



Sandpiper e-News

FR STEVE BOHAN (1948-2023)

A Man of Deep Faith committed to his Community.



If you would like to read Fr Joe Taylor's Homily, or reflections of Fr Steve which were presented at his Funeral Mass, please ask your Parish for a copy, or visit our website:

<https://sandhurst.catholic.org.au/item/2541-fr-steve-bohan-a-man-of-deep-faith-committed-to-his-community>

Sandhurst Priest, Fr Stephen Thomas Bohan, will be remembered as a man of deep religious faith and deep convictions; an exceptional leader who "went the extra mile to help people" and "threw himself into the local community". A keen sportsman and historian with a knack for "opening-up" scripture so his parishioners could see its relevance in their lives.

Fr Steve was a priest of Sandhurst for fifty years. Born and raised in Benalla he was the loving son of Margaret and Frank (both deceased), brother to Frank (deceased), John and Bernie, brother-in-law to Mary, Jackie and Vicky, Uncle of ten and Grand-Uncle of 25.

Fr Steve's Funeral Mass was held at Sacred Heart Church, Yarrawonga where he had been parish priest until he retired on his 75th birthday in July this year. Fellow priest and friend, Fr Joe Taylor presided over the Mass with Bishop Shane Mackinlay, Bishop Emeritus Leslie Tomlinson and priests of the Diocese.

Cathedral organist joins ACU Centre for Liturgy



Music has always been in Dr Paul Taylor's blood, but it was inside his local parish church that he developed a fascination for the pipe organ. As a child, Dr Taylor would watch the organists from St Kilian's and Sacred Heart Cathedral parishes playing either the electronic Yamaha organ or the 1872 German beauty falling apart in the rear galley.

"I used to re-enact the whole scene (at home), a bit like playing 'Mass' with other family members," Dr Taylor said.

"I loved listening to the tone colours the organists chose and the harmonies they employed for the hymns."

What started as pretend play eventually became a hobby, and then a career. After completing degrees in music and eventually liturgy, Dr Taylor has become one of Australia's most respected liturgical musicians. He has worked in music ministry in the parish communities of Flemington, St Patrick's Cathedral Melbourne, and in Bendigo since 2020, and served as Executive Secretary of the Australian Catholic Bishops Council's Commission for Liturgy and of the National Liturgical Council.

Now Dr Taylor brings his longstanding reputation as a musician and liturgist to the ACU Centre for Liturgy as the new Assistant Director.

Dr Taylor will support the Centre's suite of formation and educational resources, including their online courses, seminars, and regular events, as well as facilitating discussions on the Liturgy Nexus online networks.

Having turned a childhood hobby into a professional career in ministry, Dr Taylor said the Church was now being called to rethink how it engaged with young people to ensure the traditions of the faith continued into the next generation.

"We need to work at ways to attract young people in general to our churches in order to enthuse them for ministry in the church, which can be enormously satisfying, even if the work requires dedication and ongoing practice," Dr Taylor said.

"The key thing is formation, and this is where the ACU Centre for Liturgy can play a vital role, by providing liturgical formation opportunities and empowering people to use their God-given talents for service in the Christian community."

Dr Taylor's association with ACU can be traced back to the university's beginnings,

when he was a music student at the Institute of Catholic Education, which later became the ACU Melbourne campus.

"I remember being told that I was actually difficult to teach because I could play by ear, the upshot being that I wouldn't always play what was printed, but what I wanted to hear," Dr Taylor said.

"However, it was only later that I realised, from Roger Heagney during my Harmony and Counterpoint classes at ACU, that playing by ear is very useful in ensemble settings, particularly when it comes to teaching and improvisation."

Dr Taylor then completed a doctorate at ACU in 2010, under Dr Dianne Gome, looking at the perception and understanding of chant within the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

While the so-called liturgy wars continue to debate the styles or genre of music in the post-conciliar Church, Dr Taylor said the biggest misconception about music in the liturgy was that it was an optional extra, rather than an integral part of the liturgical celebration.

"I think we would do well to recall that the Second Vatican Council in the mid-1960s invited Catholics to view the Mass not just as solemn canonical obligation and key sacramental occasion – but what the ritual books refer to as a celebration of the Eucharist – a celebration of Christ's paschal mystery and triumph of life over death, light out of darkness," Dr Taylor said.

"And just as we participate fully in secular celebrations like national days, remembrance days, sporting events, and birthday celebrations with music and singing, during the liturgy, singing helps to lift our words, our offerings of prayers, of praise, thanks and intercession to God, to a higher spiritual level, beyond everyday speech."

Professor Clare Johnson said Dr Taylor was a welcome addition to the ACU Centre for Liturgy.

“Dr Paul Taylor brings to the Centre a wealth of knowledge about the Catholic Church’s liturgical life, both as a trained church musician in his own right, and as a liturgist who has served the Church at a national level under the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference,” Professor Johnson said.

“The expertise and experience Dr Taylor has garnered over decades of study and research of the liturgy will be of immense value to liturgists and ministers around this country.

“I look forward to working with Dr Taylor as the Centre for Liturgy continues to support specialised expertise to every level of ministry in Australia.”

Strategic Direction a focus for SMPC at third meeting

Council Chair, Gabrielle Downie chaired the third meeting of the SMPC which focused on strategic direction for the Diocese and formation for Council members to address the purpose of the Council.

SMPC Members considered four Strategic Directions which are based on the Final Report of the *Preparation and Consultation for the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council* and informed by the Concrete Proposals for the Council from the Diocesan Assembly (15 February 2023). Each member selected a Strategic Direction of interest to them and formed three 'interest groups'.

All three groups will include consideration of the equal dignity of women and men in while focusing on the strategic direction of their specific interest group.

