Lessons from a benevolent barista

Many people who know me are aware that I am particular about my coffee.

In fact, I am so particular that after Sunday morning services, I will often opt for tea or a cold drink rather than drink instant coffee. Instead I might pick up a latte on the way home if I need a caffeine boost, regardless of what the given brand of instant had promised.

I recently tried a new café in the Brisbane CBD for the first time. My regular haunt had closed its doors after limping through COVID shutdowns and fewer people working in the city.

I lined up, gave my order and my name, and waited to be called before returning to the office, cradling the precious liquid in my hands until I was back at my desk.

Two days later I returned. Halfway to the counter, I was greeted by a smiling barista with, “Hello, Jeremy! A latte today?”

I realised in that moment that I had found my new favourite café.

What a difference it makes when someone remembers your name, welcomes you and makes you feel like you belong.

As American writer Brené Brown writes:
“A deep sense of love and belonging is an irreducible need of all people. We are biologically, cognitively, physically, and spiritually wired to love, to be loved, and to belong. When those needs are not met, we don't function as we were meant to. We break. We fall apart. We numb. We ache. We hurt others. We get sick.”

Any number of research papers back this up. In their research on the importance of belongingness to wellbeing, social psychologists Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary proposed the “belongingness hypothesis”, which suggests that:

“...human beings have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships” (p.497)

Their research suggested that failure to have one's belongingness needs met may lead to feelings of social isolation, alienation and loneliness and concluded that “a sense of belongingness is not only a precursor to social connectedness, but also a buffer against loneliness“ (p.497).

And, as the Archbishop of Canterbury reminded the Bishops gathered at the recent Lambeth Conference:

“The heart of the Church is deeply relational – go back to 1 Corinthians 13 – it doesn't matter what we do, what gifts we have, what wonders we carry out, but if we don't have love and in that context of Corinth – love for one another – if we don't have that, love for one another, we are a 'sounding gong or a clanging cymbal' and, therefore, whatever else comes out of this Lambeth Conference and as we go forward in this next period, at the heart of it must be the deepening and the building of relationship as our first objective...that we love one another – we love God and love one another.”

If it is true, that “the heart of the Church is deeply relational”, then in a society where around one in four people report feelings of extreme loneliness, where people increasingly feel like they do not belong, we have a great gift to offer.

When the simple act of remembering someone's name can make such a huge difference, what other small things might we do to invite people into a sense of “belongingness” – the belongingness that is at the heart of the Gospel.
What is your favourite Lukan passage and why?

"I love this passage because it keeps me in check and balance, helping me to be honest and faithful with myself and others around me" (The Rev'd Rebecca King from Christ Church, Yeronga on 'The parable of the shrewd manager' in October 2022)

Four priests from across our Diocese tell us about their favourite passage from the Gospel of Luke, which is the primary Gospel read on Sundays during Year C of the Lectionary cycle.

The Rev'd Rebecca King – Priest-in-Charge, Christ Church, Yeronga

Luke 16.1-13 is one of my favourite verses because it talks about honesty and faithfulness.

Clearly in this passage, honesty is wrapped up with faithfulness. Honesty and faithfulness are essential values that the servant of God should possess in the following three ways.

Firstly, in our time. One of the values that the servant of God must have is to be honest with time, dividing her or his time wisely – this is wrapped up with faithfulness. There's time to laugh, time to rest, time for devotion, time for work, time to be build, time to plant.

Our heart-beats show us that our life is in seconds and minutes. Time is divided into seconds, minutes, days, weeks, months, years and so on. And our success or failure is dependent on how we spent our time living honestly and faithfully.

Secondly, money. We need to be honest and faithful in how we spend our money. We will need to account for how we stewarded our money. We need to be generous with our income, sharing what we have with people who are struggling and to further God's mission.
Thirdly, being honest in the small things, especially when nobody is watching. Luke said this very well, when he wrote: “Whoever is faithful in a very little is faithful also in much; and whoever is dishonest in a very little is dishonest also in much (16.10).” Being honest and faithful in both the small and big things are important as servants of God.

I love this passage because it keeps me in check and balance, helping me to be honest and faithful with myself and others around me.

"One of my favourite parts of Luke is the ascension of Jesus...The ascension tells us at least three important things about Jesus“ (The Rev’d Adam Lowe from St Bart’s, Toowoomba in 2022)

The Rev’d Adam Lowe – Senior Minister, St Bart’s, Toowoomba


First, Jesus is alive. If there was no ascension, it would mean that Jesus either died again or – unbeknown to anyone – remains alive on earth. The ascension demonstrates the glorious news that Jesus is the living king.

Second, Jesus is human. Perhaps one of the more neglected aspects of Christology (the study of nature and work of Jesus) is that Jesus' ascension was not a “reverse-incarnation” – in which he jettisoned his body for some “higher spiritual form” – but Jesus remains embodied. This means that, not only do we have one who is able to sympathise with us, but it also points to the redeemed physical nature of new creation that awaits all who put their trust in Jesus.
Third, Jesus is worthy. Having witnessed the resurrected Christ ascend, the disciples worship him even though gone from their sight. The ascension shows us that, not only was Jesus victorious over sin and death, but the model for those who follow him today is to worship him with our entire lives until we see him face to face.

“As far as favourite things go, it’s hard to look past the Magnificat” (The Rev’d Deb Bird from The Parish of Maleny in October 2022)

The Rev’d Deb Bird – Parish Priest, The Parish of Maleny

As far as favourite things go, it’s hard to look past the Magnificat (1.46-55). It's unique for all kinds of reasons, but what really tugs at my heart is the sheer exuberance of young Mary, full throated in song.

There is nothing small about her exclamation – this is a young heart brimming with joy and bursting with possibility, imagination, confidence and hope. A nice dialogue between cousins can’t do justice to that feeling. Only music will.

Looking at the four songs connected to the birth of Jesus – Mary’s Magnificat, Zachariah’s Benedictus 1.67-79, the Angels’ Gloria 2.14 and Simeon’s Nunc dimittis 2.29-32 – I think about the tradition of the musical, a genre in which the condition of the heart drives the plot and is so emphasised that it becomes completely natural to be carried away in song, dance and drama.

It suggests to me that this is how we are to hear the story of Jesus that follows – as a person so caught up in love and hope for the whole community of God that it became the great story of his life. And to paraphrase the poet Mary Oliver, this is why we keep telling his story – that our hearts may likewise be broken open to each other, that they may “never close again to the rest of the world.”
“But on the first day of the week”, tells us that what we are about to hear will bring us a new perspective on past events” (The Rev’d Michael Stalley from St Bartholomew’s, Mt Gravatt, pictured with parishioner Pradeep and German Shepherd Nala at the Blessing of the Pets during 2022’s Season of Creation)

The Rev’d Michael Stalley – Rector, St Bartholomew’s, Mt Gravatt

“But on the first day of the week...” (Luke 24.1a).

This passage is so short, and yet it says so much. As someone who lives on this side of the resurrection, these words are full of anticipation for me each time I read them. As we read Luke, we have witnessed the death of Jesus and his burial. All his followers' expectations seem to have been shattered. The powers that opposed Jesus seemed to have had the last word. The voice of God’s love has fallen silent. It is almost as if the story might stop here.

And then this simple sentence that starts with “But” reminds us there is more. “But on the first day of the week,” tells us that what we are about to hear will bring us a new perspective on past events. It reminds us that the voice of love has not been silenced, death has not had the last word, and the story continues. The very sense of anticipation these few words bring me makes them my favourite.

These words remind me that if we are to grasp that which follows in this story about Jesus, we need to remember the first time God started counting the days of the week. It is the story of creation in Genesis that we will need to understand the story of the new creation through Jesus Christ on this first day of the week.

It is hard not to get a little excited about that!

Editor’s note: If you would like to share about your favourite scripture in anglican focus, please contact the Editor, Michelle McDonald, via focus@anglicanchurchsq.org.au for more information.
Being Together: a new inclusion and respect dialogue resource for Anglican parishes

"Every day in our faith communities we are presented with opportunities to use our giftings, skills, resources, church spaces and, most importantly, our knowledge that every person has inherent dignity, for the common good" (Dr Stephen Harrison)

Many years ago I attended an Anglican Church conference for young people that demonstrated to me some of the best and worst of Church welcome and inclusion. I have sought to bring these learnings into my various Anglican Church Southern Queensland roles.

There were hundreds of young delegates from all around the world at the conference. On one particular day, a group of delegates was split up accidentally at a very busy train station. Being in an unfamiliar place and language complications subsequently made it difficult for them to find each other. The following day, one of the young delegates who got lost was made fun of publicly by the conference organiser. The delegate was left feeling absolutely humiliated, largely because in his culture being singled out in such a way was considered very shameful. This was an important lesson for me in cultural competency.

During the conference, the daily keynote speaker addressed us in English for a solid hour. Many of the international delegates from countries where English is not an official language could read English quite well, but were unable to process all the information shared verbally during the course of an hour. Many also found it impossible to understand the accents of diverse English speakers. A friend of mine and I asked the conference organiser if people could have the option of receiving the talks the night before, so they could be read ahead of the hour-long speeches to facilitate comprehension and inclusion. Our request was declined, so my friend and I instead assisted as many people as we could with understanding what the keynote speakers said.
Another opportunity missed by the conference organisers was consulting with delegates in the lead up to the event about culturally appropriate foods. The food was often cold, bland and un-filling, with bread being the primary staple served. Cold cucumber sandwiches are not enjoyed universally.

