

The Gippsland Anglican

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Hundreds of Virtual Hugs in Benetas aged care

Emma Lang

Amidst visitor restrictions and outbreaks in some residential aged care homes in Victoria, Anglican aged care and community health provider Benetas has facilitated hundreds of Virtual Hugs to be personally delivered to residents, including those at its Dalkeith Gardens home in Traralgon.

During the first wave of COVID-19, Benetas established the online tool in March to support families and friends to connect and show support for their loved ones in residential aged care amidst the restrictions and changes involved.

Within a matter of weeks, over 500 messages had been submitted through the program, alongside many photos of drawings and family snaps. Benetas CEO Sandra Hills OAM said the program had resonated with a community spirit and exceeded expectations in its uptake.

"The sheer number of messages and photos sent is testament to the care and connection that so many in our community have for older members of our community in aged care and their loved ones in our homes.

"We're very aware of the challenges of loneliness and isolation that too many older people in Australia face. Whether you are

living in the community or in residential aged care, this can be challenging at the best of times, let alone when faced by COVID-19.

"It's wonderful to be strongly reminded of the support that families and the wider community hold for older Australians, including the thousands of residents who we care for at Benetas."

Since March, Benetas residential aged care homes have received significant support from the local community with everything from gardening and flower donations from local businesses through to new pen pal programs.

"A number of our homes have struck up pen pal programs with the local schools or kindergartens which have brought great joy to many residents on a regular basis," Ms Hills said.

"We've also had remarkable acts of kindness with everything from bagpipe players and bands performing outside our homes through to family members donating dozens of homemade pastizzi and other delicious items.

"One family donated a ping pong table to our home on the Mornington Peninsula, Corowa Court, which I hear was a hit with residents and employees alike."

The team at Dalkeith Gardens have been supporting resident Evelyn English to collate all of the virtual messages, emails and photos sent from her family and granddaughter.



Dalkeith Gardens resident Erna Riess with a card she received from her community in recent months

Asked how she felt about receiving these, she said, "It is wonderful to receive the messages and hear what my family has been up to. I love to be able to see the pictures of the young ones, it really lifts my spirits!"

Ms Hills said that these acts of kindness and messages of love are

more than feel-good warm and fuzzies. "Amidst the incredible hardship and difficulties that our residents have faced these past months, it's been very inspiring to witness the goodwill and care that we've seen unfold in very testing times.

"I hope that the messages

keep coming and new avenues for connection with older Australians in aged care continue to be embraced by our community."

To donate or find out how you can support a Benetas residential aged care home, visit www.benetas.com.au/donate.

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GIPPSLAND DIOCESE VACANCIES

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Wonthaggi/Inverloch

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Investing in our future

In this issue of *The Gippsland Anglican* you will notice an advertisement for a part-time Diocesan Development Officer. As the advertisement suggests, the person we are seeking to fill this new role is someone who will help us to tell our story to the wider community, help to build partnerships and attract philanthropic support, and help to focus and increase our fundraising capacity.

Why, you might ask, at a time when things are so tight financially, are we looking to employ a new staff member?

The Diocese has been running deficit budgets for a number of years now. The reasons for this are manifold, complex, and understandable in their context. However, the fact remains that for some time we have been depleting the capital assets of the Diocese at a rate that is unsustainable. As that corpus diminishes, so does the income it generates, especially in the challenging wider economic environment in which we are now operating.

In May of 2019, Synod endorsed a recommendation of Bishop-in-Council that we plan to return to a surplus budget by 30 September 2023, just three years from now.

Notwithstanding the twin crises of the east Gippsland bushfires and COVID-19 that

have dominated this calendar year, the Finance Committee of Bishop-in-Council, Diocesan staff, and – more recently – the Executive Committee of Bishop-in-Council, have been working to identify strategies that can move us towards that goal.

At its last meeting in August, Bishop-in-Council adopted a Draft Strategic Financial Plan that included five strategies or ‘pillars’ around increasing income, and four ‘pillars’ or strategies around managing expenses.

Although both broad strategies – increasing income and managing expenses – are vital, our challenge is essentially around income: we are not generating enough revenue to support our mission as it is currently ordered.

Our diocesan structures are already very lean. We are served generously and well by the Registry Office team, in which only the Registrar is employed full time. Our equity in property and investments is carefully and prudently managed by the Trusts Corporation and Finance Committee.

Meanwhile, the cost of those essential services for which the Diocese is responsible – not least in the professional standards space – continue to outstrip our limited income

streams. We have incurred a significant burden – and rightly so – in terms of our redress obligations. Even the production costs of *TGA* are steadily rising, and you may see some changes in how this publication is presented in an effort to contain those.

In my Synod address last year I stressed the need to strengthen existing partnerships, and create new ones. To this end we have been engaging with a number of organisations to successfully gather support for our bushfire response. We have partnered with local shires and Victorian Government funding bodies to apply for grants that may enable us to deliver projects, create new roles and extend the reach of fresh expressions of our gospel ministry into the wider community.

An example of this is Cafe 123 in Sale, which will soon close its doors in its current dispensation (ending the Diocese’s financial commitment), and yet through a process of extensive community consultation and collaboration is on the verge of a new and exciting chapter as a multilaterally supported social enterprise.

We cannot be effective over time in this space without the skills and the dedicated human resources that a Diocesan Development Officer will



Bishop Richard Treloar

bring. Be it grant writing or a bequests program, growing our media presence or helping to fund local mission initiatives, seeking the support of regional businesses for diocesan projects or liaising with Anglican agencies around the wider church, generating a tax-deductible instrument for donors or promoting the activities that will attract donors, we need greater capacity in these areas if we are to gain much-needed traction.

That is why this philanthropic pillar has been identified as the first income strategy of the Draft Strategic Financial Plan; hence the search begins for someone to take up and shape this new role.

Please circulate the advertisement in your networks and encourage any potential applicants you may know: we want to recruit, and invest in, the very best person who can help us to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to us.

+RM

Prayer Diary: around the parishes

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

TRARALGON

St James, Traralgon
St John, Glengarry
St David, Toongabbie
St Stephen, Traralgon South
Rector: Canon Jeff Richardson
Assoc. Priest: The Rev’d Marilyn Obersby

We pray that our Parish will continue to live up to our motto, “To know Christ and to make Him known”, especially as we live through the current COVID-19 restrictions on our worship and contact with parishioners.

We give thanks for those who continue to work in our op shop and storage shed

and look forward to the time when we can welcome the community back to our monthly lunches.

The future of St Stephen’s Traralgon South is still under consideration and there are major works planned for St John’s Glengarry and St James Traralgon. We pray that God will guide us in these decisions.

TRAFALGAR WESTERN REGION

St Mary, Trafalgar
St Mark, Yarragon
St Mark, Thorpdale
Rector: The Ven Sue Jacka

Trafalgar and Yarragon are small but growing towns

while Thorpdale, like many farming communities, has a small population, of about 400. Strong community spirit exists in all three towns, although many newer residents from city areas find it difficult to feel like part of the community. Our churches have a positive role in developing a sense of belonging.

WARRAGUL WESTERN REGION

Warragul Anglican Church
Rector: The Rev’d Tracy Lauersen

Ministering to the community of Warragul, the church has continued

to provide services online during the COVID-19 lockdown: an 8 am traditional Prayer Book Eucharist and a 9.45 am contemporary service, and a kids program (called Salt Club).

Give thanks for the volunteers who have served with the Rev’d Tracy Lauersen to provide this online church experience each week. Pray for Tracy and the brothers and sisters in Warragul as they gather online (and hopefully in person as well soon). Pray for the church as it seeks to employ a Youth Minister (two days per week). Pray that God will continue to empower the vision that he has given them for the church over the next five years.

Deaconess grant to create safety for domestic abuse survivors

A grant calling upon Christian women in Australia to form an innovative, collaborative, strategic and church-based response to the issue of domestic violence in Australia has been awarded by Anglican Deaconess Ministries (ADM) to a concept supporting churches to create safety for domestic violence victims within their communities.

