Putting on Christ

Every person who is baptised promises, or in the case of young children godparents promise on their behalf, to turn to Christ. They are signed with the sign of the cross to show that they are marked as Christ's own forever. And they are called to Christian ministry, to serve Christ in the world. And when people are confirmed they renew these promises for themselves and seek the strengthening of the Holy Spirit to live that life.

And we usually think of life of Christian ministry in terms of the jobs that people do, the tasks they take on in Christ's name, the work they will do in the world to serve Christ's cause.

There is a problem with that way of thinking about Christian ministry, though. The problem is that it basically rules out little children, old people, those with no leisure, the poor, and the sick. All these people lack at least either the skill, the energy, the time, the money or the good health to take on significant jobs. So if that's what ministry is then they can't be ministers, so why baptise or confirm them?

I once baptised and confirmed an 87-year-old lady. She wasn't very mobile. She couldn't go anywhere much. We had the service in her little unit. She could hardly see anything. She could hear very little and her hands were so screwed up with arthritis and gout that she had difficulty handling things. What significant jobs could she take on in the life of the Church or in the community? So if ministry is to do with the jobs or tasks people do, why baptise and confirm such a person?

But what if ministry isn't to do with jobs done? There's another way of thinking about baptism and confirmation.
St Paul talked about putting on Christ like a garment – “All of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Galatians 3.27) – which is where the custom of having baptism or Christening robes comes from. When we say “I turn to Christ” we are taking on the character of Christ, becoming Christlike, committing ourselves to grow into the likeness of Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, so that when people see us they see the character of Christ.

What if ministry has more to do with the character of a person than with the jobs a person does? Then it would be possible for all the baptised.

What if Christian vocation is to do with being infused with the character of Christ? What might it look like then? What are the character traits of the Christian?

One is humour. Humour was definitely a mark of Jesus’ life. We catch glimpses of Jesus’ humour in the New Testament. Andrew calls his brother Simon and introduces him to Jesus. Simon will be called Peter and he will be that famous bombastic, mercurial character who seems to rush in like a bull-at-a-gate and is up and down all over the place. He’s the first to call Jesus “Messiah”, and then in the next breath reveals he doesn’t understand what that means. He announces confidently that he will follow Jesus anywhere, and then betrays him. After Jesus’ death he returns to fishing but then becomes one of the most energetic apostles. Jesus playfully, humorously affirms this mercurial, changeable Simon bar Jona. He gives him a funny nickname. Simon shall be called Cephas, says Jesus. Rock or as we would say Rocky – even though Simon was anything but rocklike, solid, dependable, unshakeable. And bar Jona means son of Jona, that is son of John, or as we would say Johnson. So the first Pope’s name was Rocky Johnson! With humour Jesus gently affirms this impetuous character and paradoxically indicates that on such a shaky foundation the Church will stand firm.

Jesus’ humour was not always gentle and affirming though. At times it could be quite cutting. He told the pharisees that they strained out gnats but swallowed camels. He called them white-washed tombs: on the outside looking clean and respectable but inside full of putrid flesh and dead bones. He cut away self-righteousness through humour and ridicule. Jesus’ humour was directed towards bursting the bubble of pretence and self-importance and allowing the universal human predicament to be recognised, the basic commonality of human life. His humour gave birth to solidarity. Humour is a character trait of the baptised.

A second one is Hospitality. Christians are to be hospitable people. The word comes from the same root as the word “hostile”, and that’s the clue to what it means. Hospitality is to do with welcoming an enemy as a guest. And enemies can be all kinds of things, not simply people. Welcoming the enemy as guest – reaching across barriers of fear and mistrust. Creating friendships, new communities of belonging and trust in place of scepticism and segregation. We’re no longer talking about true hospitality when we reduce it to social niceness with the like-minded. Hospitality is a character trait of Christ.

Another is Compassion. Compassion means to suffer with. A small child was born with a deformed foot and as a result was over-protected by his well-meaning parents. Eventually the day came when the parents let the boy go down the street to the shop on his own for the first time. The shop was only just out of sight so the panicking parents stood anxiously by the gate watching for the boy’s return. They waited and waited and he didn’t come. The panic rose and they ran along the street looking for him. Not far from the shop they eventually saw him coming along the footpath, slowly, dragging his foot along. Almost in tears, the mother burst out, “Where’ve you been?” “I saw Jane,” he said. “She dropped her doll and it broke.” And his father babbled on, “And you had to stay to help her pick it up.”
“No,” said the boy. “I had to stay to help her cry.” To be able to suffer with someone. Perhaps we've made too much of helping people, which can make them dependent on us so we can help them some more. Suffering with.

Confrontation is a character trait of Christ and the Christian. Confrontation is really offering an alternative to the way things are. Desmond Tutu was once asked how he came to live his life the way he did. He said that as a young boy he had once seen a white man tip his hat to a black woman. That white man was Trevor Huddleston, an Anglican priest, later to become a bishop, and the black woman was Tutu's mother. In that simple gesture Tutu saw a whole world of meaning. In fact he saw the possibility of a whole new world for South Africa and he gave his life to making real that alternative vision. From that simple gesture his whole vocation unfolded. Confrontation is offering an alternative to the way things are. It's a character trait of Christ and all the baptised.

Gratitude and generosity are Christian character traits. In George Eliot's novel *Silas Marner*, there's a weaver whose whole life is devoted to work. He weaves from daylight to dark to earn more and more gold, which he's dead scared will be taken from him so he hoards it under his floorboards. One day his gold is stolen and his whole world falls apart. He suddenly loses all desire for gold. Eliot writes:

“The disposition to hoard had been utterly crushed at the very first by the loss of his long--stored gold: the coins he earned afterwards seemed as irrelevant as stones brought to complete a house suddenly buried by an earthquake; the sense of bereavement was too heavy upon him for the old thrill of satisfaction to arise again at the touch of the newly--earned coin.”

Remarkably though his life and world are amazingly remade when he meets a little girl whose mother has died and for whom the weaver becomes responsible:

“And now something had come to replace his hoard which gave a growing purpose to the earnings, drawing his hope and joy continually onward beyond the money.

In old days there were angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the city of destruction. We see no white--winged angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction: a hand is put into theirs, which leads them forth gently towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand may be a little child's.”

The weaver's life is now focused on doing all he can for the girl. Fear and selfishness are replaced by gratitude and generosity. They are character traits of Christ. And, by the way, they are the foundation of the Christian discipline of stewardship to which every baptised person is called. When we are put in touch with God's love and generosity to us, that turns into gratitude which overflows in generosity to others. They are Christian character traits.

All who are baptised and confirmed are called to take on the character of Christ, to be the presence of Christ, in the world. It doesn't matter whether we're child or adult, sick or well, rich or poor, wise or simple, strong or weak.

In baptism we are incorporated into Christ's body, we put on Christ so we might be infused with Christ's character, so that we might be Christ's presence in the world.

In confirmation we are strengthened by the Holy Spirit, Christ's Spirit, so that the character of Christ might shine more strongly in us.
In the eucharist we feed on the body and blood of Christ so that we might live in him and that his life might live in us. The eucharist re-constitutes us as his body; we are re-infused with his character and sent out to be his presence.

This is the basic ministry we all share.

We have one purpose in mind: to be Christ's healing, reconciling presence in the world so that all people may be restored to unity with God and with each other in him.

We have been called by God so to live that everyone else will discover what is already true for them also; what God has done for them, too, in Christ.

The one test of all we are and all we do is this: In what ways are the lives of people around us who don't come to church different because we do? Are people being reconciled to God and to each other in Christ?

May we all be so strengthened by Christ's Spirit that we may be his presence that this unity might be real.

