,000 to the Melbourne Anglican Foundation for bushfire recovery in the Diocese of Gippsland and Wangaratta, all of which has been distributed.

The Royal Commission into Australia’s 2020 summer bushfires opened online from Canberra on 16 April. Under COVID-19 restrictions the Royal Commission will hear stories from witnesses, those who lost homes, businesses and families of those who lost their lives.

*Nicola Templeton is Director of Development and Communications, Melbourne Anglican Foundation. Courtesy [The Melbourne Anglican](http://TheMelbourneAnglican.com).*



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# Funding to Anglicare Victoria allows extra support

Cathrine Muston

Latrobe Health Services will provide \$350,000 to Anglicare Victoria in support of families impacted by family violence, young people facing social isolation, and parents with children who are violent or abusive at home.

Anglicare Victoria's Regional Director of Gippsland, Tim Pedlow, said Latrobe's donation would enable Anglicare to provide additional support to Gippsland families who have been doing it tough. "We are delighted and incredibly grateful to accept this donation on behalf of all Gippsland families dealing with the tragedy that is

family violence," Mr Pedlow said. "This donation will be used to promote and support youth mental health through a buddy system designed to support young people experiencing poor mental health and to work alongside them as they link back into other supports such as school and family. We'll also be using it for



resources to support children and young people affected by family violence."

Some of the funds will go towards the appointment of a Children's Practice Leader based out of The Orange Door in Inner Gippsland, which is the family violence support hub partnered by Anglicare Victoria. It will also enable the employment of an ISO Buddy youth mentor to support young people with their mental health, as well as engagement with education and other community services. Further, it will expand the existing TEACHaR program, which works to support young people in out-of-home care to stay connected and engaged with their education.

One of the ways in which support is provided is through the Breaking the Cycle therapeutic group program. This is currently being offered as an online group format and

is open to parents and carers whose adolescent children are abusive or violent in the home. Registrations are currently open to those who are interested in joining this group via Zoom.

During this period of lockdown and social isolation, Anglicare Victoria has continued to operate in its support of vulnerable and at-risk families, children and young people. While the offices have had to close to the public, the demand on services has continued to climb and the added support from Latrobe Health Services is very welcome.

*Cathrine Muston is Anglicare Development Officer, Parish Partnerships.*

*If you or someone you know is experiencing family violence, contact The Orange Door for advice and assistance: 1800 319 354.*

## Hope Restart Centre handed over to Odyssey House Victoria

Peter Down

It was an important day when the Hope Restart Centre was handed over to Odyssey House Victoria on 23 March. Local staff had been recruited and training for the previous two weeks, and the handover allowed the furniture to be brought in and the final fitout to take place. At the same time, the landscaping was completed.

The great work of Brooker Builders and their contractors turned a vacant paddock into a marvellous facility. The arrival of nine senior clients from Odyssey House Victoria in Lower Plenty completed the preparation of the centre. In the next few weeks, the centre will be accepting referral clients from the wider community.

The facility furnishings and people living there have

brought the building alive. Despite its size, this place has a homely atmosphere and will become home to people in need.

The handover and preparation is the culmination of a little over four years work. The board has taken the original vision and turned it into this wonderful place. We are so grateful to all the churches and individuals from across Gippsland and beyond who



*The Hope Restart Centre at Lucknow*

have supported this project and helped it to become a reality.

*Peter Down was Chair of the Hope Restart Centre Board.*

Located at Lucknow near Bairnsdale, the new Hope Centre drug and alcohol rehabilitation facility will provide vital services for individuals and their families across the region who are dealing with addiction. The initial nine residents have already completed much of their residential rehabilitation journey and volunteered to move to the new facility. They are senior residents who will also provide support to new clients as they are admitted.

"Our model utilises a therapeutic community approach, providing values-

based rehabilitation in a structured environment," said Odyssey House Victoria Chief Executive Officer, Dr Stefan Gruenert. "The residents, the staff, and any visiting consultants all work together to facilitate the positive changes and choices that residents make on their pathway to recovery. Peer support from residents who are well-established in the program is critical."

Numbers will be increased gradually, building up to 30 to match the current and recurrent funding being provided by the Victorian Government. Several community leaders

who established a board of management and sought a partnership with Odyssey House Victoria have worked tirelessly to achieve this significant milestone. They led a fundraising effort to lobby state and federal governments for capital and operational funding, securing philanthropic grants and enormous support from local businesses and the broader community. The facility includes large group-training rooms, a commercial kitchen and dining room, recreation areas, greenhouses and courtyards. "The need for a residential rehabilitation facility in this area has been

well documented and we are very pleased to be finally up and running, especially in the current climate," said Dr Gruenert. "This project was initiated by Peter and Margaret Down in 2016 and would not have been realised if it wasn't for their vision."

*Courtesy Odyssey House Victoria*

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# Bushfire response and recovery in east Gippsland

Cathy Turnbull

Despite the restrictions on travel and visiting (due to the COVID-19 pandemic) in bushfire-affected areas, we are endeavouring to maintain a presence within these communities through the parishes as well as through the ongoing provision of material aid. The Diocesan Emergency Relief Fund, which, despite the economic difficulties many find themselves in due to COVID-19, continues to receive donations and enables us to continue to reach out to fire-affected communities. We are currently supplying fuel vouchers for fire-affected farming families in the more remote regions of east Gippsland and at the same time supporting local businesses that are partnering with us.

The response has been humbling, with many expressing deep gratitude. The feedback has been that in particular these more remote areas are feeling as if the bushfires are now forgotten and that any help they may have had before pandemic restrictions won't return when the restrictions are lifted. Of course, we hope and pray that this will not be the case and I know of a number of volunteer groups that are eager to return as soon as it is safe to do so. It is therefore so important that we continue to show support both pastorally through phone calls by clergy, who

are endeavouring to keep in touch, and through practical aid such as fuel vouchers.

We continue to link people with offers of assistance as they come in to those who are in need and support community recovery groups and projects where we can. The clean-up of houses and outbuildings continues to progress slowly and for some this is a huge frustration as families and individuals cannot move forward until their blocks are safely cleared of debris. With winter setting in and progress being so slow, many are discovering how long the process of recovery will be. For some, this will seem a journey too long, and the mental health of individuals as well as collectively of communities is of concern. We hope that, soon, communities can once again gather to share food, music and stories, as this is an integral part of a healthy recovery process. We look forward to parishes being part of that when it is once more safe to do so.

