

The

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Living Heritage Grant for St John's Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust Church

Rev'd Edie Ashley

A grant of \$200,000 has been awarded for urgent conservation works to St John's Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust Church.

The grant is a major step to address significant repair needs first reported by The Rev'd (now Rev'd Canon) Aunty Phyllis Andy at an Aboriginal Ministry Support Team Meeting in early 2020. It was imperative that the significant building issues and the poor condition of the church be addressed.

Opened in 1878, the timber building was designed by architect Leonard Terry and built by members of what was then the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Mission, under the supervision of mission manager John Bulmer and his relative Douglas Blay.

Historically, architecturally and from a heritage perspective, St John's Lake Tyers is highly significant. Even more significant is the place that St John's holds within the Aboriginal community today.

With pro bono advice from Geoff Ashley of Ashley Built Heritage, Phyllis, Diocesan Archivist Tim Gibson, Bishop Richard and the Diocese of Gippsland worked together to prepare an application to Living Heritage – and were successful. The group was supported by the Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop in Council and The Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust and Management Committee.

As the project moves to the next stage, Phyllis will work closely to support Jodes Veale who, as CEO of the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust, takes on the responsibility of the grant.

We give thanks to God for the partnership of so many who brought us to this exciting place. We pray for Jodes, Phyllis and Geoff and many others who will continue to make their contribution to the refurbishment of St John's.

We look forward to a time when we can travel to Lake Tyers and enjoy together the celebration of work completed, the church restored and the life of the Lake Tyers and wider Aboriginal community enriched.

Jodes Veale (left) and The Rev'd Aunty Phyllis Andy at St John's Lake Tyers (below), which will undergo restoration thanks to a Living Heritage Grant

Living Heritage Grant 2021–2022

"A grant of \$200,000 has been awarded for urgent conservation works to the Lake Tyers Aboriginal Trust Church. The timber church was constructed in 1878 for the then Lake Tyers Aboriginal Mission. The building is architecturally, historically and socially significant to the state of Victoria, and is integral to the cultural and spiritual identity of the community. The church is still in use, and open to the Lake Tyers community and visitors around Victoria for a diverse range of community events. It is currently in a very poor condition due to water ingress and the harsh maritime setting. The grant will fund urgent repairs to ensure the building can continue to be utilized."

Heritage Victoria



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## GIPPSLAND DIOCESE VACANCIES

Bairnsdale  
Drouin  
Nar Nar Goon  
Trafalgar  
Traralgon

# An each-way bet on equal opportunity?



Bishop Richard Treloar

It's that time of year when horseracing parlance sneaks out of the local betting shop and into the homes and workplaces of many a once-a-year punter.

I can't help but wonder whether we are having a bet each way when it comes to the opposition expressed by some in our churches to the Equal Opportunity (Religious Exceptions) Amendment Bill in Victoria – a Bill that upholds some existing exemptions, while limiting others.

On one hand, we may voice concerns over mandatory vaccination requirements, for example, because of a theological conviction that they are discriminatory; on the other, we appear to want to preserve the right to discriminate when it comes to legally protected 'attributes' including sexual orientation, gender identity and marital status.

Why indeed should religious bodies be permitted to discriminate on the basis of such attributes?

One possible answer is that they serve as important markers of religious belief. Whereas the proposed amendments retain religious belief as a legitimate reason

for preferencing one person over another, they specify belief alone (as distinct from such attributes) as the only lawful reason for doing so.

In the case of employment, for example, where conformity with religious beliefs is an inherent requirement of a position (as in the selection process for clergy, or the appointment of a school chaplain), it may be legal to discriminate on that basis.

However, as this was qualified by Minister Hutchins in her speech for the Second Reading of the Bill in the Victorian Parliament on 27 October, "A person being gay is not a religious belief ... A person being transgender is not a religious belief. Under the Bill, a religious body or school would not be able to discriminate against an employee only on the basis that a person's sexual orientation or other protected attribute is inconsistent with the doctrines of the ... religious body."

A key word here is 'only'. Some have argued that the proposed Bill does not account for religious requirements to live in accordance with codes of moral conduct that are based on religious beliefs, and that the activity associated with a protected attribute (e.g. being in a same-gendered marriage) is contrary to religious belief.

If this argument were to be applied consistently as some kind of 'test' or 'guarantor' of belief, religious bodies would need to factor into their employment decisions many other aspects of personal

conduct that reach well beyond the protected attributes cited in the Bill. Otherwise, we risk reducing markers of religious belief to these few attributes only, and ignore a host of less contested ones that would be impractical (or inappropriate) to include in professional codes of conduct, effectively asking employers to judge the hearts of their employees.

Even if one accepts that a protected attribute such as marital status serves as an index of religious belief, other – more fundamental – questions arise in relation to the missional impact of the concessions that religious bodies receive under both existing and proposed legislation.

As one charged with defending the faith, I find myself asking whether our faith needs defending in the sense that it must somehow be protected by law from the cultural context in which it is proclaimed. Have we so little confidence in the Gospel to commend itself through the church's life and teaching that it must be structurally quarantined from convictions or social movements that may be seen to differ from it?

Some of Christianity's greatest periods of outreach have occurred when the Gospel has rubbed shoulders with other traditions and philosophies in the marketplace of ideas, or when – far from being afforded exemptions or otherwise privileged by the state – the church was marginalized.

What does special pleading,

so as to be allowed to continue discriminating on the basis of protected attributes, say to the wider community about a faith-tradition that claims to be incarnational?

As Christmas approaches, are we willing to 'muck in' with the obligations placed on the rest of the community, as we believe God-in-Christ to have 'mucked in' with human history, geography and culture? Will we be preaching a Gospel of radical inclusion this Advent, or one of selective exclusion?

One may well take issue with the level of consultation, the timing, or what is perceived to be the wider agenda of any particular government. The questions I raise here are not primarily about process, nor are they party political. They go to our faith in God's Word – living and written – to achieve its purpose for the world God so loves.

Yes, the Anglican Church has a right – a responsibility, in fact – to ensure that those ordained to lead its faith communities or employed in its schools as chaplains or religious educators are appropriately qualified to perform those duties, not least by dint of religious belief. The freedom to show preference on account of this criterion is properly retained in the Amendment Bill.

I'm just not sure that by seeking exemptions beyond this we are putting our money where our mouth is.

Grace and peace,

+R

## World Kindness Day

13 November 2021

World Kindness Day was started in 1998 by the World Kindness Movement, an international coalition of kindness NGOs. Founded a decade ago, World Kindness Australia (<https://worldkindnessaustralia.org>), a member nation of the World Kindness Movement, is "a platform for national collaboration designed to encourage and support all sectors of our communities to engage in the global campaign for a kinder world."

Friends of World Kindness Australia at the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation offer many free training and education resources: [www.randomactsofkindness.org](http://www.randomactsofkindness.org).



