

The Gippsland Anglican

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Gippsland apologizes

Cynthia Grove

A service of Lament and Contrition in response to the National Apology to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse was held at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale at 5.30 pm on Ash Wednesday.

The service drew on the form of litany and included the traditional Ash Wednesday Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion.

We arrived silently and sat or knelt in silence as we remembered those who have suffered from institutional abuse; not simply the direct victims but their family and friends then and now.

Such pain, betrayal, and denial of human dignity has long shadows. The effect of abuse never ceases with the victim but reaches out into many corners. Bishop Richard's apology on behalf of the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland formed part of his sermon, which is reproduced here.

Ash Wednesday homily

Bishop Richard Treloar

This evening we echo the National Apology made to Victims and Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual

Abuse on 22 October last year by the Prime Minister. And we acknowledge the historic abuse that has taken place here in Gippsland within the orbit of responsibility of our own Anglican organizations.

We do so, quite intentionally, on Ash Wednesday: a day in the calendar of the Church universal when we are called to penitence, and recognition of our finitude and our frailty – both as individuals, and as the body of Christ; an ever-wounded body, which even in the light of Easter Day, bears the marks of betrayal, injustice, the misuse of

power, and violence, the stories of which we will hear as Lent unfolds, drawing us again to the foot of the cross, to weep with blessed Mary that something like that could happen to one so innocent, while we stood by.

In offering an apology to victims and survivors, let me first reflect with you on the nature of what we are doing – what it is, and what it isn't – so that it might be of a piece with the spiritual work, the practice of our faith, to which we seek to bring greater integrity: integrity that is a function of a collective, soul-searching

honesty; for the truth, and only the truth, will set us and others free.

Such was the premise of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa of the 1990s, which was instrumental in transforming South Africa into the robust, if still troubled, democracy it has become post-apartheid. No reconciliation without truth: the truthfulness, that is, of human stories, of lived human experience.

The authors of a 2013 Georgetown University study on that Commission commented that "In all societies, it often seems that genuine reconciliation – which includes repentance [and] restitution... is humanity's deepest need." (*Sunday Age Extra* 25, 23/12/2018).

(Continued on page 2)

Community spirit during fires

Jan Down



Packenham turn-off on 2 March, taken by Jo McLeay

While fire-fighters worked long and hard to contain more fierce fires in early March (some of which are still going), Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministry team members were on hand to support people in need, who in turn supported one another. Many people have rallied to give practical assistance to those who had lost homes or other property.

Thirty-one houses were destroyed, two at Yinnar South and twenty-nine in the Bunyip State Forest fire. Sixty-seven outbuildings or sheds were also lost. The Yinnar South and the Bunyip fires have been officially declared "catastrophic", which means those who have lost homes "will be given priority by insurers" (ABC report 9/3/2019).

Archdeacon Sue Jacka, a chaplain with VCCEM, was at the Morwell Relief Centre on Saturday 2 March, along with Jill Campbell and Denise Martin from the Mirboo North parish. Sue reported that a bakery had generously donated many trays of hot cross buns and these along with pizza, tea and coffee (provided by Latrobe Council) were given out to people at the centre.

A family who had been evacuated, having asked for water, later came back to the centre and gave out bottled water to others. Sue said there were nearly 100 people at the relief centre, along with 40 dogs and other animals.

(continued on page 5;
see also Ken Parker's
Bunyip report page 7)

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Ash Wednesday homily

(continued from page 1)

Pondering what makes us human, one of my former teachers of theology, Jesuit priest Andy Hamilton, writing with reference to the 2008 National Apology to our First Nations peoples, had this to say:

When we are teaching our children a right way to live, we want them to learn three magic words: please, thank you, and sorry. If they make these words central in their lives and mean them, they will treat everything... as a gift and not an entitlement, and they will be well equipped to form and heal relationships... Some [apologies] are made out of love, others out of fear... [In] its highest form... contrition [is] motivated by love for the person injured... [However] contrition [can also be] motivated by concern for oneself, expressed in shame or guilt at not living up to... expectations... or in fear of the consequences (Eureka Street, "The national apology 11 years on" 12/2/2019).

Tonight's gospel passage (Matt 18:1-7) sets out these two sources and qualities of contrition. The first is born of a

sense of the inestimable worth of the person wronged. Jesus places a child in the midst of the disciples, drawing counter-cultural attention to both the inherent dignity of children and their embodiment of kingdom values.

At the same time, Jesus draws attention to the vulnerability of such "little ones", which demands particular things of those less vulnerable. The second sort of contrition referred to by Hamilton, then, is born of a sense of a fear of judgement in relation to failure in this regard: "Woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes".

Contribution that is motivated by fear of judgement – the world's or God's – is not "perfect contrition" in the language of sacramental confession.

Yes, woe to us; and shame on us; but not in that kind of "woe is me", indulgent self-loathing that becomes yet another form of preoccupation with ourselves and the Church as institution, instead of focusing on the vulnerable person, the child, the victim, the survivor.

That kind of "imperfect contrition" feeds back into the structural brokenness which enabled such atrocities to happen in the first place, and must not describe our intention

this evening.

So it is that Jan Richardson, in her poem "Blessing the Dust" urges, "let us not be marked for shame" – at least, not in that self-serving sense; rather, let us be marked for the sort of contrition that is motivated by respect for the injured, care for the vulnerable, which – in this context – is survivor-focused and trauma-informed, which includes the sort of repentance that leads to reparation, even if reconciliation must wait.

Let us be marked "for claiming what God can do within the dust": redemptive work reflected in an unwavering commitment to child safety in our churches and schools and organizations; reflected in a seismic cultural shift, driven not by compliance, or insurance, but by kingdom values, and a gospel-shaped worldview; reflected in a willingness to face into the clericalism, and the other forces which have been allowed to erode transparency and accountability, to substitute power for authority, and to usurp the ministry of all the baptised.

Tonight we confess, with a contrition which places



Bishop Richard Treloar

the child at the centre, our collective sin, our structural complicity in enabling the conditions in which such insidious – but no longer unspeakable – stumbling blocks could be placed before the vulnerable in our care, under our watch, while we stood by.

In that spirit, and with those assurances, I apologize unreservedly to all survivors of institutional child sexual abuse, especially within the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland, for the breach of trust on the part of all on whom you relied for protection.

We have failed you. We are sorry for the wrong done to you, and the harm and trauma you and your families have suffered. We ask for your forgiveness. We ask for God's forgiveness.