The Strategic Directions:

1. Missionary and pastoral outreach to families, young people, marginalised groups and those who are baptised but are no longer active in parish life.
2. Promote the equal dignity of women and men enhancing the role of women in the Church in Sandhurst; and to overcoming assumptions, culture, practices and language that lead to inequality.
3. Strengthening connections between parishes and schools, parishes and Chancery, between parishes, Chancery and Catholic Education Sandhurst, and other Catholic entities in the Diocese.
4. Promote initial and ongoing formation of the faithful in missionary discipleship, missionary and pastoral outreach, theology and liturgy, ministry, listening, dialogue and discernment.

All groups are incorporating Strategic Direction 2, “Promote the Equal dignity of women and men” within their focus area.

The Meeting was held at St Brendan’s Pastoral Centre, Shepparton on Friday 25 and Saturday 27 August 2023. It was the first meeting chaired by Chair, Gabrielle Downie.

If you would like to read the report, please ask your parish for a copy. The full report can be downloaded from our website.

https://sandhurst.catholic.org.au/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=2013-smpc-2023-08-25-26-meeting-3-

Get to know Gabby Downie, Chair of the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council



Benalla parishioner, Gabrielle Downie, is more than qualified to chair of the Sandhurst Mission and Council (SMPC). Currently Principal of St Patrick's Primary School in Wangaratta, Gabby has over 39 years of experience working in Catholic education, 27 of those years in leadership roles. Yet it's perhaps her childhood experience as the daughter of faith-filled migrant parents in Corryong that has best laid the foundations for her role with SMPC, equipping her with the necessary humility, empathy and genuine desire to listen to and understand others.

Gabby has a Bachelor of Education and a Graduate Diploma in Religious Education. She has been the Principal of St John's Primary School, Euroa and St Joseph's Primary School, Benalla and for six years worked as the principal consultant for the Northeast Deanery for Catholic Education Sandhurst, where she provided support to principals in 14 schools of the northeast.

A resident of Benalla for thirty years, Gabby has been a member of St Joseph's Parish Pastoral Council for over ten years, four of those years as Chair.

"Right from birth my journey has always been in Sandhurst," she said. "I've got to know many Sandhurst priests and been involved with many different Sandhurst groups and communities over the years."

The Diocesan Assembly in February this year, was possibly the first time Gabby had seen parishioners from across the Diocese gathering in one place. Gabbie was delighted to see how engaged the participants were. "It really showed me that people care – they all want our Church to be successful, to be outward-facing and want others to know how good it can be," she said.

Gabby said she submitted an expression of interest to become a member of the SMPC after she was politely tapped on the shoulder. "I had just stepped back from the Benalla Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) where I was Chair," said Gabbie. "I had a week's grace between finishing with the PPC and starting with the SMPC."

For Gabby, responding to a request for service was a natural thing to do. Gabbie's parents were shopkeepers in Corryong where they were totally immersed in parish and community life. "They were very generous, kind and faith-filled people," reflects Gabby. "They contributed so much to the building of the Corryong community." Her father, and his brother, were founding parishioners at Sacred Heart Parish in Corryong (established in 1961) and, with Fr Leo Lacey PP and others, they formed a school committee to establish a Catholic primary school in the town (Sacred Heart Primary School was established in 1963).

"Bishop Stewart told them they would have to build a school building, then – if they wanted nuns to come and run the school – they would have to build a convent."

Sacred Heart parishioners set to work building a school on land willed for the purpose by Dan Cronin. "Everyone was on site pitching in," said Gabbie. "Someone laid the bricks, others put the roof on; you couldn't build a school building like that

today, OH&S would have a fit!" exclaimed Gabby.

Gabby remembers that during this time, her home seemed a hub for visiting nuns, clergy and bishops and remained one for many years. "Our whole life was around the Church," she recalls.

"My parents were migrants from Lebanon. We looked different; we couldn't hide who we were – most people just assumed we were Italian." Said Gabby. "Back then, Corryong was more isolated than it is today, and the Catholic community was a very small minority." Gabby reflected that, for her parents, creating a sense of community through their actions was important to feel they belonged.

Gabby explained that when her mother arrived in Australia as a young woman, she had only a limited understanding of English. Her father had migrated to Australia as a child and grew up in Canning Street, Melbourne. He travelled and returned to Lebanon for a while where he met her mother. It was a brave move to settle in Corryong, yet it was the opportunities to build parish and school in Corryong, to contribute in a tangible way, that helped her parents feel at home.

"Isolated communities are really resilient and self-sustaining," said Gabby. "Corryong didn't want for anything. It had a tennis team, football team, everybody knew everybody ... school, church ... as a community we were self-sustaining and resilient because we had to be. So many successful people have come out of Corryong. These days, there is still that sense of community, but the next generation will have to tap into the 'how' to ensure it continues."

Relating this to Church Gabby said, "Lots of people are passionate about their communities; they want others, and especially the next generation, to know about the good in our church that can help us to lead rich and rewarding lives. A lot of this is sometimes hidden beneath the tradition, or the old ways which aren't

fashionable anymore. We need to recontextualise for today – we need better branding. We have kept ourselves humble and quiet, but that's not doing us, or anyone else, any favours."

For Gabby, one of the biggest challenges for the Church today is being relevant. "We need to reveal ourselves in a recontextualised way. We reach out in so many ways, but I still think we are unknown." Gabby references Pope Francis as someone who resonates with people, irrespective of faith, and who extends a wonderful invitation for people to live a spiritual faith-filled life. "Generally, people are anti-institution these days," said Gabby. "Pope Francis extends a loving invitation. He has a Catholic voice, but he is outward-facing – as a church we need to shape ourselves around that."

Gabby said that her role as Chair doesn't make her a leader of the SMPC. "We are all leaders; I'm fortunate to be working with a diverse group of people who bring so much to the table." She aims to embed a culture of growth and improvement so that parishes can grow and flourish. For Gabby, the SMPC is looking at the bigger picture. "We aren't baking the cakes in the cake stall; we are setting direction for plans which are measured and sustainable," she explained.