The Restoring Sanctuary Innovation Grant, of \$80,000, was awarded to Dr Wilma Gallet and her group's proposal.

Dr Gallet's proposed program outlines clear stages for participating church communities to progress

through, including a church-specific needs assessment, a workshop for both church leaders and congregants, support in policy formation and integration with local service providers, and planned resourcing for ongoing learning. The program has been intentionally constructed on a strong foundation of theology, trauma-informed care and a focus on the domestic abuse victim-experience. Dr Gallet is a lecturer at the University of Divinity, with senior project management, research and domestic violence program experience. She is joined by Nell Kuilenburg, who established and managed a Christian women's shelter

for over a decade and has continued to work in this space, along with Christine D'Souza, a registered psychologist with experience within the intersection of church communities and domestic violence. They are partnering with the Christian Research Association, including Professor Reverend Philip Hughes and Stephen Reid, to support the project.

Dr Gallet noted the heart behind the program, sharing that, "the program aims to create communities where victim-survivors of domestic violence feel safe, believed, included and loved. A sanctuary is a sacred place, a place where the presence of

God is felt; a place of safety and refuge. It is therefore fitting that the Church in the 21st century should provide sanctuary to those in need of support and in particular be a safe space for anyone who has experienced domestic violence."

ADM's Restoring Sanctuary Innovation Grant was first announced on 25 November 2019, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. Its focus is particularly to support structural and cultural change within churches that would allow for safer community spaces for victims of domestic abuse. Applicants for the Restoring Sanctuary

Innovation Grant came from church ministries, community organisations and individuals across the country, and final selection included an external review committee with representatives from the Anglican clergy and Christian victim-survivor communities, across both urban and rural contexts.

Amelia Schwarze, Area Specialist for Domestic and Family Violence at ADM, said, "we knew that churches were not un-affected in the domestic abuse crisis in our country, and yet many feel under-resourced in how they can best care for victim-survivors of abuse. We also knew that many women in the church were both well-placed and seeking to serve both the local church and victim-survivors in addressing domestic abuse."

Courtesy Anglican Deaconess Ministries.

Encouraging stories at Anglicare Victoria

Cathrine Muston

Despite all the recent bad-news stories, we can be encouraged when we hear stories of progress made or goals achieved. So at Anglicare Victoria we tell each other good-news stories – of encouragement or needs met, of families supported and workers thanked. It is amazing how the little things we do and say can make a big difference in someone's life as well as in our own.

A recent success story in Gippsland is that a young person in foster care has a placement that has now been made permanent. Another is that an 18-year-old currently in foster care has another three years with her carers because the family successfully applied for an extension through

Home Stretch. It is significant that these two young people now have stability and security as well as ongoing support as they grow and develop independence.

Most of our programs have had to transition to delivering programs online. This can cause some anxiety in both clients and those delivering programs. Fortunately, video-conferencing has been working well in many programs from supported playgroups to TEACHaR and Safe Care. Our teams, who often work across different sites, have also experienced a strengthened collegiality as communication between teams has increased through the use of platforms such as Skype and Zoom. Staff have been able to come up with more innovative and creative ways to engage with

their clients, as well as saving on travel time.

Our regular partners and supporters have also been an encouragement. The Latrobe Valley Quilters kindly made and donated a quilt to the Cradle to Kinder Program. The Early Learning Centre at St Anne's campus of Gippsland Grammar in Sale has been collecting pantry items throughout the term. These non-perishable food items are greatly needed for many of the families we work with.

Financial counsellors continue to relieve the pressure on people recovering from bushfires, saving families over \$1.1 million so far this year, just in the bushfire-affected areas. This service continues to provide both financial relief and advocacy for those who need it most.

Perhaps the most encouraging story shared recently was of a woman in her 60s who had suffered a severe stroke and was at risk of losing her home. She had a loan approved for a mortgage by her local bank branch despite evidence that she did not understand numbers and had a medical condition. From day one she experienced hardship, was unable to afford food and utilities and had difficulty understanding official documents and legal letters. Anglicare Victoria's financial counsellor, Stuart Lister, challenged the bank on her behalf on the grounds of irresponsible lending and as a

result a sizable chunk of her mortgage was reduced, and the balance set up interest- and charge-free. This means that she will be able to stay in her forever home with added security and dignity.

If you or someone you know is experiencing financial hardship, call Anglicare Victoria's Financial Counselling intake service: 1800 286 260.

Around the Diocese

East Gippsland bushfire recovery continues

Rev'd Cathy Turnbull

Gippsland Diocese bushfire recovery work continues across east Gippsland despite COVID-19 restrictions. Recently, we were able to provide much-needed fencing material to a number of farmers across various fire-affected locations. This was made possible by Melbourne Grammar School and the Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) and those who had donated to their bushfire recovery appeal from across the world. The need for fencing material is an ongoing one: farmers throughout the region have lost many kilometres of fencing as a result of the fires. It has been a privilege to be able to assist these farmers in this way and humbling to receive their grateful thanks on behalf of the Diocese and their supporters. In this work we have been partnered by Elders Bairnsdale, who have been

ever helpful and generously delivered the material free of charge.

So the fire recovery work continues, with clergy and parishes across east Gippsland continuing to provide assistance, both material and pastoral, in so many different ways. It is always heart-warming when people I speak with in fire-affected communities tell me how much they appreciate the presence of the church during this time and the work of the clergy. People may not always turn to the church when in need, but they do appreciate it when the church sees their need and reaches out a helping hand. May God continue to bless the work of the church in walking the journey of recovery alongside those impacted by the 2019/20 bushfires.

The Rev'd Cathy Turnbull is the Gippsland Diocese Bushfire Response and Recovery Coordinator.



Children from Gippsland Grammar Early Learning Centre with the non-perishable food collection

BSL report: poverty to return for single mothers and their children

Single mothers and their children experience higher rates of poverty than any other household type in Australia, and upcoming changes to social security will have a devastating impact on them, according to a new report by the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The report from the social justice organisation shows that low-income single mothers and their children continue to be caught in the binds of poverty and insecurity, with limited choices and opportunities.

The recent addition of the coronavirus supplement to many social security payments, including Parenting Payment Single, has been widely welcomed. This has finally allowed many single mums to make ends meet and live with dignity. But the government reduced the supplement on 25 September, with the dramatic drop impacting up to 1.1 million children.

Trampolines, Not Traps, the year-long qualitative research study, shows just how tough it will be for many single mothers to make ends meet once the supplement is gone.

One mum spoke of the need to forgo meals so that her child could eat: "I make sure my son eats ... He gets what he needs to be happy and survive, but there'll be times when I do the grocery shopping and it'll be nappies, food for my son, formula for my son, and then I might get myself a bag of noodles for the week."

Another mother, juggling two kids, reported how hard it has been to find extra work. Despite a degree in community services, she hasn't been able to find more than seven hours of work. This doesn't cover the cost of rent, food and bills.

"Many of the women that we interviewed reported high levels of stress and anxiety as they were constantly worrying about money, budgeting and working out how to pay their

bills," said Dina Bowman, Principal Research Fellow at the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

This important study highlights the structural inequality that has hit single parent families so hard, and will continue to do so once the supplement is removed. It also gives voice to women's experiences of being caught between work, care and welfare.

As Bowman and her co-author Seuwandi Wickramasinghe argue: "Women and children need strong foundations: stable, safe and affordable housing; affordable good quality child care; decent and inclusive employment; flexible access to education and training; and a fair social security system."

The report is available at www.bsl.org.au (search 'trampolines').

Courtesy Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Victorian homelessness package a ray of light

The lives of 2000 homeless people who have been sheltering in hotels during the pandemic will be transformed by an investment in long-term accommodation by the Victorian Government, Anglicare Victoria CEO Paul McDonald said in August.

Mr McDonald said the \$150 million boost by the Andrews Government was positive news for this vulnerable group of people who have been worrying about the future as COVID-19 rages around them.