*Sermon given by Archbishop Phillip Aspinall AC on Sunday 28 November 2021 at St Luke's, Ekibin. Published by request.*

**Features • Tuesday 14 December 2021 • By Peter Branjerdporn**

**Weddings, parties, Advent, anything**

"I'm sure my friends on the Thai-Myanmar border didn't think much of it when they welcomed me into their workplace, their parties and their homes...I am truly indebted to their love and I think that's why I am still passionate about supporting people seeking asylum to find safety, freedom and dignity nearly 10 years later" (Peter Branjerdporn, pictured leading a Carols for Compassion vigil in December 2016)
What does it mean to be “welcoming”? Throwing big parties with bottles of Moët? Building a beautiful al fresco dining area for entertain guests? When we say, “All are welcome to worship with us” on Sunday mornings, what do we really mean?

I met the most welcoming people when my family and I were living on the Thailand-Myanmar border in 2012. I was working as a pharmacist at Mae Tao Clinic in Mae Sot, a town on the Thai-Myanmar border six and a half hours northwest of Bangkok, on an AusAID-funded Australian Volunteers for International Development assignment. A handful of small old buildings make up this health and community centre that receives over 150,000 patient visits annually. Most of these patients are people seeking asylum from the world’s longest ethnic civil war.

As part of the central pharmacy team, I worked with a resilient group of people who themselves are displaced persons from Myanmar. I ran basic pharmacology workshops for pharmacy staff and medics, and also gave advice on ordering, inventory management and improving operational procedures and policies.

I must admit to being very nervous in the beginning. I grew up in Bangkok but I had never even been to that part of Thailand before. It took me a few weeks to have an actual conversation (in English) with anyone, but eventually I started to make some good friends.

I quickly discovered that my new friends had left their homelands for a range of reasons, with some seeking asylum and others seeking quality healthcare, education and a better life for their children. Around town there was evidence of inhumane sweat shops, unfair wages and human trafficking, as well as people living with disabilities and unaccompanied children begging along the main streets.

And yet, each week I experienced the kind of welcome I’d never experienced before. First of all they welcomed me into their midst without judgement. It must have been a surprise to see me, a young Thai-looking pharmacist turn up, after they were told that an Australian pharmacist-trainer was going to come and work with them.

But that was just the beginning. As the weeks turned into months, I continued to experience more and more of that welcome, as they showed a willingness to let me be who I was. They helped me understand their culture while also being willing to learn about mine. They valued my ideas even though, especially in the beginning, they were irrelevant and unrealistic. They spent time with me. It seemed like they were never in a rush to move on to the next task or conversation. This made me feel really valued and appreciated.

They also shared their life stories with me. These stories changed me forever.

They listened to my stories, which made me feel accepted. Our family was invited to a wedding and then to a child’s birthday party.

I loved the chance to experience their culture, and the way they celebrated life with each other and welcomed strangers like me even though they did not have much. A colleague invited me to their very humble home to have a simple meal made with love. I can still taste the delicious stir fry and hear the laughter we had.

In Matthew 25 Jesus told his followers that whenever they feed a hungry person, give a thirsty person a drink, take in a stranger, give someone clothes to wear, or visit someone who is sick or in prison,
they were really doing it for Him. I feel like I was that stranger in 2012. And the Kingdom of God belongs to my friends who had so little and yet welcomed me with open arms.

Advent is about preparing for Jesus' birth. We welcome Him into our hearts by welcoming 'strangers' (people we don't know...yet!) into our community. The welcome statements at our churches are a great start, but often it is in other not-so-visible ways that we can really welcome people.

The welcome shown to Mary and Joseph, and then to Jesus, by the innkeeper wasn't anything particularly amazing at the time, but look what baby Jesus went on to become! Next time we think we don't have enough money to give, no space to house someone, or skills to share to change someone's life, just think: a dirty, smelly stable changed the Holy Family's life and the future of humanity forever!

I'm sure my friends on the Thai-Myanmar border didn't think much of it when they welcomed me into their workplace, their parties and their homes. But all those cups of instant coffee over conversation made a deep impression on me – a kind of justice communion for my soul each week. I am truly indebted to their love and I think that's why I am still passionate about supporting people seeking asylum to find safety, freedom and dignity nearly 10 years later.

Here are some suggested ways for us to be a more welcoming people:

1. Make a point of speaking to three people you haven't met before at Church this Christmas.
2. Invite people who would have spent Christmas alone to join your family on Christmas Day.
3. Learn about and support the work of organisations working with people seeking asylum such as Baroona Farm, which is based at St Francis College and works alongside the Romero Centre. To find out how you can support Baroona Farm, please contact The Rev’d Samuel Dow at Baroona Farm via baroonafarm@gmail.com.

Features • Tuesday 14 December 2021 • By Fleur Creed

Sister Wendy Beckett: hermit, nun, art historian and unlikely TV star

Sister Wendy Beckett in 2018 (Photo credit: Catholic Herald)
As someone who has both studied and worked in the creative fields, I have always been interested in anything relating to the arts, especially if it combines spirituality with art. When I heard about Sister Wendy Beckett, long after her first BBC show *Sister Wendy's Odyssey* started airing on TV, I was curious as to how a Roman Catholic ‘consecrated virgin’ (she is often referred to as a ‘nun’ for brevity’s sake) who lived as a hermit could possibly be such a broadcasting success. So I thought I should check out some of her BBC TV programmes.

I became fascinated by the unassuming woman dressed in full black habit, huge round glasses and displaying rather protruding front teeth, who gracefully glided around the world's museums and galleries discussing objects of art. She was so knowledgeable and so passionate about the artworks, and about conveying this knowledge to others. Sister Wendy was present to every detail of the pieces, noticing not only what was obvious, but also the emotions and possible intentions behind what was depicted.

She also recognised humanity in all its fullness, making earthy comments about topics that you would have thought would make a nun blush! Sister Wendy was often described as the world's most beloved – if not most unlikely – art critic. On occasion, she could be quite humorous in her comments about religious figures, such as in the case of Thomas á Becket. “After all,” she said, “This is my cousin Tom. Cold-hearted like all us Becketts, and bossy, and a bit of a show-off, but he tried so hard to love God. And he did. So, I'm one of the lucky ones to have, if in imagination only, a saint in the family.”

Sister Wendy Beckett was born in Johannesburg, South Africa on 25 February 1930, and was raised in Edinburgh, Scotland, where her father was studying medicine. Wendy had always expressed a desire to serve God, so in 1946 she joined the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, a Roman Catholic order of nuns devoted to education. She completed her novitiate in England, graduating from Oxford University with first class honours in literature in 1954, then taking on a teaching diploma in Liverpool.

After teaching at a girls' school for several years and lecturing in a South African university, serious illness forced Sister Wendy to return to England where she was granted Papal permission to become a ‘consecrated virgin' and hermit, living in a small unheated caravan on the grounds of a Carmelite monastery in Norfolk. Here she devoted her life to solitude and prayer, supporting herself by translating Medieval manuscripts.
In 1980, Sister Wendy became interested in art, studying through books, catalogues and postcards. She published her first book on art in 1988. Her solitary life was interrupted when the BBC commissioned her to make an art documentary in 1991, at which time she had never watched a TV programme, nor seen the art she wrote about first-hand! The rest, as they say, is history. She appeared in regular programmes for the BBC until 2001, then only making occasional appearances as her health deteriorated. She continued to write books on religion and religious art until she died on 28 December 2018. All her earnings were donated to the Carmelites.

Sister Wendy can teach us much more than just an appreciation for art. She believed that “Looking at art is one way of listening to God” (1995, A Child’s Book of Prayer in Art) and that “All art that really draws us to look deeply is spiritual” (1993, The Mystical Now: Art and the Sacred).