Gabby is clear that parishes need to put money into things that work, so the SMPC is working on developing strategies that can be enacted effectively, and sustainably. She agrees that people are used to the church working at a "glacial pace" but stresses the importance of taking time to make sure things are done well. "If we want to see real change and real growth and to embed that change, we have to do it carefully." Having said that, Gabby notes that action is also required, as well as an understanding that there will be some things that won't change.

For Gabby the biggest change she has seen within the Catholic Church in her lifetime is the education of Children. "Catholic schools strive to be a secure

loving place to nurture and grow children in a faith-filled environment and I think they do it very well."

If you would like to get in contact with the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council, please phone the Chancery on 5445 3600, or email: admin.smpc@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

23rd Knights of the Southern Cross Archbishop's Dinner



What a wonderful night, once again!

After last year's return after the COVID hiatus, there were many expectations that this year's Knights of the Southern Cross Victoria Archbishop's Dinner 2023 for [Knights of the Southern Cross Priests' Support and Education Fund](#) would be bigger and better. And indeed it was, with everyone walking away from Moonee Valley Racecourse having enjoyed a wonderful night of camaraderie, and having raised \$77,000 in total for the education of Victoria's Seminarians.

Friday September 1, 2023 saw 450 people from all over Victoria attending the flagship event of the Knights of the Southern Cross Victoria, in support of the education of the seminarians of the four dioceses of Victoria, studying at Corpus Christi College Seminary, and those studying for the Catholic Military

Ordinariate of Australia to become Chaplains in the Australian Defence Force.

People from all areas and organisations of the Victorian Catholic Church were in attendance, many having travelled long distances, such as those from Mildura, Colac, Wodonga, Sale, Bendigo and Ballarat. Our furthest travelled guest was no doubt the Supreme Knight of the Knights of the Southern Cross Australia, Mr Vincent Granahan (newly elected at the June KSC National Conference in Perth in June), who flew down from his home town Brisbane earlier in the day. The evening commenced with drinks and canapes in the adjacent room, before guests streamed to take their places and commence the night with introductions, before Grace was led by Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli.

Prior to the entrée being served, guests were treated to a performance of the [Seminary Schola](#).

All in attendance enjoyed a great night of proceedings, featuring the presentation of Bursaries to two seminarians for a trip to the Holy Land, Jean-Sebastien Gery and Tue Pham, who will travel to the Holy Land in December as part of their Seminary formation. There was also a number of acknowledgements and presentations, with milestone ordination anniversaries recognised, along with 1st and 25th year sponsors.

One of the highlights of the night was an [interview with Carlton Football Club player Matthew Kennedy](#) by Fr Michael Gallacher, Parish Priest of St Roch's Parish Glen Iris. Fr Gallacher interviews Matthew about his Catholic faith, and how it impacts his football career. Following the interview, a Carlton jumper signed by all members of the Carlton men's team was auctioned off by Matthew's soon-to-be father-in-law, famous Catholic comedian John Canavan.

Featured as part of the fundraising activities were a raffle, and main auction, and silent auctions.

The [guest speaker for the night](#) was Corpus Christi College Seminary Rector, the Very Reverend Dr Cameron Forbes, who spoke about the Seminary, the Priesthood, and his hope for both, as Rector. The Vote of Thanks was given by Chief Executive Officer of the Catholic Development Fund, Matthew Cassin.

Also promoted was a number of [upcoming KSC and Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne events](#), such as the hugely popular KSC-run “God and Beer” talk series (featured at the Notting Hill Hotel), featuring speakers Olivia Chamoun (Jesus and Jazz), Archbishop of Hobart Julian Porteous (who will address a special God and Beer session at the Hoppers Club in Hoppers Crossing in early October), and the upcoming Benedict Conference in late October.

At the end of the night, it was the honour of the State Chairman of the Knights of the Southern Cross Victoria, Mr Paul Mitchell OAM, to present the Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli, with a cheque for \$75,000 to be split equally between Victoria's Dioceses and the Military Ordinariate. While not as much as the previous year's amount of \$86,000, with inflation impacting throughout the economy, this was an excellent result. Following the cheque presentation, an anonymous donor contributed \$2,000 to the Fund, unable to win a silent or main auction item, which was not reported in the night, bringing the overall total to \$77,000. This took the overall money raised since the first Dinner in 1999 to \$1,540,301.00, surpassing the \$1.5 million mark.

For this, many thanks must go to all the loyal sponsors (who have been acknowledged in recent posts), donors, KSC Branches and Members, and Dinner attendees. Many thanks also go to the members of the Organising Committee, who have worked hard all year to plan this year's successful Dinner.

AUSTRALIAN AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE

As the [Voice Referendum](#) on 14 October approaches, The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC), encourages Australian Catholics to use the [One Journey Together](#) website to as part of their discernment.

“We in NATSICC know there are criticisms, even from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people support the referendum,” state NATSICC

"The Voice to Parliament Referendum provides all Catholics with a unique opportunity to come together as a community and draw upon our faith and moral grounding to make an informed decision."

World Youth Day Diary Part Two



Sandhurst Youth Ministry Coordinator, Ruth Lawlor, describes the Rise UP Sessions, the arrival of Pope Francis, Stations of the Cross, the WYD Vigil and all the colour and excitement of Lisbon during World Youth Day.

Wednesday 2 August — Rise Up! Encounters Begin

It's time for the WYD Rise Up! Encounters to begin! These are normally called Catechesis sessions and are run all over the host city and surrounding areas in different languages. Animator teams from around the world host the different catechesis sessions which are all based on a specific theme for each day. Day one for Lisbon was centred around the theme of Integral Ecology.

We chose to head to a beautiful Church, the *Coleginho de Santo-Antao-o-Velho*, in the civil parish of St Mary Major, which includes Churches in the area around the Lisbon Cathedral. The Church appears to

be part of an old college or something similar (a residence for many people?), but that is possibly now part of its history. We were all interested to learn that this Church was the location of St Francis Xavier's last Mass in Lisbon before he left as a Missionary.