However, towards the end of the conference, delegates were invited to a dinner at a local church. It was clear from the start of the evening that the church community understood what hospitality and community are about. Everyone was made to feel warmly welcomed, valued and at ease. And, delegates’ cultural backgrounds had obviously been considered because different kinds of food were prepared using different staples, including (very simple) hot rice, which made all the difference.

These memories came to mind recently during the development of a new Parishes and other Mission Agencies Commission (PMC) resource, titled “Being Together: An inclusion and respect dialogue resource for parishes and ministries”. We launched the resource yesterday. It has been endorsed by our Regional Bishops and forms part of our Diocese’s response to General Synod’s Being Together statement.

A hallmark of “Being Together” is the way we respectfully welcome and include everyone, as we understand that every person offers something that only they can contribute. The whole can only be whole if everyone is embraced and enabled to engage and participate.

Dozens of Anglicans assisted with the development of the new resource, including nearly 30 Australian Anglicans who have anonymously shared their stories about being excluded and included in parishes – in our Diocese and beyond. By courageously sharing their negative and positive experiences, these clergy and parishioners are helping to show all of us how we can better create welcoming and respectful communities.

Their stories form the backbone of the resource, which also includes a simple blend of prayers, scriptures, activities and discussion time.

In his ministry, Jesus used narrative to share knowledge, initiate discussions and connect with people. This is why personal stories centred on specific parish experiences have been sourced to form the backbone of the new Parishes and other Mission Agencies Commission resource.

The resource sessions cover the following themes:

- Introduction
- Disability, impairment and neuro-diversity
- Age and life stage
- First Nations and cultural and linguistic diversity
- Gender
- Major unexpected life events
- Sexuality
- Socio-economic situation.

The 90-page resource may be used in a variety of ways. For example, while the resource is presented in eight modules and may be used as a course, your parish or ministry may wish to:

- change the session order
- use a selection of the sessions
• use selected elements of the resource for group discussions or other (non-commercial) activities.

Every day in our faith communities we are presented with opportunities to use our giftings, skills, resources, church spaces and, most importantly, our knowledge that every person has inherent dignity, for the common good. By choosing to include and respect others, we create space for them to contribute their God-given dignity and gifts.

I sincerely thank the dozens of diverse Anglican community members who assisted with the creation of the resource over the last year, including by sharing personal stories, providing brief biographies, giving session feedback or participating in a session test run.

The new resource may be downloaded from the Anglican Church Southern Queensland website.

Please join me in this prayer for all the faith communities who use this resource:

Lord Jesus,
You commanded us to love our neighbour as we love ourselves, and taught us that all are our neighbour, loved and cherished by God.
Help us to see your face in all those we meet, empower us to show your hospitality, welcoming all so that we may build places of belonging where everyone may love and learn together.
Amen.

News • Monday 17 October 2022 • By Philippe Coquerand

Archbishop of Canterbury inspired by the resilience of Lismore’s flood-affected residents

Lismore parishioner Ray Nickel was one of many impacted by the February 2022 floods, losing everything he owned. He said the visit helped him deal with the trauma. He is pictured with Archbishop Justin Welby at his house on 14 October 2022 (Photo: Anglicare Southern Queensland)
It was a historic occasion for inspirational Northern Rivers locals who were visited by the Archbishop of Canterbury, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, and his wife Caroline last week.

Archbishop and Mrs Welby are currently on a rare trip to Australia, arriving in Ballina on Wednesday where Archbishop Welby delivered an open community address on the theme of “Building Peace in robust diversity” at Emmanuel Anglican College.

Following Archbishop Welby’s community address, a Q&A panel session was held.

They then spent a day in Lismore visiting those still reeling from the devastating floods that impacted their community in February this year.

The visit marked 72 years since an Archbishop of Canterbury visited the Diocese of Grafton, with the first visit held on 7 November 1950 by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Francis Fisher.

Archbishop Welby spoke to The Lismore App team about why he decided to extend his visit to the Northern Rivers.
“Wherever you are, either a war or a natural disaster, it has much the same effect on people. Yes, there are people probably worse off, but that doesn't necessarily mean that you are okay,” Archbishop Welby said.

“I decided to visit Lismore and the Northern Rivers as I am in Australia, and to extend my trip by a few days, and to not just rush past, was something I can do.

“In the story of Jesus and the Good Samaritan, the Priest and the Levi walk past the man who is beaten up by robbers, but the Good Samaritan stops.

“I don't want to be like the priest and the Levi; in other words, stop, pay attention and even if you can't make much difference, show that you mind.”

Archbishop Welby walked the streets of Lismore shaking his head in disbelief as he was shown buildings that went completely under during the February floods.

Archbishop Welby told The Lismore App that “intense courage” are the words he would use to describe his impression of the Lismore, and wider Northern Rivers, community.

“If someone asked me what is an Australian like when I return home, I would say, on the whole, really courageous, brave, they really get out there with a ‘can do, we'll beat this’ approach to life,” he said.

The Archbishop went on to commend the resilience of Lismore community members, with only around one in five people back in their homes, over 1,000 still unhoused, and some homes remaining off their stumps.

“I mean entire streets have been completely wiped out,” he said.

“I visited two houses and heard from residents who had lost everything, everything that symbolised their life, and that was heartbreaking.”

Parishioner Ray Nickel said it was an “absolute privilege” to host the Archbishop Welby at his North Lismore home, which still remains stripped of internal walls.

“I was pleased to let him see what the situation was for not just myself, but [so] he would understand how it is for other people in this town, and how much devastation and loss there was,” Mr Nickel told ABC News.

Later, they prayed together on the verandah.

Archbishop Welby met with another family who admitted they sometimes suffer from anxiety.

“I met with a family, with a young daughter, who was going off to school, and they told me that some days they wake up, and suffer with the anxiety they feel, but they choose to get on with things, and out of this, they sweat the small stuff less,” he said.

Archbishop Welby praised volunteers from Resilient Lismore, a community action group providing vital information and connecting people willing to volunteer their time or services to help flood-affected residents.
“Resilient Lismore is one of the most inspiring things I have ever seen. I genuinely mean that. I was super impressed,” he said.

*The Lismore App* asked what advice he would give to those struggling to find hope and resilience.

“It’s easy for the adrenaline of the early months to wear off, it really matters that people are supporting each other, year after year. You have found a new level of extraordinary community than you ever have before, it’s important to hold onto that, to keep it alive through regular connection,” he said.

“Use opportunities when you can celebrate to celebrate, and thank for what progress has been made, but also cry out, and lament and protest about what needs to be done.”

Archbishop Welby and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Lismore, The Most Reverend Gregory Homeming, gathered for midday prayers at St Carthage’s Catholic Cathedral before boarding the bus for lunch at The Sherwood Hotel.

The Anglican Bishop of Grafton, The Right Reverend Dr Murray Harvey, said that conversing and praying with Lismore locals and Archbishop Welby was the highlight of the visit for him.

“I will especially remember the visit to Lismore, especially walking around the streets and talking to locals and agency representatives and doing two home visits to families who were flooded and who are still living in temporary accommodation,” Bishop Harvey said.

“This is why he came and he’s very engaging and interested in people and their stories.

“The Archbishop, Mrs Welby and the whole team that travelled with him were clearly overwhelmed by the extent of the devastation, and also by the friendliness, tenacity and resilience of the local people.

“There is a real sense of community in Lismore and he was touched by that.

“People seemed to really warm to him and they appreciated his personable nature and the fact that he was so interested.

“At one point he disappeared into a shop and I said, ‘Hey, I don’t think this visit is on the run sheet of prearranged visits is it?’ His wife Mrs Caroline Welby said, ‘No, he just does that sort of thing.’

“It was just a random visit! The shopkeepers were keen to tell him about their experience and how they’ve worked hard to reopen.

“One of the other highlights was to visit St Carthage’s Catholic Cathedral and introduce the Archbishop to the Bishop of Lismore, Bishop Greg Homeming.

“I knew the Catholic community was really looking forward to the visit.

“They told him about how the cathedral was completely flooded and he met students and staff from the local Catholic schools that had extensive flood damage to their campuses.

“He was really warmly received and we said Midday Prayers together.”
Archbishop Welby flew to Thursday Island over the weekend where he spoke with locals about the impacts of rising sea levels in the Torres Strait Islands.

Today Archbishop Welby ordained two Aboriginal women, Valmai Connolly and Petronella Connolly, as priests and one Aboriginal woman, Ainsley Dangar, as a deacon at St Alban's Anglican Church in Yarrabah, east of Cairns.

Tomorrow, on the final day of his official engagements, he will visit the trailblazing Wontulp-Bi-Buya College in Cairns, which supports the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander church and community leaders.

The Archbishop of Canterbury is the spiritual leader of the world’s 85 million Anglicans, which includes around 2.5 million Australians.

He is the most senior bishop of the Anglican Communion, which has provinces in more than 165 countries.

Archbishop Welby was enthroned as the 105th Archbishop of Canterbury in Canterbury, England in 2013.

He recently gave a sermon at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II and will conduct the coronation of King Charles III on 6 May 2023.