Courtesy: Random Acts of Kindness Foundation



# 2021 Nobel Peace Prize supports striving for freedom of expression

The Norwegian Nobel Committee has decided to award the Nobel Peace Prize for 2021 to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov for their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for democracy and lasting peace. Ms Ressa and Mr Muratov are receiving the Peace Prize for their courageous fight for freedom of expression in the Philippines and Russia. At the same time, they are representatives of all journalists who stand up for this ideal in a world in which democracy and freedom of the press face increasingly adverse conditions.

Maria Ressa uses freedom of expression to expose abuse of power, use of violence and growing authoritarianism in her native country, the Philippines. In 2012, she co-founded Rappler, a digital media company for investigative journalism, which she still heads. As a journalist and Rappler's CEO, Ressa has shown herself to be a fearless defender of freedom of expression. Rappler has focused critical attention on the Duterte regime's controversial, murderous anti-drug

Illustration: © Niklas Elmehed for Nobel Prize Outreach



Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov, recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize for 2021

campaign. The number of deaths is so high that the campaign resembles a war waged against the country's own population. Ms Ressa and Rappler have also documented how social media is being used to spread fake news, harass opponents and manipulate public discourse.

Dmitry Andreyevich Muratov has for decades defended freedom of speech in Russia under increasingly challenging conditions. In 1993, he was one of the

founders of the independent newspaper *Novaya Gazeta*. He has been the newspaper's editor-in-chief for a total of 24 years. *Novaya Gazeta* is the most independent newspaper in Russia today, with a fundamentally critical attitude towards power. The newspaper's fact-based journalism and professional integrity have made it an important source of information on censurable aspects of Russian society rarely mentioned by other

media. Since its start-up in 1993, *Novaya Gazeta* has published critical articles on subjects ranging from corruption, police violence, unlawful arrests, electoral fraud and 'troll factories' to the use of Russian military forces both within and outside Russia.

*Novaya Gazeta's* opponents have responded with harassment, threats, violence and murder. Since the newspaper's start, six of its journalists have been

killed, including Anna Politkovskaya, who wrote revealing articles on the war in Chechnya. Despite the killings and threats, editor-in-chief Muratov has refused to abandon the newspaper's independent policy. He has consistently defended the right of journalists to write anything they want about whatever they want, as long as they comply with the professional and ethical standards of journalism.

Free, independent and fact-based journalism serves to protect against abuse of power, lies and war propaganda. The Norwegian Nobel Committee is convinced that freedom of expression and freedom of information help to ensure an informed public. These rights are crucial prerequisites for democracy and protect against war and conflict. The award of the Nobel Peace Prize to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov is intended to underscore the importance of protecting and defending these fundamental rights.

Without freedom of expression and freedom of the press, it will be difficult to successfully promote fraternity between nations, disarmament and a better world order to succeed in our time. This year's award of the Nobel Peace Prize is therefore firmly anchored in the provisions of Alfred Nobel's will.

Courtesy Nobel Prize Outreach

## Melbourne Synod 2021

### Churches counter rising anxiety

Australia has become a society "increasingly seized by anxiety, frustration and growing anger," Melbourne Anglican Archbishop Philip Freier said last month on the opening night of the Melbourne Diocese's first synod (parliament) for two years, and its first digital synod.

"People have experienced hardship, loss of freedom, livelihood and certainty," Dr Freier told the opening night of Melbourne's General Synod.

Parish life has been significantly disrupted, but the churches have found other ways to celebrate communion with God and each other.

"I admire the efforts of our clergy to adapt to all that we have faced and to continue nurturing congregational life through online worship and other means," he said. "This recent time has opened up

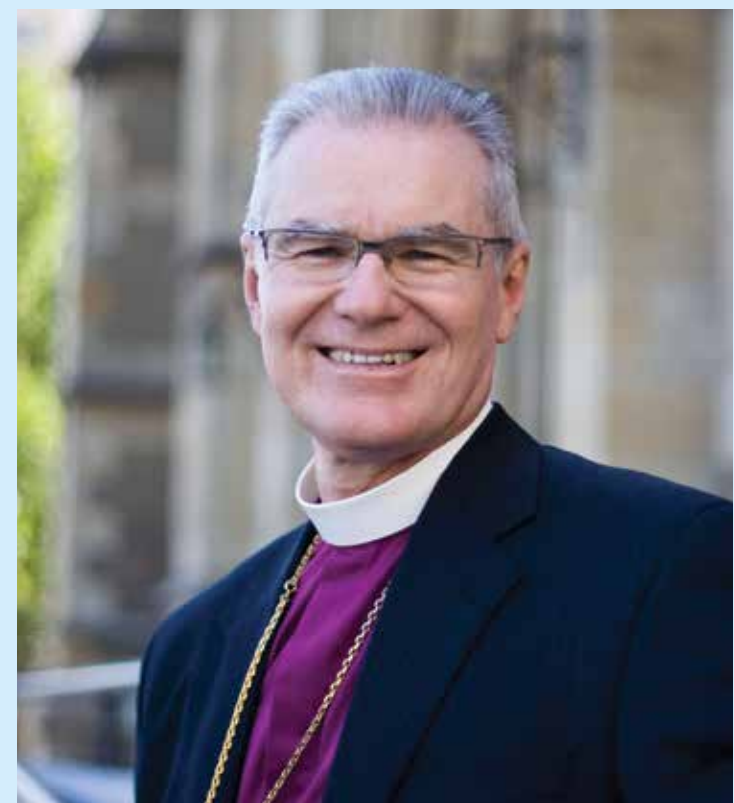
opportunities for learning and the reception of the ancient truths of the Church."

Dr Freier said Australians should be thankful that it had survived the impact of coronavirus without high loss of life and without catastrophic economic collapse.

"We are in an uncharted place but it is reasonable to expect some of the impact of the last 18 months will continue well after the emergency phase of the pandemic. The work of the Gospel of Christ to heal and restore will be freshly needed," he said.

Dr Freier said the church has achieved a great deal in complying with child safety standards. "It is through embedding a culture of child safety in our awareness and in our practice that we ensure procedures and compliance are effective."

Courtesy Anglican Diocese of Melbourne



Most Reverend Dr Philip Freier



# Three welcomes and two farewells at Sale Cathedral

Kate Campbell

On the afternoon of Sunday 24 October, the faith community of St Paul's Cathedral hosted a service of Evensong for the installation of three new diocesan canons and the diocesan farewell for the Cathedral's Dean, the Ven Susanna Pain and its Associate Priest, The Rev'd Nikolai Blaskow.

The Ven Sue Jacka and diocesan lay canon (and organist for the day) Marion Dewar presented The Revd Phyllis Andy and The Revd Dr Fran Grimes as clerical canons, and Mr Ian Maxfield as a lay canon. Cantors were The Revd Dr Dean Spalding and Jenny Batten, from the Uniting Church.