The Animating Team for our Rise Up! Encounter came from the Diocese of Broken Bay, and our own pilgrim Zoe was able to join their choir along with Gen Bryant and her band members. Bishop Danny Meagher, one of the Auxiliary Bishops from Sydney, was the Bishop presenting. It was a rather Australian affair up the front, but we were joined by pilgrims from Ireland, Singapore, and USA, as well as other English-speaking countries. Pilgrims enjoyed music; opportunities to share in small groups; and questions and sharing. We concluded our time together with Mass. Overall, it was an informative and enjoyable event, despite how hot it was inside the Church! And the Parishioners were so welcoming!

Pilgrims split up for the remainder of the day, with time to explore the WYD Festival or what Lisbon has to offer. One group went up the mountains to visit the amazing Sintra, the location of the old Portuguese Summer Palace. Our talented photographer pilgrim, Edward, took some incredible photos from Sintra which made other pilgrims wish they had more time to venture to such beautiful locations.

Another group headed over to Belem to check out the Vocations Fair. Ok, we went to get the original Portuguese Tarts at the *Pasteis de Belem*, but we also wanted to check out the Vocations Fair! The tarts were well worth the journey, although we were all bemused that the line to buy the tarts was incredibly short, yet the line to get into Burger King would have been a couple of hours long. We had hoped to visit the Jeronimos Monastery and the Belem Tower, but were surprised to see it all blocked off! The Pope was on his way!

Disappointment at not seeing these incredible buildings was quickly dissipated as our youngest pilgrims stuck out the hour wait to catch a glimpse of Papa Francisco! The rest of this group decided to head back into the city to try to escape the heat.

Other pilgrims headed towards the beach in Cascais to check out the WYD Festival offerings out that way (and possibly enjoy a bit of surfing!) And I believe one group might have managed to hire a kayak and get out on the water in a different way. Whatever pilgrims chose to do during their afternoon, they were able to meet people from all around the world who had travelled to Lisbon for the same reason as them — to take part in WYD!

The evening had no official WYD events so, again, pilgrims dispersed and went out to explore the city. A river boat cruise proved popular for pilgrims from Sandhurst and many others from around the world. For others it proved the perfect opportunity to get an early night and catch up on sleep!

Thursday 3 August — Welcome to the Pope

This morning began with the 2nd of the Rise Up! Encounters. The focus of the day's session: Social Friendship. We went back to the same Church as yesterday and were delighted to do so. An incredible inspiring Bishop from Kenya spoke, and I wish I caught his name — I will ask one of the pilgrims to share this in the future! The rest of the session followed a similar pattern to yesterday and was highly enjoyable and provoked some serious thought about how privileged we were to attend WYD, particularly as most young Catholics in Kenya, even if they managed to get the money to attend were not able to obtain a visa. It made us all think about the bigger meaning of Social Friendship in our universal context. This is definitely a topic that Pilgrims will reflect on more going forward.

The afternoon gave people more chances to explore and some decided to take the steep road up to the Castelo de Sao Jorge for some spectacular views over Lisbon, while others decided on a more low-key afternoon. Some delicious food was eaten, some souvenirs were purchased, some caught some of the music on the main WYD stage, and much fun was had by all!

The evening brought with it the Welcome Ceremony for Pope Francis! We decided to split up a bit for this event due to the crowds and the heat. A few headed straight into the crowd and were able to get remarkably close the front. The feeling right in the thick of it was awe inspiring and was probably a highlight for some. Our resident photographer, Edward, was able to spend some time in the Communications area and was able to get some fantastic photos of the event prior to the Pope's arrival. Others hung back on the edge of the crowd, still feeling the energy from being a part of it, while not being overwhelmed. These pilgrims were able to wave at the Pope as he was driven through the crowds waving. An important moment for them!

Others headed slightly away from the event, towards one of the large screens set up so that pilgrims could watch from further back. They may not have caught the Pope in person, but they were able to closely follow the event and had a much more relaxed crowd to hang out with. The final group made the decision to look out from the Hotel windows — our hotel was in such a prime location that the Pope actually went past the front door! The hotel staff were quite impressed! This group were able to watch the event from both the window and on the TV with an English Translation. No matter which experiences the Pilgrims had of the event, we can all agree the Pope's address to the crowd at this Ceremony was inspiring. We encourage everyone to read it! But the highlight from the speech, particularly hearing so many voices join in with the Pope's cry, was:

*Everyone, everyone, everyone!
“In the Church there is room for everyone...
There is room for everyone! All together
now, everyone, repeat with me in your
own language: Everyone, everyone,
everyone.
I can't hear you: again! Everyone,
everyone, everyone.”*

Hearing the crowd call out “Everyone” in their own language, with the Pope repeating “Totus, Totus, Totus” will stay with me for a long time.

Please go and read the Pope’s speech: [Apostolic Journey to Portugal: Welcome Ceremony \(“Parque Eduardo VII”, 3 August 2023\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

Friday 4 August – Stations of the Cross

Our third Rise Up! Encounter led our group to a different, larger, outdoor location a short journey away via the wonderful public transport system (it held up remarkably well during the week considering the WYD pilgrims at least doubled the population of Lisbon!). The final theme focused on God’s Merciful Love and included an experience of Adoration. Pilgrims were beyond excited to hear Bishop Robert Barron speak, and it is probably one of our pilgrim’s (Mason) highlights to be able to altar serve for the Mass.

The afternoon provided further time to explore, with the added task for the pilgrims to find “cool” Portuguese snacks to share at a picnic later that evening. They did not disappoint with the fun food items they found. (Sea Urchin Pâté is an interesting food experience!)

Heading back into the crowd, snacks in hand, we found a place in the shade on the edge of the growing crowd, with a great view of one of the large screens, and the opportunity to walk right up to the fence as the Pope was driven by, not once, but twice! Every single Pilgrim has now been within a few metres of Pope Francis! The buzz was real amongst the Pilgrims as

we became taste testers and judged our favourite food items before we settled in to take part in the Stations of the Cross.