This article was written by Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Philippe Coquerand with quotes from The Lismore App and the ABC News.

News • Monday 17 October 2022 • By Michelle McDonald

ACSQ Domestic and Family Violence Working Group welcomes legislative reforms to strengthen Queensland’s response to coercive control

The recently appointed ACSQ Domestic and Family Violence Project Officer, Jennifer Clark (pictured outside St Martin’s House in October 2022), said that it is important for our Diocese and the wider community to understand what coercive control is, including its impacts.
The Anglican Church Southern Queensland’s Domestic and Family Violence Working Group has welcomed the first round of legislative reforms to strengthen Queensland’s response to coercive control, which were introduced into Parliament on Friday.

The Domestic and Family Violence Protection (Combating Coercive Control) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 will strengthen laws to address the patterned nature of coercive control.

The Bill will also limit the ability of perpetrators to further traumatise victims during the court process.

The Bill proposes relevant legislation amendments to:

- modernise and strengthen the definition of stalking in the Criminal Code
- broaden the definition of domestic and family violence to refer to a “pattern of behaviour”
- strengthen the court’s response to cross application for protection orders, to ensure the person most at risk is being protected
- strengthen the court’s consideration of previous domestic violence history.

Chair of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) Domestic and Family Violence Working Group, The Rev’d Gillian Moses, said that the new Bill is an important step in strengthening the state’s domestic and family violence legal framework.

“Both Anglicare Southern Queensland and the ACSQ working group made representations to the consultation around coercive control and it is encouraging to see that the Queensland Government is taking steps to implement some of the outcomes of that consultation,” The Rev’d Moses said.

“General Synod’s research project on family violence reported that ‘Although unintended, Christian teachings sometimes contribute to and potentially amplify situations of domestic violence’, including coercive control, which is mentioned specifically in the report.

“The ACSQ, through its adoption of the report’s ‘10 Commitments for Prevention and Response to Domestic and Family Violence in the Anglican Church of Australia’, is committed to actions and culture change that challenge all kinds of domestic and family violence, including coercive control.”

The Bill directly addresses several key recommendations by the Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce first report, Hear her voice.

To support this important work, the Queensland Government has announced a $363 million package of reforms.

The ACSQ Domestic and Family Violence Project Officer, Jennifer Clark, said that it is important for our Diocese and the wider community to understand what coercive control is, including its impacts.

“The Hear her voice report, which was produced in 2021 by the Queensland Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce and chaired by the Honourable Margaret McMurdo AC, made many recommendations to enhance responses to violence against women in Queensland,” Ms Clark said.

“Most importantly, the Taskforce recommended that a new offence of coercive control be implemented, and this Bill is the first stage of this process.
“Coercive control is still a relatively new term, and Justice McMurdo’s defines it as ‘a pattern of deliberate and rational behaviour designed by one person to control another person within a personal relationship. This is done by causing the victim to fear for their, or someone else’s, safety. The misconception that only physical violence is domestic abuse is so entrenched that coercive control victims themselves often do not realise they are victims.’

“Coercive control is a concept that our Diocesan community will learn more about as the Church more deeply embraces the ‘10 Commitments’ and seeks ways for these commitments to be visible in our parishes and agencies.”

Attorney-General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Shannon Fentiman, said Queensland has taken the first significant step in combating non-physical forms of domestic violence.

“These important reforms lay the foundation for the passage of a standalone offence of coercive control next year,” Minister Fentiman said.

“The Taskforce stated very clearly that system-wide reform was needed before any new coercive control offence came into effect.

“These laws pave the way for the introduction of a Bill to establish a criminal offence of coercive control before the end of 2023.”

In addition to the reforms recommended by the Taskforce, the Bill will also amend the Criminal Code to modernise and update certain sexual offence terminology.

Specifically, it replaces the term “carnal knowledge” and changes the title of the offence “Maintaining a sexual relationship with a child” to “Repeated sexual conduct with a child”.

These reforms were developed following targeted consultation with domestic, family and sexual violence stakeholders, as well as the legal profession.

The Bill will be referred to the Legal Affairs and Safety Committee for review.

Note from The Rev’d Gillian Moses, Chair the ACSQ Domestic and Family Violence Working Group: The Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) is committed to promoting and supporting a safe environment for all. Domestic and family violence is unacceptable. We offer pastoral care to victims of domestic and family abuse. The ACSQ is part of the Queensland Churches Together Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project (JCDVPP), which publishes resources for clergy and lay people.

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.
Q&A with new St Francis College Principal, theologian, mother, gardener and second-generation priest, The Rev’d Dr Ruth Mathieson

Where do you currently live and where do you worship?

I live on the beautiful bushland grounds of St Francis College. Since commencing in the role mid-year, I have been worshipping with The Parish of Milton community in the College's chapel on Sundays. I have recently started worshipping with additional parishes across our Diocese, and getting to know more people.

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

I grew up in the Anglican Church attending church, Sunday School and GFS in my childhood and then teaching Sunday School and attending Youth Group in my teenage years. I was involved in the young Anglican Synod movement in the Diocese of Adelaide and the South Australian Council of Churches as a young adult. As a young teacher I participated in Parish life by serving, singing, coordinating musicians, leading youth group and Lent Studies and being a member of Parish Council. Following ordination in the Diocese of Adelaide I ministered in the parishes of Glen Osmond, Parkside, Elizabeth and Semaphore and as a chaplain at St Columba College and Trinity College. I completed two terms as an Archdeacon, first in the north of the Diocese (2006-2010) and then in the southwest (2018-2022).
What is your current role and what does your role involve?

I am the Principal of St Francis College and the Executive Director of the Ministry Education Commission (MEC), which includes FormedFaith, Anglican Youth Children and Families (AYCF), Spiritual Direction formation, the Roscoe Library and Baroona Farm. At St Francis College we also host the formation and graduate clergy program. My role involves being a theological educator – I teach in the area of the New Testament. On a day-to-day level I also work at an operational level to oversee the MEC’s staff and ministry functions.

What activities are you currently engaged in?

One of the main projects I am currently working on is contributing to the writing of the new curriculum as we prepare to teach within the University of Divinity in 2023. My days are framed with Morning and Evening Prayer in the College’s Chapel of The Holy Spirit. My days variously involve meetings, lecturing and supporting MEC staff, as well as working alongside other Executive Directors and Episcopal leaders of the ACSQ.

Why and when did you become drawn to ordained ministry?

My call was always there, but the appropriate time to explore my vocation came after I gained experience working as a teacher. I had grown up in a clergy household and needed to know what life was like outside of living in the rectory. I attended the Selection for Ordination weekend in 1992, just prior to the first ordinations of women to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Australia and was accepted as an ordination candidate the following year.

What advice do you have for people discerning ordained ministry?

To sit with it, to pray about it and to talk about it with a trusted person. People considering ordained ministry benefit from having a spiritual director.

What do you enjoy most about being a priest?

Celebrating the Eucharist is a real joy – the depth of which I realised when I returned to ministry following a couple of months off on maternity leave. In parish ministry I loved building connections with the wider community. As a school chaplain, I loved the challenge of sharing the gospel with different cohorts in the community – from Godly Play with the pre-schoolers to deeper theological conversations with staff and senior students.

What has been one of the highlights of your St Francis College role so far?

Celebrating the signing of the Collegiate Agreement with the University of Divinity on Friday 30 September with a Eucharist and Public Lecture, given by Professor Peter Sherlock, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Divinity. Many conversations and connections were made during his three day visit.

What are your plans and goals for the next 12 months?

My primary goal for St Francis College in the next 12 months is to ensure that our transition to the University of Divinity goes smoothly. My primary goal in the Ministry Education Commission space is
to commence a process of strategic planning for continuing youth, children and families ministry in our Diocese, as the new Director of AYCF, Elissa Cotroneo, begins in her role.

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

My father was an Anglican priest, so we moved around a lot while I was a child, and the church community became my extended family because we didn't have extended family around in the various parishes where my father served. My mother fostered and inspired my faith from a young age through bedtime prayers and her really deep faith and trust in God, which were shaped by growing up in Germany during the Great Depression of the 1930s and the Second World War. She was Lutheran and one of 11 children. She tells a story about how when in her late teens, towards the end of the war, her mother handed her some potatoes that were sprouting in the cellar and asked her to go and plant them in the family allotment by the Danube. When she arrived at the allotment, she encountered some German soldiers who were intent on blowing up the road bridge to slow the advancement of the Allies. They tried to send her home for her own safety, but she quoted Martin Luther and said that the food needed to be planted regardless, even if the potatoes were eaten by others. After the war, she trained as a missionary and served with the Lutheran Mission in Papua New Guinea for nine years.

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

Archbishop Desmond Tutu because he engaged with people who were committing the worst of what we are humans can do to each other, but had such joy in his relationship with God and zest for life, which bubbled out with his the amazing laugh.

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

Psalm 139 because I love the idea that we are held in God's love from the womb onwards.

**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?**

The On Earth festival, which was held at St Francis College on Saturday 8 October, had the theme “Embracing Joy”. People gathered to eat, dance, sing, plant, learn and create together.

**Why is Reconciliation with First Nations peoples important?**

*Makarrata* is a word in the Yolngu language that means “a coming together after a struggle, facing the facts of wrongs and living again in peace.” *Makarrata* is just as important for those of us who have benefitted from colonialism in this country as it is for our First Nations peoples. It is only by engaging in meaningful Reconciliation and *Makarrata* that we can live our lives in truth and integrity.