+ RH

Prayer Diary: around the parishes

"That we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith..." (ROMANS 1:12)

CROAJINGOLONG COOPERATING PARISH EASTERN REGION

St John, Cann River
St Peter, Mallacoota
Priest-in-Charge:
The Rev'd Jude Benton

The Parish of Croajingolong is isolated – we have the only church buildings and Jude is the only resident minister in this massive area. Although the permanent population is small, over the summer it is a hub of holiday-makers. We appreciate the encouragement and wisdom of visitors who boost our church congregations each week.

Our thriving op shop is increasingly becoming a place of ministry in Mallacoota.

We are also looking at new ways to engage with the communities, such as an informal dinner-based service on Saturday evenings in Cann River, and movie-based discussion nights in Mallacoota.

Please pray for the finances we need, as well as energy, wisdom and safety on the roads for these remote congregations.

DROUIN WESTERN REGION

Christ Church, Drouin
St James, Jindivick
Union Church, Longwarry
Rector: the Rev'd Dr Dean Spalding

Please pray that we will grow in our ability to deepen our

relationship with God, each other and our community; that we might live more deeply into our baptismal identity where ministry is understood to be a commitment of the whole congregation. Pray for the Holy Spirit's outpouring, bringing healing, the seeking of reconciliation and wholeness; for development and continuation of relational bridges to other associations in the Drouin and Jindivick Communities – Kurnai (Gunaikurnai) Nations; other denominations; Baw Baw Shire Council; Baw Baw Singers; RSL; CWA; CFA; Rotary; the Warragul Municipal Band; and for relational bridges to our baptismal families and those who attend SCAMPS (Story, Craft And Music for

Pre-Schoolers). Pray for the growth of Inter-Generational (IG) Ministries and a new IG worker

HEYFIELD EASTERN REGION

St James, Heyfield
St Matthew, Tinamba
Priest-in-Charge:
the Rev'd Lyndon Phillips
(two week days per week)

Please pray for the Parish of Heyfield as they prepare for the Rev'd Judith Lake to commence as Priest-in-Charge of the Parish; for the visiting clergy, the Rev'd Heather Cahill and Lay Leadership Team: David, Deb and Jannette as they continue to provide support and encouragement within the local community. Pray for on-going pastoral care in both Laurina Lodge and home situations, and for drought and fire affected regions.

New adventure for Judith Lake and Heyfield

Jan Down

The Rev'd Judith Lake, newly appointed as Priest-in-Charge of Heyfield, explained how she first came to be interested in the Gippsland parish by saying "I'm blaming Lyndon Phillips!"

She and Lyndon, (Priest-in-Charge of Rosedale parish, as well as part-time at Heyfield) had studied together at Trinity College, and met up again at a conference a couple of years ago. Lyndon suggested Heyfield as "just the parish" for Judith, but initially the timing wasn't right for her.

However, Judith began reading *The Gippsland Anglican* "with great interest", and kept noticing the vacancy at Heyfield. Eventually she contacted Bishop Richard, and the official process of inquiry began.

Judith is looking forward to what she sees as "a whole new adventure" and a challenge in coming to Heyfield. She commented "The town has a good feel about it... I walked into the church [recently

painted] and it felt comfortable, welcoming and looking for a future". She added, "I'm on about being collaborative – working out how we go forward together".

The Heyfield parish will be 100 years old next year, so Judith also said "We've got to plan a party!"

Judith will live in the rectory, next door to the church of St James' at Heyfield, and work three days a week. She explained her decision to move to Heyfield rather than travelling down each week: "I feel really strongly about being part of the community as well as part of the parish", noting that ministry needs don't necessarily fit neatly into three specific days of the week.

Judith's call to ordained ministry goes back a long way, to the time when her children were small and she had just gone through a marriage break-up. She had an interest in theology and found herself wanting a better understanding of "how things fitted together", so began theological studies by correspondence.

When she was in her last

unit of study people began suggesting ordination, but initially Judith resisted this. However, eventually she decided to explore the idea and see where it led. It took her to ordination as a distinctive deacon in the Melbourne diocese in 2007 by Archbishop Philip Freier.

But the question of priesthood "kept hanging about", Judith says, so she went to see her theological lecturer and mentor, Richard Treloar (now Bishop of Gippsland) and as Judith tells it, "he grinned and said 'I'm not surprised. Let's talk about what being priested may mean'."

Judith feels that in the last five years, she has changed. "There's been a shift in me that's enabled me to see what people have been saying to me for years."

She is grateful for the opportunities of those five years at St Stephens' Richmond where she has been first Honorary Deacon, then Associate Priest, while also working as an Anglican Chaplain to the Epworth Hospital and as Mothers'



The Rev'd Judith Lake

Union Chaplain in the Diocese of Melbourne.

In her hospital chaplaincy work, Judith says she has had amazing conversations with people and got to know a few "frequent flyers". She will miss this work.

In earlier times, Judith worked at the Women's and Mercy Hospitals as a Mothercraft nurse, looking after babies in the special care

nurseries and supporting new mothers in learning to care for their babies.

At one time she also worked in Sale for six months with the Children's Protection Society, which had houses scattered around for children who were "at risk".

Judith's induction will take place some time after Easter, at a date to be announced.

What is Ash Wednesday?

Archdeacon Sue Jacka

Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent, the traditional time for repentance and giving over the six weeks before Easter.

Of course it is helpful to come before God in confession whenever we have done or said something hurtful. We can also lament when we feel shattered by having been sinned against.

Bringing our sin to God allows us to start the journey of repentance – making changes in humility. It also allows God to heal our hurts.

But sometimes we also need to acknowledge and bring before God different kinds of sins. These can include the wrongs done on our behalf or on our watch often while we were unaware but are still implicated: things like the imbalance between the haves and have-nots in the Australian community; the blight of modern day slavery; or the trauma suffered by victims of sexual abuse. We don't allow enough time for lament, for grieving before God or emptying our hearts

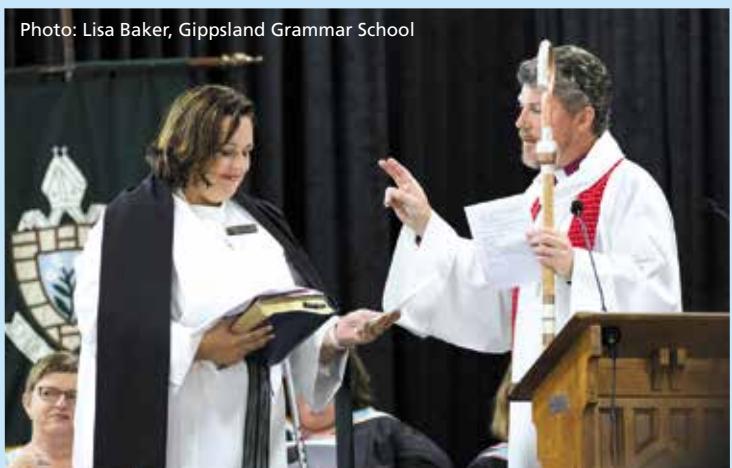
of the pain and the sense of powerlessness we feel when we consider these terrible situations.