*(Continued on page 12)*



Photo: Christine Morris

The copes of clerical canons Fran Grimes (front left) and Phyllis Andy (front right) were designed and stitched (by Janet Staben, Lois Wust, Noelle Walker and Kate Campbell) with their personal stories and symbols. Ian Maxfield (centre) was installed as a lay canon. The Diocese farewelled Dean Susanna Pain (far right) and Nikolai Blaskow



Felicity Knight holding her dog Ilar as Ven Sue blesses her

## Pet-friendly policy brings joy and strength at Clifton Waters

Sue Paterson

Clifton Waters Retirement Village changed its policy on pet ownership in 2018 and it seems to have been a decision that has changed the lives of many residents. It is increasingly acknowledged by medical professionals that owning a pet has a positive effect on both physical and mental health. The experience of the village is that this benefit is shared widely beyond the owners.

Reg Maxted's dog, Abbey, is not really a pet but a service dog with a job to do. She was provided to Reg, a Vietnam veteran, by Integra Service Dogs in Canberra two

years ago. The bond between Reg and Abbey provides great comfort and has improved his quality of life.

Pat McKeown adopted a rescue dog named Rueben, a sheltie (small collie). Rueben was one of the first pets to be welcomed to the village. Pat has always been a dog person, having previously owned labradors. Being a rescue dog with an unknown background, Rueben was at first quite timid and anxious. Pat has done a lot of training with Rueben, who is now much calmer. Pat's health has improved too. Her twice-daily walks have strengthened her and improved her mobility to the point where she no

longer needs her walking stick. During lockdowns the focus on the care and attention of another living being has helped Pat to feel calm and contented.

Pat has a couple of lovely tales of Rueben. Last year, as part of his ongoing socialisation training, Rueben came with her to the church for a blessing. He was very well behaved, but for a little bark when 'Amen' was said – and when Pat sat too close to the organ, Rueben decided to sing too.

Pat and Reg both comment on how their dogs know and love everybody in the village. Dogs are a fabulous catalyst for social interaction. Many

by Ven Sue. This year there were no cats. One parishioner confided to me that she had consulted with her cats and they had declined to be in the company of so many dogs! Those who could not bring their pets could bring a photo to be blessed.

The service was very joyful. The hymns were sung (through masks) enthusiastically. Many of the dogs joined in, evidently impressed by our singing.

We were all reminded of our connection with and reliance on the animal kingdom. We are responsible for their care and prosperity. God loves all animals, his valued creation.

Photos of our pets and other animals were shared through a photo reflection. Ven Sue blessed each pet, with each dog expressing enthusiasm to be blessed. It was a service full of thanks and gratitude.



Service dog Abbey keeps an eye on rescue dog Rueben (front)

There are currently eight dogs, as well as two cats, a couple of cockatiels and a princess parrot in the village. They all bring their owners companionship and comfort. Seeing residents walking their dogs, stopping for a chat and connecting with neighbours brings me great joy. As a dog lover myself, currently without a dog of my own, I appreciate every opportunity for a furry cuddle.

Sue Paterson is Community Manager at Clifton Waters Village.

people will engage with a dog before having a conversation with the owner.



# Faces of the Cathedral exhibition opens in Sale

Jan Down

The Faces of the Cathedral festival, celebrating the Archibald Prize, was launched on Sunday 10 October, with the opening of a portrait exhibition at St Paul's Cathedral in Sale.

The inevitably small (because of COVID) but enthusiastic group in attendance was augmented by an unseen host of others who watched the opening online. The video is still available on the Cathedral Facebook page.



Jenny and Peter Batten with Jenny's painting of Peter, Moods in Perspective



Ann Miller with her pencil drawing, The Public Face of the Cathedral

Dean Susanna Pain, in her opening remarks, invited the viewers: "If we are made in the image of God, the challenge is to look for God in each portrait."

Susanna then led the audience on a tour of the art, introducing each artist and inviting them to say a few words about their work.

The artists were local and most had a connection to the Cathedral. Those contributing to this fascinating exhibition were Julie Mielke, Christine

Morris, Coral Minster, Rita Weir, Claire Flack, Jenny Batten, Peter Batten, Ann Miller and Kate Campbell.

Diverse styles and media were represented, including textiles, wood, photography, paintings and drawings. Ann Miller's pencil drawing, The Public Face of the Cathedral, was a portrait of Dean Susanna and her husband Nikolai Blaskow, showing various aspects of their lives in the Sale community,

arranged around their faces.

Ann commented, "I think if you asked anybody in town who were Susanna and Nikolai, you would get a hundred different answers." Some might think of the peace vigil at the Sale clock tower, after the Christchurch massacres. Others would remember Nikolai's philosophy talks, or his work as Police Chaplain.

Ann said the drawing was "the story of what I've enjoyed of what they've done over the last five years, expressed symbolically." Susanna and Nikolai have announced they will be moving back to Canberra towards the end of the year.

Drinks, nibbles and lively conversation concluded the afternoon. The exhibition will run until late November, and can be viewed when the Cathedral is open – Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays 2–4 pm – as well as service times: Sunday morning 8 am and 10 am, and Wednesday 10 am.

Other Faces of the Cathedral activities also continue for the length of the Archibald season. There are guided tours of the stained glass windows, creative workshops, Interplay, a Living Stones display of photos, and Quiet Afternoons with Art. For details, see [www.stpaulssale.org.au](http://www.stpaulssale.org.au)

## Parish of Yarram embraces renewed Diocesan vision

Glenda Amos

During the past month, the Yarram parish has been involved with a variety of community activities, as we move forward with the renewed Diocesan vision in Gippsland.

The Junior Hive in Yarram conducted activities in Holy Trinity hall on three separate days, during the recent school holidays. Deb and her helpers, including some members of Holy Trinity, provided a different array of activities each day for about 20 primary aged children. Each participant received a bag of goodies for the day and then enjoyed games, cooking, a jumping castle and a special visit by two baby lambs on the last afternoon. Great fun was had by all.

The Blessing of the Animals was held on 3 October at St John's Port Albert, in celebration of the feast of St Francis of Assisi. A mixture of large and small animals including cats, dogs, birds and even snails enjoyed the service. Each pet was presented for blessing by the Rev'ds Jenny and Tony Wicking. Afternoon tea was enjoyed in the sunshine at the conclusion of the service.

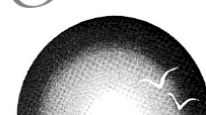
On the second Saturday of October, a community market finally happened. Planning had been in hand for a couple of months for this event but COVID lockdowns had delayed it. A steady stream of visitors wandered the stalls inside and outside Holy Trinity hall after completing their COVID check-in. The Rotary Club barbecue and a local coffee van were on hand to

keep everyone satisfied with food and drinks. Goods and furniture from Twice Blessed Opshop were also on sale.

Many people commented that it was lovely to be out on a sunny morning mixing with others. So many people, it would seem, have been struggling with restrictions. The opportunity to share some community spirit was very welcome. All stall holders benefited from the day, as well as the Yarram parish.

As a parish, we reach out to engage with many different groups in the community to share our care and concern for the wellbeing of all. We are exercising a committed ministry by looking outward in meeting needs and acting for the good of the earth and all creatures, as we connect in service.

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# Anglicare Victoria Toy Appeal 2021

**Cathrine Muston**

Christmas can be a challenging time of year for vulnerable children, but you can help give them a special day to remember.