The journey of recovery from bushfire continues and, as a Diocese, a church and the people of God, we endeavour to 'walk alongside' as many people as we can in these difficult and strange times, bringing comfort and hope, granted to all through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*The Rev'd Cathy Turnbull is Diocesan Bushfire Response and Recovery Coordinator.*

## Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund

The Diocese of Gippsland and the communities of east Gippsland are deeply moved by and profoundly grateful for the prayers and generous support offered by so many individuals, parishes, dioceses and other organisations around the Anglican Communion in response to the bushfire crisis, and assures those dealing with the aftermath of fires in other parts of our state and nation of the continuing prayers of the clergy and people of Gippsland for you also.

Donations to support the continuing work in the fire affected parishes can be made directly to our diocesan emergency trust fund by EFT:

Account name: Gippsland Emergency Relief  
BSB: 705077 Acc: 00040664 (zeros must be included)  
Ref: (Name or organisation) – Fire Relief  
Cheques can be sent to the fund at:  
PO Box 928 Sale Vic, 3850.

# Ten things to know about crisis support

I've learned a lot this year about support from others during a crisis. If you hadn't thought of these things when helping someone out, don't feel guilty. We can all continue to learn how to support others in future.

Jude Benton

1. People in crisis are unable to process information properly.

Brains are running on high adrenaline during a crisis, which narrows the human focus to what is immediately essential for survival. Almost everything else will be forgotten.

2. The basics may not be re-established for some time.

After the Mallacoota fire, I had no power at home for 18 days. There was only a gas hob to cook on, torches at night and a rapidly defrosting fridge/freezer. I couldn't use the washing machine, have a hot shower or charge devices at home. Roads were closed, supermarket supplies were running low, I had to wear a mask outside because of the smoke, and the garage and backyard were burnt and a twisted pile of wreckage.

3. Admin is not a priority for the first few weeks.

Adrenaline calls for action, not admin. In Mallacoota, my partner and I worked from dawn until dusk despite the challenges. Admin was extremely difficult anyway: one mobile network crashed for three weeks, and without power at home I had to go to the church to charge my laptop. The first time I was able to log on, I waited more than 24 hours to download all of the incoming email.

4. Keep the phone line clear.

Imagine a parallel relationship between the length of time you've known a person and how close your relationship is, and then translate that into how long it should be before you phone them. A month on, the person will be more appreciative of your call than in the first few days or weeks.

5. Restrict professional contact to business hours.

None of us – and especially exhausted disaster workers – enjoy being rung by strangers about work issues at home at 9 pm on a Saturday night. People in disaster need rest, time to recover, and the opportunity to communicate with family and friends.

6. Give money, not goods.

Australia is a wealthy country, with a government and organisations that provide essential goods for relief in the immediate period after a disaster. A second disaster can happen as well-meaning people deliver more and more food, clothing and other goods, which become unnecessary and require exhausted volunteers to spend hours sorting and even redistributing to other communities.

7. Give money with an open hand.

If you choose to give, trust that the receiving person or organisation will use it wisely. Requests for money to be put to specific uses can undermine what a church's role is in a disaster – to be there for all people. We are truly grateful to those who gave generously and with open hands, allowing us to ensure that ministry could be maintained through this period as well as using funds to bless the community for the long term.

8. Recovery is a marathon, not a sprint.

Imagine walking through a swamp – that's how a

post-crisis brain operates. It takes three to six months before the post-adrenaline exhaustion begins to wear off and for normal creativity and reasoning to be re-established. Offers of assistance may initially be rejected as they seem too complicated, but later on offers will be accepted. Be patient. Give space and allow for changes of mind.

9. Ask before a group visit.

A traumatised community is a sensitive and emotional being. They need space and time to be alone, to relive and retell the stories, and to grieve together. Wait three to four months before beginning to talk about bringing a group to a disaster zone, and at least six months before actually doing it. And when you arrive, don't take photos of the damage.

10. Prayer is powerful; pray for the people.

The expression 'held in the prayers of the people' was very true to me over the immediate fire response. I felt out of my depth, exhausted, and so busy that prayer was elusive, yet in all this I felt closer to God and more held in the prayers of others than I've ever felt before. Pray for wisdom, health, energy, compassion and the courage to keep going.

*The Rev'd Jude Benton is Priest-in-Charge at the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong. She was present and continued working through the Mallacoota/Cann River bushfires last summer.*



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# Our church family during COVID

Carolyn Raymond

Life is certainly different now as each of us tries to do our bit to prevent the spread of coronavirus. Social distancing is not natural! Everyone is re-inventing their lives. Many of us are finding more time for prayer, more time for meditation and time to read our Bibles. There is also time to read those books on our bookshelves we meant to read years ago!

We are all missing our usual Sunday worship, we

are missing our church family and in some cases we are worried about them, who we know are not well or are facing particular problems in their lives. Several of our congregation have told me how much they are missing celebrating the Eucharist each week. We are grateful to be able to access the weekly service from the Cathedral. Thank you to our Bishop and to Dean Susanna as well as the different clergy who have given sermons each week.

There have been many phone calls, emails and

text messages between our church family members. Many of us are praying for each other. In Morwell, the Rev'd David Head has been sending a regular newsletter to everyone. He has also sent many individual emails. We have felt in touch with David and each other. As David expressed, he was particularly concerned for those members of St Mary's who are in nursing homes and shut off from their families and the wider world.

David generously offered to take his holidays over this time so the parish would not have the extra cost of a locum. This would mean his holiday would be spent at home, unable to visit friends or travel. This was generous indeed. However, he has had health problems at this time and his leave has become sick leave. We hope he can have a proper holiday at a later date.

We know that everyone is experiencing similar challenges, all around the world. We are particularly thinking about and praying for parishes that have also suffered from the bushfires. I am very grateful to Bishop Richard, Dean Susanna and David, who we know are providing ways to continue to worship and keep in contact. We all pray for each other and the world as we learn more about this virus and work to control it.

## ISO challenge keeps Gippsland Grammar on the move

Lisa Baker

Gippsland Grammar rowers are clocking up thousands of kilometres despite not being able to get on the water. It's all part of an 'isolation challenge' to maintain fitness and camaraderie during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students have also inspired siblings, parents and teachers to become involved – running, cycling, rowing and walking.