This year the Ash Wednesday liturgy at Trafalgar drew on the service created by Dean Susanna Pain for St Paul's Cathedral with its focus on repenting of the conditions that allowed child sexual abuse to occur within the church. Such systemic sin is being addressed, but this service gave us a chance to lay open before God how dreadful we feel that innocent children's lives have been greatly damaged and that even today some parts of society seem to care more for the reputation of churches and other institutions than for these "little ones".

GIPPSLAND DIOCESE VACANCIES

- SOUTHERN REGION
 - Mirboo North
 - Yarram

Jackie Belot commissioned



Jackie Belot, the new full-time Chaplain at Gippsland Grammar School, commissioned by Bishop Richard Treloar on 20 March



Be a part of supporting the Aboriginal Ministry Fund

The AMF exists to resource employment of Aboriginal people in ministry; training of Aboriginal people for ministry; development of Aboriginal ministry in the community; the planting of Aboriginal churches; education of the Diocese about Aboriginal issues.

Be a part of achieving these aims.

Contact the Diocese of Gippsland
453 Raymond Street, Sale, Victoria
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Email registrar@gippsanglican.org.au



The Rev'd David Head celebrating with the congregation

David Head: 40 years a priest

**Carolyn Raymond
Morwell**

It was wonderful to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Rev'd David Head's priesting on Sunday 17 February.

Our St Mary's congregation entered into the occasion with enthusiasm. Several people had made a special effort to come to congratulate David and celebrate with him. We even included a welcome visit from Tess, his beautiful (and well behaved) border collie.

The church was decorated with red and white balloons and a large balloon with 40 emblazoned across it. The hymns were all well-known tunes but the words to three of them had been written by David himself, one of them especially for this celebration. The words reflected living a Christ-inspired life.

During the sermon David shared some of the highlights of his time as a priest in parishes in Melbourne and Gippsland. He acknowledged the many people who had been part of his journey and also contributed

to his growth as a priest and minister. We journey together.

People had brought much delicious food to share for lunch. On behalf of the congregation Sandra Wagner presented David with a gift of money that he could use during his up-coming long service leave. He plans to visit Egypt so perhaps our gift will enable him to ride a camel around the pyramids!

We thank God for the gift of David's ministry among us. We were glad to celebrate and congratulate him on this special day.

Family Fun Fair drew crowds

**David Perryman
Avon**

The Family Fun Fair hosted at Avon Parish in the first weekend of March was a great day as we welcomed families from our community to many free children's activities including pony rides, face painting, fairy floss, lucky dips, jumping castles and an early visit from Easter Bunny who distributed Easter eggs and icy poles.

Despite the forecast hot weather, the pony rides were well in demand and many pets arrived with their owners to be shown at our pet show. The Fair hosted community stalls, SES and CFA involvement and the Stratford Lions tended the barbecue.

The Avon parish is deeply appreciative of the assistance from Anglicare that made this day possible.

The Rev'd David Perryman is Priest-in-Charge of Avon Parish.



Pony rides were popular at the Avon Family Fun Fair



Rainbow over The Abbey on Raymond Island

The Abbey Diary

- **The BIG Planting:** 31 May – 3rd June. Planting over 1300 new plants and trees to preserve critical biodiversity. Jobs to suit everyone: all ages and levels of fitness. Come and go as it suits you. (See calendar page 12 for dates and times.)

Morning Prayer in the Chapel at 9:30 am on Friday, Saturday, Monday. BBQ lunch (Friday, Saturday, Monday). Tea and coffee provided. Overnight accommodation available in West Cottage and at The Abbey Cottage at 37 Fourth Avenue for those staying as part of the planting party. Bookings essential; cost by donation. Book with Anna at 5156 6580 or info@theabbey.org.au

- **Solar power for The Abbey** – caring for creation and saving money. The Abbey Chapter is proposing to put solar panels on the Administration Building and West Cottage to service the Administration Building, the A Frame, Illawarra and the Chapel as well as West Cottage and the units, with back up from the grid, at a cost of \$15,000.

Anglican Earthcare Gippsland Inc (AEG) Public Gift Fund has set up a "Solar for The Abbey" Fund. All donations over \$2 to the Public Gift Fund of Anglican Earthcare Gippsland Inc are tax deductible. Donate by cheque to: Anglican Earthcare Gippsland Inc, Solar for The Abbey. Mail to: The Abbey, PO Box 77, Paynesville 3880. Please include your name and address for a tax receipt. Direct Deposit: Anglican Earthcare Gippsland, ANZ Bank, BSB 013 795 Acct No: 2060 78399. Please use surname and SA as reference. For tax receipt email: info@theabbey.org.au to confirm your donation and request a tax receipt.

- **Easter Pilgrimage reminder:** Maundy Thursday 18 April – Easter Day 21 April: four nights at The Abbey, including the liturgies of Easter. Bookings and inquiries: info@theabbey.org.au. Cost per person twin share: \$262. Cost per person single: \$475. Breakfast included.

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Photo: Christine Morris



L-R back row: George, Bishop Richard, Dean Susanna, Estelle, Front: Karena, Jenny, Lisa, and Wendy

Six welcomed and a quilt blessed

Cynthia Grove Sale

Six people were welcomed into the church community on Sunday 3 March at St Paul's Cathedral in Sale. There were: one adult baptism; three confirmations; two reaffirmations of baptismal vows; and one reception into the Anglican church of a long-time congregant, Karena Nagy, who had come originally from a different tradition.

Bishop Richard preached a wonderful sermon for the Feast of the Transfiguration, weaving in parts of the candidates' stories. We ask for your prayers for George, Estelle, Wendy, Lisa, Jenny and Karena, and for us all as we surround them with our love and support.

With the service ended, the

whole congregation processed behind the crucifer, young acolytes, Lay Assistant, Bishop Richard and Dean Susanna to Delbridge Hall where we celebrated the life and ministry of the late Brian Turner, former Dean of our Cathedral Church of St Paul, Sale.