Anglicare Victoria supports many young people in care every day, and at Christmas time we want them to experience the joy of receiving a gift like every other child. Each year more than 400 Christmas hampers are provided to vulnerable children and

their families in Gippsland alone. Your donation to the 2021 Christmas Toy Appeal will help us spread cheer to the children in our community who need it most.

For many years, locals have delivered gifts to the Giving Trees in our local shops and supermarkets, but with the need to ensure safety from COVID-19, Anglicare Victoria has moved the annual Toy Appeal online.

This year, you can donate a toy for a child by calling 1800 809 722 or by visiting our dedicated webpage:



[www.anglicarevic.org.au/toy-appeal](http://www.anglicarevic.org.au/toy-appeal).

*For further information, contact Cathrine Muston, Anglicare Parish Partnerships Coordinator for Gippsland: 0458 450 370, Cathrine.Muston@anglicarevic.org.au.*

## ARDFA financial support flowing to Afghan refugees

**Lucy Lim**

We thank God that many Anglican dioceses, in Australia, including the Diocese of Gippsland, supported the Anglican Relief and Development Fund (ARDFA) Afghanistan appeal. As a result, we were able to send \$30,000 immediately. We will be sending another \$30,000 soon.

We are helping refugees like Zainab, who was fortunate enough to escape Afghanistan during the Taliban takeover.

Zainab, her three children and her mother consider themselves blessed to have been able to leave Afghanistan in August 2021, during the Taliban takeover.

They are thankful that ARDFA's on-the-ground partner has been able to provide them with rent, food, medical and household supplies, as they struggle to survive in their new country of refuge.

Zainab has not had an easy life. When Zainab was 13, her poor, illiterate family married her to a much older man. The man was an unemployed drug addict, who was very controlling, and made Zainab work as a maid and took her income. When Zainab's daughter was 14, her husband



arranged to sell his daughter to a group of men. When Zainab bravely resisted, he threw acid on her body, face and eyes.

Praise God that Zainab was helped by a Christian family to receive intensive medical care. She survived, but was blinded in one eye. Through the witness of caring Christians during this time, Zainab became a follower of Jesus.

In early August 2021, instability in Afghanistan meant that prisoners were being released from prisons. Zainab's husband, who was imprisoned, had been sending letters threatening to kill the family. Fearing his release, Zainab and her children, with her mother, fled Afghanistan for another country.

Zainab's family was initially refused entry, but when they saw Zainab's disfigured face

and her hope for health care, the family were allowed into the country.

Although Zainab has been saved from the terrible situation in Afghanistan, life in the new country is also very hard. The Christian community who took her family in have limited resources, and by taking in these refugees, they are placing themselves under very real threats for their actions.

Furthermore, Zainab, like many other Afghan refugees, is not registered, and is not viewed kindly by the country's security forces.

Your prayers and financial support are helping refugees from Afghanistan to forge a new life in what is still a very difficult environment. Thank you for your compassion and generosity.

*Lucy Lim is Executive Director, Anglican Relief and Development Fund.*

### EDITORIAL

#### Thinking about religious enmity

When I started as TGA editor, I was keen to introduce an ecumenical and interfaith segment to highlight what others are doing within their own faiths and traditions, and also how different faiths and traditions are engaging with each other. A recent Trinity lunchtime seminar raised my awareness that challenges related to difference and change may be just as great within a tradition as between faiths.

Thinking Together About Religious Enmity, hosted by the Trinity Theological School (University of Divinity), was facilitated by Trinity's Dr Scott Kirkland, John and Jeanne Stockdale Lecturer in Practical Theology and Ethics, who joined the conversation with three other academics and researchers. Dr Kirkland leads the Political-Theological approaches stream of a related project, Figuring the Enemy ([www.figuringtheenemy.com](http://www.figuringtheenemy.com)), which is researching questions of religious enmity.

Dr Susan Carland, Discovery Early Career Researcher Award Fellow at Monash University, said that religious enmity is not so different from other causes of antagonism. It often comes down to competition over resources and power – and religion may be central or act as a vehicle. How this can play out depends on the power balance between two groups, whether the disagreement is between cultures or between faiths – or between faith and non-faith groups.

Fred Morgan, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Beth Israel and former Professorial Fellow of Australian Catholic University, said he tends to think about religions as cultural entities, which can be weaponised in the same way that other cultural entities can. From a Jewish perspective, he said, history is very important in enmity. There has been relatively little contact between Jewish people and Buddhists, for example, and it is constant proximity that can lead to a sense of threat; the challenge is to build a sense of trust.

Dr Aaron Ghiloni, Director of St James' Institute, Sydney, has interests in religious diversity, educational philosophy, and the intersection of religion and culture. He said many Australians are less exercised in compromise and pragmatism within Christianity than we are for other traditions. Perhaps the provocation of proximity, as explained by Rabbi Morgan, also comes into play here.

The media was seen by all participants as a powerful contemporary force that can enhance enmity and inflame debate. They discussed how the media portrays religion, and the problem of low religious literacy in the media, particularly about religions other than Christianity, and that few reporters write with empathy and trust about the experience of religion.

Dr Ghiloni emphasised that conflict is normal and is often about genuine human dissimilarity. Negotiation can be good and moral, he said, and it would be great to see nuance and complexity represented in the media.

On the question of understanding the role of religious education in Australia in generating understanding and peacefulness, Dr Carland's remarks were sobering. She has seen little evidence, in her research about gender, Islamophobia and social cohesion, that implicit bias training works – in fact, she suspects it may exacerbate the bias problem. The proximity theory is difficult to test in Australia, because the number of Muslims in Australia is too low for most people to be likely to meet them.

Dr Ghiloni alternated between two hats as he responded. As a lecturer at a secular university, he gave a shout-out to the secular study of religions, saying that the distance can overcome "blind spots". As a religious educator, he espoused the value of learning 'from' rather than 'about', for example trying to understand the Quran from a Christian view and the Bible from a Muslim view. Learning in the presence of people who are different from us can be seen as part of our growth, he said.

**Sally Woollett**



# Ecumenical study for Advent at The Abbey



Bishop Richard Treloar



Fr Francis Otobo

In a further major ecumenical initiative, the Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops in Gippsland will co-host a seasonal Bible study in November in preparation for Advent.

The two bishops are inviting clergy and lay people from both dioceses to join with them in an Advent Conversation based on a study of passages from Luke's Gospel featured in the common lectionary this year.

The conversation will be led by two eminent biblical scholars: Dr Robert Derrenbacher, Associate Professor in New Testament, Trinity College Theological School, and Fr Francis Otobo, Lecturer in Biblical

Studies, Yarra Theological Union. It will be held at The Abbey on Raymond Island on Friday 26 November, commencing at 10 am and concluding with a service of ecumenical worship at 3.30 pm.