"More than 220 children and 500 women are included in this 2000, and this initiative will provide a safe and secure place to live as well as some much-needed stability," Mr McDonald said.

"Housing homeless people in hotels has worked as an interim solution to a challenging problem, and this is the next step. It's great to see the government stepping up to look out

for the less fortunate and help them to turn their lives around."

Mr McDonald said more still needs to be done to address the root causes of homelessness, in areas such as family violence, mental health and family services.

"Funding for early intervention programs can stop our homeless numbers growing in the first place, by ensuring we respond to emerging family and youth problems before they hit crisis point," he said.

"Some further investment in accessing new work opportunities for the young and providing outreach mental health support to families – as well as permanently extending foster care and other forms of state care from 18 to the age of 21 – will ensure more positive life chances for vulnerable families and young people. It will also save money for the state over the longer term."

Courtesy Anglicare Victoria

'Cape Crusaders' undefeated by COVID

Lance and Rev'd Anne Perryman

During these times of restrictions, we have been talking a lot in the Parish of Wonthaggi/ Inverloch about how the early church met, to encourage each other and build each other up. We have been encouraging our parishioners to keep in contact with not only family and friends, but others in our communities.

Just before the most recent lockdown, the Anglicans who live in Cape Paterson but worship at different services and locations got together over a bring-and-share pot luck dinner at our home. There was no agenda other than encouraging each other

and building each other up. A great night was had by all as new friendships were formed and plans for more shared meals were made.

During stage 3 restrictions, we had to become more creative to keep the newfound tradition going (and still be compliant). We cooked roast pork and all the trimmings and delivered dinner to the 'Cape Crusaders', who then shared dinner together via Zoom. Thanks to Jude Mortimer, a magnificent piece of lemon meringue pie and a glass of wine were delivered too.

The conversation was lively and the evening was enjoyed by all. Plans are already afoot for



Anne Perryman (left) dining with Keith and Anne Wilson, part-time Cape Paterson residents in lockdown in Melbourne

our next meal.

Cape Paterson doesn't have a church within a specific building, but it is most definitely alive and faithful, and the Cape Crusaders look forward to continuing to meet wherever and in whatever way we can.



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Dean of St Paul's tells story of great-grandparents

Cynthia Grove

In 1867, a young man of about 25 arrived in Sydney. He came from a Bedfordshire family in England. His parents were dead as were seven of his ten siblings. The young man had been received into Holy Orders as a priest in 1866 but his health was poor and he had been advised by physicians to seek a warmer climate. His choice was Australia and accordingly the young Rev'd Arthur Wellesley Pain boarded the ship *Sobraon* to head down under, arriving after a voyage of some three months. His first parish in Australia was at Cobbity in NSW – undoubtedly a warmer climate. The year 1902 saw his appointment as the first Bishop of Gippsland. He served our Diocese as Bishop for 15 years, resigning in 1917 at age 75. Bishop Pain and his wife Annie moved to Sydney after retirement, where the Bishop died in 1920. In 2016 his great-granddaughter, the very Rev'd Susanna Pain, became Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

Dean Susanna spoke of all this and more via a Zoom presentation in September. Those watching were in Melbourne, Sydney, Canberra, Yarram and of course Sale, and included other descendants of the Bishop, friends and community members. Bishop Richard, in introducing his opening prayer, noted that as a church family in which the

waters of baptism are thicker than blood, we give thanks for the connections through bloodlines that we celebrate in this story.

Bishop Pain was described in terms of "strong faith," an "ethic of service," "exacting," and as having "high expectations of self and others," of being "scrupulously exact" and yet being a man of vision, faith and patience. This and a couple of read anecdotes portrayed him as a formidable man. Yet excerpts from several letters read by Susanna suggested a man of grace, a man of gentle caring. The letters were both moving and humbling – something for all Christians to attempt to live up to.

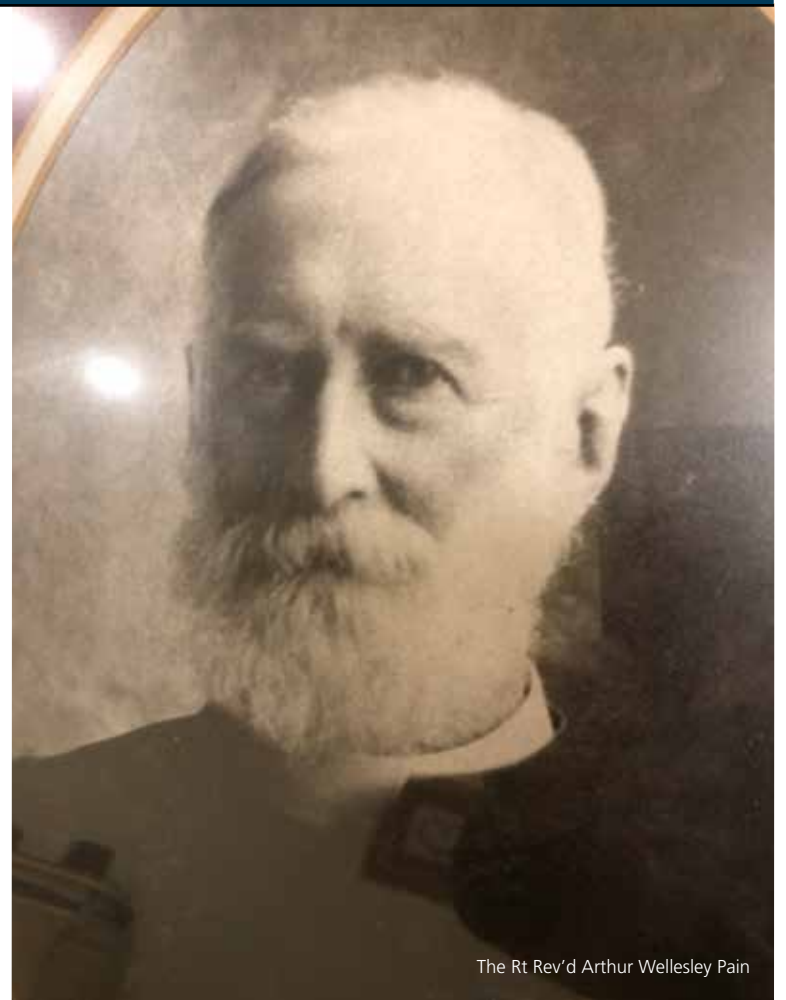
One of those letters was written, in 1919, to an ordinand who had gone to the First World War and not yet returned. Among other things the now-retired Bishop living in Sydney wrote of the effects of the influenza epidemic of that time and how it was spreading "through lack of vigilance." Movements were restricted, those arriving by boat had to go into quarantine, masks were required to be worn and there were no church services – a situation so familiar to us today. As part of his letter, Bishop Pain wrote:

Hotel bars are closed, so are all schools. No meetings or church services are allowed, not even in the open air. Train and tram services are considerably reduced. I was expecting to go to Melbourne at the end of next

week for a meeting of our Church Missionary Society Council but of course that is impossible now.

...But truly we are living in anxious times – and there is more need than ever for prayer, and for a real turning to God. That after all is the true solution.

Dean Susanna spoke of her own journey to being Dean of St Paul's, how she linked to her great-grandfather through a photograph when discerning if this role was right for her. She raised the questions of how her great-grandfather would view how ministry is done today.



The Rt Rev'd Arthur Wellesley Pain

Mary Talbot Room reopening at St Augustine's

Les Ridge

As the venue for many a cuppa and chat is opening once more, the Mary Talbot Room at St Augustine's will resume the social outreach function that was the dream of Mary Talbot. Mary, a resident of San Remo and longstanding member of St Augustine's, saw the need for Christian outreach in the local community. So, once a week, she opened up her home to all comers with a warm smile and a cup of tea.

Later on, St Augustine's decided to hold Mary's 'cuppa and chat' sessions in the church, but that meant moving all of the pews back against the outer walls and filling the resulting space with small tables and chairs. This effort and much more continued for many years. Eventually, with the addition of an op shop to the space, the need for a multipurpose room became a pressing need.