Bishop Richard sprinkled with water and blessed a

quilt designed and created by Ms Kathleen Campbell and donated by the Rev'd Colin and Mrs Dorothy Tunbridge, Bishop Bruce and Mrs Zandra Wilson, and the Rev'd Anne Turner and family.

How lovely it was to see Anne Turner with us again; truly a morning of joy for the St Paul's congregation.



A section of the quilt made by Kathleen Campbell, honouring the ministry of a former Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, the Rev'd Brian Turner

Gippsland Anglicans respond to NZ attacks

Bishop Richard Treloar

We have all been shocked by the brutal attacks on two mosques in Christchurch on Friday 15 March.

The thoughts and prayers of the clergy and people of the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland are with the victims of these horrific acts, and with their families.

We grieve with our trans-Tasman neighbours at the loss of innocent life, and the associated terror and trauma in a country that celebrates diversity and exemplifies a culture of inclusion and respect for all people.

Our hearts go out to our brothers and sisters in the great Abrahamic tradition of Islam, with whom we stand

in solidarity as people of faith, of peace, and of good will.

We uphold those who seek to bring relief to the injured, comfort to the bereaved, and order to the chaos of this terrible

event and its aftermath.

And we continue to work in our communities, our churches and our schools to enhance religious literacy and to address the fear of difference that can manifest in such violence.



Members of St Thomas', Bunyip laid 50 flowers on the Mary altar in remembrance of the people killed in the Christchurch mosques in New Zealand

Community spirit during fires

Jan Down

community to get through this time."

In Nar Nar Goon parish, the Rev'd Chris McAleer also said that several parishioners had to evacuate from Tynong and Garfield, but thankfully none of their houses were lost. However, he said "Many farms and animals were not so fortunate. In Nar Nar Goon we had lots of smoke and traffic chaos from the rail, road and highway closures, but no immediate danger, due to the prevailing winds."

The Rev'd Dr John Batt said many people evacuated from Neerim South, including himself and his wife Penny.

CFA members told John that the fire was at times jumping across ridges, travelling at a fast pace and ominously following the same course as the deadly 2009 Black Saturday fires. John commented "the concern was a wind change that would take the fire across to the Neerim South township but praise God that did not eventuate. Our prayers go out to those who were less fortunate and lost homes and properties to the fire."

The Rev'd Tracy Lauersen at Warragul reported "None of our parishioners' properties suffered damage; however the adult children of one of our 8:00 am parishioners were affected and are currently living in town with their parents..."

"Two of our parishioners were involved at the relief centres and several are involved in helping in clean-ups of properties.

"We praise God that there was no loss of life in these recent fires and we are grateful for the work of the many volunteer fire-fighters and support workers."



Avon River at Stratford

Ministry to the Dying Working Group reports

Sue Fordham

The report by the Ministry to the Dying Working Group has been handed to the Bishop following a year-long series of meetings.

The group was established as a result of Synod Resolution 222/17 and has varied in its membership over the time.

While members represented a great diversity of views on the issue of assisted dying, once the legislation had been passed by the Victorian Parliament,

the group set about looking at the best way to minister to the dying and their families given this new reality.

The focus was on pastoral care and while the Church has a tradition of anchoring pastoral care into its theological training, it was thought that assisted dying required the marshalling of new resources for use by clergy, chaplains and lay pastoral groups.

To meet the need for this new reality of assisted dying, the State Department of Health and Human Services

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Slovenia, Gippsland, Rwanda, New Guinea

Lindy Driver enthralled congregation at Yarram's World Day of Prayer

Glenda Amos

Yarram's World Day of Prayer service was held at Holy Trinity church this year on Friday 1 March. Forty people from all Yarram churches attended the afternoon service to hear stories from Slovenia, one of the smallest and youngest countries in Europe.

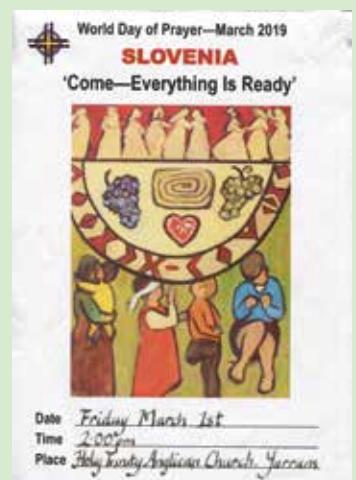
Slovenia is a country of natural beauty with plains, green forests, high mountains and a mysterious *karst* underworld on the coast of the Adriatic Sea. It became an independent country in 1991.

The Slovenes have been refugees and migrant workers since the break-up of Yugoslavia. Many are poor farming families and

some have Romani heritage. Despite their difficulties they have a great love for their country and their Christianity.

Linda Bowden co-ordinated and led the service. The readings, featuring stories of women from Slovenia, were presented by members of each church.

As well as prayers of thanksgiving for their well-being and hymns of praise, those present were enthralled with the guest speaker – Mrs Lindy Driver. She gave an interesting address weaving the mission needed in Slovenia, here in Gippsland and also in Rwanda, as well as New Guinea where Bishop Jeffrey Driver works and supports Newton Bible College in Popondetta.



A DVD presentation gave us a fuller description of this year's Bible Society project in Slovenia which will support "Trauma Counselling for Women". The offering given during the service will be donated to this project.

Afternoon tea was enjoyed by all at the end of the service.



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The Diocese is committed to ensuring all people in contact with the Church can participate in a safe and responsible environment. If you may have been harmed by a church worker, or know someone who has, please come forward.

The Director of Professional Standards, Cheryl Russell, is available, and will maintain confidentiality, on telephone 03 5633 1573, on mobile 0407 563313, or email cheryl.russell1@bigpond.com

An important conversation

None of us likes to consider our own mortality. For our older loved ones, it's an even more confronting topic and difficult to discuss.

When Lindsay became ill, his family's priority was to support him through his treatment and keep him positive and as comfortable as possible.

Typical of his generation, Lindsay had always been very private, never sharing personal information – not even with his nearest and dearest. After he passed away, it dawned on the family that nobody

knew whether Lindsay would have preferred cremation or burial. At such an emotionally charged time, the question caused quite a dispute.

As parents, we aim to have open dialogue with our children over issues like drugs, sex, etc. But as our parents age, difficult discussions around medical arrangements, Wills, money, etc, are usually put off until something occurs to trigger the talk. Often, by then it's too late, which is why it's so important to communicate while you still can.