"We hope to record 20,000 km by the end of the term," said Gippsland Grammar rowing director, Nick Bartlett. "It's helping keep the students connected during isolation, it's keeping them fit, and it's helping with their overall wellbeing." The tally is more than 12,300 km.

Mr Bartlett said the ISO challenge began with the disappointment that the rowing season was cancelled.

"We got the news at the Head of Schoolgirls Regatta in Geelong," he explained.

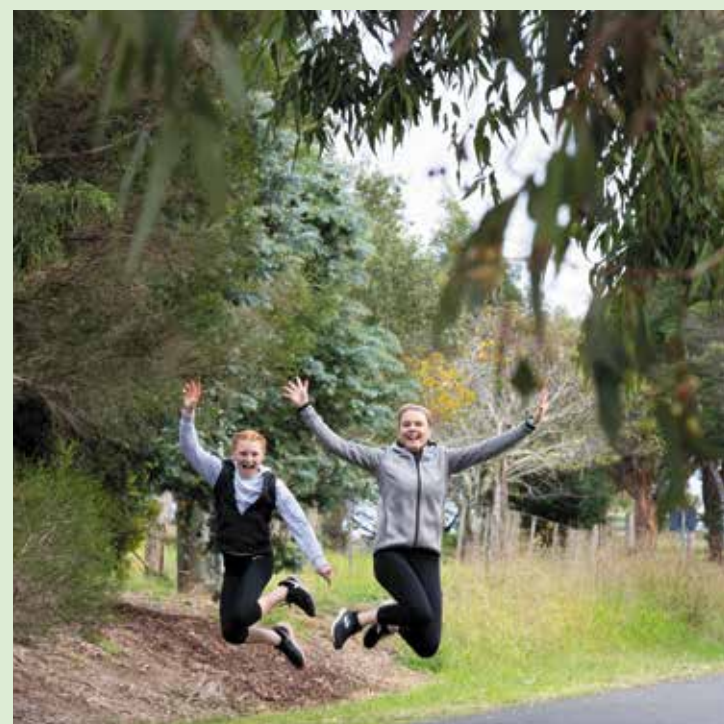
"We were making our final preparations for the Nationals and our rowers were really in a good position to medal this year, something we haven't achieved since 2015."

The Australian Rowing Championships were to

be held on the Olympic rowing course in Sydney in late March. Among the students aiming high at the championships were Year 12 students Tom Phelan-Penson, Amy Baker and Lachy Rose. A total of 60 students take advantage of the co-curricular activity offered by the local independent school.

The ISO challenge was the brainchild of assistant rowing coach Eleanor Brinkhoff and volunteer coach and Old Scholar Jessica Thompson. It is a teams and individual event featuring students from Year 8 through to Year 12 as well as a parents' team, coaches' team, staff team and a team from Bairnsdale Rowing Club. Each participant records their exercise and lodges it weekly against the team they belong to. All exercise including gym workouts, boxing, skipping, and even rollerblading or skating, are included in the challenge – just converted to an equivalent kilometre rate.

The ISO challenge will continue for the duration of term 2, with weekly rewards. "There is no doubt it's keeping us all physically and mentally healthy during these challenging times," Mr Bartlett said.



Gippsland Grammar Year 8 student Isabel Foat and her mum, Liz, are having fun with the ISO challenge

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# Bentons join Bush Church Aid

The Rev'd Jude Benton and her partner, Andy Benton, have been appointed Bush Church Aid (BCA) Field Officers. Jude will continue her ministry at the Cooperating Parish of Croajingolong, which includes St Peter's in Mallacoota and St John's in Cann River. Jude recently expanded her ministry from a part-time to a full-time basis, with the help of donations to the Diocesan Emergency Relief Fund and BCA. In sharing news of their appointment, Bishop Richard said, "The support of BCA will enable Jude

to minister in a full time capacity at Mallacoota, Cann River and Genoa over the next four years, which is an important strengthening of the Church's presence and mission in the Eastern Region of our Diocese following the bushfires earlier this year." Greg Harris, National Director of BCA, said, "BCA is excited to be able to return to supporting a parish with such a strong historical link to our society. I pray that the Good News of the Gospel will continue to bring great hope to the people of this region so devastated in recent months."

# Bishop Jeffrey Driver now Priest-in-Charge at Paynesville

Jeffrey Driver has been appointed Priest-in-Charge at Paynesville, commencing his new role in a part-time capacity in May.

Bishop Jeffrey served as the tenth Bishop of Gippsland (2001–2005) before being translated to Adelaide as Archbishop. He is currently Principal of Newton College Popondetta. Jeffrey's wife, Lindy Driver, has been involved in several lay ministries at

St John's in Bairnsdale.

An avid fisherman, Jeffrey said of his and his wife's move to Eagle Point, "Lindy and I chose this area to retire in because we love it. Now it's nice to have a priestly role in that same community."

In announcing the

good news, Bishop Richard said, "St Peter's and the Diocese are blessed to have someone of Bishop Jeffrey's experience and energies."



Jeffrey Driver

## The Gippsland Anglican

*Q: Is there a faith question you're afraid to ask?*



*A: Chances are others have that question too!*

Send your question to the editor at [gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:gippsanglican.org.au) or 0407 614 661 and we will publish an answer from a clergy person. (Your details won't be shared or published.)

*"What is the difference between someone's soul and their spirit?"*

An excellent question to open this new segment! In the West, we are largely influenced by Greek ways of thinking that don't always neatly marry up with Hebrew understandings, which often underpin Christian teaching. In Greek thought, bodies are mere mortal containers of souls; souls are the immortal components which are carried around in their bodies for a season.

The Judeo-Christian concept is quite different. Spirit is something of the essence and nature of God coming to dwell within us. God is Spirit, and God breathes Spirit into humanity. Once we are recipients of God's Holy Spirit (sacramentally for Christians in baptism) it becomes a part of us. In Psalm 51, David expresses the hope that the Spirit of God will continue to dwell in him. The Spirit's divine origin and creative presence means that it can permeate and inform every other element of us.

What then of the soul? Another Psalm may help us. Psalms are frequently built upon parallelisms – two lines that say essentially the same thing. Psalm 103 begins, "Bless the Lord, O my soul! And all that is within me, bless his holy name." Just as God's holy name is synonymous with God's very being and nature, so 'soul' here means every part of us – body, mind, emotions and will. The Hebrew word translated as 'soul' is *nephesh*, which means something like 'a living being' or 'person', the very 'is-ness of someone.