A small but dedicated team from St Augustine's worked with builder and designer

Trevor Parsons during 2012, and the first 'cuppa and chat' was held in November of that year. The following March, the new facility was officially opened and blessed by the then Bishop John McIntyre.

Since that time, the Mary Talbot Room has hosted many parish social events, including Shrove Tuesday pancake nights and men's dinners. Perhaps the most enduring and regular use has been for the op shop, with a cuppa and chat on the side.



Ida Hyslop and Laurie Alexander proudly displaying the 'open' board for the Mary Talbot Room



Our commitment to a Safe Church

The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland does not tolerate abuse, misconduct and harm in its Christian community.

We are committed to ensuring all people in contact with the Church can participate in a safe and responsible environment.

If you have been harmed by a church worker, or you know someone who has, please contact Cheryl Russell, Director of Professional Standards, for a confidential discussion.

Contact: 03 5633 1573, 0407 563 313, cheryl.russell1@bigpond.com

To find out more about Safe Church, and about Safe Ministry resources, visit www.gippsanglican.org.au/safe-church

Retirement village changes

Richard Connelly

Since 1953, the Diocese has had a long commitment to its two managed retirement villages: Clifton Waters Village at Wy Yung and Botterill Court in Morwell. Over this time, the management of these villages has undergone several reforms as the Diocese strives to meet its objective of providing quality, affordable living to the village residents.

The previous management structure, Gippsland Anglican Retirement Living Ltd (GARLL), was created in 2014 – largely to be an appropriate vehicle for a major redevelopment of the Clifton Waters Village. This redevelopment objective remained the focus of GARLL for many years, until a recent change of strategic direction in light of funding challenges. This change of direction has enabled the Diocese to return to its core objective and to simplify its governance oversight. A committee of management, which reports to Bishop in Council, continues to support the manager.

Recent changes have seen the management of the village returned to the Diocese, a live-in manager appointed, and staff numbers reduced. The financial administration is now provided by the Diocesan Registry. Sue Paterson along with her husband Stephen have been warmly received by Clifton Waters Village residents and the committee

of management as she settles into her new role as manager. The Diocese is now able to offer some of its independent living units as short-term leases, which has enabled us to make living in the villages more accessible to many actively retired people.

As these changes begin to take effect, we are receiving great feedback from residents and the public about how great the village is looking and how warm and welcoming the staff are at Clifton Waters Village.

I would like to thank the many people who have demonstrated great commitment to the retirement villages throughout this period. Philip Davis has led the transition as a recent chair of the GARLL board and initial chair of the management committee. Kevin Broughton has conducted a thorough review of the management of the villages, as consultant, and we appreciate the contribution he continues to make. Peter Down, the Ven Brenda Burney, David Gittins and Chris Beckman have served on the board and the committee, furthering the vision of the Diocese for its two retirement villages. We welcome Lou Bordin and Rochelle Bodwell to the staff of Clifton Waters Village.

*Richard Connelly
is Registrar of the
Diocese of Gippsland.*



Photo: Sue Paterson

The picturesque Walden's Walk, leading from Clifton Waters Village to Clifton Creek

A most resilient woman

Ven Allan Huggins

Joan Singleton enjoyed her 97th birthday in August 2019. Fully deaf and almost completely blind, the remarkable Joan was full of fun and laughter as she partied with friends.

Joan died on 22 July this year. In spite of her hearing and sight loss in later years, she remained a buoyant and positive person to the end of her life. Her ringing laughter was often heard in Bairnsdale's Maddocks Gardens, where she was living. Joan remembered many jokes and told them loudly to her visitors. Although of great age, she maintained her sharp wit, and her memory retained the details of her long life.

The Singleton family arrived in Australia from England in the early 1950s. John, a radio artificer, spent time in Iceland during World War II, operating with Coast Watch to protect the convoys of US ships entering the battle area. In Australia, John worked for the Australian Defence Department and installed that department's first computer, which he brought from England. In the early 1960s, John entered St



Archdeacon Emeritus Allan Huggins, who knew the Singletons since the 1950s, took this photo of him and Joan celebrating her 97th birthday in 2019

John's College in Morpeth to undertake theological studies.

To provide for herself and son Keith, the resilient Joan walked daily from Belgrave to Monbulk, where she worked in Camms' Jam Factory.

John served as a priest in the parishes of Morwell, Foster, Lang Lang and Newborough/Yallourn. However, Joan's life and Keith's were shattered in the late 1970s when Keith's small boat, with John on board, overturned in the Gippsland Lakes; the shock caused John to die of heart failure. Left as a widow without a residence, Joan spent the next 27 years living

in aged care cottages in Rosedale, and at Clifton Waters Village in Wy Yung, then she moved into Maddocks Gardens hostel in Bairnsdale for the remaining 16 years of her life. Fortunately, Keith lives close by; he is Joan's only living relative in Australia. Even in her advanced years, Joan was alert and remarkably mindful.

Joan proved to be an excellent friend to many, particularly to those who needed extra support and friendly company. Her positive outlook and her strong faith were an encouragement to those needing a cheerful companion.

Clifton Waters residents host Celtic trio

Sue Paterson

In early July, Clifton Waters Retirement Village in Wy Yung was delighted to host a visit by Celtic trio Liminality in the community hall. The Melbourne based trio – renowned harpist Cath Connelly, violinist Greg Hunt and keyboard/vocalist Jules Vines – entertained us with

a superb, classically styled repertoire of ancient Celtic tunes, songs and original compositions. We were honoured to be the first to hear their new song *Deeper* performed in public, in advance of the official release later recorded at St Paul's Cathedral, Sale.

It was the first social event in some time due to COVID restrictions and the small

crowd, although limited by hall capacity, enjoyed the morning's entertainment immensely.

The concert was followed by a morning tea of warm Welsh cakes made by resident Linda Davies. The morning was the highlight of July for Clifton Waters Village and a rare chance to have a socially distanced catch-up with some other residents.



Greg Hunt and Cath Connelly performing at Clifton Waters in July

Hardwicke Rawnsley and the UK National Trust Identity, inspiration and conservation

When in 1878 the newly-ordained Reverend Hardwicke Rawnsley took the living at Wray, a tiny 100-parishioner ministry on the shores of Windermere in the Lake District, it did not appear to be a role that would thrust him into the national spotlight. This, however, was to underestimate the energy and persuasive power of a man referred to by one of his parishioners as “the most active volcano in Europe”.

Hardwicke Rawnsley was a crusader: a man for whom to have an enthusiasm (and he had many) was to act upon it, and to rouse others to follow his lead. Under his guiding hand, the Lake District Defence Society saw off proposed railways that threatened to spoil the natural beauty of the Lakes, and in the process alerted the whole nation to the importance of this landscape, not only as a delight for those living there, but also, for those toiling in the industrial cities of Victorian England, as a “rest place ... for weary workers.”

As a cleric of a broad and tolerant persuasion, Hardwicke had a strong sense that the landscape was God’s creation to be protected. His environmental attitudes were distinctly modern. He was also faithful to his mentors. From William Wordsworth, whose poems he admired from his youth, Rawnsley understood the effect of landscape on the human spirit, and what made the Lakes part of the nation’s literary heritage. From John Ruskin, of whom he was a loyal disciple, came his sense of social reform. These elements were intrinsic to his tireless work in the early days of the National Trust. So, too, was his distinctive personality. Of the three Trust founders, Octavia Hill had the long experience and solid contacts, and Robert Hunter the legal acumen; Hardwicke, a firebrand some years their junior, added the zeal that proved to be the vital raising agent in the mix.

Hardwicke went up to Balliol College at Oxford University in 1870. Initially he studied classics, but after two years transferred to reading Natural Sciences with

the intention of becoming a doctor of medicine. An excitable undergraduate, Hardwicke spent more time singing ballads and ‘ragging’ than studying, and once demonstrated his prowess at the high jump by leaping over a donkey cart complete with passenger. Yet an encounter with the art critic and social commentator John Ruskin, at that time Slade Professor of Art at Oxford, altered his course.