Once Lindsay's funeral was over, the family faced more complex questions: did Lindsay have a Will? Was there any insurance? What investments and assets did he have? Trying to locate Lindsay's paperwork and make sense of his finances became a nightmare.

If only someone had asked him.

What should you talk to your parents about?

Julie Irving from DMG Financial can guide you through the complex maze of information you need to know. Contact Julie today on: 03 5144 4422.

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Ash was falling on the altar cloth

The Rev'd Ken Parker tells of Bunyip's narrow escape from the bush fire.

We had been warned. Ray Hodge in his Bunyip Lecture on Sunday 24 February had concluded a most interesting talk about his career as an aerial fire-spotter, saying that the coming weekend would be a challenge for us all. He was right!

All hell broke loose when fire erupted in the Bunyip State Forest on Friday 1 March. Before long all the communities bordering the forest were under threat, particularly those between the forest and the freeway. Places like Garfield North and Tonimbuk were especially threatened and Labertouche and Jindivik if there were a wind change.

Saturday's heat was intense and the threat grew. Other fires developed in Gippsland. With some wise advice from CFA contacts I took the risk of driving from my home in Mornington to Bunyip early on the Sunday to lead any folk who might come to share in the eucharist.

Driving up into Bunyip that morning was like driving into an overheated oven. The fire was huge and not far away – ash and burning leaves were dropping on the town. People did arrive for the

service. We started with seven and by the end there were fourteen of us.

We lit no candles that day. For our prayers, we put pebbles in a large bowl of water, praying for neighbours and friends, for the fire-fighters, for our homes and communities. We shared the sacrament gathered round the altar and had a deep sense of being blessed. Ash was falling on the altar cloth as we concluded.

News came as we left the church that fire had hit the heart of Tonimbuk and we knew that our friends were fighting for their homes and their lives.

I saw that the wind had changed while we made eucharist and the fire was driving towards Bunyip itself. Across the road the marvellous staff at Hillview Aged Care was evacuating their residents. I closed the church and took with me the best chalice and paten, for I did not expect to see St Thomas' Church again.

Returning home to Mornington I kept in touch with people who were in the midst of it all. News of spot fires in Bunyip itself was no surprise but I was

"I did not expect to see St Thomas' Church again."

(This number has of course grown as further losses have been discovered.)

On Wednesday I drove back to Bunyip and into a wall of smoke. The church was still standing and a little group came to mark the solemnity of Ash Wednesday. Solemnity turned into celebration when solid rain landed on our little church's tin roof.

After the eucharist I wandered round the town.



From the Nar Nar Goon CFA station looking east, taken by Captain Geoff Bramley

heartened to hear John Fain on the radio talking with people who'd evacuated to Biddy Martha's – Bunyip's famous coffee shop. News came through, little by little, including the loss of maybe seven homes at Tonimbuk.

A great relief effort was well under way as a competent team worked lovingly in the football pavilion to care for the fire's victims. At the school children had returned and staff and chaplain were helping them find normality.

Biddy Martha's was busy with its ministry of compassion and at the CFA a few men were catching their breath and cleaning up. When I expressed my thanks that they had saved the town and that no lives were lost one of them said, "Yes, it's been a huge task, but we are a big family here, and I reckon we did have some help from above!"

Now I am left with questions.

What is this little wooden church in Bunyip for? Having survived these fires, there is surely a future ministry. And us – parish, priest, community – what are we here for? Pray God we learn and love and live our vocation more.

And I ask that you pray too for the many families who have lost homes and whose homes are damaged. Pray for those who have lost animals.

Pray, too, for the animals and our poor scorched land.

Pray that while there is still time we might learn better care for the earth.

Give thanks for the fire-fighters.

Give thanks for the miracle that no human lives were lost.



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Brodie's baptism was his decision

**Canon Jeff Richardson
Traralgon**

Occasionally God blesses the church with an unexpected gift of joy. This was the case for St James' Traralgon when in November 2018 a family approached me to baptise their 12 year old son, Brodie.

This is a common request at St James for children entering Roman Catholic schools or colleges who are required to be baptised. But Brodie was different as it was something that he decided for himself. "I wanted to do it because Mum and Dad were both baptised and I thought it would be something good to do", he said after his baptism.

His parents, Craig and Narelle Hocking, were very supportive of Brodie taking this step forward in his life. And so began a journey of discovery for Brodie (and his mum who attended each session) as we examined some of the key elements of Christianity.

After his baptism Brodie was asked what were some of the things he learned. "God, the Creator, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Church", was his immediate reply. For one of the sessions Brodie sat in the church, had a good look round, and then I explained the meaning behind many of the ornaments, symbols and furnishings. One thing I forgot to tell him about was the pews and when he came to church the following Sunday he needed to know why there are there so many "benches in the church"!

Then came the rehearsal, and afterwards Brodie proudly recited the Lord's Prayer off by heart; something he had been learning since the second session when we talked about prayer.

The day of Brodie's baptism (10 February 2019) was a wonderful occasion for his family and newly adopted church family at St James. The sermon began with the opening words from Chaim Potok's novel *In the Beginning*: "All beginnings are hard" as

an illustration for Brodie (and every Christian), that baptism is a new beginning and there'll be times when he will be drawn away from the promises he has made.

After the sermon Brodie came forward for baptism. His sponsors proudly presented him and before the congregation he confidently made his promises to God. Once baptised Brodie received the symbols of faith and one member of the Parish placed a silver cross around his neck to show that he was welcomed into the church, and particularly the community of faith at St James. Brodie was then presented to the congregation who greeted him with applause.

Finally, at the offertory Brodie was admitted to Holy Communion. He made the promise to regularly receive Holy Communion and, when appropriate to do so, renew the promises he made in his baptism at his confirmation in the presence of the Bishop.

And so the journey to baptism has ended for Brodie, but a new journey begins as he develops a spiritual awareness



Brodie Hocking after his baptism by Canon Jeff Richardson

of God that will maintain his search for truth in God's Word and his hunger to be fed with the bread and cup of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Potok is right, "All beginnings are hard", but they are less so when you

have a loving and supporting family and church always at your side.

May God continue to bless the church with unexpected gifts of joy, just as we have been at St James' with Brodie and his baptism.

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Rules, ideals and a changed heart

Daniel Lowe

A Year 12 student recently asked me what I thought about the rules regarding the Year 12 common room. The general understanding is that students from other year levels should not enter the common room unless they need to see a teacher who is in there or if the weather is particularly horrendous and they need to walk through the common room to avoid getting saturated on the way to class.