In Hebrew thought, the soul is thus embodied and mortal. The soul is not merely contained within the body; it includes it and every other part of us that is emmeshed with it. Recent scientific research is revealing how integrated body, mind, will, emotions and thought are. The Spirit is an integrative presence, leading each element of our soul – our whole self – to its fullest and best.

The Spirit's role is one of guidance. The Spirit leads the soul; the Spirit can

counsel the soul; the Spirit can even pray with the soul (Rom 8:26-27). The Spirit sometimes gently questions the soul. "Why are you so full of heaviness, my soul, and why so unquiet within me?" (Psalms 42, 43)

And herein lies a mystery: if the only part of us that can survive death is this indwelling Spirit, what is our hope beyond this life? The Spirit, being immortal, transforms or mortal souls to become immortal, and to make our mortal bodies to be like Christ's immortal body (what Paul calls a spiritual body, see 1 Cor 15:35-55). So too in our earthly experience, God's Spirit can bring healing to our bodies, our emotions, our wills, our minds and thoughts.

Thank you to our anonymous inquirer, who has given us these wonders to reflect upon as we celebrate the great feast of Pentecost!

*The Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding is Teacher of Christian Studies and Mathematics at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School in Warragul.*

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View across McMillan Strait and Lake King from Raymond Island, in the Gippsland Lakes

# The Gippsland Lakes

## Can we sustain and renew?

Max Thomas

World Environment Day happens on 5 June, and the fifth of the Five Marks of Mission in the Anglican Communion is to 'strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth'. To do this in the Gippsland Lakes, we need to understand them as both a natural system and a resource.

'The Lakes' are a series of lagoons receiving fresh water from the Avon, Thomson, Latrobe, Mitchell, Nicholson and Tambo rivers. The Lakes support biologically diverse ecosystems and are an important destination for many migratory bird species protected by international agreements.

The Lakes are among the best known and most popular environmental and tourism resources in Victoria. Like other water bodies, they reflect the condition of the land that drains to them (catchments) and the effects of past management.

Before European settlement in the area, unstable and shifting natural entrances to the Lakes from Bass Strait near Lake Bunga were unreliable and treacherous. Since the opening of an artificial entrance in 1889 about five kilometres west, the Lakes have become more estuarine in character and the resultant major ecological effects are ongoing.

In the early colonial years, the country between Melbourne and Gippsland was almost impassable, so the City of Sale was shaped in part by its relation to the Lakes. Located near the confluence of the Latrobe and Macalister Rivers, Sale was accessible mainly by boats operating on the Lakes to the east. With the completion of the Gippsland railway in 1879, Sale, having literally oriented itself to the Lakes, about-faced and looked to the west. The Lakes and hinterland became accessible and available to 'Marvellous Melbourne'.

“ Visitors to the Lakes are attracted to images of clear blue water with sandy beaches. But this vision of the Gippsland Lakes is utterly unlike the pre-European reality. ”

Across Gippsland, settlers hacked relentlessly at the bush to secure the economic prosperity they handed on to the future. After several generations the clearings linked up, leaving only remnants of the great forests. Pastures were established and crops planted; vast wetlands were drained; dams were built to supply water for agriculture, industry, electricity generation and domestic uses. Roads provided improved access to remote areas. Rivers and waterways were diverted. The legacy of historic dredging and mining operations in Gippsland is clearly evident.

Eventually, incremental changes to the environment amount to something beyond what can be valued in money. The landscape changes of yesterday became today's environment. We have been borrowing from what I will call the 'ecobank' since European settlement and, far from repaying the loan, until recently we hadn't even considered paying interest.

Today, seasonal flow patterns of Gippsland streams draining agricultural and urban areas are very different from those of relatively undisturbed and comparable catchments. Water draining from 'developed' catchments contains nutrients that contribute to nuisance weed growth and algae blooms in the Lakes. The agricultural sector has responded through Landcare and other such community groups.

Tree planting, fencing, control of pest plants and animals, restoration of degraded land and salinity management are examples of ongoing work done, often by volunteers, to restore degraded land.

Removing willows and replanting native vegetation on river banks are examples of regeneration projects undertaken as part of catchment management strategies. Scientific research in Gippsland shows that fertilisers can be applied in a more targeted way to reduce farm costs and limit the movement of plant nutrients within and from the Lakes catchments.

Visitors to the Lakes are attracted to images of clear blue water with sandy beaches. But this vision of the Gippsland Lakes is utterly unlike the pre-European reality, when the Lakes were large, predominantly freshwater lagoons fringed by reeds with adjacent extensive wetlands and deep freshwater marshes.

Water levels in the Lakes tend to be governed by wind, and tidal flows are weak. 'Flushing' of the Lakes happens infrequently when flooding occurs in the rivers flowing from the mountains and hinterland. Ground water enters the Lakes from aquifers that recharge in high country to the north.

The volume of fresh water entering the Lakes has been greatly reduced since European settlement while salt has been constantly entering from Bass Strait. Colder, saline water tends to flow near the bottom of the Lakes from Lakes Entrance as far as the Latrobe River near Sale. A result of them being unable to tolerate salt, the protective reed fringe and other vegetation have been lost, exposing the shorelines and river banks to erosion.

The environment is now a mainstream concern in Australian society and it has been suggested that efforts should be made to restore the Lakes to their original condition. Today, their primary 'beneficial uses' are recreation and tourism, including holiday accommodation, power-boating, fishing, sailing, sightseeing and swimming.

Given that the Lakes catchments have undergone drastic alteration and, in terms of water quality,

significant degradation, closing the artificial entrance would most likely result in widespread and persistent eutrophication. Toxic algae blooms, resulting in fish kills; rotting vegetation and offensive odours would be likely to severely limit the present recreational and commercial uses of the Lakes.

Some people advocate opening a second artificial entrance to 'flush' the Lakes. Apart from prohibitive maintenance costs, the prospect of rising sea levels and offshore subsidence due to gas, oil and water extraction raises uncertainties about the security of the barrier between the Lakes and the sea.

In our quest to satisfy insatiable wants, we reshaped and wandered far from the 'Garden of Eden'. But do we now seek to find our way back into the Garden? If so, it is difficult to reconcile the dichotomy of wishing to continue with land uses and other activities that are incompatible with restoration of the Lakes. It is also interesting to consider the likely result of attempting to restore the Lakes to their former condition and whether the outcome would satisfy apparently conflicting objectives.