Ruskin was recruiting undergraduates to help rebuild the rutted and insanitary road between north and south Hinksey, as a way of providing the isolated poor with improved access to the city. Sons of the professional classes did not usually dig ditches or lay stones, so the project, which included such future writers and social reformers as Oscar Wilde and Arnold Toynbee, was subject to much mockery. The road was never finished – after two months Ruskin left for Venice and, without its leader, the group disbanded – but the project had a far-reaching effect nonetheless. For Ruskin it was a demonstration of the dignity and worth of ‘useful muscular work’ and an act of social renewal that was to prove critical to his work as a social commentator. For Hardwicke, the contact with Ruskin and his beliefs was life-changing: his social conscience awakened, he began to think that following in his father’s footsteps as a clergyman was his true vocation.

Hardwicke left Oxford with a deep commitment to making improvements in the lives of the urban poor. In 1875 he began work as a lay preacher in London at the parish of St Mary’s, Soho, where he also volunteered at a lodging house for vagrants. Perhaps his later aversion to saucy seaside postcards had its origin in the period spent in this part of London, which was fast becoming a centre for prostitution. Sensitive, and with high standards of Victorian propriety, Hardwicke worked so hard that his health deteriorated and he had a nervous breakdown.

It was during this time that Ruskin introduced Hardwicke

to Octavia Hill, and he soon found himself rent-collecting for Octavia’s colleague, Emma Cons, on Drury Lane. In time, Hardwicke’s introduction to Octavia also brought him into contact with Robert Hunter, who was making a name for himself in the 1860s as a preserver of open spaces, public parks and commons. The three future founders of the National Trust had met one another twenty years before the birth of the organisation for which they are now remembered.

Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley’s genius was to take the local and make it matter to the world beyond. Centred in a quiet corner of the Lake District, his dynamic campaigning roused people everywhere to understand that we affect the landscape we live in, and it in turn shapes us – and we lose that connection at our peril.

It was this spirit that fed into his work as the National Trust’s first secretary. The early days of the Trust clearly show the mark of his indefatigable style, in seeking to protect beauty anywhere, not just in the preserve of the Trust. Yet Hardwicke’s legacy would always be felt most strongly in the Lake District. It was felt in his friend Beatrix Potter’s careful purchase of hill farms to be bequeathed to the Trust on her death. It was felt in Hardwicke and wife Edith’s Keswick School of Industrial Arts, which continued to run for 100 years. It was felt in the schools of the Lake District, where secondary education was advanced and children sang songs written by Hardwicke decades after his death. Most of all it was felt in the landscape, which he loved and defended not only from mining and railways, but also from building developments, roads and electric cables, to preserve its natural beauty for subsequent generations. In 1810, Hardwicke Rawnsley’s great poet hero, William Wordsworth, outlined the idea that the Lake District might one day be “a sort of national property, in which every man had a right and interest who has a heart to perceive and an eye to enjoy.” With the Lake District Defence Society and

Founding of the UK National Trust

When the National Trust was founded 125 years ago, it was by three extraordinary leaders. Octavia Hill, Sir Robert Hunter and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley were visionaries, united by a belief that beautiful, natural and historic places were worth protecting for future generations. Octavia Hill wanted to “protect all open spaces, no matter how small, secure them, cultivate them” and, most importantly, to allow them to be open “for everyone”.



Drawn from a photograph of Octavia Hill, a pastel portrait by American artist D. Kimberley, 1882

Octavia Hill was both a visionary and a pragmatist. In an era in which the expansion of over-crowded cities and untrammelled pursuit of profit were the prevailing forces, she believed in the civilising power of well-designed, well-managed homes and in the critical importance of beauty, space and fresh air.

Robert Hunter, the young lawyer.

Of the three founders of the National Trust, Robert Hunter was the least conspicuous but the most effective. He was its architect and engineer, its steady hand on the helm, and its first chairman. Of Hunter it could be said, they also serve who get on and do the work. Without him, there might one day have been a national trust, but not the National Trust.



The Rev'd Hardwicke Rawnsley, ‘Defender of the Lakes’, in 1885 (Courtesy Rawnsley archive)

“[Rawnsley] is a man of singular gifts and power ... His energy is very great, and he is most indefatigable in organising the schemes of improvement he has taken in hand.” (Edward Thring, Headmaster, in a letter to The Committee of the Church of England Sunday School Institute, 1879)

For virtual access to some of the UK National Trust properties and to other National Trust content, visit [youtube.com/user/nationaltrustcharity](https://www.youtube.com/user/nationaltrustcharity). For an online tour of St Paul’s Cathedral in Melbourne with church canon and Heritage Council Victoria member Leigh Mackay, visit www.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au and search ‘St Paul’s’.

then the National Trust, this idea took the first steps towards fruition. In 2017 the goal was completed when the area became a Unesco World Heritage Site – remarkable for its identity, inspiration and conservation. These three qualities might be said to be the legacy of Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley.

Excerpt adapted with permission from The Three Founders of the National Trust: Octavia Hill, Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, by Peter Clayton, Ben Cowell and Vivian Griffiths, National Trust, 2020. Published by Pitkin Publishing, an imprint of Pavilion Books Limited.

The spirit of aged care

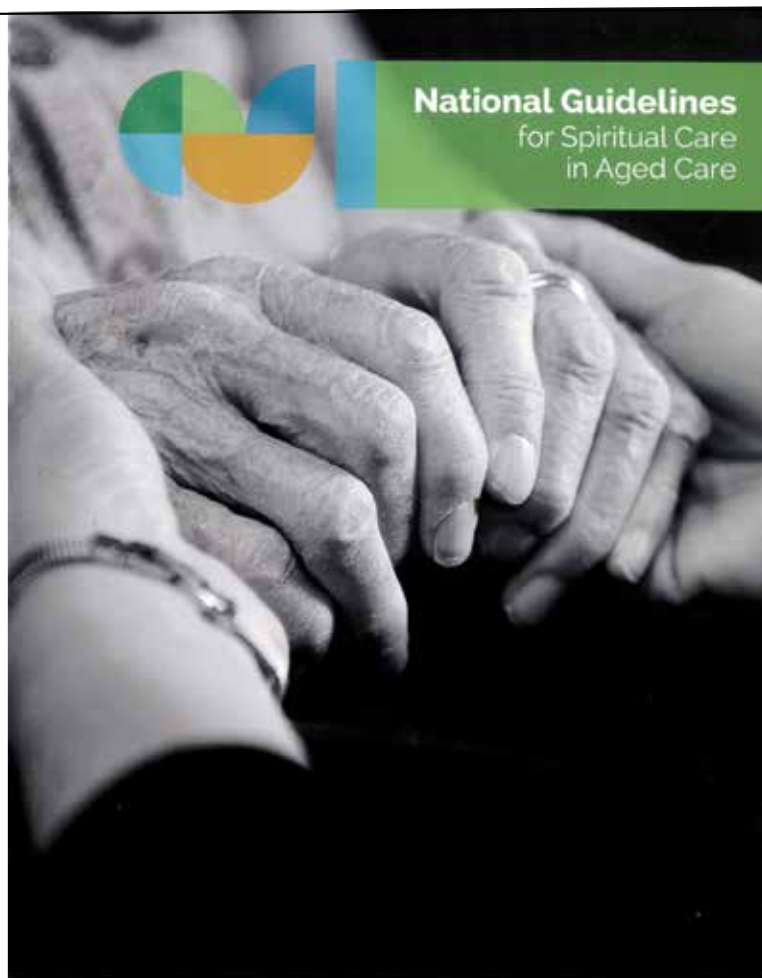
Brian Holmes

You may well have some sort of negative reaction when you read the next two words: aged care. It is well known that there is no return to 'normal' life if you move into residential care. In part due to the large volume of negative media many of us fear that we will be treated like physical bodies to be kept safe from further harm, until we die, rather than whole people with potential.