In commending this gathering to Anglicans across the Diocese, Bishop Richard said:

*Ecumenical partnership is vital to the mission and integrity of both Churches and serves as a witness to the wider community of our essential unity in Christ. The scriptures are a common source of authority for both Anglicans and Roman Catholics and when we study and reflect on them together we are enriched*

*by the insights and experiences of our sisters and brothers from another tradition. Bishop Bennet and I join in warmly commending to our clergy and people this opportunity to engage with two eminent biblical scholars and with each other.*

For further information and bookings (which are essential for catering purposes and any accommodation needs), contact Anna at The Abbey: (03) 5156 6580 or [info@theabbey.org.au](mailto:info@theabbey.org.au). There will be a catering charge of \$20 per person and those attending will need to meet current COVIDSafe requirements, including evidence of vaccination.



Bishop Greg Bennet



Dr Robert Derrenbacher

## In prayerful preparation for global environmental talks

### Bishop Philip Huggins

We have family staying with us unexpectedly. Like many, the pandemic has caused them big disruptions. It's been quite confusing for their little boy.

On the week they arrived, a wattlebird began building a nest in the lemon tree outside his new bedroom window. We watch as the little bird sits patiently on her eggs. We have placed food where she can get it easily and delight as she keeps coming back for more.

The birth of the babies and their first flight is anticipated. My wife is trusted to be close enough to picture the eggs.

It may seem a stretch, but I see all of this in the love of God for all creation and the encompassing of our little grandchild so tenderly. We have never had a bird build a nest in that tree before!

Prior to the United Nations Climate Conference, COP25, in Madrid in 2019 there was a huge rally. A young Lutheran gave me a biblical banner to carry.

One thing I have learned from many years of ministry



is that we must continually unlearn whatever makes God too small.

The love of God for all creation is completely wonderful. Our worship of God flows into care for all who share our common home.

I went to COP25 and keep involved for the sake of all I love in God's creation – including my grandchildren and their generation.

We take to heart what our spiritual leaders say in their

poignant Joint Message:

*We must decide what kind of world we want to leave to future generations.*

Hence their quote from Deuteronomy (30:19): "Choose life, so that you and your children might live."

The Joint Statement has been criticised, by some, for not explicitly condemning the vested interests and the political ineptitude that has blocked faster climate action until now.

But they do quote Jesus' clear teachings, including the parable "of the rich and foolish man who stores great wealth of grain while forgetting about his finite end."

There in Luke 12.13-21 Jesus says, "Be on your guard against all kinds of greed."

That is the context for this parable. It critiques greed for more profits from industries causing global warming; greed for political power – to gain it and then to hold onto it, by whatever means and without consideration beyond a next election!

In communion with the Divine Creator, who "brought all things into

existence from nothing", we keep saying, in various ways: "You want to continue doing exactly what you know is causing global temperatures to rise, endangering many lives and destroying many irreplaceable species – for what?!"

We are compelled into climate action as a matter of love. Our love of God flows naturally into a love for our neighbours, including our Pacific neighbours who are literally going under as we speak.

We have offered our advocacy and will continue to do so.

But as the crucial COP26 begins it is also our responsibility to pray for beneficial outcomes.

Internationally, in our varied time zones, people of faith are being encouraged to participate together in three ways, especially from 31 October until 14 November:

- At noon each day: silent prayer and meditation, perhaps with symbolic actions like bell-ringing, lighting candles, standing silently together wherever we are.
- At 7 pm each day: deep meditation and prayer, utilising special prayers which will be provided by those on the spot in Glasgow.

- A Pilgrimage Event, "Faiths for Climate Justice", on 6 November (ahead of the crucial final week of negotiations at COP26).

All this is being coordinated by the Interfaith Liaison Committee to the UNFCCC (<https://interfaithliaisoncommittee.carrd.co>).

Beholding the love of God for all creation, everything and everyone is included.

We are praying for the miraculous transformation of our planetary life at this time, through the success of COP26.

We all understand the difference between a holy place with a holy atmosphere and a place that needs prayerful, transfiguring influences.

Our world, including those who will gather at COP26, need our loving prayers and meditations.

Let's offer them together! "Jesus have mercy." Amen.

Postscript: The baby birds were born! Our grandson sat with his binoculars to watch the mother return with food for the newborn wattlebirds! A moment beyond wonderful for us all, thanks be to God!

*Bishop Philip Huggins is President, National Council of Churches in Australia. Republished with permission.*



# Tim Gibson, diocesan archivist

*When did you begin your role?*

My archival involvement with the Diocese started in late 1994 when Bishop Arthur Jones wanted a committee set up to work towards the writing of a centenary history ready for 2002. I started to come to Sale with retired priest Rev'd Ken Campbell and retired librarian Cyril Tolley, and worked with then Registrar Peter Wallis to sort out papers and other documents stored on the second floor of a building in Raymond St, Sale. The task was mammoth and was like entering Aladdin's cave – or perhaps Miss Havisham's dining room – with all the dust and cobwebs! Over several years we sorted out what was valuable and transferred it to one secure storage facility at the Diocesan Registry. In 2001, after being appointed archivist for Gippsland Grammar at Sale, I developed a pattern of calling into the Registry too and dealing with any historical matters and filing that needed to be done.

*What does your work involve?*

I am constantly surprised at the number and range of enquiries the Registry receives for historical information. Now that all the records are sorted, boxed and housed all together, answering enquiries is a lot easier. I now know whether I can answer an enquiry easily, know where to look or, if I cannot assist, to direct the enquiry to someone who will be able to help.

The Diocese has a large Gippsland photograph collection given by a retired clergyman after his death in 1962, and although these thousands of photos have been listed they are yet to be scanned. The archives facility has drawers for the storage of large maps and architectural plans and adequate shelving for storage of past clergy files, parish information, as well as a fine collection of parish histories. Also, we have bound back issues of *The Gippsland Anglican*, dating to its first issue in 1904.

Over the years I have

travelled to many parishes across the Diocese to assist and advise them on how to store their records and what definitely needs to be kept.

*What types of lay ministry have you been or are you still involved in?*

I am a parishioner at St Peter's by the Lake, Paynesville and serve on Parish Council, as a Synod representative. At Diocesan level I am a member of the Trusts Corporation.

In the past I was a chorister, a server and a church warden, and in 2001 I served on the Diocesan Bishopric Election Board that elected my current priest at Paynesville, Jeffrey Driver, the tenth Bishop of Gippsland.

*How is COVID affecting the operation of the Registry Office?*

The Registry staff are a supportive team and a pleasure to work with. COVID has meant we don't see each other as much as before.

In recent times I have been doing more archival work



from home. Last year during lockdowns I was able to focus on the transcription of letters written by Bishop Pain to Cyril Chambers while he was serving on the Western Front. These had been held in the diocesan collection for many years. Handwriting transcription can be a slow and tedious exercise! I have also done full marriage listings for parishes so that they can search their records more easily; tasks like this can be done from home and information or files returned when completed. To think of COVID in positive ways has forced us all to reassess what we do and reorganise ourselves, perhaps changing some of our priorities.

I have always encouraged access to records by members of the public under supervision, but face-to-face contact with

researchers has been restricted during the past 18 months.

*What changes have you seen across the Gippsland Diocese in recent times and what changes are you anticipating?*

With the closure of many small out-centre churches, I worry about the loss of history and encourage all parishes to contact me if they have storage or retention concerns.