In his *Summa Theologiae*, Catholic philosopher Thomas Aquinas (see box on page 9) argued that, with respect to the use of exterior things, 'Man ought to possess external things, not as his own, but as common, so that, to wit, he is ready to communicate them to others in their need'. Although the

*Continued on page 9*



# The Gippsland Lakes

Can we sustain and renew?

*Continued from page 8*

Lakes are common property, the catchments are largely fed by runoff from privately owned land. Construction of the entrance was undertaken (and maintenance continues) mostly in order to support private interests. In this context, the prospect of stewardship is far from straightforward.

*Max Thomas (retired) worked in the public sector and in private consulting on a range of land, water and waste management projects, including in the Gippsland Lakes catchments. He writes regularly for [Open Forum](#), including on popular environmentalism as a quasi-religious phenomenon.*

## What has St Thomas Aquinas got to do with modern environmental problems?

There is a strong case to be made that the most important pre-requisite for a sustainable environment is a society that has a sophisticated, comprehensive and respected set of institutions based on private property. This will not necessarily solve all problems, but it is a good start. As Thomas Aquinas put it, in one of his three justifications for private property, if things are owned, they will tend to be looked after. If things are the responsibility of everyone, nobody will take responsibility for anything.

For example, the owner of a lake will tend not to fish it to near extinction (or even over-fish the lake to a small degree) because the breeding potential of the fish would be reduced. The owner values the lake's future capacity to produce fish and, indeed, the lake could be sold on the open market for a price that reflects the potential value of all the fish that can be taken from the lake in the indefinite future. If it is over-fished, the value of the lake reduces and, in effect, the owner shoots himself in the foot. Furthermore, in a good institutional regime based

on private property, pollution of the lake by (for example) another business would be much less likely because it would lead to a tort action in court.

On the other hand, if the lake is not owned by anybody the lake will be fished to extinction because nobody has any benefit from holding back. And, indeed, local businesses may well also pollute the lake because there are no well-defined ownership rights in clean water to enforce.

This is, of course, a manifestation of the 'tragedy of the commons', a concept developed by the Anglican clergyman William Forster Lloyd in 1833 (though often attributed to Hardin). Perhaps the most tragic environmental problem in the world today is that caused by water wastage (and free water use for well-connected business interests) in areas where there is significant scarcity.

*Professor Philip Booth is an academic and Director of Research & Public Engagement, St Mary's University, London. Excerpted from [St Mary's University blog](#).*

Dear Future Reader,

My name is Zoe and I'm 9 years old and in Grade 4. My day to day living is different at the moment and I want to tell you why.

We are currently experiencing something we have never experienced before in Australia, we are in a lockdown. This is making for a challenging time here in Australia as people of my age have never been involved in a lockdown before.

Currently we are in the middle of a pandemic with the COVID-19 (coronavirus) sweeping the world. It's making people all around Australia and the world sick and in some of the worst cases dying in hospital due to the Coronavirus.

The times are challenging, difficult and strange. Learning from home has been really hard for some of us as we are so used to seeing familiar faces, friends and teachers.

So many activities like PE, music and swimming lessons and after school activity lessons have been cancelled. No play dates, no dinner parties, no catch up at all! It seems all boring and sad, so we have been doing as much as we can to not go crazy. I'm doing this by TikTok videos, face timing my friends, calling my family and sending text messages to stay in touch and see what everyone else is doing.

It can be quite difficult sometimes to do remote learning, but our school is fantastic and we have a program called Zoom. This is great fun as this allows us to see our fellow class friends and our teacher Miss Goode. However sometimes for me, it doesn't load and this is frustrating. It's so important to continue to try to learn on the devices we have at home so we don't fall behind in our learning.

It seems like everything is changing at the moment. Some parents are working from home, we shop quicker or online and get it delivered. There are people with face masks and gloves on, shops are shut, and less people walking the streets.

I hope this all passes really quickly, and we can get back to living a normal life. My birthday is in July and I would love nothing more than to be able to have a sleepover with friends. Fingers crossed scientists can get a vaccine to stop the spread of the Covid19 virus, otherwise we will continue to be in lockdown!

Until then, fingers crossed everyone stays healthy.



Zoe is a student at Gippsland Grammar.



# Love, war and abuse

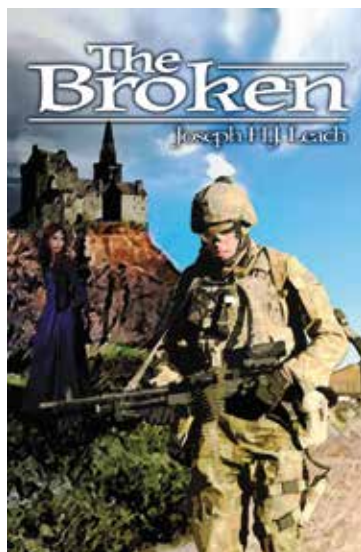
Richard Prideaux

Joseph Leach already had a full life before writing this novel. As a NASA space scientist he worked on Martian ice caps; he served as an airforce intelligence officer and has lectured in science at university, alongside a busy family life with three sons. He has ministered in the Catholic Church as an ordained deacon at St Roch's Parish in Glen Iris.

*The Broken* is part war novel, part allegorical fantasy (in the tradition of C.S. Lewis' *Till We Have Faces*), psychiatric drama, love story and Christian apologetic. The story is told from the perspective of Captain Jacob Jones, a highly regarded Australian military officer who is on leave from his third tour in the Middle East. Some of the war incidents are

## The Broken

by Joseph H.J. Leach  
Stone Table Books, 2019



chilling in the extreme.

We soon find out that Jacob is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, and the remainder of the novel is the story of how this 'broken' man finds recovery through love, faith and

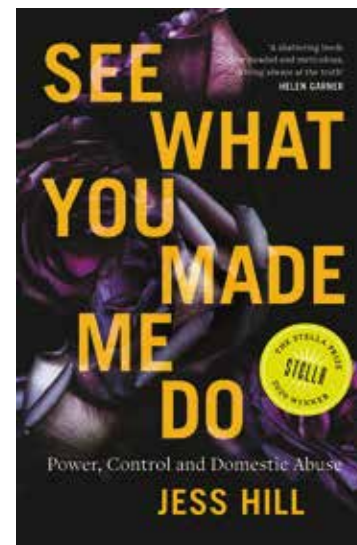
courage and the determined avoidance of the worst forms of drug therapy. One certain thing about this novel is that it will surprise you.