It can be difficult at these events to fully immerse yourself in the prayer when you can’t understand the language, but each pilgrim found a way to engage in a meaningful way as we all meditated on the Way of the Cross brought to life with incredible movement and dance on the stage and screen.

Pope Francis provided another beautiful, simple, inspiring speech which is well worth checking out. [Apostolic Journey to Portugal: Stations of the Cross with Young People \(“Parque Eduardo VII”, 4 August 2023\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

The pilgrims again split into two groups after making our way back to the hotel—those that needed sleep, and those that wanted to go and experience the Ecumenical Worship event, The Change. Catholic musician Matt Maher, Jonathan Roumie, the actor who plays Jesus in The Chosen, and a large number of Christian musicians and speakers joined together to pray with the Catholic young people attending World Youth Day. The Stadium, filled with approx. 10,000 people from different Christian Churches, felt alive with the Spirit. A pilgrim’s highlight of the evening was the stadium all singing Oceans together. It was a very special event.

Saturday 5 August – Pilgrimage Walk and WYD Vigil

The WYD Vigil requires some planning and a few tactical choices had to be made to secure a space large enough for the whole group to camp out together. It also should be noted that some severe heat warnings had been issued meaning extra planning for pilgrim wellbeing needed to take place. Two pilgrims (who both happen to be pregnant!) opted to stay at the hotel rather than risk being stuck in the 40-degree heat with no shade – definitely not safe for them!

A group of six wonderful pilgrims left early in the morning to be the forward party. They walk through the beautiful empty streets of the tourist areas in Lisbon. They walked along the river, through industrial parts of the city, they walked past beautiful parks and the Lisbon aquarium. They stopped briefly at McDonalds for a quick breakfast (very little was open that early so please excuse the choice!) They collected food bags which weighed over 3kg per pilgrim and carried them further than they would have liked! They chatted and enjoyed the journey. It was a wonderful moment of pilgrimage and companionship. Finally, they arrived at our destination and managed to find a spot for the whole group to join them whenever they eventually arrived! Now, just to keep the spot safe in the heat of the day!

The remaining pilgrims set out later in the day after breakfast and a celebration of Mass to begin the journey. They most likely had a similar journey to the pilgrims that left earlier in the day but with more people around them and possibly more difficult walking in the heat. Eventually they too made it to the Vigil site and the group were reunited, ready for whatever the evening had to offer.

There were so many people! We were so close to the front of the site that we could see the stage. We heard that other groups had to walk for a further 2-3 hours to find their section and set up camp, so we were feeling very privileged. Surrounded by other pilgrims from around the world and Australia (there were many Australian groups in our section). We napped, chatted with each other, explored the site, and played a bit of “footy”, and card games with some Portuguese teenagers. There was music on the main stage, and chanting going on all around us. It was an experience that pilgrims will never forget!

Just a side note for those interested — Lisbon decided to put some really good infrastructure into the whole site. A lot of plumbing was infrastructure had been installed. Pilgrims could refill their own bottles at the water stations in each

section and use incredible sewered toilets which stayed remarkably clean given the number of people using them. There was barely a line to get to a toilet and not a porta-loo in sight! Very different, and much more sustainable options, than has been the case at previous WYD Vigil Sites! It was impressive!

Finally, as the sun set, excitement began to grow. The WYD Cross and Icon arrived via boats on the river and were then processed to the main stage. The Pope arrived to great fanfare and welcome, and a now familiar chant filled the air: “*Esta e a juventude do papa*”, This is the Pope’s Youth. We truly feel like we are the Pope Francis generation.

Again, Pope Francis had inspiring words to share. It’s hard to capture what it’s like to hear him speak so naturally and so in touch with his audience, but here’s a favourite part:

“Mary’s joy is twofold: she had just received the angel’s message that she would welcome the Redeemer of the world, and she was also given the news that her cousin was pregnant. This is interesting: instead of thinking about herself, she thinks of the other. Why? Because joy is missionary, joy is not just for one person, it is for sharing something with others. Let me ask you: those of you here, who have come to meet others, to find Christ’s message, to find life’s beautiful meaning, will you keep all this for yourselves, or will you share it with others? What do you think? Surely it is for sharing with others because joy is missionary! Let us all repeat that, together: joy is missionary! And so we share this joy with others.”

[Apostolic Journey to Portugal: Vigil with Young People \(“Parque Tejo”, 5 August 2023\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

And then, the whole crowd, estimated to be close to 1.5 million people, joined together in Adoration. This is always an experience that impacts pilgrims in different ways, just as it does for all people.

But to look around and see everyone in silent prayer all together definitely impacted every pilgrim in some way. It is hard to explain what it feels like in those moments. There is a connection with the Universal Church that is hard to replicate.

And finally, time to sleep- or so we thought (and were told to do via the loudspeakers!) but instead, the Screens began to show The Letter. I know this is a great documentary, but I'm not sure how many in that crowd did watch it that evening! I am pretty sure I fell asleep about 5 minutes in. It had been a long, hot, exhausting day and all the pilgrims were tired! Maybe this is something pilgrims will watch with their parishes at some point (hint, hint! It's a possible idea for a Parish social event!)

Sunday 6 August – World Youth Day Mass

As the sun rose, the Sandhurst Pilgrims made the difficult choice to pack up and leave before the sun came up. Several pilgrims had suffered with something close to heatstroke the previous day; a forecasted temperature of 42 degrees; no access to shade; and a very long journey back to the hotel, potentially stuck in the crowd if we exited at the same time as everyone else — all led to the decision to return to our accommodation.

Not to fear! We got back to the hotel with plenty of time for quick showers and breakfast before gathering as a group in the Hotel Bar to watch the Mass on TV with the English translation playing. Fr Jackson was able to celebrate Mass earlier in the morning, so we could also participate in Communion along with those at the Vigil Site. It may not be the experience we expected or planned on, but it allowed our pilgrim group to stay safe and form closer connections with each other— there is definitely now a strong young adults community in Sandhurst thanks to the opportunities

experiencing the WYD Pilgrimage together!