She loved God and art, and wanted to help others know them, too:

“Art that is not specifically religious expresses this truth: if we do not see the Lord everywhere, however unconsciously, we shall find it hard to recognize Him when we look into His face at prayer time.” (1994, The Gaze of Love: Meditations on Art and Spiritual Transformation)

“Great art offers more than pleasure,” Sister Wendy wrote. “It offers the pain of spiritual growth, drawing us into areas of ourselves that we may not wish to encounter. It will not leave us in our mental or moral laziness.” (1999, Sister Wendy’s 1000 Masterpieces)

“If you don’t know about God, art is the only thing that can set you free,” she explained. “It challenges the human spirit to accept a deeper reality.”

The amount of time Sister Wendy spent in solitary prayer is difficult for most of us to emulate, but we all need to make time to be alone with God if we want to know Him. We could all be more like Sister Wendy in being present to what is going on around us, and in not just accepting things at face value, instead looking more deeply. She did not avoid the messiness of humankind, noticing, and commenting on the realities of circumstances.

On prayer, Sister Wendy once said in an interview:

“Prayer is a direction...Prayer is complete freedom. When you are looking at God, whether you want to sing and dance, meditate, or read Him poetry, fine — so long as you are honest, because prayer is the essential test of our integrity.”

Sister Wendy Beckett is one of my favourite hermits, and we are blessed to be able to see her in action on the various BBC programmes that she appeared in, some of which are available on YouTube. If you are interested in art, you can be assured of an interesting and uplifting time by watching the programmes of this unlikely TV star. Regarding the paradox of her broadcasting success and celebrity status, Sister Wendy once admitted in an interview that:

“It's the kind of thing that only God would do.”

You can read more about Sister Wendy Beckett and other hermits on the Holy Hermits Online website. Holy Hermits Online is an ecumenical Zoom-only, participatory worshipping community, where all are welcome.
Holy Hermits Online will be celebrating a number of services over the Christmas period. Please pre-register your attendance online to receive Zoom links. You are very welcome to join us at the following services:

- The Quiet Christmas – A Blue Christmas Service (for those who may find this a difficult time of year): Friday 17 December 2021, 7 pm to 8 pm (Brisbane time).
- Festival of 9 Lessons and Carols – Friday 24 December 2021, 6.30 pm to 7.30pm.
- Christmas Morning (Spiritual Communion Agape feast) – Saturday 25 December 2021, 9 am to 10 am.
- Contemplative Christmas Evening – Saturday 25 December 2021, 5 pm to 6 pm.

Reflections & Features • Tuesday 14 December 2021 • By The Rev’d Michael Stalley

1,400km, 16 hours, three churches and two clergy

Sixteen hours and 1,400km in a car over two days to participate in three church services. Apparently, there is some interest in what conversations occur between a priest and a bishop who might undertake such a journey.

In October, Bishop Cam and I undertook a road trip in our Western Region. Cam had promised to be present in Charleville for a baptism that Sunday. I, on the other hand, wanted to meet members of The Parish of Charleville. There is a covenantal relationship with my church, The Parish of Mt Gravatt, and The Parish of Charleville that was established many years before I arrived on the scene. Our commitment is to prayer, shared ministry and hospitality. I also bring a curiosity about how such partnership relationships can be mutually beneficial and enhanced by newfound digital technology.
Our first stop in Roma was to bless a window in honour of The Rev’d Canon Arthur Fellows and his wife, Beverley. This aspect of our journey was somewhat serendipitous as I renewed a family connection between the Fellows and Stalley families. A connection that harks back some decades to North Queensland, where Canon Fellows would have known my grandfather, The Rev’d Canon Edward Stalley, through his role with ABM. I still often wear a white stole that belonged to my grandfather, presented to me by Canon Fellows soon after my ordination.

Sharing the driving, Bishop Cam and I arrived in Charleville in time to freshen up so we could join some local Anglicans for dinner at the RSL.

On Sunday, we first joined the people (and pet dogs) of All Saints’, Charleville for a Holy Communion service. There was no baptism as was initially planned, but Bishop Cam kept his commitment to be there.

The Rev’d Michael Stalley and Bishop Cam Venables visited the All Saints’, Charleville community in October 2021

We then travelled the 100km to Augathella to again celebrate Holy Communion with another small group of faithful people who warmly welcomed us and expressed their deep gratitude for our participation among them.

As I reflect on this whirlwind trip, many things stand out as worthy of mention.
Bishop Cameron serves in a very unique episcopal ministry shaped by the vast Western Region and its communities. As we travelled, it was clear that Bishop Cameron knows each community, its people and clergy deeply. He ministers alongside them with empathy and understanding. Many in his region know him as “our priest” because he spends much of his time working with the parishes who do not have their own local clergy.

The ministry of the local Anglicans to keep a church presence and offer pastoral care to the community is inspiring – the people who provide lay ministry in their parishes thirst for connections that will support and enhance their ministry. They, too, need people who can be there for them.

The locals want those in urban centres to know how much they want doctors, teachers and other essential workers to take the opportunity to work in their rural communities.

Ministry in the Western Region involves an ability to be lovingly present to people with diverse socioeconomic, educational and cultural and linguistic backgrounds. I observed Bishop Cameron engage with each person with the same sense of interest and understanding.

It is clear that genuine participation between urban and regional parishes can provide unexpected opportunities to support one another in our shared mission. During a recent parish workshop at Mt Gravatt, three congregation members of The Parish of Charleville joined us via Zoom.

In the end, 16 hours in a car together was filled with conversation that was only interrupted to listen to music we wanted to share with each other. We chatted about ministry, vocation, family, books, music and podcasts. I heard about each western community we passed through, their people and clergy. We talked about God and faith.

For my part I came away from our trip in the west encouraged by the kind of encounter with others, be they bishop or lay, in which God surprises and blesses.

**Editor’s note:** Please pray for all rural and remote communities in our Western Region, particularly those who are supported in some way by the BMF. The new Bush Ministry Fund money boxes are a fun and easy way for churches, ministries, schools, families and individuals to donate to bush ministry in our Diocese. Please call Helen Briffa at the Western Region Office on (07) 4639 1875 or email her via hbriffa@anglicanchurchsq.org.au to order your money boxes.
"Growing up in a Zimbabwean family, I was raised to be welcoming" (Tapiwanashe Masvaure, pictured at The Parish of North Pine in December 2021)

As a young woman, being a welcoming person in my everyday life is about accepting people, including those who are different or vulnerable. I value being a welcoming person, especially as a disciplined African woman who seeks to stick to my Christian values and honour my culture.

I was recently celebrating graduating school with my friends. While I wanted to have fun with them and make memories before we go on our own paths post-school, I was put in a challenging situation where my values as a Zimbabwean Christian were put to the test. When I was celebrating Schoolies (a week of celebration, usually on the beach, following school graduation) recently, I experienced both implicit and overt peer pressure to drink.

It was implicit because everyone else was drinking alcohol a lot and so there was a temptation to join in and drink to have fun. It was overt, because fellow graduates said things like, “C’mon you need to loosen up” or “C’mon you’ve graduated, too, it’s time to have fun.”

As I am not the type to beat around the bush, it was challenging to remain polite in my responses to my friends, as I know how to have fun. It was also challenging for me to remain non-judgemental and to help my friends when they became drunk.

Growing up in a Zimbabwean family, I was raised to be welcoming. This means opening our door to people without family, donating food to the parish pantry and going through our clothes at the end of every year and giving away what we don’t need. I come from a reasonably big family and so we cook in bulk, making extra for people who are experiencing homelessness. We give the meals to people on the streets directly or to emergency service organisations.
Being welcoming also means spending time with people who are lonely, such as those in aged care homes. I sometimes spend a Saturday with friends hanging out with and helping residents in the local aged care facility. They especially like it when I play board games with them, particularly chess. There is an elderly man in the home who made a chess set out of a beautiful light brown timber when he was young. I have never been able to beat him at chess – he likes winning with a Scholar’s Mate, a four-move checkmate strategy.

