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ST MARGARET MARY'S RANDWICK NORTH
OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART RANDWICK



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REFLECTION

DIANE GORDON

Who are the poor? Who are most in need? Who are most pushed to the margins of neglect and powerlessness? It doesn't take a great social analysis to come up with some immediate answers in our own world, and in the global situation today not all the poor are in the news, but as we know a sensitive scan of the news is a place to start.

The U.S. Jesuit Province Superiors named four major groups that are most deserving of our care in their document, A Meditation on our Response to the Call of Christ. 'In this light, how can we ignore the fact that those most in need of our solidarity are those who suffer painful hardships? Their misery seems almost inescapable. Many are trapped in poverty. So limited are their opportunities, their poverty has become structurally entrenched. Their lives are severely diminished and their hopes are crushed by a persistent and oppressive poverty that denies to all but the boldest the basics of human dignity and the opportunity to live happy and fulfilled lives.

Perhaps the most pressing and painful examples are forced migrants (refugees, migrant workers, the undocumented), inner city populations (racial minorities, the elderly, the homeless, the persistently poor), indigenous peoples at home and abroad, and the globally destitute, more than 800 million people who go to bed hungry each night.'

What do we do when we begin to hear the cry of the poor? We tend to not think of the poor very much because to do so can render us sad or feeling 'unable to help.' But, if we take time to reflect upon the situation of the poor near us and around the world, we become aware of how narrow our concerns are or how self-centred we have become. Reflection upon the situation of the poor will draw us closer to them, helping us understand the mystery of radical dependence on God.

If we spend time reflecting upon the situation of the poor, we will begin to pray differently. We will not only see their radical dependence upon God but we will find ourselves turning to God on their behalf, before we ask anything of God for ourselves. This kind of prayer purifies our prayer. It helps us pray with a renewed spirit. It frees us from so many of the demands we can place on God, especially for things like comfort or success or just getting things our way. With the poor as our prayer companions, we can surrender more easily and ask God for what really matters - first on their behalf and then for ourselves.

Our prayer for ourselves will more freely become a prayer that we might be transformed to be better servants for others, especially conscious of those on the margins of society. It will ultimately lead us to ask the Lord to help us make our lifestyle more simple. It can lead us to ask to be freed from our dependence upon so many of the benefits of the unjust social structures of our world. Finally, it might lead us to ask for the courage to act against those unjust social structures, even to dismantle them.

Front Cover Photo
Statue of St Joseph the Worker in the grounds of OLSH church
See story page 15

This edition marks the introduction of a new format for the magazine.
Readers response would be appreciated.

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BRAZIL TO AUSTRALIA: STOPS ALONG THE WAY

MICHELE OLTRAMARI



Michele is a parishioner whose life has been one of happiness and sadness. This is her story.

I'm from Brazil and arrived in April 2009 on a working holiday visa. I had been working on a cruise ship, saving some money to come to Australia. Friends had told me about Australia - better than many of the other countries the ship had visited they said -and I was convinced I could settle down here.

"broken but not dead"

I came with my strong faith that God will always protect me and that I'll be surrounded by great people and thank God this happened. I got my first job as a nanny three days after arriving and found accommodation with a Christian family. A great start. Later that year I was able to renew my visa, began studies and now really knew that Australia was a place for me to call home.

Life got better. During this time I met a lovely Peruvian, Broz. I found love and joy with him. Unfortunately within six months he was diagnosed with Hodgkin lymphoma. I turned to God for strength to support him when he decided to return to Peru for chemotherapy treatment. And I never ever panicked, I had a feeling of peace during all this time that he would recover and come back stronger. When he had his first

treatment I witnessed it on Skype. A truly emotional experience.

I was alone and homesick so in February 2011 I returned to my parents in Brazil and to visit Broz in Peru. He seemed pretty fine and strong, we were so happy and we became engaged. We decided to go to New Zealand in July that year. Why New Zealand? That's a long story for telling at a later time. The happiest part was we were married there but we struggled with work and adjusting to a new way of life. But we needed to return to Australia in December to renew my visa. I was able to get my job back, live in the same flat and be surrounded by my old friends. God is good.

2012 was a year of ups and downs. I joined the OLSH Holy Spirit Prayer Group where I found a great mix of culture, strong faith and support for me. They truly become my second family. At year's end Broz was told the cancer had spread. We were in some financial difficulties and just when he received approval for sponsorship our visas were cancelled. Throughout all this time our friends in the Holy Spirit Prayer Group were so very supportive. What great blessings.