Once again, Pope Francis' homily is worth a read: [Apostolic Journey to Portugal: Holy Mass for World Youth Day at "Parque Tejo" \(Lisbon, 6 August 2023\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

The Feast of the Transfiguration provided the Pope with a beautiful message and something for us all bring back with us: "Now, we can also ask an important question: What will we take back with us as we resume our daily lives? I would like to answer this question with three verbs, drawing from the Gospel we have heard: to shine, to listen, and to be unafraid. What will we take back with us? I would respond with these three words: to shine, to listen, and to be unafraid."

I hope that all our Sandhurst pilgrims are able to respond to Pope Francis' words and find their own ways to shine, listen and be unafraid as they continue on their faith journeys after the pilgrimage experience is over.

The remainder of the day saw the pilgrims spend their final time in Lisbon. More exploring took place, beaches were visited, Portuguese food was consumed, and there was definite sadness to be leaving the WYD week behind. It can be challenging to leave behind these mountaintop experiences and return to normal lives changes by the experience but finding nothing changes back home. The Transfiguration is the perfect Gospel to provide the pilgrims some insight into this. But rather than jumping on a plane and heading back to our everyday lives, we still have time to reflect and retreat as we continue our pilgrimage to Avila, Spain.

The final part of the Sandhurst WYD Pilgrimage will cover the last few days of our pilgrimage, including visiting Salamanca, Avila and Segovia.

Outdoor Mass launches Season of Creation



Inter-generational wealth and longevity for all creation ... We stand here today, with Djaara, we stand here today with Country, and we move towards a brighter future to ensure that our younger generations have a prosperous future, a future that is bright, humble, and importantly connected with Country and creation."

Kerry Stone from the Sandhurst Care for Creation Team, welcomed people to the Mass and proclaimed the theme for the Season of Creation this year:

*"Let Justice and Peace Flow.
The prophet Amos cries out, 'but let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!' We are called to join the river of justice and peace to take up climate and ecological justice and to speak out for communities most impacted by climate injustice."*

Galaks flew in to perch on surrounding Kamarooka Mallee, and wildflowers rustled with the breeze – as if they knew the Gospel Reading was about them – at Sandhurst's launch of the Season of Creation in the Greater Bendigo National Park on 1 September.

Clergy, parishioners, and teachers and students from nine Sandhurst schools gathered as a Diocese committed to the Laudato Si' Action Platform and to encouraging all our parishes and schools to take up the Catholic Earthcare journey towards Pope Francis' seven *Laudato Si'* goals.

The congregation was embraced by a big blue sky; a forest of Mallee, Box-Ironbark and flowering wattle; and the warmth of each other's goodwill. Music was led by Paul Taylor and Maria Forde, featuring Deborah Ross and the Catherine McAuley College Choir; The Mass was celebrated by Bishop Shane Mackinlay and concelebrated by Monsignor Peter Jeffrey, Fr Rom Hayes and Fr Des Welladsen. Newly appointed Pastoral Associate and Cathedral Sacristan, Andrew Howe and Mason Crosier assisted at the Mass.

In his Welcome to Country Djaara man, Troy Firebrace, spoke of the knowledge of Country which Aboriginal people carry in their heart. "We carry in our heart what our elders have passed on to us," he said. "Knowledge to care for Country has been passed down from generation to generation to ensure



In his [Homily](#), Bishop Shane reflected on the Gospel more closely, "Our report card on most of Jesus' commands, would probably read, 'Tries hard, could do better' ", he said. "However, there is one of Jesus' commands that we do exceptionally well on. Jesus says, at the end of today's Gospel – '*Don't worry about tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself ...*' – We are over performers in not

worrying about tomorrow, in kicking the can down the road.”

The relatable scene painted by Bishop Shane inspired a quick burst of laughter from the congregation, short comic relief from the deeply serious issue of environmental sustainability, which all who were present knew would be the topic, not only of the day, but the key theme in the rest of our lives. Bishop Shane went on to explain the Gospel reading further:

“So what Jesus is saying in that text – where he is responding to people about the times when we are so concerned about our own needs, that we forget about everything around us. He says, “Remember, the world is bigger than just you, look at the birds in the sky, look at the flowers in the fields. God cares for all of these things. All of these things are part of God’s good creation and cared for as part of God’s good creation. Don’t centre your concerns just on yourself, or your immediate needs. Don’t get so obsessed with your own needs for tomorrow. Think more broadly about the way that God cares for each of us, but also for the whole of creation. Our needs, our cares, fit in that much bigger picture.”

Referencing Pope Francis’ 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’* Bishop Shane related the Gospel reading to integral ecology, “As we’re increasingly aware, if we don’t care for the needs of all the life of God’s creation, we won’t be able to meet the individual needs that we have, or the needs that our community has, or that any of those have.”

Bishop Shane recommended that people read Pope Francis’ Message for the 2023 World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. “Pope Francis invites us to join that river of justice and peace which is needed in our world, by transforming our hearts, transforming our lifestyles, and transforming our public policies ... We need to think about the whole of creation as God’s precious and sacred gift to us, entrusted to us by God to care for and to cherish. Not as an object to be exploited.” The galahs above squawked as if to say “Hear, hear!”

Bishop Shane elaborated on the three ways we need to transform, recognising that the challenges ahead can feel overwhelming.

“While we can be tempted to say, all this is too much, this is too hard, he (Pope Francis) reminds us that the mightiest of rivers, starts up in the high country with tiny trickles of water that couldn’t wash away any obstacles. They couldn’t create any new riverbeds, but eventually those trickles come together in creeks, streams, tributaries and, eventually, into the rivers that are so overwhelming for us in the power that they bring.

It’s the same with the river of justice and peace that we speak of in the theme for this year’s Season of Creation. That river of justice and peace, that we need to be so powerful, will flow powerfully only if each of us is committed to an action that produces our own trickles, that feed into that bigger river. And if we encourage others around us to do the same.”