I also assist in the aged care home with giving out meals at lunchtime, taking the time to chat and interact with the residents during their meal. I am moved hearing their stories. One that struck me recently was shared by a very quiet woman. At first she was hesitant to speak to us, even suspicious. After some time, she started engaging my friends and me. She told us that she had fled an abusive partner and ended up living on the streets for a long time. She said that she was touched by our kindness and felt acknowledged because when she was living on the streets most people would pass her without a glance.

By being respectful in challenging conversations, helping people who are in need and taking time to be with people who are lonely, we are being a welcoming community. Just as the whole community – the shepherds, kings and animals – came together to be with the vulnerable baby in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, it is important for our community members to be there for those who are vulnerable.

Every human being was saved by that beautiful baby. The nativity story reminds me that I was not put on this Earth for myself, but to do God’s work as part of a community.

**Reflections • Tuesday 14 December 2021 • By The Rev’d Hanna Dally**

"*When you are Spirit-filled, people will know God’s word through you*"

"The Jordan River, from where John the Baptist preached, is an hour away from Reineh where I live. Reineh is the village beside everything – you can go all over Galilee from Reineh" (The Rev’d Hanna Dally, the Director of the Holy Family Episcopal Church in Reineh, Galilee)
In the first week of Advent every year we focus on the meaning of Advent – about Jesus being the way to heaven and Advent being a time to wake up. Now is the time to wake up. Advent is the season between the last season of the liturgical year and Christmas.

The first Sunday of Advent in my parish is about hope. Nobody is perfect – whatever we have done or not done, Jesus is opening his arms to us and inviting us to come back. So, the first week is invitational. Begin your preparation by awakening. This needs time, so we take it.

The second Sunday of Advent in my parish is about peace. I spoke in services about Sunday being a special day of the holy Bible – the Old Testament and the New Testament. How do you read it? I asked my congregations whether they put letters and photos in it for safekeeping? There are some people where I live who kiss the Bible every day before they go to work. However, it's not meant to be seen as a piece of magical equipment in our homes. The Bible is valuable when you open it and read it. You can only live the Bible when you know it.

God loved all the world so much that we were given God's son, who saved all of us and then gave us his Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is with us – he gave us his Spirit at Pentecost. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, people will see your face, hear you talk and witness how you act and know the word of God and his peace through you.

In the third Sunday of Advent we focus on John the Baptist, and his call from the wilderness to prepare ourselves because the Messiah is coming. We need to repent.

On the fourth Sunday we also focus on John the Baptist. To be an instrument in God's hand, as John the Baptist was, I need to be clean. The Holy Spirit cleans our hearts and speaks through us.

John the Baptist was imprisoned by Herod. As Palestinians, we see people, including children, being put in prison in unjust ways. John could have been set free from prison by saying what Herod wanted to hear, but instead he spoke the truth.

The Jordan River, from where John the Baptist preached, is an hour away from Reineh where I live. Reineh is the village beside everything – you can go all over Galilee from Reineh. I can see the mountain of the Transfiguration from my home verandah. In the summer time, I go there every week and sit there for my devotions.

You are very welcome to visit us in Reineh, which has the only spring between Nazareth and Cana. So, Jesus of Nazareth would have passed through Reineh when travelling to Cana.

My church and I are also very keen to partner with parishes in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland and other parts of Australia so we can be supported through prayer. We already have prayer partners in Scotland and would very much like Australian Anglican churches to partner with us as well. If you are an Anglican Church Southern Queensland clergyperson or lay leader and you are interested in your church becoming a prayer partner with our church, please email the anglican focus Editor Michelle McDonald via focus@anglicanchurchsq.org.au and she will put you in contact with me.
Antique silver rose bowl’s surprise return to The Parish of Nundah

A Church Chronicle story published on 1 September 1920 states that the rose bowl was presented by The Parish of Nundah “Vicar” to the Patterson couple: “as a token of the esteem and gratitude of the congregation, remarking that what impressed him most about the work of them both that it was the work of really consecrated people.”

November saw a precious piece of history being returned to The Parish of Nundah in the form of an antique silver rose bowl, which was presented to parishioners Mr and Mrs Paterson 101 years ago.

Mr Paterson was a St Francis of Assisi Anglican Church, Nundah warden between 1913 and 1920. The rose bowl was presented to “Mr & Mrs Paterson”, upon Mr Paterson’s retirement from the role of warden. A Church Chronicle story published on 1 September 1920 states that the rose bowl was presented by the “Vicar” to the Patterson couple:

“as a token of the esteem and gratitude of the congregation, remarking that what impressed him most about the work of them both that it was the work of really consecrated people.”

The rose bowl has certainly been on a journey since 1920. It was donated to the op shop of St John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Gordon, Sydney and then passed on to the Nundah Historical Society by the thoughtful op shop team. Margaret Prowse of the Nundah Historical Society kindly returned it to our parish. It is resting in its new home in the Lady Chapel at St Francis Church.

Ms Prowse also found a Brisbane Courier clipping excerpt dated Tuesday 27 July 1920, which acknowledged the occasion:

“A large gathering of parishioners and friends assembled in St. Francis's Parish Hall, Nundah, last Saturday afternoon to entertain the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Otway on the eve of their departure for England. The room, was tastefully decorated with roses and sweet peas. Mr. Hood (rector’s warden) briefly outlined the object of the gathering, and Mr. Paterson presented Mr. and Mrs. Otway with a wallet of notes us a token of the high esteem in which they were held by the parish. The Rev. Morgan
Jones and Canon Simmons also eulogised Mr. Otway’s good work in Nundah during the past four years. Mr. Paterson (the retiring warden) and Mrs. Paterson, who have left the district, were also entertained at the same gathering. The rector, on behalf of the parishioners, presented them with a silver rose bowl as a small token of appreciation. Other speakers were Canon Campling [St Francis’ College Principal], the Rev. Hanbury, and Mr. Boyd."

Sadly, correspondence with Michael Rogers from the Records and Archive’s Centre reveals that the Archives has little information on the Patersons, “as virtually all the early records from Nundah were destroyed in a parish hall fire.”

One of the speakers at the retirement ceremony was The Rev’d Canon William Campling, the then St Francis College Principal. At the time, the College was located on Buckland Road, Nundah, later moving to its current location in Milton. The former College chapel (now known as Church of the Holy Spirit) was moved from Buckland Road in 1936 to its current location on the corner of Olive and Imbros Streets after the College shifted to Milton. The church has heritage significance and is home to an active faith community, as part of The Parish of Nundah, to this day.

Earlier this month, our parish celebrated another occasion as our Deacon, The Rev’d Elizabeth Donald McConnell, was ordained to the priesthood at St John’s Cathedral. She is now serving as Assistant Priest to both The Parishes of Nundah and Banyo.

These parishes have shared a rich connection since the Banyo site was acquired back in 1918 and formed part of The Parish of Nundah. Banyo eventually became its own parish in 1974. Although separate parishes for more than 45 years, both Nundah and Banyo parishioners have continued to maintain close bonds of faith and fellowship.

Both parishes now embrace and look forward an exciting new chapter of ministry in the form of a shared clergy team consisting of The Rev’d Dr Graham Warren, The Rev’d Dr Imelda O’Loughlin and The Rev’d Elizabeth Donald McConnell.

Features • Tuesday 14 December 2021 • By Michael Rogers

Cathedral foundation stone: celebrating 120 years

The laying of the St John’s Cathedral Foundation Stone on 22 May 1901
Brisbane has seen many events and occasions that have literally stopped the city, including royal visits. Many would remember the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales to Brisbane in 1983. A much earlier visit by another royal couple also stopped Brisbane. The couple took part in a special ceremony that had a lasting impact on the life of our Diocese.

When William Webber became the Bishop of Brisbane in 1885, he had a dream that the heart of our Diocese would be a Cathedral as grand as those in England. While Bishop Webber never saw the completion of the first stage, he was present for the laying of the foundation stone 120 years ago.