**Why is the Uluru Statement From the Heart important for Anglicans?**

The Uluru Statement From the Heart's two reforms – the Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution and the *Makarrata* Commission of truth telling and Treaty – continue the important work begun by the successful 1967 Referendum, which meant our First Nations peoples were counted in the Census for the first time.
What is the kindest gesture you have ever received or witnessed?

I know a rough sleeper who sat and prayed with a cantankerous rough sleeper on a strip of land by a railway line while waiting two hours for an ambulance that came too late.

If you could have a billboard with any text on it?

“God loves everybody – no exceptions.”

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

The Gospel of Luke because it contains some of my favourite stories of Jesus and it's helpful for people to read one story of Jesus from cover to cover.

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

Read, garden and walk.

Where do you do your best thinking?

While walking along the Brisbane River.

What is your earliest memory?

Meeting my cousins in Germany when I was a pre-schooler.

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

I go and pull out weeds in the garden or cook with whatever ingredients I have so I don't need to go shopping first.

What is the funniest thing that happened to you recently?

Arriving in Brisbane and hearing the shrieking cry of the curlew in the night for the first time was so distressing I nearly rang the police.

If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would that be?

Pasta – any way it comes.

What day would you like to re-live and why?

My ordination day. There had been a heatwave in Adelaide and the rain had come while we were in the Cathedral. We came out to pouring rain and I was soaked to my skin. In a place where rain is rare and valued – in the driest state on the driest inhabited continent – it was a sign of God's abundant blessing.
A truckie, a farmer, a General Manager and a priest

Rob – Man who sleeps rough outside an Anglican church

My name is Rob. I have been on the streets for about two months. Before I was living on the streets I was a truck driver, working full-time and earning a decent wage. My work involved travelling interstate in a heavy combination truck. I drove trucks for over 15 years. I really enjoyed it, especially being my own boss.

One night a few months ago I was at a farewell event for a friend at a pub. We sang karaoke – the night was going great until I walked out of the pub and was suddenly king hit for no reason in the head by a random stranger. I do not know how long I was out for. A couple of friends picked me up off the ground and took me home.

I was laid up for five days. There was so much pain – it was like whiplash. I have lost memory, sense of smell and taste and have blurred vision and a locked jaw. I still need medical clearance to drive a truck again.

Because I could not work, I could not pay my rent and that is how I ended up on the streets. Initially I slept somewhere else, before sleeping outside the church a few weeks ago. I like being around the other rough sleepers at the church.

It is a myth that all people on the streets have addiction issues. To assume that all people are on the streets because of drug use is wrong. Circumstances beyond a person's control can land them on the street – just one situation can be a life changer.
Suddenly being on the streets has helped me to appreciate regular life more. Things I used to take for granted, I no longer do – like a bed, waking up and turning the kettle on, being able to shower whenever I want.

My passport, wallet and phone were stolen soon after I started sleeping on the streets.

My mum does not live locally. She is elderly and so I do not want her to know that I am on the streets because she would worry and would not stop.

“I was a farmer before I was homeless. I come from a long line of farmers. I really loved working the land – it was my life” (Warwick, 2022)

**Warwick – Anglican church rough sleeper**

I have been homeless for about 20 years. Up until around four months ago, I lived near the airport. I went “dumpster diving” every day, so I could eat. I cooked my food at the barbeque facilities at a local park.

I started sleeping rough outside a local Anglican church about four months ago because I was threatened by some guys. I am happy sleeping outside the church because I feel safe there. Safety is the main thing.

I was a farmer before I was homeless. I come from a long line of farmers. I really loved working the land – it was my life.
It is normal for farmers to have debt; however, I could not service my debt after I became sick with chronic fatigue syndrome. I was unable to work the land, which meant that I had no income coming in to service the debt.

Brain fog and fatigue were the two main symptoms. I got chronic fatigue syndrome from a combination of physical trauma following a serious tractor accident and Q fever, which is a disease caused by bacteria that is spread by livestock.

Over a period of time, the stress built up and it got to a stage where I could not take it anymore. So I got out. One day I just left the farm.

I have plenty of food to eat on the streets – I just have to be organised and get to it. Lack of accommodation is the main issue now. I am drug-free and dry and have a totally clean police record. More needs to be done to provide accommodation for the increasing number of people living on the streets.

St John’s Crisis Centre General Manager Dianne Kozik says there has been a spike in need since the onset of COVID-19, with a significant increase in domestic and family violence

**Dianne Kozik – General Manager, St John’s Crisis Centre, Surfers Paradise**

I attended an assembly in 2007 at St Hilda’s School, where my daughters went. The founder of St John’s, Joan Hancock, spoke about the work of St John’s and homelessness in my own backyard. I realised I was living in a bubble – I had no idea that there were people living on the streets in my neighbourhood. I went home to my husband that afternoon and said, “There are people who need
help.” So I started volunteering. I joined the admin staff two years later, and then became General Manager in 2019.

The statistics show that women over the age of 55 are the fastest growing group of people experiencing homelessness. This is largely due to the rental crisis – women can't afford to pay the rent. We are seeing more and more women in that age group living in their cars. It is really sad.

Domestic and family violence is also a primary contributing factor. Before the pandemic started we saw maybe one woman a week who was fleeing intimate partner violence – now we see two a day. There is an increasing number of women sleeping in their cars with their children. Providing safe temporary accommodation for these survivors is a priority for St John's. In partnership with St Peter's, Southport and the Diocese of Brisbane, two units purchased by St Peter's are providing emergency accommodation for mothers fleeing domestic and family violence with their children through St John's Crisis Centre.

“This one is of our community meal family celebrating Mary Norris’ 100th Birthday as she continues to serve as a part of the community meal team” (The Rev'd Tania Eichler, The Parish of Maroochydore, August 2022)

The Rev'd Tania Eichler – Rector, Parish of Maroochydore

We started our weekly community meals after a gentleman from our congregation was touched with compassion to respond to local people living with homelessness, disconnection and loneliness in
2012. The initial idea was to get a van and take food and supplies around. Prayer and reflection led us to host a weekly community meal. It is a more sustainable approach to offer a place of welcome and care, open to anyone from the local community as we seek to bless and show God’s love for those who attend.

Our doors open around 4.00 pm, when we greet our guests and sit down with them for a chat and cuppa. At 5.00 pm, before the main meal is served, we say, “Welcome to our Family Dinner” and then there is a combined interactive grace and ‘Think Spot’. It starts with the question, “What are you thankful for?” and is followed by a message of love and hope reflecting our sidewalk chalk art.

What do we mean by “homeless”? People who are sleeping rough on the streets and those who have to rely upon friends and family members putting them up for short periods of time in an ongoing “couch surfing” situation.

The people we have shared conversation and food with have become homeless for varying reasons. The Sunshine Coast has a high level of rental stress, with the Real Estate Institute of Queensland (REIQ) reporting that the Sunshine Coast has an incredibly tight vacancy rate of 0.6 per cent (2.6 per cent or higher is considered healthy). Unemployment, lack of support following foster care or custody, and domestic and family violence are also key causes.

Our community meal is more than food – it is an extension of the family table with conversations and connections for all who need a hearty meal and some TLC.

Note from The Rev’d Gillian Moses, Chair the ACSQ Domestic and Family Violence Working Group: The Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) is committed to promoting and supporting a safe environment for all. Domestic and family violence is unacceptable. We offer pastoral care to victims of domestic and family abuse. The ACSQ is part of the Queensland Churches Together Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project (JCDVPP), which publishes resources for clergy and lay people.

Editor’s note: 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.

PMC team note: A new small group resource is available for parishes and ministries to explore inclusion and respect. The free resource covers eight optional themes, with a choice of personal stories from Australian Anglicans forming the resource’s backbone. This resource was developed by the Parishes and other Mission Agencies Commission (PMC) team and is part of the ACSQ’s response to General Synod’s ‘Being Together’ statement. The resource may be downloaded from the ACSQ website.
“A glimpse of heaven On Earth”: hundreds embrace the joy of diversity

2022’s On Earth festival drew a crowd of more than 500, with youth and young adults making up around half of the participants and volunteers

Over 500 people gathered for the second annual On Earth festival at St Francis College on Saturday, celebrating 2022’s Diocesan theme “Being Together: Embracing Joy” through the arts, music, spirituality and justice.

The packed festival program included sustainable farming workshops, an eclectic line-up of local and regional performers, guided meditation and labyrinth walks, a refugee art exhibition, talks and mini-lectures, storytelling and workshops for kids and Tesla test drives.

The event engaged hundreds of youth and young adults, who made up around half of the festival participants and volunteers.

Former church youth group member Carolyn Farago said that her festival highlight was listening to young On The Way podcast co-host and Coomera Anglican College Faith and Spirituality Coordinator Dom Fay reflect on his faith journey.

“One takeaway was his observation that we tend to fall into two groups – people who see life as something to be endured and those that see it as an adventure,” Ms Farago said.

“He made the interesting point that we say ‘that’s life’ when things go wrong, even though there are plenty of moments where unexpected good things happen, which are just as much part of life.”
Throughout the day people from the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (ACSQ) and the wider community ran workshops teaching festival goers practical skills, creative techniques and ancient knowledge.