Year 12 students have traditionally interpreted and enforced this rule in a particularly legalistic manner. The view that I expressed at the time was that I didn't think there should be a rule and that students should simply be expected to respect all common areas and to behave accordingly. On reflection, it occurred to me that both the

students and I were guilty of common errors of thinking.

The student approach reflects that of the Jewish Pharisees who took adherence to the letter of the law as their number one priority. In their mind, the way to live right (and be right with God) was to live strictly by the law.

What this meant in practice was that they were constantly adding extra laws and clauses to laws in order to create a rule for every possible eventuality. It also meant that they lost sight of the original purpose of the laws.

This is why Jesus was so critical of them when they rebuked him for doing something like healing a person on the Sabbath. In focusing so much on obeying the letter of the law, they had lost any sense of compassion for a sick and suffering person. This sort of attitude is not restricted to Jewish Pharisees and Year 12 students.



We are all prone to this error, particularly when we are focused on protecting our own perceived rights and privileges.

The mistake in thinking that I was making is equally common and no less problematic. I was operating from the assumption that everyone is basically a really good person and if left to our own devices we would all treat each other with respect and care. This is probably the dominant cultural mindset of most Australians. We like to believe that everyone is good, except of course for the really

bad people (think murderers, rapists etc.) who are clearly evil and not actually normal human beings.

The trouble with this view is that it doesn't stack up against our real world experience. Throughout all of history humans have demonstrated an equal capacity for great good and horrendous evil.

When left to our own devices we don't always act for good. As much as we hate to admit it, all of us have the potential to be both good and evil. We actually need boundaries, or rules, that help to keep us from doing the

wrong thing or at least to draw some clear lines for what sort of behaviour we are prepared to accept.

The Biblical picture of humanity is that we are all made in the image of God and carry that inherent dignity and worth in us. In that sense we are all capable of great good. But we are also flawed (the Bible uses the term *sinful*) creatures who are capable of, and prone to, evil as much as good. The law is useful in that it points us in the right direction but we become better people only through a fundamental 'recreation'. We can strive to be good people but only God can truly repair our flawed humanity.

So it seems the Year 12 common room probably does need some rules, as does society as a whole, but what we all need more is a change of heart. Perhaps our prayer should be that of the psalmist who said, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10).

The Rev'd Daniel Lowe is Senior Chaplain at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School.

Anglicare Fare

Justice Sunday in Gippsland

Cathrine Muston, Anglicare Development Officer

People are often curious about what happens behind the walls of prisons. There are sometimes rumours about prisons being like "holiday camps" where inmates enjoy items of "luxury".

Regular so-called law and order campaigns do nothing to dispel this and usually result in higher numbers of people being sentenced to spend time in prison. At present there are more than 7,500 people incarcerated in Victoria and this figure seems to be on the rise.

For those who go regularly into prison as chaplains such rumours are laughable. Life in prison is rarely comfortable, let alone luxurious. As well as the lack of any physical luxury, men and women in prison are incarcerated because they have been convicted and sentenced for something that they have done and the shame and guilt of that is a constant companion.

And then, once they have served their time, they will experience another form of

imprisonment as they look for housing, employment and to rebuild their relationships with family and friends. They will find that the doors are often closed on them and the way back is long and hard.

Anglican Criminal Justice Ministry provides Chaplains, many of whom are volunteers, to the people in all prisons in Victoria. Their role is to minister to those inside and when released, help them to rejoin the outside world with confidence and hope in God. Chaplains have a pastoral role in the life of the prisoners, conducting regular church services, praying with people, as well as baptising and preparing them for confirmation in the Christian faith. Communicating a message of hope in a place where many



feel that hope has deserted them requires commitment and compassion.

For many, prison can be a time of reflection and repentance as they seek rehabilitation and restoration with the community. When released, reconnecting and sticking to your goals is often difficult so ACJM have a program called "Get Out for Good" which matches ex-prisoners with volunteer

mentors. These volunteers are able to meet regularly with the participant to encourage them to live a positive life and make choices that will enable them to stay out of prison.

The Get Out for Good program is being launched in Gippsland on Wednesday 1 May at St Paul's Anglican Cathedral, Sale. Following the 10:00 am service, there will be a morning tea with presentations and the official launch of the program. If you would like to attend, please contact me on 0458 450370.

This year, our diocese will be joining with the rest of the state to celebrate Justice Sunday on 5 May. Justice Sunday seeks to highlight the work of the Anglican Criminal Justice Ministry, and those who work alongside people who have spent time in prison and are working to rebuild their lives.

ACJM has resources including a short video, for churches to access in order to mark this day and highlight the valuable work done by prison Chaplains.

If you would like a copy of the resources you can contact me at: cathrine.muston@anglicarevic.org.au or phone 0458 450 370.

Through Justice Sunday it is hoped that more people will be able to hear about how God is working in the justice system in Victoria and join in the restorative work that He is doing in people's lives.

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Sacred voice in the silence

Heather Toms

As life becomes increasingly busy there is an even greater need to search for a deeper meaning to all that we do. Sometimes we need to go and sit in the silence, so that we can hear new melodies that God constantly composes within. Who am I? What is my life for? What is my purpose?

How well do we listen? As we travel through Lent, are we taking the time to make our connections to God's story and how God has been working in human history to restore us and all of creation to wholeness?

We are part of the creation story, subject to all its laws and rhythms. Heading into Easter we are very aware that Jesus Christ is central to the story, the man who lived and died and rose and still lives for us.

Do we listen and hear God as he whispers to us in the night? How God's

majesty and mystery sail into our souls!

Listening to the heartbeat of God is never limited to the activities of worship, daily devotion or spiritual exercises. It echoes in unexpected ways every hour of the day and night. How deeply, how wholly we need to hear the words of King David who wrote:

*The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech,
and night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are
there words;
their voice is not heard;
Yet their voice goes out through
all the earth,
and their words to the end
of the world.*

Psalm 19.1-4

"How God's
majesty and
mystery sail
into our
souls!"

David believed that creation in all its earthiness and ordinariness actually was a microphone for broadcasting the glory of God. God's voice is proclaimed through the heavens as well as through the perfect decrees of God's law. David had faith to believe that through all creation God breathed his loving words to humankind. We could say that God sang his song to the human family.

Teresa of Avila taught that God is found among the pots and pans. She helped her community know that dramatic spiritual experiences are not intrinsically more valuable than the habitual obedience of day-by-day faithfulness. Spiritual maturity, or "perfection" as she called it, must be measured not by

mystical moments but rather by doing God's will in the context of real life.