At Meaningful Ageing Australia we believe that seeing potential is key to good, holistic care and this is achieved through an understanding of the importance of spirituality in people's lives. To support that, and to provide guidance to organisations, we worked in partnership with others to produce the federally funded *National Guidelines to Spiritual Care in Aged Care*. This is not solely about religious faith or identity; indeed, it may have nothing to do with religion at all for some people. Rather, it is an understanding of those things that make us truly us, as individuals and humans. Too often our maximum expectations of aged care are centred around physical safety: protection from illness, disease, and injury.

In these COVID times, when residential aged care has borne the brunt of hotspots and death, there has been a realisation that life is not just about protection. Amid the mountains of used personal protective equipment, heightened infection control and lockdowns for all but essential staff, care providers can see wellbeing decline. Being isolated in a room for weeks, fed and cleaned by a plastic-clad somebody, is dehumanising for the resident, and, also for the staff. The need to see faces and expressions, to recognise people, to be comforted with touch, to communicate with loved ones and/or to participate in the rituals that a life of faith needs, has taken on immense importance.

Over the weeks we have heard many of our members'



Meaningful Ageing Australia | Spiritual Health Victoria | NARI | Australian Government Department of Health

stories. They are working extremely hard in protection, but they are also working on potential. They have employed video communications for family chats, visitor windows, communal singing from doorways, letter-writing, broadcast devotions (if appropriate for the residents), communion delivered in a COVID-safe way, held the hands of people who are isolated and wearing photos of their faces to show what they look like under the mask. We support them with resources,

such as materials on self-care for staff, and how to cope with the death of residents. For us, their work is spirituality and spiritual care in practice.

The National Guidelines are available free as a download from www.meaningfulageing.org.au, and Meaningful Ageing Australia has a wide range of resources to assist organisations with implementation.

Brian Holmes is a project officer at Meaningful Ageing Australia.

Catholic Ordination in Sale postponed

In light of the current circumstances of COVID-19 restrictions in the State of Victoria and following the announcement of 'Steps' by Premier Andrews for regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne, it has been necessary to postpone the planned Ordination and Installation of Bishop-Elect Gregory Bennet, which had been scheduled for 20 October at St Mary's Cathedral, Sale. The Steps for Regional Victoria prevent public religious worship within the Cathedral and other settings (with special exemption for restricted funerals) until 23 November 2020.

The Diocese of Sale wishes to support the state government in its efforts to ensure the health and safety of all Victorians and is mindful of the many other important occasions which people have delayed or have been unable to celebrate.

The Diocese awaits advice regarding when it will be able to proceed with the liturgy of Ordination and Installation of Bishop-Elect Bennet.

Courtesy Roman Catholic Diocese of Sale



Staff and residents of Dalkeith Gardens are pictured with TAFE Gippsland staff and students under the new arbour

Dalkeith Gardens enjoys gift from TAFE Gippsland

TAFE Gippsland and Benetas' Dalkeith Gardens aged care representatives have received a new garden structure and furniture crafted by TAFE students and staff.

A magnificent garden arbour was donated to the local aged care home along with tailored garden benches and seating to provide great comfort and respite for residents in a beautiful courtyard setting.

Director Educational Delivery, Linda Austin, joined Benetas General Manager of Residential Services, Verity Leith, to unveil the structure and furniture to residents and those involved earlier this year.

"The donation of this magnificent garden arbour and garden furniture is a very worthy project and it certainly helps to showcase the skills that TAFE Gippsland's staff and students can bring to our community," Ms Austin said.

"This is our way of saying thank you to Dalkeith Gardens as a valued Health Sector training partner and, at the same time, giving something back to our local community through the skills learned at our TAFE institute."

Ms Austin said the project was one of TAFE Gippsland's transformation projects born out of the 2019 rebranding of the Institute and aimed at helping to transform the people and places where TAFE operates throughout Gippsland.

"We hope the residents and staff at this wonderful facility get a great deal of enjoyment from the arbour and furniture well into the future and we congratulate our TAFE Gippsland trades teachers and students for their skill and work in bringing this project to the residents."

The new additions will complement Dalkeith Gardens' magnificent new residential facilities in Traralgon and add to the impressive landscaping that runs alongside residents' apartments.

Ms Leith said that the partnership focused on improving the lives of residents, with many looking forward to its completion.

"As a not-for-profit aged care provider, we are very grateful for this wonderful contribution from TAFE Gippsland and its students to enrich the lives of residents in their later years," Ms Leith said.

"These partnerships with local community organisations are incredibly rewarding for our residents and staff, and in helping to break down intergenerational barriers and forge new meaningful relationships with older members of our community."

"We couldn't be more pleased to work with TAFE Gippsland and its students to bring this about."

Courtesy TAFE Gippsland and Benetas.

Pandemic chaplaincy

Experience of Chaplains in Victorian Anglican schools during COVID-19

Rev'd Ryan Holt

We at Chaplains in Anglican Schools (Victoria) asked our chaplains about their practice and perspective during COVID-19. The chaplains were invited to participate in a survey consisting of five questions (below).

The timing of the survey is significant as it was conducted during a State of Disaster, rising cases of the virus, a curfew in metro Melbourne and surrounding areas and at the beginning of a prolonged school closure.

A total of 33 chaplains were surveyed, some with decades of experience, others just months. The act of completing the survey was for some therapeutic and the responses revealed both candour and detail. In providing a brief summation of the responses, rather than analysis, I will address each question in turn and allow the voices of my colleagues to be heard.

How would you describe your role/identity as chaplain during COVID-19?

A range of images or perspectives were named both familiar and unfamiliar. Pastor, positive presence, carer, counsellor, healer, mentor, perspective giver, guide, anchor, listener, lamenter, outsider, gatherer, and teacher, reflect a range of insights from the chaplains. For some this did not reflect a large change of identity but rather a shift of focus in a changing season.

Three themes emerged as influencing the shape and speed of change: resources (physical, structural and relational), the hospitality of school leaders, and a personal readiness to learn or adapt. A culture of trust gave permission for chaplains to try something in the larger community gatherings (chapel, assemblies...) whilst smaller gatherings such as prayer groups emerged largely as informal fellowship with other Christian staff and families who issued invitations through friendship networks.

What theological resources (scripture, tradition, practices, etc.) have you drawn upon in your role?

Of central importance to both the faith life of the chaplains and their practice during COVID has been engagement with scripture and prayer. The Wisdom Literature of the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes were named as places of focus; so too the Parables of Jesus and 1 Peter. Series on biblical characters have also been implemented, e.g. Jeremiah and Job, with themes of sovereignty, lament, wilderness, comfort and hope commonly explored.

Finding or refreshing a sacred rhythm both personally and alongside others was cited by many as a blessed anchor during a time of change. There was a reacquaintance with the Daily Office in the Prayer Book, Ignatian and Benedictine practices, mindfulness, meditation, alongside local resources. Podcasts, online sermons, blogs (*A Place for Mission*) and access to familiar global names old and new – Richard Rohr, C.S Lewis, John Lennox, N.T Wright, Jürgen Moltmann, Walter Brueggemann and Miroslav Volf – continue to provide daily nourishment for the soul. Listening to music in the absence of communal singing has been seen as a good grace during COVID; likewise, the opportunity to invite students to provide music reflections from home for chapel. Outside the discipline of theology, psychology and mental health resources have been found to be helpful and accessible.

Engaging younger students remotely was for many chaplains uncharted waters; however, for chaplains who have ventured into this space they reported on the fruitful use of Godly Play, crafts and child-friendly liturgy in engaging the easily distracted.

Has your role/influence/effectiveness been enhanced or hindered as a result of the pandemic? If so, how/why?

In classic Anglican style an either/or question was reframed with a both/and response by a majority of respondents, citing both negative and positive change and also a wait, watch and see perspective.

A common reflection was that although the scope of engagement with families and staff at home had widened through the ease of remote online entry, the experience of genuine connection was mixed with some raving about its effectiveness for Parent Teacher Interviews, yet questioning its limited nature in reading personal cues and building relationships.