These included Labyrinth walks, tips and tricks for living more sustainably, First Nations seeded jewellery making and a paint-your-own-plant-pot corner for kids, as well as the popular Baroona Farm wicking bed and composting workshops.

This year’s On Earth festival was held in conjunction with the St Francis College Open Day, with a variety of mini-lectures given in the Chapel of The Holy Spirit and the Roscoe Library building.

St Francis College Principal The Rev’d Dr Ruth Mathieson said she particularly enjoyed listening to the live music.

“It was great to see the bustle, activity and connecting happening in and around Old Bishopsbourne,” Dr Mathieson said.

“A highlight for me was, as the evening came, a chance to sit with a drink and listen to wonderful performers like Lydia Fairhall, who is a Worimi woman, singer-songwriter and St Francis College student.”

The festival was opened with an acknowledgement of Country given by Kuku Yalanji Traditional Owner and artist Lalania Tusa.

Ms Tusa said she was excited to return to the festival following her popular dot painting workshop last year.

“The highlight of this year’s On Earth festival for me was connecting with a diverse range of people from all walks of life,” Ms Tusa said.

Festival co-organiser Peter Branjerdporn from the ACSQ Justice Unit said his On Earth highlight was seeing the diversity of people.

“I loved seeing people who are different working together for the common good of all people, Mr Branjerdporn said.

“It made the day such a vibrant celebration of life – it was a glimpse of heaven on earth.

“That is what On Earth is all about – embracing joy by appreciating one another’s differences, and realising that the Body of Christ is made whole when we choose to be with and for one another.

“It makes all the hard work of so many volunteers, performers and facilitators worthwhile.

“I’d especially like to thank the St Francis College events organising committee members, Rod, Linda, Sheilagh, Eve, Bill, Ceri and Erica, for all of their efforts co-organising the festival.

“I think we have started a wonderful annual gathering and really hope it continues to grow as we expand and collaborate with more groups across the Church and wider communities.”
Festival justice stalls were also popular again this year, as stall holders spoke to festival participants about their advocacy work, with many signing up as volunteers and supporters.

Stall holders included Angligreen, the Roscoe Library, Thread Together, Common Grace, Baroona Farm, Tearfund Australia and the Joint Churches Domestic Violence Prevention Project, among many others.

Editor’s note: Did you attend On Earth? Please assist festival organisers by providing feedback via this online form – you could win a copy of the book Together We Can: Everyday Australians doing amazing things to give our planet a future by Claire O’Rourke.

Editor’s note 19/10/2022: Images updated.

News • Tuesday 18 October 2022 • By Jo Leveritt

Champion show guinea pigs blessed at special service

St John the Divine, Burnett Heads parishioner Hilary Reed, who brought her champion guinea pigs Pyrus, Mystic and Jacob, said she enjoyed the 1 October 2022 blessing of the pets gathering

Three champion show guinea pigs were among the pets blessed at St John the Divine, Burnett Heads during the closing days of 2022's Season of Creation.

Parishioner Hilary Reed, who brought her champion guinea pigs Pyrus, Mystic and Jacob, said she enjoyed the gathering.

“The blessing service was a delightful afternoon in the outdoors and a wonderful opportunity to thank God for the gift of animals,” Ms Reed said.

Parishioners and nearly 30 wider Burnett Heads community members brought along nine canine companions to the annual blessing event.
Assistant Priest of the Anglican Parish of Bundaberg, Mother Kate Ross, led the afternoon service, which was fittingly held outdoors so gatherers could enjoy Creation.

The service included a sermon on St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of the animals and ecology, and several popular hymns, including the 174-year-old Anglican hymn ‘All Things Bright and Beautiful’.

During the afternoon tea, each beloved pet received a tasty treat and a blessing certificate.

At the conclusion of the service, a collection was taken to benefit local animal rescue organisation Red Collar Rescue, including a donation from the St John’s Ladies Guild.

The annual blessing of the pets gathering at St John the Divine is one of the parish’s most popular events.

St Francis of Assisi’s Feast Day of 4 October marks the last day of the Season of Creation, which commences on the first day of spring annually.

Features • Monday 17 October 2022 • By The Rev’d Dr Gemma Dashwood OAM, The Rev’d Selina McMahon

Marathon walk for mental wellness: dawn to dusk

The Rev’d Selina McMahon and The Rev’d Dr Gemma Dashwood will walk from dawn to dusk between St Paul’s, Ipswich and St John’s Cathedral on 28 October 2022 to raise money for clergy mental wellness

Forty-five per cent of Australians suffer from a mental illness at some time in their lives. This figure applies just as equally to clergy as it does to anyone else. Although little research has been dedicated to clergy mental health, some of the available data shows that about 20 per cent of clergy acknowledge struggling with a mental illness. This is a big deal.
The whole Church needs to surround vulnerable clergy with love, compassion and kindness until they find their feet again. While it is encouraging to know that the Church is increasingly becoming better at identifying and addressing the shortfalls in how it supports clergy when they face mental health challenges, there is still a way to go.

We believe that we can do better.

There are lots of resources available for the general community and, particularly with this being mental health month, people are being encouraged to talk about the mental challenges they are facing or to reach out to those who are struggling.

Everyone needs to play their part in supporting clergy who are struggling with mental wellness.

The idea for our walk came when we were considering some way of raising awareness about clergy mental wellness to churchgoers, as well as to the wider community. With one of us based in Ipswich and the other at the Cathedral, a walk from one church to the other seemed a natural idea. When we realised that this route is almost exactly 42.1 km – the official marathon distance – the “Marathon Walk for Mental Wellness” was born.

We will be stopping at as many churches as we can en route for breaks, as well as to pray for all those suffering mental health challenges – particularly clergypersons. These pauses will also give community members the opportunity to join with us for part of the walk.

Neither of us are mental health experts, although experience and research have shown us that five commonly missed symptoms of mental illness include:

- constant fatigue
- physical pain (if your body is sick it can affect your mental health, and the converse is also true)
- perfectionism (some mental illnesses can distort perception of self and others, which can lead to unachievable standards being set)
- lack of emotion
- avoidance of people (often used initially as a coping strategy, but can be taken to extremes).

Having failed to recognise these symptoms in friends whose lives have been severely impacted, we knew that we had to do something to highlight it.

So from dawn to dusk on 28 October 2022, we will be undertaking the Marathon Walk for Mental Wellness (MW²). Please feel free to join us for part of the journey – everyone is very welcome.

You can also follow us on Facebook for event information, training updates and live videos on the day.

Through our marathon walk, we are also raising money to support clergy struggling with mental health challenges. A new Clergy Mental Health Support ANFIN account has been started for this purpose – donations are very welcome.

**Tips for supporting the mental wellbeing of clergypersons:**

1. Be realistic about your expectations of clergy, who also need to balance other commitments, such as family, other parish centres, study or (if they are serving in an honorary role) other work.
2. During particularly busy liturgical periods (such as Holy Week or Advent) or on busy days, be especially mindful of your clergyperson's limits.

3. Always support your clergyperson in their weekly day off, regular holidays, exercise routines and hobbies.

4. Speak more openly about mental health in your parishes to help destigmatise the conversation.

5. Be willing to share the load and be reliable when you put up your hand, encouraging others to do the same.

**Editor's note:** If you are in need of support, including helpline assistance, please visit the [Queensland Government website](http://queensland.gov.au).

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**Reflections • Monday 17 October 2022 • By Monica Behrenbruch**

**A school sacristan's thoughts on “Embracing Joy”**

“When I am enjoying the company of another person, I will tell them so. If I love something they did, I will tell them so. It is the smaller things that mean so much” (St Aidan's Anglican Girls' School sacristan Monica Behrenbruch)

When Archbishop Phillip [first introduced](http://queensland.gov.au) the 2022 Diocesan theme, “Being Together: Embracing Joy”, he said:

“For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.’ (1 Corinthians 12.12-13)

“Embracing Joy will focus on celebrating the way that our differences help to make us whole and the importance of diversity.”
I only recently came to this epiphany, with the help of my fellow St Aidan's sacristan, Beth. We were coincidently discussing how the make-up of a community is much like a body, and, as the above definition reads, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body.”

While the Church has many important parts, such as the eyes (those who are logical and lead) to see and legs (those who support and encourage others) to take us places, we still need other parts, such as the muscles to help carry and lift the load.

We must treat each part of the body kindly to maintain a healthy relationship with our whole body. Thus, it only makes sense that we should love and care for everyone. It does not come down to some being more important than others, but rather that we are all people made in God's image, which is reason enough to celebrate our diversity.

Growing up I always had the belief that one must make judgements of people based on first impressions. Perhaps a little wiser now, I have come to realise that people are not always whom you think they are at first. So I started practising differently how I perceive people, and I encourage others to do the same. When I meet someone new now, I see them as a blank slate. I try really hard not to make any assumptions about them based on how they look or even what they say because both looks and words can be deceiving.

People may appear broken, but sometimes our prejudices stop us from seeing how wholesome another person is. Instead, I look at their actions and their values. Sometimes it is not about “celebrating” necessarily, but simply acknowledging. When I am enjoying the company of another person, I will tell them so. If I love something they did, I will tell them so. It is the smaller things that mean so much.