The loss of so much hardcopy history in a digital age is a real concern. Documents such as Parish Council minutes are now saved on computer systems, and with changes of office-bearers old-fashioned minute books are often not kept. Down the track, anyone writing a history of the past few decades or wanting information will face great difficulty.

*What would you say to someone considering lay ministry?*

If you have an interest or skill in any facet of lay ministry I would encourage you to 'run with it'. You never know where it will lead. We all have skills in different areas that can be used for the good of the church and our communities.



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# It's complicated

Rev'd Daniel Lowe

“It's complicated!” What a versatile phrase. You can use it as a relationship status online; as a way of avoiding an awkward question (or a question you simply couldn't be bothered answering); you can use it to appear well informed, perhaps even in possession of secret knowledge; or you can use it to dismiss something as not worth trying to understand. It has a ring of truth without revealing any actual information. And the reason it is such a good way to deter further questioning is because we all love simplicity. Behavioural scientists call it the simplicity theory, based on the idea that people have a bias toward simplicity and are predisposed to choose products and experiences that minimise their cognitive load. It is partly why the advertising world surrounds us with pithy one-liners and catch-phrases. ‘Just Do It!’, ‘Think Different’, ‘Because You're Worth It’. Not only do we gravitate

toward simplicity, but we tend to deal with complexity in our lives by removing or hiding it. Complexity is hard and simplicity makes us feel safe and in control.

The trouble is, most of life is complicated. Change brings complexity and we are living through a time of remarkable change. While I was writing this article, I found myself listening to a group of Year 12 students in the common room outside my office as they engaged in a robust debate about COVID vaccines, protests and lockdown restrictions. This is the reality of the world they are living in.

One of the dangers of our desire for simplicity is that we can fall into the trap of separating things into overly generalised categories: Science v Religion, Vaxxers v Anti-Vaxxers, Environmentalists v Climate Change Deniers. We polarise issues, seeing the world in black and white and failing to consider crucially relevant shades of grey. We can do this with all sorts of

issues and our view of God is no different. If we hold on to a simplistic view of God then we are likely to go one of two ways – either we dismiss God as a childish and unsophisticated concept that has nothing to offer the adult world, or we cling to a rigid and limited view of God that feels constantly threatened by the complexities of the world. But God is not simple!

This was part of the lesson Job learned when he declared, “These things are merely a whisper of God's power at work. How little we would understand if this whisper ever turned into thunder!” (Job 26:14). This is what the Psalmist acknowledges when he declares, “When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?” This is what we see in Jesus, who doesn't buy into simplistic answers. In fact, when confronted with an oversimplification, he often responds with a



capable of speaking into our messy and complicated world and we can take courage from this. What encouraged me about the student conversation I overheard was their willingness to grapple with the complexities of the issue. Although they held differing views on some things, there was no name calling, no generalisations or simplistic

question that leads us into the complexity of the issue. When the Pharisees try to provoke him by asking, “Should we pay taxes to the Emperor or not?” (Matthew 22:17) Jesus responds with a question that challenges their thinking. When the Sadducees try to trick him with a question about marriage (Matthew 22:25-28), he essentially tells them their assumptions are all wrong.

The world is a complex place and the issues confronting us are often complex and confusing. But we don't need to be afraid of that complexity, nor do we need to confront it alone. God is more than

labelling. By the end of the discussion, while there was still disagreement, they had all found areas of common ground. I got the sense that each of them understood the other a little more and everyone was better off because of it. My hope and prayer is that our young people will not only have the courage to tackle the complexities of their world with respect and compassion, but will also discover a complex God who can speak into their lives with hope and love.

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

## Perseverance pays off for St Paul's national champs

Paula Walland

After months of hard work and dedication, two Sport Aerobics teams from St

Paul's Anglican Grammar School were declared national champions in their divisions in



*Pictured at the State Championships are St Paul's students (back L-R) Ella Black, Charlotte Kovacs, Mya McFarlane, Chloe Hannan, Madeline Williams, Charlotte Fraser, Harri Parkinson, Holly Norris, Lucy McKenzie, Georgia Cumming; (Middle L-R) Maggie Dargan, Amity Hunter, Tayla Clark, Megan Lambert, Sienna Christian, Dempsey Sederlan, Jorgia Neyland; (front L-R) Coaches Jemma Douglas and Bella Fraser.*

the School Aerobics National Championships in October.

Both the St Paul's Saintly Ladies (Open B Secondary Section) and St Paul's Saintly Angels (Secondary Stage 1 – Open) qualified earlier this year to compete at the nationals after winning their divisions at the School Aerobics State Final held on site at The Arena in Geelong.

The national competition, normally held on the Gold Coast, was converted to an online event this year due to COVID restrictions, and qualifying teams submitted a filmed entry for judging. Both St Paul's teams had their routines filmed in the school's dance studio, before intending to film their final submission in front of a small live audience at the Arts Centre. Unfortunately, the Arts Centre filming was cancelled due to COVID restrictions. Every week throughout the year, the girls worked to pursue their potential as a team, with restrictions proving no barrier as they trained and provided support to one

another online when they could not be together.

The teams have been guided, mentored and coached by past St Paul's students and alumni Jemma Douglas and Bella Fraser, who have both previously experienced the thrill of competing at the nationals. In a year of challenge, and through times of doubt about whether the competition would proceed, both coaches were present to boost spirits and inspire the girls to never give up. In a combined statement, Jemma and Bella said, “With what was such a challenging year for sport aerobics, we are unbelievably proud of our dedicated teams for producing such monumental results.”

As the largest Sport Aerobics competition in Australia, School Aerobics is open to both primary and secondary students, proving to be an increasingly popular co-curricular activity over the years.

*Courtesy St Paul's Anglican Grammar School*



## Unlocking the power of philanthropy



### Campbell Bairstow

The final piece of the philanthropic process is to become adept and intentional in saying thank you. So far we have considered the importance of our not-for-profit organisation being clear about its values, its purpose and how it makes a difference, and then bold and compelling in asking for funds that will enable the organisation to make that difference. Happily, you are now receiving gifts – so what happens next?

There is a principle in philanthropy that donors should be thanked five (or even seven) times. This sounds over the top

but it is not as demanding as it first seems. Best practice might look like:

- a phone call to say thanks when the gift is first received
- an email or handwritten note with the receipt enclosed
- acknowledgement in a list of donors in a newsletter or annual report
- an invitation to a function held to thank donors, or to a special event or service
- an occasional update on the project that the gift supports
- incidental personal acknowledgement from the CEO, bishop, rector, etc.

when the opportunity arises

- inclusion on an honour board.

There is a further received wisdom in philanthropy that the people most likely to support you are those who have already made a gift. The likelihood is that donors who have thought about your organisation and its purpose, and supported you financially, will want to see you continue to thrive (or in some cases survive). This is why it is crucial that donors are thanked and acknowledged as often as possible. In doing so you affirm their alliance to your organisation and include them in your important work.