I approached this novel with some trepidation, but could not put it down. It is written out of deep life experience, with verve and creativity. If nothing else, it will permanently change your view of the impact of 21st-century warfare on those who serve.

Brokenness is an overlooked Christian theme. Christ was broken for us on the Cross. The image of the strong, complete, capable Christian person is just that. We are all broken and in need of rescue. Effective and enduring rescue can only come from God in Christ and usually through the loving people God puts in our way. May you read this novel and be truly blessed.

## See What You Made Me Do:

Power, Control and Domestic Abuse  
by Jess Hill  
Black Inc, 2019



Cathrine Muston

The blurb on the back cover of investigative journalist Jess Hill's award-winning book on domestic abuse and the family court system claims that we ask the wrong questions around domestic abuse. When one in four Australian women will experience violence at the hands of a man she was intimate with, we need to stop asking "why didn't she leave?" and start asking "why did he do it?" To begin to read a book that aims to address this question is daunting, and there are many who have the book on their bedside table but not been brave enough to open it. However, for those who do, it is time well spent.

Jess Hill presents the research on the state of domestic abuse and the family court in our country in a way that enables us to be taken on a journey of discovery. It is not a finger-pointing exercise and is certainly not a gendered blame game. The story she tells is an exploration of how we got to where we are that is grounded in research and sourced from experts across Australia and the world.

So why does he do it, and why doesn't she leave? What about women who abuse their intimate partners? How do the children cope and what is the outcome for them? Starting with a chapter entitled 'Perpetrator's Handbook', Ms Hill identifies abusive men as either 'coercive controllers' or 'insecure reactors', but all domestic abuse is about power in

one way or another. It does not necessarily have to be physical or violent in order to be abusive. Survivors of abuse commonly talk about 'walking on eggshells' and the constant state of hypervigilance required to survive an abusive partner or parent. Often the abuse does not have to be physical because the victim can be controlled by the rise of an eyebrow.

Traditionally, the reasons for domestic abuse have been presumed to have their roots in mental illness, substance abuse and childhood trauma. However, Ms Hill cites a growing body of research and the experience of many working with men who abuse to suggest that it is more than that. She provides evidence suggesting it is more likely the abuser's value system that is unhealthy and, in particular, his sense of shame.

A whole chapter on the nature of shame as a driver of domestic abuse breaks open the ways in which we may have viewed it. It makes sense that if to be a man is to be 'strong, powerful and in control' and the one unbreakable rule is 'do not be weak', then to be shamed by being weak or vulnerable is intolerable. And if this is a message perpetuated in society in ways big and small, then we all have a responsibility to address it.

Much of the book provides a voice to those who have told their stories and their experiences of the family court system, the police and community services. Some of these stories are from children who find that they have no say over what happens to them, and there is a chapter on the abuse experienced by Indigenous women.

Ms Hill offers hope in it all. She concludes that "Social problems often seem insurmountable, until they're not." She presents strong and clear ideas for a way forward, along with examples of how social change has been affected both in the past and in other jurisdictions.

Reading this book enables us to engage with the issues and to understand what is at the core of the problem, and to draw hope and strategies for a future where domestic abuse is reduced.

## Interview with Joseph Leach

*Your book is a mixture of current events and fantasy. Why did you write this book?*

I wanted to explore the depths of human evil and how we can respond to it. Contrast is provided by an exploration of the nature of love. Fantasy is the ideal medium for this because you can make the dark darker and the light times brighter. I also needed to anchor it in the real world to make it relevant – hence the mixture. I called the book *The Broken* because my starting point is that we are all 'broken'. We are all fallen. It is how we learn to live with that that is important.

*In what sense is this a Christian novel?*

It explores serious issues, like the nature of love and the problem of evil, and it explores them using a Christian world view. Also, many of the characters are specifically Christian and their actions clearly come from a Christian source. At the same time, this is not a polemical work. It is a story, a work of fiction, and, I hope, works at that level, even if the reader has no understanding of the Christian faith.

*You are a deacon in the Catholic Church. Does being a member of the clergy influence the way you write?*

Absolutely. First and foremost, a deacon is ordained to preach the gospel and I believe that my writing is one way in which I can do that. This is not to say that my book is a religious text. It's not. It's a fantasy story, a romantic adventure, but one which also expresses the truth of the gospel. I can't write any other way.

*The setting for your story is certainly unusual, a medieval Scottish village in the modern Tasmanian mountains. How did you come up with the idea for this setting?*

All authors borrow ideas from previous stories in imagining settings. Even Tolkien borrowed from Finnish sagas. My village has clear influences from Brigadoon, an old musical which I saw as a young child, and even, perhaps, from Hogsmeade, the wizard village in the Harry Potter books. However, my story is very different from either of those and so my village, necessarily, is very different too.

*Why use fantasy? Why not write about veterans' problems in a real world setting?*

Again, this is not a book about veterans' problems. It is a book about a particular veteran who has one problem, and soon gets a whole lot more. Fantasy is useful in that it allows a certain distance, so that even the deepest human evil, which is often so awful that it is unapproachable, can be written about and examined without trauma. This has been a function of fairy stories from the earliest times. In his great essay on fairy stories, Tolkien noted that escape is normally considered a good thing and that a prisoner won't always want to write about the bars and guards of his prison. In this life we are all, to some extent, prisoners; trapped in the ash and dust of a broken world. That doesn't mean we can't write about the sky that we can see through our prison bars. Any fantasy story worthy of the name will have an underlying sense of wonder, and this is an echo of something far deeper.

Courtesy  
Stone Table Books



# There's always more

Kate Campbell

I am not usually a long-term planner, but I admit that about three years ago I put a plan in place for my retirement. These days, 'retirement' is no longer part of my vocabulary: I now journey as an ordination candidate, having enrolled in further theology studies through the University of Divinity at Trinity College in Melbourne.

Like many people, I have experienced a great deal of change throughout my life, most especially in the last couple of years, and I admit to saying from time to time, "no more just now please, God." Yet I have responded to an ordination call, enrolled in university study and recently changed employment when so many others of a similar age are 'winding down'.