I suppose that because I am young, have grown up in quite a sheltered environment and not had to endure hardships I hear grown-ups speak of, I have never seen or experienced discrimination. I see this as a blessing. I feel open and eager to learn about others. I believe that younger people, untainted with the experiences of those like our parents, have the ability to see outside the box at the potential for change and inclusion.

Interpretation can play a large role in how people might see the Church bringing people of all kinds together. How I like to see it is that church is a place of thanks and praise. When I go to church, I always come home feeling thankful.

People who are not Christians may not see God as a source to show their gratitude, but everyone has things and people whom they are thankful for in their lives. I believe the Church is simply a place where people can feel their gratitude being heard. You can thank a person a hundred times and still they may not hear you, but I believe God hears my prayers of thanks and sends that person love on my behalf. That is my belief on the role of the Church in bringing diverse people together – acknowledging that we all have something and someone we can be thankful for.

I like to think that “diversity” goes beyond simply that we are all different individuals. It is true, yes, that we have traits that are unique to us, but we also share the ability to understand one another.

I made the analogy recently – I like to think we are all a rainbow. We go through all the colours one by one, and find which fits us best. Sometimes we even change our mind, or the shade of red deepens, but regardless of that, we all still have our own spot reserved amongst all the other colours that make
up that rainbow. To protect the wonders that God has granted us, we should protect those that help us make up such a colourful community – our neighbours.

News • Wednesday 19 October 2022 • By Michelle McDonald

Uluru Statement canvas delights Cathedral Peace Day attendees

The original Uluru Statement From the Heart canvas was brought to St John’s Cathedral on 21 September 2022 by constitutional lawyer Professor Megan Davis, who spoke about the Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution in this year’s Brisbane Peace Lecture.

The original Uluru Statement From the Heart canvas was brought to St John's Cathedral recently by constitutional lawyer and Cobble Cobble woman Professor Megan Davis, surprising those who gathered for 2022’s Brisbane Peace Lecture and the Celebrating Local Agents of Peace Awards.

Professor Davis is a constitutional lawyer from the University of New South Wales, and serves as an expert with the United Nations Human Rights Council’s Expert Mechanism on the rights of Indigenous peoples.

Professor Davis’ eleventh annual Brisbane Peace Lecture focused on the Statement’s reforms, the National Constitutional Convention where the Statement was signed and the nation-wide community dialogues leading up to the convention.

“Our Country, our land, is integral to who we are,” Professor Davis said.

“Our culture is a gerontocracy, which means that our Elders, our old people, lead decision making in communities, and are the cultural authority in our communities.

“The fundamental normative principle is that decision needs to be driven by community.
“So we designed a process that would enable us to seek advice from communities via a structured, deliberative dialogue process.

“What does this Voice look like enshrined in the Constitution?

“The referendum that we will have next year creates an enabling provision, so it sets up the power for the Parliament to make laws on a Voice.

“The provision to be inserted into the Constitution will say that the bricks and mortar of that Voice will be set up in a process supervised by the Parliament after the referendum.

“Around the world, this technique is known as the ‘decision to defer’ – it’s a decision to defer detail, not unlike the way in which the High Court of Australia was set up...recognised in the Constitution first and then set up in legislation later.

“We say that the design of the Voice should be done by communities after the referendum.

“This is consistent with the ethic of the Uluru dialogue – design done by community who are fully informed on the options before them.

“The first job of the Uluru Statement is the implementation of this Voice to Parliament.

“Why do we call it a ‘roadmap to peace’?

“We say the Uluru Statement is a sign of friendship. What we heard in all of the dialogues right across the country is that many of our old people are dying and they want some peace for their Country.

“One of the most prominent conversations in each of the dialogues was about our rapidly heating climate and climate change and how it was important for our communities to have peace, so that as a nation we can face what we are going to face in the future.

“We say that we need peace now and we say that the Uluru Statement From the Heart is the beginning of that conversation – the bringing together of First Nations peoples and all Australians.

“Law reform is about imagination – you've got to imagine that the world can change, you've got to imagine that the world can be a better place.”

Following her International Day of Peace community address, Professor Davis' invited all attendees to look at the Uluru Statement, with many delighted to hold it up and have their photo taken with the landmark canvas.

In response, the delighted emcee, The Rev'd Canon Dr Marian Free, acknowledged Professor Davis and all First Nations peoples for their graciousness.

“I am always overwhelmed by the grace and generosity of our Indigenous peoples, and to me the Statement says everything,” Dr Free said.

At the beginning of the formalities, Ngugi Elder Uncle Bob Anderson OAM gave a heart-warming Acknowledgement of Country in both Language and English.
“Welcome to this land. The land of the Jagera people and the land of the Turrbal people – I pay my deep respects for those who have walked the land before us, those who walk the land now and those who will walk the land in the future, guaranteeing the flow and the rhythm of life,” Uncle Bob said.

“When I speak, I speak as a father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather. The little ones call me ‘GG Bob’.

“It’s good that we celebrate this occasion in this house of the Lord – Jesus who was known as the Prince of Peace.

“I thank everybody for being present here and I look forward to engaging in some conversation at the conclusion of these celebrations.”

Prior to Professor Davis’ lecture, the University of Queensland’s Rotary Peace Centre presented the two annual Celebrating Local Agents of Peace Awards, which were introduced by centre Director Roland Bleiker.

“This award was initiated six years ago...and goes to a Queensland-based person or organisation who has made a substantial contribution to peace and peace-building activities consistent with principles of non-violence, locally, nationally or globally,” Professor Bleiker said.

“Very often peace is best promoted by people on the ground through incremental processes.

“Scholars call this ‘everyday peace’ and ‘local peace’.”

Founding Director of the University of Queensland Rotary Peace Centre Marianne Hanson, who initiated the Celebrating Local Agents of Peace Awards, presented an individual award to Bradley Lewis.

Bradley Lewis is a community mediator, facilitator, peace builder and policy advisor with more than 30 years’ experience serving the Queensland community.

Mr Lewis said that it’s important to celebrate everyday “acts of kindness” so that peace is fostered at a grassroots level.

“I feel it's intrinsically important to encourage peacebuilding efforts, including everyday acts of kindness, sharing, and compassion, be they modest and/or be they grand in scope,” Mr Lewis said.

“And wheresoever we can publicly acknowledge, encourage and support these endeavours, then so much the better, and hopefully it will inspire others, impart understanding and promote continuing positive change.”

The theme for this year’s United Nations International Day of Peace is “End Racism. Build Peace”.

So it was especially fitting that Professor Hanson presented an organisational award to Milpera State High School, an intensive language school in Chelmer for people of refugee and migrant backgrounds.

“Many of these students will have experienced conflict or trauma in their lives, and the community at Milpera has undoubtedly played a huge part in welcoming them to Australia and ensuring their academic and social wellbeing,” Professor Hanson said.
“I have seen the dedication and service provided by Milpera’s teachers and volunteers, and we are delighted to honour them here.

“Milpera translates to ‘the meeting place of brothers and sisters’ – we are sure that the careful work and designed interactions that take place at Milpera are producing a generation of wonderful young people who can take their place proudly in multi-cultural Australia.”

The Milpera State School’s award was accepted by Mary-Ellen Nielsen from the Brisbane Taylor Bridge Rotary Club on behalf of the Milpera principal due to the event being held during the school holiday period.

Ms Nielsen said that the local Rotary Club has supported Milpera over many years, including donating food items to, and serving food for, the school’s breakfast program.

The student message, which was given by Year 5 student Atticus Morris from the Ferny Grove State School’s Peace Program, resonated strongly with our 2022 Diocesan theme, “Being Together: Embracing Joy”.

“I think peace is about understanding, accepting and celebrating difference,” Atticus said.

“It’s not seeing difference as a bad thing or something to fight or extinguish out.

“It means working together and caring for than just yourself.”

Inspired by Uluru Statement From the Heart and in line with our Diocesan Reconciliation Action Plan, Archbishop Phillip Aspinall made a formal submission on behalf of our Diocese in support of the Voice last year.

President of the United Nations Association of Australia Queensland branch Claire Moore said that the Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution is significant for all Australians.

“The Voice to Parliament is one important step to real reconciliation and peace in our country...it is a commitment to hope after generations of injustice and ignorance.”

Professor Davis was introduced by Professor Bronwyn Fredericks, the University of Queensland’s Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Indigenous Engagement.

Professor Fredericks’ multidisciplinary research has a strong practice-based commitment to social justice and improving health, education and life outcomes for First Nations peoples.

Seventeen members of the Brisbane Combined Unions Choir performed songs between the formalities.

A collection was taken during the evening for the UNICEF flood appeal in Pakistan.

The evening was closed by Clem Campbell, from the United Nations Association of Australia Queensland branch and Earth Charter, who acknowledged all those present as “global citizens”.

Professor Megan Davis’ Brisbane Peace lecture and the Cathedral’s other key International Day of Peace formalities may be viewed on YouTube.
Trailblazing judge inspires WestMAC First Nations students to daydream big

The Honourable Justice Lincoln Crowley visited WestMAC First Nations students on Friday 23 September 2022 as part of the school's inaugural 'Conversation Series'.

Australia's first Aboriginal Supreme Court judge has inspired West Moreton Anglican College First Nations students in a recent landmark speech.

Warramunga man Justice Lincoln Crowley spoke with the students about their futures, encouraging them to daydream big.