There are innumerable and instructive stories of modest first gifts being the seeds of long-term partnerships and substantial philanthropic gifts. Be encouraged to see first gifts as indications of interest in or passion for the nature and purpose of your work, and the possible start of a significant relationship.

Be alert for moments such as a handwritten note on the annual giving slip saying, "Let us know if you need some more help."

Trusts and foundations may also ask for annual acquittals and reports on how donations have been used. This is another excellent opportunity to say thanks and build a stronger relationship. Ideally, the report will also describe the broader achievements of the organisation, and describe any new or emerging ambitions that may spark further interest. The priority should always be to demonstrate how effective and efficient your organisation is in matching the values and expectations of the trustees and governors of the funding bodies.

The final encouragement is to be brave and ambitious. If you believe in your

organisation and its power for good, do not be shy in seeking philanthropic support. The power of making the gift always rests with the potential benefactor, but what we do know is that they are unlikely to help if you don't ask!

*Campbell Bairstow is Dean of Queen's College at the University of Melbourne, and for 12 years was the Deputy Warden and Dean of Trinity College. A Canon Emeritus of St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne, and a Patron of the Skyline Education Foundation, he has a distinguished record of engagement and leadership in the not-for-profit sector nationally and internationally. He has strong connections in Gippsland, and was the Principal of Gippsland Grammar School, 1990 to 1994.*

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*The Rev'd Elizabeth Cheruiyot, principal of St Paul's Theological College, Kapsabet, Kenya, receives theological books donated by the Diocese of Gippsland. The Rt Rev'd Paul Korir (right), Bishop of the Diocese of Kapsabet, said, "We are forever grateful to you my brother bishop and the good people of the Diocese of Gippsland."*

*Courtesy Bishop Paul*



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BRIGHT SPOT





# Injustice and mercy in colonial Australia

Cathrine Muston

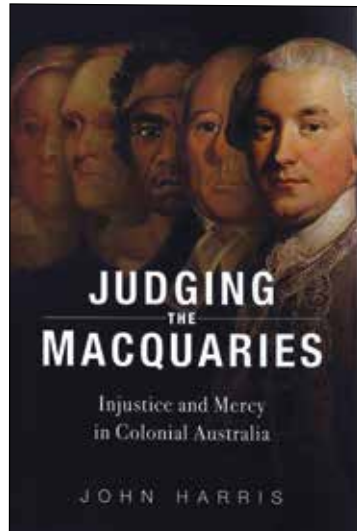
## Judging the Macquaries

by John Harris  
Acorn Press, 2021

Historical biography can help us to understand the motivations and ambitions of people from another time and place. Dr John Harris' biography of Lachlan and Elizabeth Macquarie provides not only the context for decisions made when the colony of New South Wales was in its infancy (Lachlan served as Governor of New South Wales from 1810 to 1821), but also an analysis of the Christian understanding of justice that motivated the Macquaries in their daily life as leaders of the colony.

What we believe about the world, each other and God shapes us. Our actions are the outworking of our values and beliefs, and John Harris provides a detailed study of the upbringing of both Lachlan and Elizabeth and their early influences from family, church and circumstance. In particular, it seems, Elizabeth was a significant influence on her husband, even though she was 16 years younger. Both were evangelical Christians who believed that forgiveness and redemption were offered to all, and that all should be treated equally. As Harris reveals, this made the Macquaries both loved and derided as they hosted convicts at their table and granted pardons and tickets of leave in unprecedented numbers.

Like all those who lead a group of disparate people with limited resources, the Macquaries were not without their critics. Lachlan and Elizabeth were also very much of their time, and even though they were supporters of William Wilberforce and the anti-slavery movement, their treatment of Aboriginal people in Australia has been criticised. Harris, a well-known linguist and historian, and having written



extensively on the treatment of Aboriginal people in Australia's history, is forgiving of the Macquaries. He provides the context that is often missing in a world where we can be quick to judge or 'cancel' those who fall short of expectations. In this way he provides a more sympathetic analysis of their legacy.

The Rev'd Samuel Marsden, while one of the first CMS missionaries, was highly critical of Governor Macquarie's egalitarian policies. Marsden and a small but 'influential' group of disaffected settlers were prolific in their letters of criticism to well-placed people in England and were ultimately successful in forcing the governor's resignation. Harris provides a detailed and nuanced account of these conflicts with Macquarie and the challenges that governing such an outpost inevitably brought.

Biographies of any kind are coloured by the biographer, so it is with some confidence that we can read of the life of the Macquaries as presented by someone as steeped in knowledge and painstaking research as Harris. From his many years of immersion in colonial Australia, Harris' careful analysis of documents and sources makes him a trustworthy authority. The writing in this biography provides academic rigour while also being an accessible read.

*Judging the Macquaries* is an enlightening and fascinating read, and one in which we may be able to see ourselves as viewed by future generations.

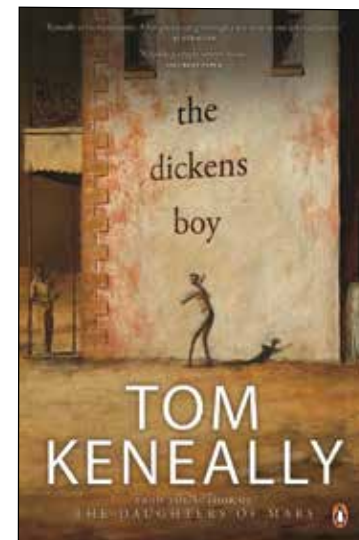
## THE DICKENS BOY

by Tom Keneally  
Penguin Books, 2021

In the late 1800s, the writing of Charles Dickens was arguably the most widely read (other than the Bible) in the English-speaking world. Dickens was involved in a scandalous affair with the actress Ellen Ternan, having sent his wife, the mother of his 10 children, back to live with her parents while installing his wife's sister as the children's nanny. *The Dickens Boy* is the result of Tom Keneally imagining what it must have been like to have been Dickens' tenth child, Edward Bulwer Lytton Dickens, who was sent to Australia as a 16-year-old to 'apply himself', and how he managed life on an outback sheep station while maintaining the secret that he had never read a word of his father's writing.

In Keneally's fictional account, Edward, nicknamed by his father as 'Plornishmaroontigoonter' – 'Plorn' for short and the story's narrator – carries the weight of his connection to not only his father but famous English writers and thinkers of the day, as well as the notoriety of life at the Dickens' country house in Gads Hill Place, Kent, where 'the guv'nor' would host plays, parties and cricket matches. Through this imagined account we see both sides to the story of the life of Charles Dickens as Plorn is forced to defend 'the guv'nor' and as he is celebrated as Dickens' offspring.

Finding a suitable appointment in which to 'apply himself' proves difficult. Plorn absconds from his first station within 24 hours due to the bullying of the station manager, McGaw, who Plorn felt had dishonoured his father to the extent that he had to "leave McGaw or kill him."



References to 'the guv'nor' are never far away and are the catalyst for many of the decisions Plorn makes.