Ahead of the Procession of Gifts, children from St Therese’s Primary School, Kennington and St Mary’s Primary School, Inglewood brought forward ‘the river’. Ahead of the gifts of bread and wine, with children from St Monica’s Primary School, Kangaroo Flat joined the Catherine McAuley College Choir to lead the singing of Andrew Chinn’s ‘I Am The River’.

Mass concluded with a lively rendition of ‘*Laudato Si’* – The Song’ (from the Archdiocese of Mumbai) led by the Catherine McAuley College Choir.

After the Mass, all of the students present received a memento of the day, a beeswax lunch-wrap. Adults received Catholic Earthcare’s 34 Actions for the 34 Days of the Season of Creation.



Socialising in the sunshine with a sausage in hand was a fitting end to a truly beautiful celebration.

Kerry Stone is Sandhurst's Caritas Australia & Social Justice Coordinator and also Caritas Earthcare Parish/Organisation National Coordinator.

A transcript of Bishop Shane's Homily is available or download on our website:

https://sandhurst.catholic.org.au/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&alias=2011-season-of-creation-bishop-shane-homily-2023&category_slug=enewsletter-pdf&Itemid=1216

Matthew 6:25-34

'That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and what you are to wear. Surely life is more than food, and the body more than clothing!

Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? Can any of you, however much you worry, add one single cubit to your span of life?

And why worry about clothing? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his royal robes was clothed like one of these.

Now if that is how God clothes the wildflowers growing in the field which are there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you who have so little faith?

So, do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat?

What are we to drink? What are we to wear?"

It is the gentiles who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on God's saving justice, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow:

tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.'

Think more broadly about the way that God cares for each of us, but also for the whole of creation. Our needs, our cares fit in that much bigger picture.



This weekend, the Catholic Church in Australia marks Safeguarding Sunday, on which we pray for those who have been abused, their families and supporters. We recognise and apologise for the harm done by priests, religious and lay people in Church settings. Rebuilding trust and confidence in the Church requires constant work and vigilance. We recommit to cultural change that will help the Church be a place that builds and supports safe communities for all people.

Royal Commission Update

published by Bishops Conference and CRA

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia have published a [report](#) updating the Church's progress in implementing the relevant recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

On the five-year anniversary of the initial response, the report is part of the Church's ongoing efforts to be publicly accountable for how it is working to create, maintain and enhance safe environments for children and all people who are at risk.

Following the format of the initial response, the new report lists each relevant Royal Commission recommendation, the response that was given in 2018 and a high-level summary of work undertaken in the five years since.

The presidents of CRA and the Bishops Conference, in the report's preamble, draw on the words of Pope Francis, who said each member of the Church "is called to assume responsibility for preventing cases of abuse and to work for justice and for healing".

"It is to this responsibility that we commit the ACBC and CRA anew, and to which we

call all Catholics in Australia, as we give this account of actions taken to implement the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse,” write Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB and Fr Peter Jones OSA in the report. “It remains our hope and prayer that all that we have done, are doing and will do, may help to bring healing to those so gravely harmed when in the Church’s care.”

In each of the past five years, the Bishops Conference and CRA have submitted annual reports on the Church’s initiatives, prepared with guidance from the National Office for Child Safety.

Fr Jones and Archbishop Costelloe note that the past five years have been a period of ongoing listening and learning, and a time for the development of additional practices, policies and procedures.

“We understand more fully that our institutions become ‘child-serving’ when they live up to the values and beliefs that enshrine the inherent right of all children to safety, nurture and care,” they write.

“We know too, all aspects of our Catholic organisations need to be attuned and responsive to the vulnerability of children and adults at risk.”

The five-year update outlines some key milestones since the 2018 report, including:

- implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, now in a second edition;
- establishment of Australian Catholic Safeguarding Limited;
- development of the National Response Framework and related National Response Protocol;
- preparation of new programs for priestly and religious formation; and
- progress on a new national code of conduct.

St Francis of the Fields a leads the way for sustainable schools



St Francis of the Fields Primary School in Strathfieldsaye is proud to announce that they are now officially recognised as a 5-star certified ResourceSmart School and as such are sustainability leaders in schools across the globe.

On Friday 25 August at school assembly, the St Francis Primary Earthcare Team shared the school’s journey to 5 Stars with their extended school community. Emily Condon and Debbie Rovere from ResourceSmart School presented a 5-star Certification to Principal, Tim Moloney and students from the Earthcare Team.

The ResourceSmart School program is an award-winning school program designed to help schools embed sustainability into everything they do. The program provides practical support to schools to reduce resource use, make cost savings, integrate sustainability into the curriculum and share learnings beyond the school gate. The program also recognises and rewards schools through Sustainability Certification. Stars are obtained through the completion of actions and achieving benchmarks for resource use.

The school is named after St Francis of Assisi. During his life, St Francis developed a deep love of nature and animals and is known as the patron saint of the environment and animals. The school is inspired by the spirit and wisdom of St Francis of Assisi to live out the values of peace, joy, service, harmony and respect for all people and creation.

The school commenced its ResourceSmart School journey in 2007, although the school has a long history of involvement in sustainability. Across the last 20 years, the school has developed different student teams to lead and support their work in sustainability. They are strongly supported by staff and parents. The school has been involved in community programs and activities such as creek restoration, the Vinnies Winter and Christmas Appeals, Bendigo Food Share, Coliban Water and LandCare.

The school has strongly embedded sustainability practices into their teaching through a dedicated sustainability program OASIS (Our Amazing Sustainability in Schools), the use of dedicated recycling and waste management systems, including separating and sorting waste, vegetable gardens and orchard, compost systems, worm farms and chooks, bee and insect hotels and integrated sustainability units of study across all year levels. The school is surrounded by farmland and the children assist in the care of the cows, sheep and farm animals where possible.

As a 5-star school, St Francis of the Fields Primary School celebrates and promotes the school's achievements and acknowledges those who helped the school to get there. The school is mentoring others and showcasing how they have embedded sustainability across their school and community.