Bishop Webber's vision for the Cathedral was inspired, in no small part, by the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Truro, Cornwall. Wanting a similar design, Webber contacted John Loughborough Pearson, who had designed the Truro Cathedral in the neo-Gothic style, and asked him to develop the architectural designs to fulfill his vision.

Ground (floor) plan of the eastern portion of St John's Cathedral (1903). The foundation stone is marked below and to the right of the altar (original plan is held by the Records and Archives Centre, ACSQ) (CADR1)

The next step was to raise the necessary funds to pay for the Cathedral. Webber did this with a great deal of success, travelling frequently to the UK and raising money by giving speeches and spreading the word by touting through the press. It is estimated that in today's terms, he helped raise the equivalent of $17 million.
After much travel and fundraising, the time came for the foundation stone to be laid. Hearing of the forthcoming visit to Australia by the then Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York (later King George V and Queen Mary), Webber arranged for the royal couple to attend the ceremonial laying of our Cathedral's foundation stone.

Needless to say this event captured the public's imagination and fevered preparations began to take place. Demand to attend the laying of the foundation stone was so great that it was decided to move the event to earlier in the day. This would allow for those attending the ceremony to then follow the Duke and Duchess to the Brisbane Agricultural Show that was scheduled for the afternoon.

On 22 May 1901 the Duke and Duchess arrived by the river and made their way up to the ceremony. A specially constructed stand was erected for the day. The stand was built to take around 1,800 people. Of these, 250 seats were reserved for clergy, invited guests and dignitaries, with the remaining seats sold to the public for five shillings each. The Bishop wanted to make sure that children were invited and were welcome; however, it was only those who had a donation of £1 or upwards that would be admitted ‘for free’ and be allowed to march past the dignitaries, presenting a small purse to Canons Osborne and Matthews who were standing on the main platform. All donations made on the day went to the building of the Cathedral.

Bishop Webber made sure that the children knew what was expected of them by publishing a letter in the May edition of The Church Chronicle, noting the time of assembly and that each child should bear any instructions in mind and pay great attention to what is said to them, and that any very young children should be under the care of an older child.

The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York arriving by river to lay the foundation stone of St John's Cathedral on 22 May 1901

This was a glittering affair for the time, with the whole city focusing on the small area of land on Ann Street. The ceremony itself, also attended by the Archbishop of Sydney, went very smoothly, with the Duke noting in his diary that the ceremony was “very well arranged and very well done”. The photo below clearly shows Bishop Webber (the white bearded gentleman) just to the left of the stone pulley wheel.
Around 300 children crammed into the enclosure in order to hand over their contributions, said to total £459. Thankfully some of the silk purses used by the children made their way to the Records and Archives Centre collection and remain in very good condition.

Silk purses used by children who attended the laying of the St John's Cathedral foundation stone ceremony on 22 May 1901 (held by the Records and Archives Centre)

As part of the ceremony, the Duke used a ceremonial level and mallet (currently on display in the Arnott Reading Room in the Records and Archives Centre). The mallet was used to lay the foundation stone for Hobart’s St David’s Anglican Cathedral in 1868 – and continued to be utilised by our Diocese for similar events, including the laying of the Stone of Remembrance at St John’s Cathedral by Field-Marshall Viscount Montgomery in 1947.

After the procession of the children and the ceremony’s closing, the Duke and Duchess travelled to the Brisbane Agricultural Show (now of course affectionately known as the ‘Ekka’) where over 31,000 people paid to attend on the same day as the royal couple.

With the ceremony completed, the hard work of constructing the first stage of the Cathedral commenced. Sadly, Webber did not get to see the start of this construction. After making one more fundraising trip to England in 1901 to 1902, he returned in failing health and passed away in 1903. He was buried at Toowong Cemetery; however, this was not to be his last resting place.

Upon the completion of the first stage of the Cathedral in 1910, Webber’s remains were exhumed. On 21 September 1910 he was re-interned below the Cathedral’s altar, just five weeks before Archbishop Donaldson consecrated the Cathedral on 28 October. He remains the only person whose body (entire) rests in the Cathedral.
When the first stage was completed in 1910, it must have seemed a little out of place in the then dusty streets of Brisbane. By the completion of the third stage in 2009, our Cathedral had become surrounded by high-rise buildings. Despite this, it remains a truly remarkable example of neo-Gothic architecture. While many contributed to the funding and construction of this magnificent building, it is entirely fitting that the sole resident (other than the Holy Spirit) should be the person who inspired its creation.

Children about to process past the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York to present them with purses at the laying of the St John’s Cathedral foundation stone on 22 May 1901 (Image courtesy of the Records and Archives Centre, ACSQ)

Author’s note: I am indebted to former Archives Researcher Adrian Gibb for his assistance with this feature, especially with the image selection. I would like to note my appreciation for all the work that Adrian has done for the Records and Archives Centre over the years, and I wish him the best in his new role in the Discernment and Formation team.
Dianne Kozik has been serving at St John’s Crisis Centre on the Gold Coast for nearly 15 years.

**How long have you been involved in the Anglican Church and in what roles?**

I started as a volunteer at St John’s in 2007 and became an employee in 2009, initially as an admin assistant.

**What is your primary current ACSQ role and how does this role contribute to the Church’s mission?**

St John’s primary mission is to assist people in crisis in a dignified and caring way, giving them ‘a hand up’, as per our motto. My current role as General Manager enables me to advocate for St John’s and our clients in the wider community, including applying for grants, presenting to community groups to encourage volunteering and donations and media liaison. My nearly 15 years at St John’s helps me guide staff and volunteers in achieving this mission through training and setting an example to follow.

**What projects and activities are you currently working on?**

I am excited about the forthcoming budget-friendly healthy cooking classes that we will be running in the New Year with the assistance of JW Marriott’s chefs. These classes will help us achieve the long-term goal of teaching people to cook healthily on a budget – a skill many do not have, regardless of their financial situation. We are also working on enlarging our community outreach programme to
deliver healthcare and emergency assistance to people who cannot access the centre due to disability, living remotely, mental health problems, or DV status – we want to help as many people as possible.

**What has been one of your highlights as General Manager of St John's Crisis Centre?**

When you have seen a person in their darkest moments turn their life around from addiction and begin the journey of healing their broken life, it fills me with joy. Below is an excerpt from a letter we received from a client:

“I am just writing this letter as a way of thanking you all for your support and encouragement. This has helped me gain confidence and reason for carrying on. I have been ill and in disrepair for a long while and had nowhere to turn. St John’s staff stood by me and helped me back on track, all my medic bills are being attended to and I seem to be well on the way to recovery. My housing needs have been met and I feel comfortable and established. I have a plan now that I can start moving on with my life.

I just want to say thank you to all that have helped me along the way,

With respect and thankfulness.”

**Can you tell us a little about your personal faith journey?**

Through the example of my parents and their open door policy to anyone in trouble, growing up I saw that the best way to follow His teachings was to do this in my own way. This eventually saw me volunteering at St John’s and then working my way up to General Manager. It has truly become my passion.

**What is your favourite scripture and why?**

**Mark 10.45**: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

This scripture fits the philosophy of St John’s Crisis Centre to help all in need in our community.

**What person of faith inspires you the most and why?**

I was inspired to start volunteering 14 years ago after hearing the founder of St John’s, Joan Hancock, speak at a school assembly. I had not realised that homelessness was such a huge issue on the Gold Coast and she inspired me to help. Without Joan Hancock I would not be doing what I am doing today, I am grateful that I attended that assembly and listened to her. I wonder, “Was that God's plan?”
“Joan Hancock, the St John’s Crisis Centre founder, and me at our recent 40th anniversary celebration” 
(Dianne Kozik)

2022’s Diocesan theme is ‘Being Together: Embracing Joy’. What are some practical ways that we can celebrate the way differences help to make us whole and the importance of diversity in our unity.