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life – this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us.

1 John 1.1-2

All of life is sacred. When God reveals his heart to us, it will most likely come to us in the way described in 1 John. Did you notice? Have we heard with our ears, seen with our eyes, and touched

with our hands? We will know the presence of God through our five senses of hearing, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling. David Willard says "Human spiritual life always involves the use of our bodies. We have no other tools or instruments in the spiritual life than those. It is by our physical senses that we are made alive to the Kingdom of God. It is for the family of humankind our way of knowing".

Can we spare the time to be nourished? Can we take time to walk through a rambling woodland and be aware of the colours of the leaves on the trees, the leaves falling gently on the ground and the wind blowing on our faces, taking our breath away? Can we trust and walk on through to where we know not where, but find God is there waiting?

We need patience and a willingness to open ourselves to the work of the Spirit in us and to embrace fully the gift of salvation.

*Un-crowd my heart, O God,
until silence speaks
in your still small voice;
turn me from the hearing of words,
and the making of words,
and the confusion of much speaking,
to listening,
waiting,
stillness,
silence."*

Esther de Waal

The Rev'd Heather Toms is a Hospital and Prison Chaplain and Associate Priest at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

EDITORIAL

God knows what it is to suffer

The crucifixion of Jesus is as offensive to some people now as it probably always has been, though it might be expressed differently. St Paul, 2000 years ago, described the cross as "a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles" (1 Corinthians 1:23).

The kind of offence the cross gives today is seen in the reaction of horror and even disgust at the idea of a God who sacrifices his son, and at the sheer brutality and violence of Jesus' death.

Yet it is precisely in the horror, pain and darkness of the cross that God meets our human need for an answer to the problem of suffering. What we see in the cross is not a philosophical answer to our question, but God suffering as we humans do in this world.

When we think of the evil of the Holocaust, the massacres of Aboriginal people when Europeans arrived, people who are scarred for life by sexual abuse, the families who have lost people in the recent Christchurch massacre, or so many other instances of terrible human suffering in history, nothing less than the cross will answer.

The Franciscan friar, Richard Rohr, goes so far as to say "I have come to believe that Jesus' solidarity with suffering on the cross is actually an acceptance of a certain meaninglessness in the universe, its nonsensical tragic nature, a black hole that seems constantly to show itself to sensitive souls. To accept some degree of meaninglessness is our final and full act of faith that God is still good and still in control" (Eager to Love, 2014).

So there does seem something sad about John 3:16 ("For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son...") being overtaken as the most popular Bible verse (see report in telegraph.co.uk 25/2/2019). The Rev'd Dr Peter Phillips, Director of CODEC Research Centre for Digital Theology of St John's College at Durham University is reported as saying "People don't want to put a verse about Jesus' death upon the cross on social media, it's a bit heavy". Perhaps this says more about the limitations of social media than it does about the theology of the church in general.

But surely there is still a time and place for saying with St Paul, "...Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified."



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The “Kindertransport”—escaping Germany in 1939

Ursula Plunkett, a parishioner at St John’s Bairnsdale, tells the story of her escape to England just before the Second World War.

In December 2018 about 2000 elderly people celebrated the 80th anniversary of the “Kindertransport”. I am one of 10,000 children brought out from Germany nine months before war was declared in September 1939.

My parents were the only Jews living in a small village in Pomerania, Germany. They had to leave without notice when the local Nazi party confiscated their business – no compensation paid, of course. We moved to a flat in Berlin and I remember nothing about the Jewish school I attended except trying to learn Hebrew!

“Kristallnacht” in November 1938 saw Nazis looting, smashing and burning Jewish shops – my parents were concerned for my safety as I looked a typical Jewish child, with black hair and dark eyes.

Meanwhile in England a Jewish and a denominational body formed the “Refugee Children’s Movement” and appeals went out to influential people. The British Government eventually agreed to allow Jewish children into the country without legal immigration papers. People began to offer foster homes, some of which were questionable as to their suitability.

I left my parents on the platform in Berlin on 3 January 1939. My father had blessed me before we left the flat. How could they bear to let me go? They had so much strength and love to get me on a transport.

My sister, six years older, had already gone to Palestine (as it was then) in 1936 to live in a kibbutz. She had been an ardent Zionist. I was probably on the second transport. Children up to fourteen years were allowed to leave and I was thirteen. The train travelled via Utrecht to Hook van Holland, then by ferry to Harwich and a summer camp in Dovercourt. It was so cold – unheated, overcrowded, with poor food and little supervision.



Ursula aged 7 years, taken in Stepenitz/Stepnica, Germany.

People came every Sunday to look us over and decide which child took their fancy! Many preferred the young and cute. Teenagers were mostly overlooked and many eventually went into hostels.

I know now that God was looking after me: I was introduced only to one couple and two teachers from a private school in London. My prospective foster parents were an Anglican priest, Bernard Mohan and his wife Christine. She always told me that she took one look at this very Jewish looking teenager and just wanted to take me home.

They could not really afford to have me as they already had two young children. Clergy stipends were not good! The staff of the school also wanted to support a refugee and offered to meet school fees.

So my life at the vicarage began on 7 January 1939. Auntie and Uncle had two children, Patricia aged seven and John aged four, who became my sister and brother. I am still in touch with Patricia who lives in Paris. John is in Canada and doesn’t correspond.

When war broke out my parents wrote letters via an uncle in America. That stopped when America entered the war



and letters of 25 words were then forwarded by the Swiss Red Cross between Germany and England.

My father wrote after some time that “they were going away” the next day and sent his blessings and my mother’s love. They were murdered in Auschwitz concentration camp in July 1942.

I asked my parents’ permission to be baptised and my father had requested me to wait until I was 18 and to be sure. I can only wish now that I had spared them that grief.

I was always looked upon as a daughter and eventually, many years later, introduced Bernard and Christine as my parents, mostly to avoid questions!

It is a fact that children who went to Christian homes were sometimes not heard of again. Some of the unfortunates in hostels landed in trouble with the police.

Many children went to good Jewish homes. A Rabbi came to see me and to my horror suggested that I might like to change to a Jewish family.

In 1942 I was baptised and confirmed. That year I started my nursing career at Guy’s Hospital in London.

Does history teach about the Holocaust? How many people know that six million Jews, including children, died in concentration camps? Old people, like me, were asked to write and talk about the 80th Anniversary and remember.