We acknowledge Monsignor Frank Marriott who was the parish priest when the school was established, the parishioners, families, teachers and John Hermann the first principal who dreamt of a school that lived out the inspiration of St Francis of Assisi. Through their courage, work and perseverance they brought to life St Francis of the Fields.

We also acknowledge and thank all the St Francis of the Fields leaders in the area of sustainability who have led our school on this sustainability journey so well – Paul Dullard, Grant Shannon, Raelene Gooch and Matt Butcher.

St Francis of the Fields Primary School would like to express our gratitude for the

combined efforts to achieve the 5-star Resource Smart School certification of the past and present students, whole school staff, parents, families and for the specialised ResourceSmart School facilitator assistance from Robyn Maclean and Debbie Rovere.

Young and not so young leaders explore ideas for parish life at St Augustine's Kyabram.

By Kylie Morrissey

Student Leaders from St Augustine's College joined with Parish Pastoral Council members and parishioners for the Parish Partnership Luncheon on August 24. The initiative came about to strengthen the presence of the parish and foster relationships across the generations.



This time, the parishioners provided a meal for all to enjoy. Small groups of Student Leaders from Year 4, Year 8 and Year 12 gathered and enjoyed the plentiful offering and engaging conversation. Unlike previous occasions, which have been focused on building social connection, the recent luncheon included a short Q&A session. The Student Leaders pre-prepared five questions to ask of the parishioners which included:

- What led you to become a parishioner at St Augustine's?
- Have you seen a change in the connection between the school and the parish in recent years?
- What do you think the parish could do to make Mass more engaging for younger children?

Catholic School Parents meet with Education Minister

Members of Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA) executive had a productive meeting with Education Minister, Jason Clare on August 24, 2023. The meeting focused on crucial matters related to the important role that families have in the learning and wellbeing of our children and young people and its impact on education in Australia.

The CSPA delegation took the opportunity to provide an overview of their ongoing efforts in parent engagement, including projects and surveys aimed at ensuring a parent voice on critical topics such as student wellbeing and learning, the effects of classroom disruption on learning, and the current positive Home and School communication project. Minister Clare expressed his admiration for the organisation's substantial achievements over the past decade and its robust presence, with members spanning across all states in Australia and the ACT.

One highlight of the meeting was CSPA's proposal for a National Parent Engagement Roundtable to develop a national policy so that all schools are committed to engaging families in their children and young people's learning and wellbeing. This roundtable would also discuss establishing a national repository to bring together all the current resources and research being done in Australia in Parent Engagement. This would be a central point for families, schools and early childhood to access the best information possible to better engage all families. Minister Clare exhibited keen interest in this initiative and initially CSPA will work with the Australian Council of State School Organisations (ACSSO) around developing a plan for the roundtable to present to him.

The conversation also delved into the timely topic of NAPLAN (National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy), with both the Minister and CSPA recognising the importance of positive communication to parents around the 2023 results across the country. Notably, the Minister praised the progress in reading capability amongst

- What do you believe is the most important thing people take away after attending a Mass?

- Is there a strong sense of community among parishioners and regular churchgoers? If so, what kind of benefits does this community provide to the people who are members of it?



In a similar way, Parishioners asked the Student Leadership team to have a think about the following questions in advance of the Luncheon to guide the conversation.

- What is important to you as a student who attends a Catholic School?

- Do you have a sense of belonging to a faith/religious community?

- How can you help someone who is making poor choices in their life?

- How important are the sacraments (Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion, Confirmation) to you?

- How might you stay connected to a faith or Church community once you leave school?

St Augustine's is so very lucky to have a beautiful Our Lady of Peace Garden and Church equipped to host these kinds of events which students and parishioners can equally enjoy!

eight-year-olds over the past few years, demonstrating significant improvement in previous national reading levels.

"In our pursuit to advocate for parents, we recognise that one in five children in Australia receives their education in Catholic schools. This statistic underscores the immense responsibility we bear in ensuring their educational journey is nurtured through strong family – school partnerships.

Our ongoing collaboration with Minister Clare cements our commitment to strengthening education by empowering parents to actively engage in their children's learning," said Andrea Obeyesekere, CSPA National Chair. CSPA will once again participate in the National School Reforms Ministerial Reference Group alongside other key Educational Stakeholders in October, reaffirming our influential role in shaping educational enhancements.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Diocese of Sandhurst recognises the traditional owners of the lands upon which we live, serve and worship. We acknowledge the people of the Northeastern regions of our Diocese, Djilmathang, Minjambuta, Duduroa and Waywurru. We acknowledge the people of the Southern regions of our Diocese, the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungerung. We acknowledge the people of the Northern regions of our Diocese, the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang. We acknowledge the people of the Western regions of our Diocese, the Baraparapa peoples.

We respectfully honour and acknowledge their ongoing custodianship and their connections to the land, waters and animals. We pay our respects to their culture, their Elders, past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of their peoples.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and commit ourselves to actively working alongside First Nations people for healing, reconciliation and justice.

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GOT A STORY TO TELL?

Call Katrina (details above)



Bishop Shane's Calendar

- Saturday 9 September – Sunday Mass, St Joseph's Church, Benalla
- Sunday 10 September - Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Joseph's Church, Benalla, 9:30am
- Sunday 10 September- Sunday Mass, St Brigid's Church, Thoona, 12pm
- Monday 11 September – Blessing and Opening of new building, St Joseph's Primary School, Benalla
- Tuesday 12 September - Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd AGM, Bendigo
- Wednesday 13 September - Council of Priests, Shepparton
- Thursday 14 September - Diocesan Finance Council, Bendigo
- Saturday 16 September - Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Augustine's Church, Kyabram, 5pm
- Sunday 17 September - Confirmation and First Eucharist, St Augustine's Church, Kyabram, 10am
- Wednesday 20 September – Catholic Care Victoria Members
- Thursday 21 September – Backhaus Trustees Meeting, Bendigo
- Sunday 24 September – Sunday Mass, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 11am