This theme is integral to St John’s mission – people facing homelessness come from all walks of life. We need to embrace diversity and the differences in people so we are able to assist the people who come to us for help, who trust us to care for them. Giving unconditional love and acceptance to everyone you meet makes the world a better place.

What does Advent mean to you?

It is the busiest time of year for our centre. In Advent, we see so many more people coming to us for assistance as Christmas approaches, as they are unable to feed, clothe or provide presents for their children. A person’s financial situation should not inhibit their family’s enjoyment of Advent and Christmas. I appreciate the generosity of our wonderful volunteers that make it all possible. Advent to me shows the compassion and love that people in our community have for each other, especially through the giving of their time.

Our theme for the fourth week of Advent is ‘Being a welcoming people’ – what does this mean to you?

“Being a welcoming people” for me means treating everyone as you would like to be treated, with honesty, respect, kindness and open-mindedness.
What are the primary strengths of the Anglican Church and what is the best way to make the most of these for the benefit of our communities?

One of the primary strengths of the Anglican Church is its acceptance of those who sometimes feel excluded from mainstream religions, such as people living with disability and LGBT people. These people often face crisis and homelessness and the congruency of the Anglican Church's wider mission with our own helps us help them. St John’s would love to work with the wider Anglican Church community and share resources to help provide sustainable accommodation for those who need it in our communities. Proverbs 14.31 says, “Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honours God.”

What is the kindest gesture you have ever received or witnessed?

One of the most selfless gestures I have heard about was when an intimate partner violence victim, whom we placed in safe accommodation with her children, told me that her adult son and his friends would stay up all night to ensure the father could not gain access to and hurt his family. While a sad story, it shows the resilience of people and how family and community support are integral to ensuring the safety of vulnerable people.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received and who gave you this advice?

My father told me “Dianne, you don’t need to be the smartest person in the room, you just have to surround yourself with them.” I abide by that advice, and so my board is full of some of the most competent, kind and intelligent people I know. I could not do what I do without them.

What do you do in your free time to recharge and relax?

I love to read. I am currently reading Boy Swallows Universe by Trent Dalton. I also enjoy gardening, walking my dogs (they are my babies), and I get great satisfaction cooking produce I have grown in my garden.

“I feel most at peace when walking with my dogs. They are my non-judgemental, loving companions” (Dianne Kozik, pictured with Katara and Zuko)
If you could have a billboard with any text on it, what would it say and why?

“Be kind to each other” – because the world would be a better place overnight if we were all kinder.

What book have you given away most as a gift and why?

Adam Liaw’s *Two Asian Kitchens* because it is hands down one of the best cook books I have ever owned.

If you are having a bad day, what do you do to cheer yourself up?

Cuddle my dogs – they give me so much love. My children often say, “Mum, you love those dogs more than us.” I say teasingly in response, “Yes, so true, because they are always happy to see me and never answer back.”

Where do you do your best thinking?

I feel most at peace when walking with my dogs. They are my non-judgemental, loving companions.

What’s your best childhood memory?

Spending time with my dad back in South Africa, looking for mussels for him to open and eat, and then finding a warm rock pool to lie in and talk.

Editor’s note: If you would like to find out more about St John’s Crisis Centre visit their [website](#) or contact Dianne Kozik for a tour of the centre. If you would like to donate either a one-off amount or monthly, please visit the St John’s Crisis Centre [website](#) or contact Dianne Kozik on (07) 5531 6013 or via admin@stjohnscc.org.au (please leave a message – phone sometimes aren’t answered when the St John’s team are helping people face to face).

If you are in immediate danger, call 000 for police or ambulance help. For a list of helplines and websites available to women, children and men, visit this page on the Queensland Government [website](#).
Coomera Anglican College community celebrating Christmas with creativity

The Creative Art Hub is a group of Years 7 to 10 Coomera Anglican College students who love to make and create. This year we took the next step to transform our passion into a small business using entrepreneurial thinking. The Christmas Catalogue that we are distributing to school staff showcases five young entrepreneurs and presents the first large-scale opportunity to sell to the wider community. Catalogue products include crocheted water bottle holders, custom Christmas cards, beeswax wraps and oil painting commissions.

I joined the College's Creative Art Hub this year. I have had lots of fun and made new friends along the way in this co-curricular activity. The Hub is run by two enthusiastic and creative teachers, Ms Franks and Ms Howard, who put a lot of time into mentoring us. The Creative Art Hub helps me and other group members create business plans and structures for our small businesses. We went through a process of ideation, market research, branding and marketing, as well as making of the products.

Starting in Term 3, each student created something for either personal use or the Christmas Catalogue. Many students chose different art styles, ranging from crocheting and sewing to pottery and ceramics. I decided upon sewing facemasks and scrunchies. I did most of the making at home, using the Creative Art Hub as a space to brainstorm ideas. I made and sold masks during the period of COVID-19 mask-wearing. In addition to making masks, I also made scrunchies, which was my original idea. I am very happy that I had scrunchies as a back-up product because (luckily), we don't have to wear masks at present.
Finally, by Term 4 everything was finalised and projects and pieces were ready to be photographed for the Christmas Catalogue. We learnt about how to style a photoshoot and how to use the best camera angles and settings to display our products and make them appealing to buyers. The Christmas Catalogue has a wide variety of products for selling, including cards, crocheted items, masks, scrunchies and artworks. Even though masks are not in high demand at the moment, I decided to make masks in Christmas fabrics just in case. I also made Christmas scrunchies to adapt the product to the Christmas season. The products in our catalogue were sold to College staff, so we learnt about receiving and filling orders.

I enjoy making and sewing different things and using the Creative Art Hub for brainstorming ideas and planning the selling and marketing. I think that the Creative Art Hub is extremely helpful and so much fun, not only for me but for everyone involved in the program.

I would like to give a shout-out to Ms Franks and Ms Howard for their amazing help and hard work supporting the Creative Art Hub. I thoroughly enjoy the relaxed and open atmosphere of the Creative Art Hub and will definitely continue as a Hub member next year.

Features • Tuesday 14 December 2021 • By The Rev’d Samuel Dow

Baroona Farm partners with Multicultural Australia

Rod Nason (Baroona Farm volunteer), Sammy Narua (Multicultural Australia Employment program coordinator), Sisira Fernando (Multicultural Australia client) and The Rev’d Samuel Dow at Baroona Farm on Friday 3 December 2021

The mission of Baroona Farm, an urban farm ministry located in the grounds of St Francis College in Milton, is to “grow food and community with and for the nutritionally vulnerable”.

In 2019 when the project first started gathering some momentum this mission was realised through conversations and an eventual partnership with the Romero Centre (Mercy Community Partners) who support refugees and people seeking asylum in Brisbane.
Baroona Farm has made another significant connection and partnership, now with Multicultural Australia who, after being shown the mission and set-up of the farm project, has seen the potential connections and benefits for clients that they work with. At a recent working bee, we met with Multicultural Australia Employment program coordinator Sammy Narua, who helps clients find work.

At this same working bee, Sri Lankan-born refugee and Multicultural Australia client Sisira Fernando joined the team at Baroona Farm and immediately felt connected with the place, especially after seeing foods from Sri Lanka growing there. He was delighted, in particular, to see okra, winged beans and gotu cola (a herb) growing in the small farm. However, most of all Sisira felt welcomed at the working bee where he got to meet others from Brisbane and feel a part of the farm community.

It is these powerful connections that Baroona Farm seeks to foster in growing both community and culturally-appropriate food. In fact, the name ‘Baroona’ is said to stem from a local First Nation word meaning ‘a place far away’ – we have also been told that the hill where St Francis College is located was also an ancient meeting ground for sharing and trading food, a tradition that we are proud to acknowledge and continue on with.

In 2011-12, four per cent of Australians experienced food insecurity. An even higher prevalence of food insecurity has been reported among particularly marginalised communities, such as people seeking asylum (71 per cent), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (22 per cent), disadvantaged urban households (25 per cent) and people who are unemployed (23 per cent) (Australian Family Physician).