West Moreton Anglican College (WestMAC) Indigenous perspectives learning innovator Phyllis Marsh, a MaMu woman from the Mundubarra people, said Justice Crowley's visit encouraged the students to be visionary and ambitious.

"The visit of Justice Crowley is part of what I call 'The Conversation Series', which we launched with his visit," Ms Marsh said.

"We wanted to create an opportunity for our First Nations students to speak with and hear from a First Nations leader who followed a vision and pursued individual excellence.

"The highlight for me was the conversation around becoming inspired about who you can become – Justice Crowley shared that he daydreamed about who he saw himself to be as an adult.

"Becoming inspired through hearing personal stories brings connection – hearing this from a First Nations leader allows presence through a representation of sameness."
“Transformation of self takes courage, creating a vision for yourself, and connecting to people who inspire, whether that is through reading about them, seeing them on television, or sitting with them in a conversation – these are all opportunities from which we can learn.”

The Conversation Series is part of WestMAC’s plan to strengthen First Nations students’ wellbeing through a contextualised Leadership Development program called NGARI Student Leadership Development.

The Honourable Justice Lincoln Crowley was sworn in as the first First Nations judge of an Australian superior court in June.

During his speech, Justice Crowley shared stories about growing up and words of encouragement with the WestMAC students.

“It is within you to figure out where you want to go, and how you’re going to get there,” Justice Crowley said.

“Having a vision about what I wanted to do – you think it through, you think about it.”

Mr Crowley encouraged students “to achieve because you want to.”

Year 11 student Lucas Marsh said that he benefited from the relaxed and informative session with Justice Crowley.

“The highlight for me was his willingness to spend time with us and hear from us and how open he was,” Lucas said.

“He said don’t put pressure on yourself – spend time daydreaming about who you can become.

“He made some great connections from being a school student to where he is now that I really connected to, and about what is fair and what is not fair, and that others don't make that decision for you.”

“There is a lot of pressure to get things right, and talking with someone like Justice Crowley allowed me to breathe and know that I am doing great having fun in the moment and that my vision will lead me.”
Franklin

Rock Island Bend, Franklin River

Forty years ago this coming January I was standing with about 10 others on the banks of the upper Franklin River in western Tasmania, ready for a 10-day rafting trip. It was pouring with rain, and continued to do so for the next few days. My destination was either Strahan or the protest site. Our names had been taken by the police – not for safety reasons, but as part of the intimidation process to discourage environmentalists and potential protestors who might join the ongoing “No Dams” blockade.

The documentary feature, Franklin, interweaves Oliver Cassidy’s solo rafting trip down the Franklin River, his personal life journey, his late father’s rafting trip 40 years earlier and the history of the “No Dams” campaign. This eight-year-long campaign ultimately saved the Franklin River being flooded by stopping the construction of a dam designed to generate hydroelectricity.

As Oliver retraces his late father’s 14-day journey down the river, there are flashbacks to both his protestor father’s trip and the lengthy grassroots campaign that helped “No Dams” supporter Bob Hawke win the Federal Election, as well as to the decisive 1983 High Court Tasmanian Dam case decision in Brisbane.

Interviews with Bob Brown, Uncle Jim Everett and various other key people involved in the protest are featured throughout the movie. Most protesters spent some time on the site and then returned to their regular day jobs, for example as school teachers. Others became more familiar names, such as founder of Australian Geographic Dick Smith and botanist Professor David Bellamy. The passion of all people featured is obvious.
When we mix our skills with our passion to do God’s work in the world, we are using God’s gifts. The film shows the diversity of people involved, including believers and non-believers, overseas visitors and First Nations peoples.

The footage depicting a 40-year period is understandably varied, stretching from “home movies” to beautiful modern drone shots of the river and the surrounding World Heritage listed national park.

Then there was “the shot” I was hoping for, when the whole screen showed Peter Dombrovskis’ famous photo of “Rock Island Bend”. I have kept a poster copy of it since my early 20s. The clarity of that single image on the big screen was overwhelming. While campaigns need people, art, literature, science and legal minds, that iconic photo summed up the importance of the whole campaign.

The documentary also features stills of protestors, which you might remember from newspaper front pages.

This movie is rated MA15+. Why would an environmentalist documentary have this rating? There are no scenes of graphic violence nor any sex scenes. Explaining the rating would give away a major theme, which is a current key discussion in our churches and the wider community.

I recommend this documentary to *anglican focus* readers. It is a movie that is pitched at many levels simultaneously. On one level it is about the history of the protest. For those who remember the events of 40 years ago, regardless of whether you supported the dam or the protest, you may find some twists and uncomfortable viewing.

Then there are the family dynamics and the personal history. Given the diverse beliefs of Anglicans, an unexpected narrative shift might be uncomfortable for some *anglican focus* readers even though the matter is approached sensitively.

The educative nature of the documentary is a plus, helping to show what Australian society was like in 1983.

There are also familiar metaphors throughout the movie, including the resurrection theme.

Groups can host their own screening or book a private cinema screening via the [documentary's website](#). Either would make for an informative group occasion.

That all of the interwoven themes can be satisfactorily dealt with in 90 minutes shows incredible editing. I was left wanting to see and know more.

Did I end up joining the blockade? Sufficient to say that I did not make it all the way to the blockade due to flooding. I then needed to return to Brisbane to start theological studies several weeks later. One year later though I was back on the river – but that is another story. You can ask me anytime.

*Franklin*, rated MA15+ and directed by Kasimir Burgess, is currently showing at cinemas. You can also host your own screening – more information on the [Franklin movie website](#).
Climate scarves, teal independents and proposed treaty

"By the beginning of 2022 more than 300 scarves had been knitted, which is enough to gift one to every Federal Member of Parliament and Senator!" (Justice Unit's Peter Branjerdporn, October 2022)

I first heard about a climate scarf from Cathedral friend Jessica Morthorpe after she presented one to her Member of Parliament to remind them that the Earth's overall average temperatures are rising and that we all have a responsibility to help re-balance the climate.

My friend knitted 100 colourful stripes representing temperatures from the past 100 years – the blue hues represent the years when the Earth was relatively cool; the cream and yellow indicate the years things got a bit warmer; and, the reds represent the years that became very hot.

Inspired by her action, Christian justice advocacy organisation, Common Grace, started a nation-wide campaign called “Knit For Climate Action” in 2020 to encourage Christians to knit a scarf for their elected representatives and church leaders. They made the pattern available online and my daughter and I signed up to make one for our church to display during the Season of Creation last year.

As it turned out, many other Christians also signed up. By the beginning of 2022 more than 300 scarves had been knitted, which is enough to gift one to every Federal Member of Parliament and Senator! This was a sign that damage to the climate is now an issue that many Christians care deeply about.

A recent Tearfund Australia climate report confirms that 86 per cent of young Christians want effective action taken to re-balance the climate. The report also tells us that three out of every four young Christians think care for creation should be an essential part of the Church's mission.

The scarves were given to our Federal elected leaders in Canberra late last year, less than a year before the election was called. We know that the outcome of the 2022 election was impacted by the so-called “climate-wars” – overall, average mum and dad voters preferred candidates who were more serious about climate action than party politics. The emergence and success of the “teal” independents are particularly telling, with their trademark colour being a mixture of blue (for the
more conservative side of politics) and green (for those who are concerned for the environment). Clearly most people want a safe climate for our children and grandchildren to grow up in.

Now that the new Albanese government has committed to a 43 per cent emissions reduction by 2030, some may feel that the job is done. However, this goal is simply not fast enough to curb the effects of climate change on our planet, as demonstrated in the “Aim High, Go Fast: Why Emissions Need to Plummet this Decade” report published by the Climate Council. It says that:

“...given the scale of the global emissions reduction task, and taking into account Australia’s very high level of emissions and our huge renewable energy resources, Australia should aim to reduce emissions by 75% below 2005 levels by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2035. This is a fair and achievable contribution to the global task and an imperative given our high vulnerability to escalating extreme weather.”

So we must continue to challenge our leaders to aim higher.

While elections are great opportunities to send a message to our leaders that we are concerned about the climate, thankfully there are plenty of other opportunities in between. One such opportunity is the upcoming 27th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change “Conference of the Parties” (COP27) in Egypt. This conference will be held in November, when support for an international Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty will be sought.

The proposed treaty, which has garnered support from senior faith leaders such as former Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams, reflects a growing global concern that the continued production and export of fossil fuels are overpowering any gains made by the nation-by-nation pursuit of emissions reduction targets.

Faith leaders from around Australia and the Pacific, including from the Anglican Church and other traditions, have signed an open letter to the Australian Government in support of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. They are also calling for an end to approvals for new coal and gas projects and to public subsidies for coal and gas projects.

On the morning the open letter to the Prime Minister will be published, you can support this growing movement of concerned people of faith by joining the Multi-faith service for climate justice at St John’s Cathedral on Thursday 13 October from 8am to 9.15am.

You can also get involved and make a difference by:

1. Following the Queensland Australian Religious Response to Climate Change Facebook Page.
2. Signing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty as a Faith Leader or as a concerned individual.
3. Knitting a scarf and giving it as a gift to an elected representative or faith leader or wearing it during the colder months as a conversation starter. Download the Knitter’s handbook and pattern.