The absence of physical presence from the chaplain's daily practice was identified as an ongoing challenge, recognised by many as a distinctive call of chaplaincy and difficult to replicate through distant screens.

A number of chaplains reported a greater desire of staff (both church and unchurched) to seek them out with questions, and a willingness to join staff chapel groups to stay connected and find perspective. Feelings of fear and anxiety have also been

freely expressed to chaplains as a confidant who is both in the centre and margins of the school.

What is a new practice worth keeping going forward (beyond COVID-19)?

Three particular trends can be seen in response to new practices going forward.

- Continue with a new practice in its current form.
- Translate the new practice into another form.
- Implement a blended form.

Some of the 'new' practices experienced and considered worth keeping beyond COVID-19 include online prayer meetings, pre-recorded messages/services (viewed at own time), more regular phone calls to staff, blogs, podcasts, Daily Office, Godly Play (Junior School) and larger 'live event' gatherings for families.

The practices or virtues of asking, listening, walking slowly, waiting and inviting were also strongly viewed not so much as worth keeping

but rather worth being more 'intentional' about going forward both personally and vocationally.

What is the experience of school chaplains in the midst of a pandemic?

It is complicated and yet revealing. Complexity is not necessarily a problem to be solved; it is just the way things are. Former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams says that the theologian always starts "in the middle of things" (Williams, *On Christian Theology*, xiii), and that is where the chaplain can be found during COVID-19. We reside like Jesus 'somewhere' in the messy middle and yet we continue to be on our way, lamenting and hoping, waiting and working, listening and naming.

The Rev'd Ryan Holt is Head of Chaplaincy at Caulfield Grammar School in Melbourne and representative for Chaplains in Anglican Schools (Vic). Article first published at www.aplaceformission.org.

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Christian practice in a time of pandemic

Rev'd Nikolai Blaskow

I offer this personal reflection following on from our recent clergy reflection and Tom Wright's response to the pandemic in his book *God and the Pandemic: A Christian Reflection on the Coronavirus and Its Aftermath* (Koorong Press, 2020).

Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury, delivers a provocative assessment concerning the Church's dubious history in speech and practice in times of suffering and crisis. It comes from a statement drawn from 'The Judgement of the World', in *On Christian Theology* (Koorong Press, 2000). He draws attention to how when Christians speak words to the world, even scriptural words, they fail somehow "to transform the world's meaning because [they] neglect or trivialise or evade aspects of the human." He also notices that Christians, even with the best of intentions, come across as "awkward about sexuality" and as those who speak "too glibly and confidently about eternal life," and in so doing "disguise the abiding reality of unhealed and meaningless suffering [in the world]."

In the Australian Network for Spiritual Direction Conference held in September, Dr Sarah Bachelard urged delegates to respond to Scripture in both a conversational and contemplative manner. A conversational approach because it creates space and respect between people and contemplation because it slows things down so that we have time enough to see things in a new way. These are approaches to Scripture that introduce us to a new understanding,

one that lies beyond linear reality – the kind of knowing that touches the very heart of God.

Sarah explained the openness and risk of this engagement with Scripture by using the story of Peter leaving the safety of the boat and the other terrified disciples to walk to Jesus on water. 'Lord if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water,' he shouts over the eerie silence. The courage of it, the boldness of it. Would Jesus have invited Peter to come and walk if Peter had not asked? That is the risk and unknowing of faith with which we go into the world.

My provocation is this. If it took a Syro-phoenician woman and a Canaanite woman (compare Alan Cadwallader's *Beyond the Word of a Woman, Recovering the Bodies of the Syrophoenician Women*, ATF Press, 2008) to puncture the cultural superiority of even a Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God, Son of Man to see the radical inclusiveness of mission and the kingdom of God, how much more do I need to work on the way I relate to the 'world'? Two weeks after my conversion to Christianity, Dr Howard Guinness,

who was instrumental in bringing about the revival among university students in London, was invited by the Sydney University Evangelical Union to speak on the subject, 'Can the Heathen Be Saved?' His answer was 'yes'. And his proof text was Romans 2: 14-15. He could have added Matthew 25: 31-45, Acts 10: 9-23.

I doubt whether Howard would be invited back today. And, judging from the way Rowan Williams completes his provocation, I, you, we have a lot of work to do to bridge the gap:

So it is that those most serious about the renewal of moral discourse reject formal Christian commitment as something that would weaken or corrupt their imagination.

Perhaps a think-tank on these provocations would be a good thing. There might be more wisdom out there than we imagine. Maybe we have more to account for to the world than it has to us.

The Rev'd Nikolai Blaskow is part of the ministry team at St Paul's Cathedral in Sale and Associate Chaplain at Gippsland Grammar.

EDITORIAL

Lessons from a long life

My maternal grandmother, 'Nan', was one of the tens of thousands felled by polio in the epidemics beginning in Australia in the 1930s. The youngest of 13 children, and several years younger than her closest sibling, she spent a lot of time alone, with just a pet magpie for company, which she never saw again after she was hospitalised. She spent many of her teen years in plaster and immobile in a hospital bed and then at home.

With so many dependants, Nan's parents would have struggled to make ends meet during wartime, depression and the 'Spanish flu' pandemic in Australia. Nan was born between the two world wars and endured the Second World War in convalescence and waiting for her beau to return from the PNG campaign.

Blessed with longevity (although sometimes she would disagree with this), 'Marjie', as her husband called her, survived my Pa by almost 20 years, after caring for him during his long battle with emphysema. For the rest of her life she lived alone. She developed post-polio syndrome in her 60s and spent her last four years in aged care.

Nan experienced many minor infections as she went through the final few years of her life, and during a particularly troublesome episode she couldn't be calmed until she saw a minister and was given a Bible. I don't think she read it, but it certainly gave her some peace. She was not a churchgoer, but I know that she prayed for us every day.

Mass polio vaccination began in Australia in the mid-1950s. As a boy in the Latrobe Valley at the time, my Dad and his siblings were very keen to be immune to this disease that was claiming their Sunday School friends.

On 29 October, it will be 20 years since Australia and the Western Pacific region were declared polio free. In recent weeks, Africa has been declared polio free – an immense milestone and worth a (socially distanced) celebration.

Preparing this month's issue of *TGA*, which coincides with Seniors Week, Anti-Poverty Week and Mental Health Week, I have been reflecting on the ways that pandemics such as COVID unearth old and gnarly problems and thrust them into the spotlight. Sometimes this is a good thing, if it prompts action and advocacy. With that in mind, this month I am sharing stories on meaningful ageing, tackling poverty and homelessness, and pandemic chaplaincy experiences, as well as a moving prayer for carers written especially for this issue by the Ven Sue Jacka.

Sally Woollett



The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland is seeking a Diocesan Development Officer

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The Anglican Diocese of Gippsland has been serving the people of Gippsland since 1902, and is now seeking to appoint an engaging, resourceful and suitably skilled individual as the Diocesan Development Officer. The Officer will:

- Promote the work of the Diocese in serving the region and giving care and support to families and communities
- Identify and promote Diocesan activities and ambitions that may attract philanthropic support and strategic partnerships
- Develop and implement fundraising plans that will contribute to the activities and programs
- Contribute significantly to the life of the Diocese through effective fundraising.

For more information and application details please contact the Diocesan Registry on (03) 5144 2044 or registrar@gippsanglican.org.au Applications close 23 October.

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Opening up at The Abbey

The traditional Feast at The Abbey on Raymond Island has been a major fundraiser and a great community occasion in previous years, with people from all over the Diocese and beyond spending a happy day together at The Abbey, savouring delicious food.

In this year of COVID, the idea of a virtual feast was born. It goes like this:

- Invitations go out in the usual way, including a menu.
- When you book your ticket (and pay for it if you are able to) you will receive instructions on preparing your chosen meal.
- On 31 October at noon, we all join a virtual meal at The Abbey using the Zoom conference platform, having prepared our own meals at home. (You could also just have a cheese sandwich as usual, but join in the fun anyway!)
- Help to join the Zoom meeting will be available.
- You will be able to meet others in chat rooms and have a conversation as if at a table, and to move around to other tables.