A family friend is able to find a more suitable position for him on an even more remote sheep station with two brothers, Edward and Fred Bonney. The forward-thinking and kind Bonney brothers take to Plorn and teach him the rudimentaries of station life. All the while Plorn has his brother Alfred's advice in mind, that "Above all, it's important in Australia to be seen as a sportsman and a likeable chap."

Plorn proves his ability to apply himself on the cricket field and on the sheep station, learning quickly that his brother's words are true and that 'the guv'nor' was more celebrated than reviled.

Keneally provides a simple enough premise for a fictional imagining of a real person, but one that provides canny insight into the world and worldview of mid 19th-century Australia. Reflected in *The Dickens Boy* are the attitudes of settlers to the land, ex-convicts and Aboriginal Australians

as well as insight into the qualities and skills needed to survive such isolated conditions at a time when making an enemy of a stock agent could mean life or death.

Reading *The Dickens Boy*, I wondered how much of the novel was coloured by 21st-century values and attitudes and how much was authentic. Attitudes to homosexuality, the roles of women, post-traumatic stress disorder in returned soldiers, the treatment of the Irish, known as the terrorists of the day, and of course the use of land that belonged to Aboriginal people, all form the context into which Plorn is plunged.

Keneally, renowned for his research, provides an interesting insight into early Australia and the characters who were drawn to it, and he does it with humour and spark. From the interactions with horse dealers and remote station cricket matches to the drovers in the outstations and the culture of the Paakantji people of far west NSW, Keneally writes with a deftness that enables the characters to sit easily in the landscape. It is the landscape that eventually draws Plorn into a life where he can envision a future that is both fulfilling and useful.

Through the possibilities and the devastations of early European settlement *The Dickens Boy* gives us a picture of Australia in an earlier time where we might imagine ourselves and better understand how and why we got to where we are.

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### Bruthen Bouncebackability Spring Fair and Community Market

9 am – 1 pm, 20 November  
Bruthen Mechanics Hall.

### Online cooking class Cuisine & Culture in Conversation

Palestine Israel Ecumenical Network  
23 November, 7.30 pm AEDT.  
Register at <https://pien.org.au/category>  
To register to host a 'peace meal' in the weeks  
following the cooking class,  
email [contact@pien.org.au](mailto:contact@pien.org.au).

### MU Global Day of Action

27 November; prayer vigil  
25 November – 10 December.  
Mothers' Union members and friends will  
hold a three-minute silence at 1.03 pm AEDT.  
The Global Day of Action responds  
to the call for 16 Days of Activism against  
Gender-Based Violence for the  
1 in 3 women worldwide who have  
experienced domestic or sexual abuse.  
Prayer diary for 16 days of Activism and other  
resources available at [www.muaustralia.org.au](http://www.muaustralia.org.au).

### ASCM weekly Bible studies

Australian Student Christian Movement  
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[www.ascm.org.au/events](http://www.ascm.org.au/events).



### Events at The Abbey Raymond Island

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### Diocesan Retreat

5.30 pm 12 November  
– 3.00 pm 13 November  
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peace of The Abbey on Raymond Island  
with Retreat leader Bishop Richard Treloar.

### Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul: Exploring history and faith

19 – 20 November  
This annual Faith in History seminar is  
offered by June Treadwell in exploration  
of the place of faith in history.

### Advent Ecumenical Conversation

26 November, 10.30 am – 3.30 pm  
The day will be led by Bishop Richard and  
Roman Catholic Bishop of Sale, Greg Bennet.  
Reflections for the day will be offered by  
Dr Bob Derrenbacker, Dean of Trinity  
Theological College, Melbourne and by  
Fr Frances Otobo, theologian from the  
Catholic Diocese of Sale (see article page 7).

## Three welcomes and two farewells at Sale Cathedral

*Continued from page 4*

In his homily, The Rev'd Canon Philip Muston described each of the new canons as having striven to respond to the prophet Micah's message by acting justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God, in the context and experiences of their own lives. He affirmed the contribution they bring from their own experiences and abilities to the life of the Cathedral, which is not only a building but a community of worshipping people. He reminded us of the importance of spirit and truth being at the heart of worship; to strive to love God, to love neighbour as ourselves, to always do justice, not merely speak about it. Philip invited us as a diocesan community to value the maturity and experience that Fran, Aunty Phyllis and Ian bring to their roles as clerical and lay officials of our cathedral and, most importantly, to encourage them with prayer and support. Bishop Richard spoke about the many gifts that Susanna has shared through her ministry in the diocese during her five and a bit

years in Gippsland, making particular mention of her oft-issued mantra, Breathe! He said "Our breathing, Susanna, will be a little more laboured on account of our grief at your leave-taking ..." but "our breathing will also be more purposeful, more measured and more life-giving for your legacy, which will outstrip your tenure as Dean." He paid tribute to Susanna's many gifts as team and community builder, of hospitality, as spiritual director, Quiet Day leader, retreat conductor, professional supervisor as a senior Anglican priest, embracing ecumenism and being "deeply attentive to the wisdom of our First Nations people."

Bishop Richard went on to say "How fitting that the occasion of her diocesan farewell ... should also be that of the installation of the first Aboriginal Priest in this Diocese as a Canon, and we rejoice with Aunty Phyllis, and with Fran and Ian ...". He acknowledged the team that Susanna and Nikolai are as "they have modelled shared ministry ..." He affirmed Nikolai as he nears the completion of his PhD, his

school and police chaplaincies and Exploring Faith Matters mentoring, celebrating his continual "good-humoured presence among us." A gift to purchase a piece of local indigenous artwork was presented to Susanna, and Bishop Richard offered a blessing.

In his response, Nikolai spoke of his sadness at saying goodbye and offered gratitude for the years in Sale and wider Gippsland. He encouraged us as people of faith "to continue to undergo, continue to overcome and continue to become something better than we were before." He read some of his final words of his thesis, from Friedrich Nietzsche: "On this perfect day, when everything is ripening and not only the grape turns brown, the eye of the sun just fell upon my life: I looked back, I looked forward, and never saw so many and such good things at once. I do not want to wage war against what is ugly. I do not want to accuse; I do not even want to accuse those who accuse. Looking away shall be my only negation. And all in all and on the whole; someday I wish to be only a Yes-sayer."

Susanna offered her thanks to Bishop Richard and the diocesan community, also that it has been a privilege to serve here. She reminded us of the significance of pomegranates in her journey to her ministry in Gippsland. A friend gave her a pomegranate bush on arrival a little over five years ago, and this year it bore its first fruit. She spoke about seeds taking time to germinate, plants taking time to grow and flower and fruit, and encouraged us all to take our part in the growing by God's grace. She and Nikolai have

sown and watered seeds of ministry despite not knowing what the final legacy will be. Susanna spoke of how prayer "grounds" her in life, that prayer "book-ends" her day, and how many beautiful environments and experiences she has enjoyed and appreciated while living here, as a great granddaughter of the first Bishop of Gippsland.

Both Nikolai and Susanna expressed how they will miss Gippsland and the community, and that we will continue to hold a place in their hearts.

*The service was  
livestreamed and is  
available for viewing on  
the diocesan website.*

The <sup>Gippsland</sup> Anglican



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