A 29 year old English stockbroker, Nicholas Winton, had been asked by a friend who was already working with refugees, to come and observe conditions in Prague refugee camps mostly for Jews, communists and others. He was touched by the plight of the situation and promptly set to work to get children out. He saved 664 children in the nine months before war broke out. The last train, full of parents, trying to join children who had been sent before, as well as more children, was not able to depart as war had been declared that day.



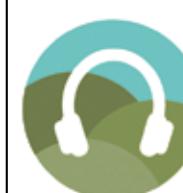
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Service – such a win win

**Carolyn Raymond
Morwell**

I guess I am a “dyed in the wool” Anglican. I have worshipped in Anglican churches all my life. I love the liturgies, the music, the sermons and the contact with my church family. Going to church means having special time with God.

For me the services are always inspirational. This is one of the prayers I love:

“Most Loving God, you send us out into the world you love.

Give us grace to go thankfully and with courage in the power of your Spirit.”

During the service there is time for praise, worship, learning and also time to reflect on how I am living the Christian life. Jesus’ teachings set the bar very high: love God and your neighbour. There are so many different aspects to living the Christian life. To include and balance worship, prayer, and service is something I am working towards, step by step.

I have been asked to concentrate on one aspect of Christian living and have chosen service. My parents were actively involved in Christian service. Though it was never the done thing to talk about it (!) I saw how they put their faith into action in their church and their community.

I take great reassurance when I look at Jesus’ contact with those he met. He did speak to large groups but he also concentrated on individuals he met and was “totally in their space”. It makes me think of tradespeople who advertise “No job too small”.

Service can be to your family and friends, in your work place and your neighbourhood. It is amazing and exciting. You do new things and go to new places. As a teenager I marched through Melbourne protesting and waving a placard against the death penalty. At university I joined “Abschol”. At this time the lives of Aboriginal people were little known about. “Abschol” aimed to raise money for scholarships for Aboriginal youth.

This was quite an



Carolyn Raymond with Kate Jewell, EAL Assessor and Teacher

my decision to become an occupational therapist. I worked in various hospitals and community programs. I spent most of my working life supporting children with disabilities and their families, which is a humbling experience. With the birth of a disabled child families face unexpected challenges which change their lives. They are desperate to help their beloved child. I certainly needed courage and the support of God’s Holy Spirit then. I worked with many amazing families and lovable children.

At this time I was married, working and, with my husband, bringing up our two children. There was little time for community service. However I did continue to find my church a pivot point in my life. I accepted the request to become a Lay Reader and took up study to improve my knowledge. There were periods on Vestry and different church organizations.

Several years later I followed this by training as a Spiritual Director. This was an inspiring four year course. To companion someone on their spiritual journey is a great privilege. I joined the contemplative Community of Anam Cara and do what I can to provide quiet days of prayer and meditation for all who come.

When I retired life got really interesting. My husband and I joined VISE, which stands for Volunteers for Isolated Students’ Education. For seven years we travelled to remote properties for six weeks each year and worked as volunteer tutors for the children.

“I guess my aim is always to help people, so they do not feel alone.”

adjustment. In the first family we went to, the family members swore in every sentence. It took us some time to realize that the family were very fond of each other! On one property we all lived in a tin shed with the dogs, ducks and many cane toads.

People adjust to isolation in different ways. The families tended to think we were a bit odd. We were from “out there”. Oliver (my husband) was good at rifle shooting, so would demonstrate that he was “normal” by shooting feral pigs with the sons we tutored.

The outback is a blokey place. I would try to help out in the kitchen. On one property when the generator was turned on I would do the washing at four every afternoon. On another property all the girls dyed their hair, an enjoyable girl thing to do. These experiences were at times testing.

Ever since the Tampa episode I have been angry about successive governments’ treatment of asylum seekers. I am still angry. I have been a member of a group which has aimed to become more informed and share that information with the community. It is very frustrating that we are still punishing innocent people and causing them permanent damage.

As I and all those who have worked tirelessly to change this have had so little success, I thought what could I do? Now I work as a tutor with EAL, (English as an Additional Language) providing conversational English for refugees and migrants who come from

Diocesan calendar

April

- 13 9:30 am – 3:00 pm Men’s Retreat at St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale: “The Practice of Living with Purpose”, led by the Rev’d Nikolai Blaskow. Cost \$20 or donation. RSVP: 0428 167 724
- 18 – 22 Easter Pilgrimage to The Abbey: four nights on Raymond Island. Bookings and info: (03) 5156 6580 or email: info@theabbey.org.au
- 19 2:00 pm Stations of the Cross using Briagalong artist Pat Waters’ images in the church grounds at St Thomas’ Bunyip

May

- 1 10:00 am Commissioning Service: “Get out for Good, Gippsland” at St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale, followed by morning tea at 11:30 am. RSVP: Anglicare Victoria: phone 5125 9555 or email: administration AssistanceGippsland@anglicarevic.org.au
- 5 Anglican Criminal Justice Ministry Sunday
- 11 11:15 – 4:00 pm The Abbey Dispersed Community Gathering. Cost \$20, lunch included. Bookings and info: (03) 5156 6580 or email: info@theabbey.org.au
- 17–19 39th Synod of the Diocese of Gippsland, Sale
- 30 6:00 pm Ascension Day Eucharist at St Thomas’ Bunyip followed by celebratory meal. Please RSVP to: 5629 5295.

31 – 3 June

The BIG Planting at The Abbey. Friday and Saturday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm; Sunday: 2:00 pm – 4:30; Monday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm. Morning Prayer in the Chapel 9:30 am on Friday, Saturday and Monday. BBQ lunch (Fri, Sat, Mon) tea and coffee provided. Inquiries: info@theabbey.com.au or ring: 5156 6580

June

- 1 9:30 – 3:00 pm Lay Reader Training Day at Christ Church, Drouin
- 8 9:30 – 3:00 pm Lay Reader Training Day at St Paul’s Cathedral, Sale
- 9 2:00 pm “A Passion for Repair” Bunyip Lecture. Ann Heard from Castlemaine comes to share her passion for establishing REPAIR CAFES, where people share skills in order to repair items and appliances.
- 17–20 Clergy Conference at The Abbey

many countries across the world. It has been a revelation to share their journeys. I also began to help out at a homework group at a primary school where there are many South Sudanese children.

I guess my aim is always

to help people, so they do not feel alone. I want to spread God’s love around. To do this I must share of myself, my time, my gifts, and my resources. God continues to send me into the world he loves. May I go with courage in the power of God’s Holy Spirit.



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