Following the call to discipleship that Jesus has given to us to feed the hungry (Matthew 25.35), Baroona Farm is committed to seeing this ministry become a further reality, making a difference in the lives of more people living in and around our city.

In the next 12 months, Baroona Farm plans to further expand operations, from 38 garden beds (1m x 1.2m each bed) to 78 beds, drastically increasing the food growing potential of the farm. In order to do this Baroona Farm is selling 2022 calendars to go towards raising the $5,000 that is needed to reach this goal. If individuals or parishes would like to purchase a calendar ($20 each) or make a general donation, please contact The Rev’d Samuel Dow via baroonafarm@gmail.com.
Anglicare Spiritual and Pastoral Care team gather at Santa Teresa

Recently, 12 members of the Anglicare Southern Queensland Spiritual and Pastoral Care (SPC) team, working in both our Residential Aged Care Homes and Community Aged and Disability Care Services from the Gold Coast to Bundaberg and Brisbane to Toowoomba, gathered at the Santa Teresa Spirituality Centre at Ormiston.

The gatherings of the SPC Team, like this one on 18-19 November, have taken place for many years.

Spiritual and Pastoral Care Manager Ray Clifton said it was a chance for all team members to meet each other, some for the very first time.

“Working at such distances from each other, the group really appreciates the time to catch up and share ideas from their spiritual care practice,” The Rev'd Ray said.

“The two days always have a training component and over the last three years we have explored the spirituality of care.

“This year’s event was a two-day retreat with times of input, group sharing, quiet and prayer.

“The focus of the retreat time was the image of servant and how it shapes our care and leadership through the lenses of ‘head’, ‘heart’ and ‘hands’.”

First published on the Anglicare Southern Queensland website on 10 December 2021.
Anglicare Southern Queensland has been announced as the national winner in the annual Aged and Community Services Australia (ACSA) awards held on Tuesday 7 December 2021.

The ACSA Awards highlight outstanding achievements and contributions made by organisations, teams and individuals in the aged care industry throughout the year.

Anglicare Southern Queensland won the National Award in the Innovation in Service or Design category for their By Request campaign, which was an eight-part web series celebrating music’s ability to connect us back to our treasured memories.

This follows on from Anglicare Southern Queensland being named as Australia’s Most Trusted Brand in Aged Care and Retirement Villages in the annual Reader’s Digest Trusted Brands survey.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Executive Director Sue Cooke congratulated all winners and finalists and all the hard-working staff at Anglicare for ensuring high-quality care is provided to clients right across Queensland.

“It’s an absolute honour to win the national award for By Request in the Innovation in Service or Design category at the ACSA Awards,” Mrs Cooke said.

“All of the finalists are doing an incredible job to support older people in Australia and we’re so proud to have been recognised alongside them.
“I’d really like to thank our 3,000 staff and 600 volunteers who, day in and day out, provide an exceptional level of care to more than 50,000 Queenslanders and have done so for the past 150 years.”

The Anglicare Southern Queensland team produced and designed the campaign in house with Specific Music, a boutique music publisher and record label, who managed artists and music licensing. The series was produced remotely from Brisbane, regional Queensland, Sydney, Melbourne and Los Angeles.

Artists in the series include Katie Noonan, Isaiah Firebrace, Jess & Matt, Harrison Craig, Rai Thistlethwayte (Thirsty Merc), Adam Eckersley and Brooke McClymont, Emma Birdsall and Kate Miller-Heidke.

“This year has been difficult for the aged care sector and these winners have risen to the challenge. To see so many providers, their employees, and volunteers working incredibly hard to continue delivering the best aged care they can under unprecedented circumstances shows just how committed the sector is to older Australians,” ACSA CEO Paul Sadler said.

“The national winners – along with all state winners and finalists – are to be commended for their exceptional efforts to support older Australians and their families throughout the year. The whole sector has worked tirelessly to maintain the safety of residents, their families and staff.

“I’m delighted that the exceptional work of these providers has been recognised through the awards. They are some of the many providers across the sector who can show all of us what aged care has the potential to contribute to our community.

“Congratulations to all winners, and nominees, for their commitment to deliver quality care to older Australians.”

By Request builds on Anglicare Southern Queensland's dedication to advocate for older Australians, harnessing partnerships and collaboration to rejuvenate the 150-year-old brand and engage with a wider audience.

Anglicare Southern Queensland's Acting Head of Marketing and Communications Louise Firth said the series was created to bring together music, memories and a sense of togetherness.

“By Request is a tear-jerker in the best kind of way. It’s the wholesome, feel good content we all needed last year and it really helped keep our loved ones connected during the lockdowns,” she said.

“We’re so grateful to have collaborated with Specific Music, who brought together such an awesome line-up of artists and songs. Together we created something magical and to do it in lock down and mostly over Zoom is something we’re really proud of.

“It’s so important to us to give our aged care residents the opportunity to tell their stories and remind everyone the elders in our community have such rich and interesting lives – we are so proud to celebrate them in By Request.”

You can listen to the By Request series online.

First published on the Anglicare Southern Queensland website on 8 December 2021.
Design Led Venture: St Paul’s School students' insights

St Paul’s School students Elliot Waigh, Natasha Brandt, Coby Watson and Claire West participated in 2021’s Design Led Venture project, working alongside large organisations to help solve real-world problems.

St Paul’s School recently completed a project called a Design Led Venture (DLV). A DLV sees a group of ten Year 6-11 students who work closely with a business or a community group to understand and develop solutions to real-life issues. Over the 10 week project, students use design thinking to create, deliver then pitch a solution to a business, which will then implement it.

This year, the two businesses St Paul’s worked with were the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) and Medline Australia.

Claire West – Year 11 student, St Paul’s School, USC Moreton Bay team

As part of a group collaborating with 10 other students we worked with the University of Sunshine Coast (USC) Moreton Bay Campus to develop a new marketing strategy. The Design Led Venture process had us exploring each part of the university, examining their strengths, areas for growth and identified areas that could use improvement. By following this process, we were able to develop a solution to an issue we identified. Our proposed solution was the ‘See it to Believe it’ campaign. This included a laid-out and walk-through advertisement / short video that would be marketed to the target audience and allow USC to grow their brand and reputation.

The highlight in the process for me was the final presentation to our client and a full audience. On the final pitch night, the whole group got together to plan our report findings to our stakeholder – the University of Sunshine Coast. Presenting in front of a crowd was very nerve racking for most of us, but...
it was a lot of fun and the environment before the presentation was very supportive and calm. The experience has certainly allowed me to overcome my public speaking fear.

The most interesting thing that I learnt throughout the process was how much I am capable of and how my thought process changed when looking at problems. I grew in many other ways as well, including mentoring younger students and learning new ways to problem solve. My confidence in asking questions and being able to talk to different people and thinking outside the box, whilst collaborating with different age groups also improved.

I will continue to bring what I have learnt throughout the DLV process to my schoolwork and future career. I will do this by being more confident in the classroom and asking more questions. And, I will use my new collaboration skills with others in group work. I will also bring these skills to my future career by speaking up and sharing my thoughts to the groups and teams I'm a part of.

**Elliot Waigh – Year 11 student, St Paul’s School, USC Moreton Bay team**

Working at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) Moreton Bay Campus, the team members were able to talk to a wide selection of people with a genuine interest in the success of USC, including students, staff and community members. This allowed us to identify that our opportunity was to distinguish USC Moreton Bay as the best place to learn for everyone. We decided that the best way to do this is through a video marketing campaign.

Undergoing my second Design Led Venture (DLV), it was clear that the 3.0 programme would be an entirely different experience to 2.0. Along with Claire, being the oldest empowered me to take on a significantly different role. The ‘near mentor’ role allowed the creativity and innovation of younger students to be nurtured in a way that Dr. Renae Jones did for me in the 2.0 programme and in my personal business ventures.