Look out for the invitation arriving soon, either by post or email, and get your replies in.

The Abbey Accommodation at Raymond Island is now open, and you are invited to come and stay for a night or a week, book a motel-style unit or stay in West Cottage.

At this stage we are delighted to be able to welcome individuals and small family groups to enjoy the hospitality of The Abbey, but we will have to wait a little longer before we can return to our program of onsite events and retreats or to offer accommodation for larger gatherings.

As it is every year, spring is a great time to be at The Abbey: the birds are singing, the plants are growing, the animals are waking up after the winter months and on a good night the stars are magnificent. Come when it suits you, relax, walk, read, pray. Don't forget to bring your camera to add to your collection of great photos from The Abbey Raymond Island.

For further information or to make a booking, contact Anna: 03 5156 6580, info@theabbey.org.au.

A prayer for carers

Gracious God,

We thank you for all who give love and care at this difficult time.

We are grateful for their effort and expertise, their thoughtfulness and compassion.

We give thanks for all working in aged care as they seek to take care of the physical and emotional needs of the residents who cannot see their usual visitors or ministers during this pandemic.

We give thanks for those caring for young children – in centres or at home – especially the parents juggling working from home, remote learning and caring for children.

Thank you for the neighbours who look out for the elderly and those with disabilities and for those who stay in contact with the isolated with a call, card or small gift.

We give thanks for hospitals, medical staff and paramedics in the fight against COVID-19.

We pray that you will strengthen those who must work too many hours, and comfort and heal patients who are ill with COVID-19.

We bring before you the researchers working on treatments and vaccines.

Grant them clarity of thought, insight and bless their work.



We pray for those in quarantine – we think of their fears and frustrations. Enable the guards and those who provide food and care to be diligent yet kind.

Grant great wisdom to our politicians and public servants so they work together and make effective plans, allowing past experiences and shortcomings to inform policy rather than simply laying blame.

We pray for ourselves, for health and strength – physical, emotional, and spiritual.

Help us to lean on you; give us others to share our load. Help us to be kind to others and to ourselves, as you have been kind to us.

Keep aflame your hope burning in our hearts.

In the name of Jesus, our friend and healer, Amen.

The Ven Sue Jacka

Are (protest) atheists excluded from the table of God?

Thursday 22 October, 7.30–9.00 pm

The pandemic, like all pandemics and catastrophes causes people to not just question the existence of G-d, but also to accuse G-d (Voltaire's *j'accuse*) of standing by and doing nothing (the bystander syndrome).

Essentially, G-d is accused of committing a war crime.

In Christian theological terms, we call any defence of G-d a *theodicy* (from the Greek *God-justice*).

Join Nikolai Blaskow for a discussion on this vital and timely question. His 20-minute presentation will be followed by a Q & A session.

Zoom link:

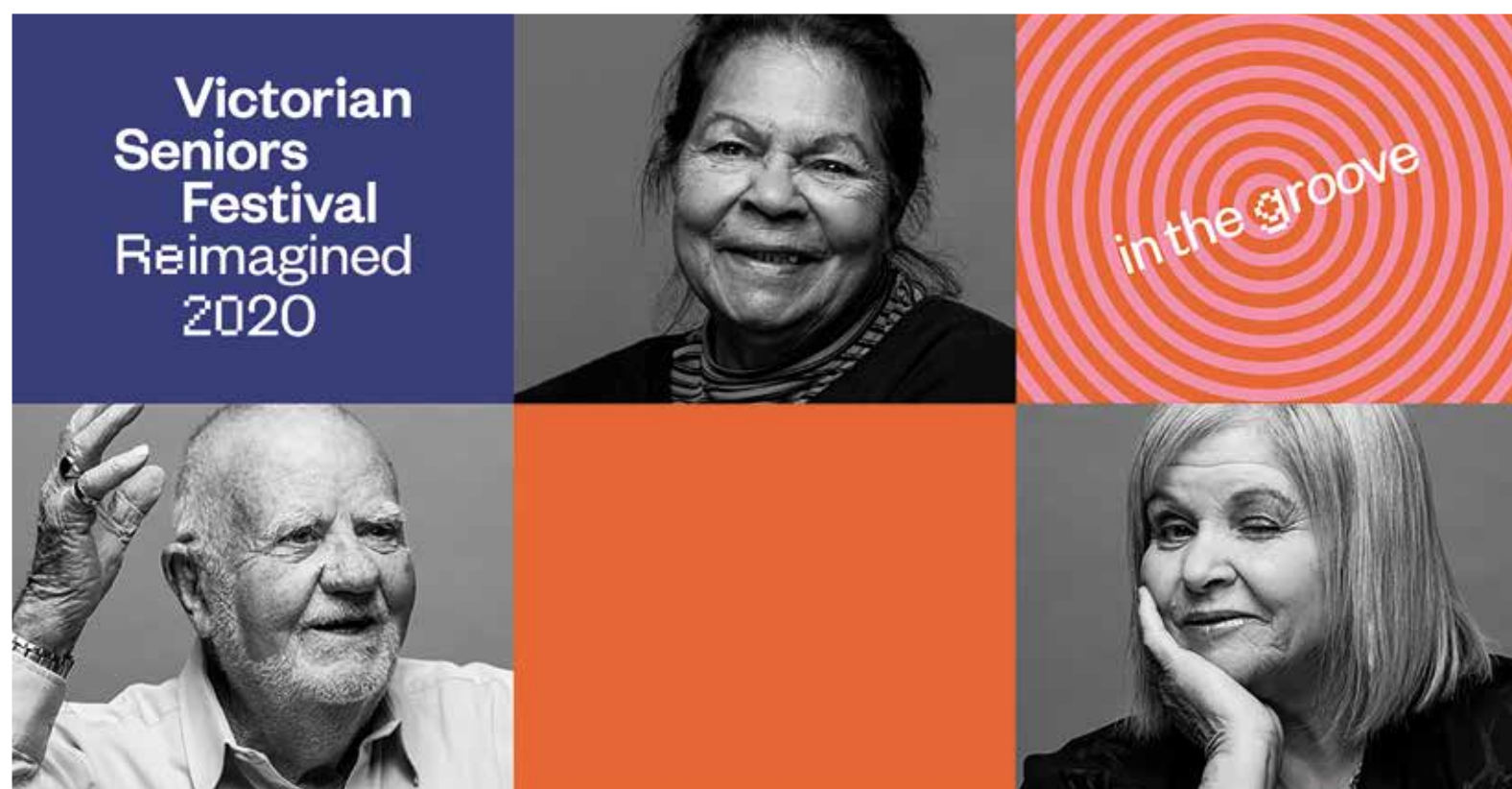
<https://gippslandgrammar.zoom.us/j/7874319962>

Meeting ID: 787 431 9962

This year's Victorian Seniors Festival has been reimagined, and it's being delivered through online performances, zoom recorded interviews and story-telling.

Until the end of this month, you can log on to video performances and interviews, as well as radio entertainment. Performers include singer-songwriter James Blundell, activist and storyteller Uncle Talgum Edwards and the Lemony S Puppet Theatre.

To find out more, visit www.seniorsonline.vic.gov.au/festivalsandawards.





“Think about who you love, then think about them in ICU.”

For Sarah, who's been battling coronavirus for nearly 8 weeks, being separated from her two little boys, has been heartwrenching. On top of coronavirus attacking every one of her body systems, intense pain and acute breathing difficulty, she still has no idea when she will be well enough to see her boys. Sarah's hope is that by us all doing the right thing, no one else will have to experience the heartache her family has.

Please, play your part and help stop the spread of the virus. If you have symptoms - please get tested. Payments of \$450 are available to help you stay home and wait for your test result.

**STAYING
APART | KEEPS
US | TOGETHER**

**To learn more of Sarah's story go to
vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS**

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