When speaking with those closest to me about the possibility of university study, a little voice inside me was thinking, perhaps even hoping, that they might discourage me, but I was given affirmation and encouragement to enrol and enjoy the process.

Matthew's gospel holds one of my favourite passages of scripture: "And Jesus said to them, 'Why are you afraid, you of little faith?' Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm." (Matthew 8:28). It is a reminder that if I continue to trust, I will embrace *whatever* God may hold for me.

I have a rich and full life, and more study is challenging, but I know there is much richness yet to come, for my acceptance and my faith in God is what grounds me –

I trust implicitly that Jesus will always calm the stirring of my personal doubt. In the words of Ecclesiastes: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven ...".

I recently spoke with my supervisor of a sense of Jesus holding on to my hand, and in this time of COVID-19 daily meditation and prayer have never been more important in deepening and grounding that sense of trust. My working environment has had a lot of curveballs recently and the entire team has been and continues to work hard to navigate new possibilities for managing and caring in practical, pastoral ways. I am grateful that the staff of Trinity College have the same practical, pastoral approach – providing lectures, reflections, ongoing updates and other opportunities. Trinity's caring provision has helped me begin to navigate my new learning experience and I am enjoying the insights and energy that come with the wonderful 'aha' moments. I have often had those experiences as a parent and grandparent, and also through my love of hand embroidery and other textiles, which is most often prayer as I stitch people's stories. Now, it's a new celebration to have those experiences in a different creative way, and I thank God for the 'aha' moments.

*Kate Campbell is Diocesan Lay Reader and Ordination Candidate at St Paul's in Sale. She is also a member of the Registry Staff Team.*



Photo: AKS 9955

At 87.3 metres, this dragon boat in Cambodia is the longest in the world

## Duanwu Festival – dragon boats and dumplings

**Observed by:** China, Singapore, Malaysia and Taiwan (among others) as either a Taoist or secular festival.

**Also known as:** Dragon Boat Festival, Tueng Ng, Fifth Month Festival, Dumpling Festival.

**Begins:** Fifth day of the fifth lunar month in the traditional Chinese calendar (25 June in 2020).

**Cultural rituals:** Racing dragon boats, preparing and eating *zongzi* (sticky rice dumplings) and drinking a type of wine made from mixed grains.

**Significance:** The patriotic poet Qu Yuan, who lived in about 300 BC in southern China, was accused of treason and banished by King Wu of Chu. In his desperate disappointment at the king's corruption, Qu Yuan threw himself into the river and drowned. People ran to the river and raced in their boats to retrieve his body. The Dragon Boat Festival commemorates this event, and in 2009 it was added to UNESCO's World Intangible Cultural Heritage List.

**Did you know?** More than 20 clubs are affiliated with Dragon Boating Victoria. [The Gippsland Waratahs](#), whose members paddle in Sale and Bairnsdale, is also a Dragons Abreast Australia team, which encourages involvement and support of people who have experienced breast cancer. The club comprises men and women aged 16 to 70, who enjoy either social paddling or more intense training for regattas.

Waratahs president Heather Watts says her introduction to dragon boating was about 10 years ago when she read about its benefits for breast cancer survivors while recovering from surgery and chemotherapy following a breast cancer diagnosis. "From the first time I ventured into a boat I was hooked," she said. "The members are supportive and friendly and with a great sense of fun." Thanks to dragon boating, Heather regained her strength, learned new skills, travelled across Australia and the world and made amazing new friends. "No matter where you travel in the world, if there is a local dragon boat club you will be welcomed and given a seat in the boat. It is an amazingly welcoming and egalitarian sport," she said.

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# Calling on core values during COVID-19

Cameron Herbert

Term 2 of 2020 has been a predominantly online experience for students and teachers in Victorian schools, owing to the onset of COVID-19. At St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, approximately 100 of our 1450 students from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12 have been attending school on site, with the remainder learning from home.

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School's four core values – wisdom, integrity, compassion and respect – guide us at all times in how we conduct ourselves, and these values have been particularly important during the pandemic. *Wisdom* provides us with understanding and acceptance of the current situation, together with trust in God. *Integrity* helps us not only to adhere to our moral principles in unusual times, but also to remain whole and undivided as a community. *Compassion* manifests in the many ways we are reaching out to those needing assistance or comfort amidst the impact of COVID-19. *Respect* will be important in the way we choose to take the path out of the pandemic in terms of our preparedness to make personal sacrifices for the sake of others and the common good.

I believe that there are distinct advantages in being a rural school during COVID-19. Our open spaces, country scenery and lower population density are obvious benefits at times like these. We also have a smaller number of neighbouring schools than in metropolitan areas, which lends itself to open communication, mutual agreement and consistency of approach. At St Paul's, we have a relatively small number of families who have experienced significant income reductions because of COVID-19, and we are assisting those who have come forward in need, but our region has not been affected in the same way as areas that rely heavily on industries such as tourism and hospitality. Living in the country rather than the city, I believe, tends to make many of our students more accustomed to quieter, even solitary, pursuits than their urban counterparts. Our rural character and the tight



The 'values tree' in the St Paul's Junior School foyer embeds the school's values of wisdom, integrity, compassion and respect. Each leaf contains a student's photograph, as part of the theme 'every face has a place'

nature of our community are also advantageous in giving rise to solidarity, mutual support and resilience.

There are a few disadvantages of being a rural school in the current context. Our students come from a wide range of places geographically, not all with the reliable, speedy internet service experienced in cities. Until recently, the many buses used to transport students to St Paul's were not operating and it would not have been feasible to have them recommence services for a small number of students. Another disadvantage of being a rural school currently is that government decisions tend to be metro-centric, ignoring the rural context, and this is probably true of the COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria.

When this period of 'lockdown' was announced, one of my initial concerns was the potentially adverse effects on the mental wellbeing of students, staff and others in our community. For this reason, our key pastoral leaders at St Paul's have been in regular contact with families and individuals to ensure they are managing the challenges and feeling supported as required.

At the secondary level, students are participating in weekly surveys so that we can monitor everyone, particularly those known to us who might be struggling in some way or at a higher risk than usual. The pleasing news is that my suspicion of a potential spike in mental health issues appears not to have eventuated. Indeed, the reported levels of wellbeing in the school are not significantly

different from what we have normally.