Editor’s note: The Justice Unit’s Peter Branjerdporn is coordinating this year’s On Earth Fest, which will be held on Saturday 8 October at St Francis College. Check out the On Earth Festival website and follow On Earth on Facebook. Book online via Eventbrite. General admission tickets are $20. Concession and under 18 years tickets are $10. Children 12 years and under are free.
Senior faith leaders call on Albanese to increase ambition on climate

Young people from the Republic of Kiribati, a low-lying Pacific island nation, support faith leaders across Australia and the Pacific who are urging Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to take effective climate action (October 2022)

One hundred religious and First Nations leaders from across Australia and the Pacific are urging Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to take effective climate action by stopping all new coal and gas projects and ending public subsidies to the fossil fuel sector.

Signatories to an open letter to Mr Albanese include the Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia, The Most Rev’d Geoffrey Smith, Saibai elder Aunty Dr Rose Elu, and Bishops Cam Venables, Jeremy Greaves and John Roundhill.

Other signatories include the most senior leaders of the Anglican Church in New Zealand and the Pacific, the President of the National Council of Churches, the Grand Mufti of Australia and the President of the Uniting Church, as well as First Nations leaders and senior leaders of the Buddhist, Jewish, Hindu and Brahma Kumaris religions.

Their letter states: “Australia is a wealthy country that profits from exports that are causing the crisis. We hear the cries of anguish from those most vulnerable in the human family who are losing their lives, livelihoods and homes through climate-fuelled disasters.

“The current level of warming is not safe. This moment in history calls for an urgent, courageous, visionary response, especially from those in power. Australia’s leadership in this response, as part of its First Nations Foreign Policy, is vital for the vulnerable communities and ecosystems who depend on it.”
General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches, The Rev'd James Bhagwan, said, “We in the Pacific have welcomed the willingness of the new Australian Government to listen to the peoples of the Pacific.”

“However, coal and gas from Australia are a threat to our survival – and it doesn't matter where they're burned. Whether Australian coal and gas is burned overseas or on Australian soil, our homes and cultures are threatened either way. New coal and gas projects are a death sentence to the Pacific way of life and life in the Pacific,” he said.

Today in major cities across Australia, everyday people of faith are showing support for their message by attending multi-faith services for climate justice at cathedrals and other well-known places of worship. The cathedrals include St John's in Brisbane, St Paul's in Melbourne, St Patrick's in Parramatta and St Mary's in Perth.

The faith leaders have furthermore called on the Prime Minister to restart contributions to the UN's Green Climate Fund. This is widely viewed in low-income countries as a crucial test of how seriously wealthy countries take their responsibilities.

Other “asks” are that First Nations peoples’ rights to protect Country are fully respected, that there be an orderly and supported transition for coal and gas dependent communities, and endorsement of a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The proposed treaty aims to eventually stop the production and export of fossil fuels by participating nations. Noting that global emissions keep rising, advocates believe the current focus at climate talks on the consumption side of fossil fuels are undermined by the lack of international constraints on production.

The Treaty has already been endorsed by Pope Francis, the World Health Organisation, Vanuatu, and Tuvalu, among others.

As well as attending the public services today, some devotees spent the whole of last night together in meditation, prayer, chanting and, in some cases, fasting to show their depth of feeling about the issue.

President of the National Council of Churches, The Rev'd John Gilmore, said “This is about putting loving our neighbours into practice. The government needs to listen to our neighbours in the Pacific. This letter echoes what Pacific leaders said earlier this year at the Pacific Islands Forum: Australia needs to rule out new coal and gas and to stop subsidising those industries.”

The letter and the services were organised by the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change as part of a global faith campaign known as “Faiths 4 Climate Justice”. The campaign is taking place in over 40 countries during the lead up to the COP27 global climate summit in early November in Egypt, and advocates for the endorsement of a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Editor's note 17/10/2022: Images updated.
A permanent referral-only clothing hub will open at St Andrew's Anglican Church in Indooroopilly this week to give people access to brand new clothing in a safe and supportive environment.

The Thread Together clothing hub will be a place of connection, where people who are doing it tough can take time to choose clothing they love and enjoy the option of warm conversation and a good cup of coffee or tea in a welcoming space.

The official launch will take place tomorrow, Thursday 20 October during Anti-Poverty Week from 10am with special dignitaries attending, including Uncle Steve Coghill, Local Member Michael Berkman, the Archbishop Phillip Aspinall, former Governor-General of Australia Dame Quentin Bryce and Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Executive Director Sue Cooke.

Thread Together is a global-first, dedicated to taking excess new clothing from manufacturers and designers and redistributing it to vulnerable people within the community at no cost to the recipient.

Volunteer Coordinator Kate Littmann-Kelly said that the new clothing hub will offer an even more dignified and empowering experience for people who are doing it tough.

“We’re very excited to open the clothing hub at St Andrew’s Anglican Church, as it will provide an extra layer of dignity and choice to people in need,” Ms Littmann-Kelly said.
“They can really enter something that very much looks like a retail environment and it’s a lovely time to be able to come and choose the clothes that you like, go and try it on in a dressing room, have a look at it in front of a mirror and take it away in a beautiful bag.”

Thread Together has grown in Queensland over the past two years. The ‘mobile wardrobe in a van’ took off at the height of the first COVID-19 wave in November 2020 and now services more than 30 Anglicare and other sites across Greater Brisbane and Ipswich.

It has assisted more than 3,000 people in the community. The Thread Together van is sponsored by Bendon Lingerie and is supported and run by Anglicare Southern Queensland and St Andrew's Anglican Church, Indooroopilly.

Ms Littmann-Kelly said the van will continue to service the community and will play a crucial role in addition to the new clothing hub.

“The hub will allow us to provide more children’s clothing, which will assist parents and families in need. There will be a greater array of clothing that people can choose from,” she said.

Anglicare Southern Queensland’s Executive Director Sue Cooke said it was no coincidence that the launch of the new hub took place during Anti-Poverty Week.

“Anglicare staff see every day the challenges faced by the 1 in 8 Queenslanders who live in poverty, and we understand that disadvantage isn't just about material deprivation. The Brotherhood of St Laurence called this ‘the lived experience of being treated as less-than’,” Mrs Cooke said.

“As well as meeting material needs, putting Anglicare’s mission and values into practice means acknowledging the dignity and uniqueness of the individual, and listening to people’s stories with respect and compassion.

“Our partnership with Thread Together and St Andrew's was therefore a natural fit. Thread Together addresses a basic human need in a way that ensures dignity, respect, and the ability to make personal choices, reflecting the unique needs and personality of the people they support.”

The clothing hub will be a referral-only service and will run Monday and Wednesday mornings from 10am until 1pm at St Andrew's Anglican Church, Indooroopilly.

“People in need of clothing can ask their support organisation to make a referral, and then we'll arrange an appointment at the hub,” Ms Littmann-Kelly said.

“If people aren’t connected to an agency, we can also help provide those links, so that people have the support they need. We don’t want the hub just to be about handing out clothing.”

Mrs Cooke thanked a number of people for their assistance over the last two years.

“I’d like to say a special thank you to our partners Thread Together, and to the St Andrew's Anglican Church, Reverend Sue Grimmett and the wonderful parish volunteers who are so much at the heart of this initiative,” Mrs Cooke said.
“Together, as a three-way collaboration, we treasure a partnership where each of us can put our mission and values into action and contribute our strengths to make a whole that is greater than its parts.”

News • Tuesday 18 October 2022 • By Michelle McDonald

Young CAC students buoyed by Olympic swimmer’s visit

Australian Olympic breaststroker Taylor McKeown inspired Year 5 Coomera Anglican College students during a recent “Olympics Unleashed” visit.

The “Olympics Unleashed” program is open to Queensland schools so athletes can share about how they set goals, persevere through challenges and build resilience in their athletic and sport journeys.

In her presentation, the Olympic medalist focused on how critical setting goals was to her swimming career.

Year 5 student Sydney Garth said that Year 5 students were encouraged by Ms McKeown’s tenacity and enthusiasm during her visit last week.

“Taylor McKeown came to our college and shared her Olympic swimming journey and challenges,” Sydney said.

“She displayed determination and persistence and was an inspiration to Year 5.

“When we look back, we will all remember the day she came to talk with us and remember the passion that helped her thrive in her career.”
Ms McKeown told the Year 5 students that while she was at school she made a tile illustrated with an Olympics motif and set the tile in concrete.

She said that the permanent display helped compel her to pursue her goal to become an Olympian.

In 2010, at the age of 15, Ms McKeown won her first national titles in the 100m and 200m breaststroke.

In her Coomera Anglican College presentation, Ms McKeown also emphasised that all journeys bring challenges, including mental and physical difficulties on race days, and how resilience and determination helped her overcome these.

Olympics Unleashed is free and available to all primary schools across Queensland, including regional and remote schools.

In Queensland the program is run by the Australian Olympic Committee in partnership with the Queensland Academy of Sport and is open to Years 4-6 students.

The one-hour visit from an Olympian or Paralympian involves a 25-40 minute presentation, followed by a Q&A session.

“Olympics Unleashed Online” enables athletes to connect with schools virtually via a live event when an in-person visit is not possible.

Following the visit, resources are provided to support future classroom activities so students can be further motivated to pursue their passions, whether in sport, the classroom, the arts, in service and community activities or at home.

Queensland schools can register their interest for a visit via the Australian Olympics website.