The overall highlight was helping Charlie in Year 8 prepare his pitch because the ability to nurture and inspire others, as I have been inspired, was probably one of the most enriching experiences of my life.

The single most interesting thing that I learnt was the fact that intelligence is not the key to success, nor is natural ability. Although the ability to think fast or solve every problem are helpful, the ability to collaborate and understand the process is a skill I’d much rather master. After doing this programme for two years, I’ve come across many types of people and I have learnt that every single person has a place and a role, and that everyone should be included.

With this newfound realisation, it is clear that my future, and that of many of my peers, will be orientated on their ability to alter or create new ideas to fit the ever-changing world we live in. Knowing everyone’s importance and ability and the art and ability of bringing people together in a way that works will give me a massive competitive edge when joining the workforce.

**Natasha Brandt – Year 7 student, St Paul’s School, Medline Australia team**

Our team worked with a medical supplies company called Medline. Our solution was called ‘Sip, Swap, Drop’, to solve their sustainability and recognition problems. The idea of this was that you can walk into a café and buy a coffee or whatever else you want to get and then you can swap your old used masks for a brand new one and it will only cost 20 cents.
The biggest highlight of DLV for me was when we visited the Medline office in Brisbane. The employees told us that they had thousands of products in that warehouse alone. I thought that it was incredible that they were able to hold that many products in just one warehouse.

The most interesting thing that I have learnt during this DLV process is although it may be very good to recycle as much as possible and help the environment, sometimes that is not always an option, especially when working with items that have been used in hospitals or other medical facilities. Many supplies and equipment items that are used in hospitals cannot be re-used and for a very good reason. To re-use and re-cycle things that have been used in surgery, for example, would risk spreading diseases and infections.

Now that I know just what kind of waste can and cannot be recycled, I have since tried my best to recycle as much as possible and I will continue to do so.

Coby Watson – Year 8 student, St Paul’s School, Medline Australia team

As a part of the Design Led Ventures team, I worked alongside Medline. Medline is a leading supplier of medical and surgical healthcare products and was founded in 1910. The Medline Team created a programme called ‘Sip, Swap, Drop’ in which we had planned to partner with TerraCycle to utilise their mask recycling boxes after many hours of goal, team and idea development.

The first moment when I walked into the CIE (where we part take in DLV), I heard Mr Osborne say “expect the unexpected“ and he continually reminded us that “these companies have reached out to us because we have a different perspective than the professionals.”

The DLVs only ever taught me one key thing, but I would recommend it to anyone. The DLV programme is about setting yourself up to teach and learn by yourself. The staff and teachers are alongside you to push you and add input. The DLV teaches us to think of the unthinkable, remembering that the multi-billion-dollar companies that we are solving problems for have reached out to other professionals and adults who often have degrees and authority to make decisions. Yet we, as teenagers who are yet to graduate high school, view things from a unique perspective, and express different opinions and initiate ideas to help prepare the world for our future.

I will bring this knowledge everywhere I go. Whether that is at school or in a future career position. I will always know how to expect the unexpected and continue learning forever. This way of thinking will allow me to stand out and create trends to, hopefully, impact change.
First female Bishop in Japan and South East Asia elected

Maria Grace Tazu Sasamori, priest of the Diocese of Tokyo, has been elected as the first female Bishop in Japan and South East Asia. She was elected as the Bishop of Hokkaido at the 80th electoral Synod of the Diocese of Hokkaido.

She was elected on the 10th ballot with two-thirds of the votes of the houses of clergy and laity on 3 November. She accepted the result on 26 November and became Bishop-elect of the Diocese of Hokkaido on the same day.

Mandy Marshall, Director for Gender Justice at the Anglican Communion Office, said: “I’m excited and pleased to hear the news of the first female Bishop. This is a real breakthrough for Japan and will be an encouragement to ordained women everywhere, but especially in Japan. Bishop-elect Tazu will need our prayers as she steps into a very male space and has the pressure and holds the hopes of Anglican Women in Japan.”

She will succeed Bishop Nathaniel Makoto Uematsu, former Primate of the Nippon Sei Ko Kei (The Anglican Communion in Japan).

The date of her consecration and installation is yet to be determined.
Dear sisters and brothers,

“...you know the generous act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.” — 2 Corinthians 8:9

The Christmas story fascinates, intrigues and challenges.

It is a fascinating story, among other reasons, because the revelation of what God has graciously done in Christ for the renewal of the whole creation comes to us through narratives in which the main actors are not the powerful living in palaces, but the humble living in the margins.

Think of the Christmas stories from the gospels of Matthew and Luke. What comes to mind? A modest couple facing difficulties; a vulnerable child threatened by the cruelty of a king; a pregnant woman who does not find a hotel room to give birth; anonymous shepherds who receive good news from a crowd of angels; a young family pushed to migration.

All of them are on the underside of history. All of them are the bearers of the divine promise about the final destination of history.

What Mary celebrated in the spirit of the Hebrew prophets, by singing that her saviour had “brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly,” the apostle Paul formulates in terms of the self-emptying of the Son of God, who became poor “for us and for our salvation,” as expressed later in the words of the Nicene Creed.
The Christmas story and its fascinating paradox invite us to meditate about Christian life in today’s world. Preaching in Constantinople about the second letter to the Corinthians, Saint John Chrysostom spoke of two altars in Christian life, which are inseparable from each other: the altar of Holy Communion and the altar of compassion. We cannot receive the Heavenly Bread without engaging in active solidarity, in “the liturgy after the liturgy”, with those who cannot receive the earthly bread.

Ours are times in which the pandemic has catalysed the risks of the climate emergency, the systemic inequalities between rich and poor, and widespread gender-based violence.

As we prepare ourselves to welcome the One who manifested the God of the widow, the foreigner and the orphan, let not our minds conform to the spirit of greed of our times. Let us repent and convert to new ways of living that express our care for future generations. Let Christ’s love move the world to reconciliation and unity.

May your Christmas be blessed and its message of joy and hope overwhelm your lives. Christ is born, let us glorify him!

Rev. Prof. Dr Ioan Sauca
Acting General Secretary
World Council of Churches

The WCC Christmas message is available in English, German, French and Spanish.

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Sunday Devotions • Monday 13 December 2021 • By Lalania Tusa Fa’aaefili

Sunday Devotion: 19 December 2021, Fourth Sunday of Advent

Welcoming all expectant mums

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, ‘Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.’” (Luke 1.41-42)

Main Readings: Micah 5.2-5a; For the Psalm: ‘Song of Mary’ (APBA p.31 or p.425) or Psalm 80.1-7; Hebrews 10.5-10; Luke 1.39-45 (46-55)

Supplementary: Psalm 113; Matthew 1.18-25; Isaiah 66.18-23; Psalm 18.27-38; Revelation 20.11-21.5

Like Mary, I had a son at a young age. Even though I had just left school, I knew I was responsible for carrying this son, raising him and my future three sons to be strong, dependable men so they would care for their families and Elders. Also, like Mary, I had cousins who were pregnant at the same time as me in my Kuku Yalanji community in Mossman. We raised our children together and were always welcomed by our family and community members, who looked out for us and our bubbas. We were cared for by the Elders, who cooked us fresh Milku (mullet) soup, which is very high in omegas and thus nourishing for babies.

I heard this scripture being read recently in church. It’s been a long time since I’ve heard it. What stood out to me when listening to the minister preach was how precious it is to God that women bear children. God nourished and guided me in my own pregnancies, especially through my family and community who welcomed and cared for me.
I think that stigma remains in the wider community when young women become pregnant – they are still sometimes shunned. We all need to do our bit to support any woman who is pregnant, especially given all she is going through with hormone changes, morning sickness, an identity shift and the new pressure of responsibility. How we view women impacts how we treat them.

Being a welcoming people means caring for all expectant mums, just as Elizabeth and Mary cared for each other.