The overall message we have received from students is that many have found learning from home much better than expected, but some couldn't wait to get back to attending school as usual. Online learning suits some students, but not all students, just as it suits certain subjects and age groups better than others. Our teachers at St Paul's are highly aware that students' needs and learning styles vary significantly and I am proud of the way they have continued to cater for these differences in their teaching and learning programs, despite having to do so online. The most influential determinant of student outcomes is the quality of the teacher, and good teaching shines through in the virtual classroom just as it does on campus.

The reality of this whole situation is novel and interesting, and is providing challenges as well as opportunities for teachers, students and families. These opportunities will, in time, I think, lead to substantial changes in the way that we live our lives, do our work and conduct our business. Hopefully it will bring people together and boost communication and community. It will be interesting to see how the way we manage education, business and socialising will also be affected but, for now, we will just continue to adapt and cope.

Cameron Herbert is Principal at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School in Warragul and Traralgon.

## EDITORIAL

### The gift of connection

Digital connection has never been more important, and those of us who are tech-savvy are grateful to have a way to continue to see their family, friends and colleagues during the pandemic. In the past week, I have connected online with my monthly book group, been part of Zoom discussions with small business colleagues, hosted a Netflix party for friends and received advice from my physio via telehealth.

But what if you don't have access to this technology, or are not familiar with using the necessary hardware and software? COVID-19 is likely causing extra challenges with staying connected.

[Victorian Tech Savvy Seniors](#), an Age Friendly Partners Program with Telstra, was set up to help older people, particularly in regional and rural Victoria, to learn to use technology for social connection, and to access goods and services online. The resources discuss using different types of devices, networks, e-safety, social media platforms and online shopping. The self-teach DVDs can be borrowed from local libraries. The online videos are available at the Seniors Online Victoria website, along with news, an e-magazine,

and information about the Seniors Card and the [Victorian Seniors Festival](#). The festival has been reimagined this year, with performances, interviews and story-telling being delivered virtually. It's already up and running, which is a good incentive for older people to learn online skills if they need to.

Also offering the opportunity to gain digital literacy is the federal [Be Connected program](#). This website has a topic library, a map to locate local help, and training to set up and customise new Apple and Android devices.

Of course, online training may at first seem difficult for people who are new to getting online. This is where some telephone guidance from family and friends can be invaluable. Tech-savvy senior Bob Richards said he thinks the seniors course is "a very good starting point. You know, the first step of any journey is probably the most daunting one, but once you're on the way it ... is a lot better."

Helping those without digital literacy to achieve it is a gift that will keep more of us connected through and beyond COVID-19.

Sally Woollett

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# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## NGV drawing tutorials online

My son, Matt, and I really enjoyed the link to the National Gallery of Victoria ([TGA May issue](#), page 13). Since we have just started homeschooling in Mallacoota, we decided to have a go at Minna Gilligan's tutorial of mixing elements of two different artworks from the collection into one.

I chose Picasso's [Weeping Woman](#) and Barrupu Yunupingu's [Gurtha \(Ancestral Fire\)](#).

Matt chose Albrecht Dürer's [Melencolia](#) and The Sydney Bird Painter's [Boobook Owl](#).

Leanne Wicks



The mixed elements artworks of Leanne (upper) and Matt (lower)

# The Man of Sorrows



Hans Memling. The Man of Sorrows in the Arms of the Virgin. 1475. Oil and gold leaf on wood panel. 27.4 x 19.9 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Felton Bequest, 1924

## Leo Wimmer

Hans Memling (c. 1430 – 11 August 1494) was an early Netherlandish painter, born in Seligenstadt (Germany), who was the last major fifteenth-century artist in the Low Countries, the successor to Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden.

Memling's perfection in achieving translucency of skin tones was a result of working in the Brussels workshop with van der Weyden. It is interesting that Memling's paintings generally show the human form almost in perfection, with delicate skin tones and fine bone structure.

Looking at this painting for the first time, I experienced an overwhelming feeling of the love of the Mother for her Son. "My Son, how brutally they have treated you!" His skin portrays that he has been carefully washed, and blood fluids removed. The Mother is showing him almost naked, to friends. Yet she is gently and tenderly holding Jesus, and although the body shows the marks of the crucifixion with the stigmata, his left arm is pointing to where the lance has pierced his chest, both arms holding the position of a living body, and his eyes are lightly open, as if he is semi-conscious.

I am looking at the painting once again, seeing the deep, deep

sorrow of Mary; the tears are long gone, and I feel the depth of the sorrow and love she has for Jesus.

In the background, we see painted on 23-carat gold leaf the characters with their instruments of torture, including nails and hammer, cat o' nine tails, the sponge, a bulrush reed and the flogging post. The eight characters I see here hint that maybe the artist is trying to tell us something.

Hands and boot are more evidence of extreme brutality with hatred. Mary's indigo cape emphasises the deep sorrow.

This painting depicts the beautiful quality and refinement that the Dutch Masters had already achieved, and is a classic example of the period.

## Reconciliation Week conversation

Join Bishop Richard for a [conversation](#) with our two Indigenous priests, the Revd Phyllis Andy and the Revd Kathy Dalton, together with the Revd Edie Ashley, who has worked alongside Phyllis and Kathy to support Aboriginal Ministry in the Diocese for many years.

In this interview we learn a little more of the ministry that Kathy and Phyllis exercise within and beyond their parishes (Morwell, and Lakes/Metung, respectively). We reflect on the 20th anniversary of the Walk for Reconciliation over the Sydney Harbour Bridge on 28 May 2000, and on the theme for Reconciliation Week this year: 'In this together.'

In a year when Pentecost falls in the middle of Reconciliation Week, Bishop Richard reflects on the Gospel ministry of reconciliation in his sermon for the pre-recorded Eucharist at St Paul's Cathedral for Sunday 31 May, which is available to view at the Diocesan website.

If you would like to support Aboriginal Ministry in the Diocese of Gippsland, please contact the Registry Office, 03 5144 2044, [registryoffice@gippsanglican.org.au](mailto:registryoffice@gippsanglican.org.au)





Thank You Victoria.

While some restrictions have eased, limiting our movement everyday means everything. It means we slow the spread of the virus. If we keep working from home and we limit the number of us moving around, we can keep kicking a footy in the park. If we use common sense and keep our distance, we can visit cafes and restaurants. And if we only see those we need to, we'll keep our friends and families safe.

We all have a part to play.  
It's up to all of us to make this work.



**For details go to [vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS](https://vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS)**

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