So, it was back to Brazil and Peru. All my dreams went astray. The

doctor said Broz needed three years of treatment. Both of us couldn't believe this was happening. Huge sorrow. It meant I would have needed to stay in Peru and learn the Spanish language. I didn't speak Spanish as Brazil is a Portuguese speaking nation. I prayed to God to give me strength to keep afloat.

More difficulties. I had borrowed money in Australia to help us but I was told unless I repaid it I could not return to Australia. There was no work available for me in Brazil so sadly I had to leave Broz whose health was improving and come back here.

It was only my strong faith in God that kept me going and I certainly needed it as Broz's health suddenly deteriorated. One night I had the strongest desire to return to Peru. So I called him and that was our last conversation. That night he passed away. I'm so glad that I said that I loved him and played our favourite song for him to listen to before we said good bye.

I was broken but not dead. God surrounded me in such a peaceful moment that I had never ever felt before and I knew the Holy Spirit was with me for the whole time. I still ask God why all this had happened with me? I still don't know.....maybe one day. A beautiful Mass was held for him at OLSH.

My husband taught me a lot, certainly to be a better person. I'm still in Australia under a student visa, learning, growing and having strong faith in my future. Life will always be good even during hardships because that's how we learn, it's our way of evolution. I have been through a huge cultural mix, moving between three countries, falling in love, and experiencing a death made me think that the most important moment is now, the people that surround you at this moment are the people that you must learn from and there's nothing else that belongs to us. The past and the future are in God's hands.

VOLUNTEERING IN SOUTH AFRICA

GABBY ANDERSON

Gabby Anderson is a student at the University of Notre Dame studying nursing and an ex-student of OLSH (2005). Here she writes of her time as a volunteer in South Africa.



I have recently returned from one of the most amazing experiences I have ever had. Earlier this year I was fortunate enough to be selected among another forty university students to volunteer to work in an orphanage in South Africa. Volunteer Eco Students Abroad or VESA enables students during their university break to travel abroad and help in communities in great need of facilities, in areas of education and wildlife preservation. These communities are found in Fiji, South America, South Africa and most recently South East Asia. Applying for the South African group meant that I was to be going to Khula village in St Lucia, located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal on the east coast of South Africa.

The Khula villagers are part of the Zulu people - 'people of heaven' - and that is the most accurate way to describe these beautiful people. They are honestly the most grateful and welcoming people I have ever met.

I found out about VESA and decided to apply. I was honestly applying on a whim thinking that I might spend my holiday break doing something worthwhile rather than just going to the beach. With the VESA program,

only 10 students are accepted from each university so I thought my chances of being accepted were slim. When I received the email saying I was accepted I was both shocked and nervous.

I did not know anyone else going and was wondering what on earth had prompted me to sign up to travel halfway around the world to volunteer for a couple of weeks. Little did I know the incredible people I would meet and the beautiful friends I would make.

“incredible memories and lifelong friends”

We stayed at a hostel in town and travelled by bus to the village. We worked at the orphanage which runs as a day-care centre during their school term. We helped with meals, education and played games with the children and assisting Mama Dorri, the local day-care owner who selflessly takes in orphans while also single-handedly running the orphanage. She does this using the money she makes from the centre and donations. We helped build a soup kitchen for Mama Dorris to make preparing meals easier, decorating it with a mixture of native Australian and African animals that the children just loved naming. All the volunteers brought with them an array of items for the orphanage, ranging from pens and pencils to blowing bubbles and face paint. We had also all raised enough money to cover the expenses for food at the orphanage for the next three months.

We also completed two days working with wildlife - including cheetahs, leopards, crocodiles and alligators. We were able to volunteer at the sanctuaries in order protect the

wildlife in the area. One of the benefits of these days was that the sanctuary bordered on iSimangaliso Wetland Park which meant that if we went for a drive there was no telling whom we would run into, perhaps a herd of zebras or a family of giraffes.

We also helped in the completion of the new library at the village school that has 1,500 students attending with teachers having to teach classes of up to 90 children. VESA is currently trying to expand the school to allow for smaller classes and just before we arrived bathrooms were installed with flushing toilets!

VESA is incredible as it encourages likeminded people to get out there and make a difference whilst allowing us to gather some incredible memories and lifelong friends. I have honestly never done something so rewarding. Even though I had participated in fundraising and volunteering at school nothing compares to the gratitude we were shown whilst volunteering in the Khula village.

It is so inspiring how the children are welcoming and affectionate to complete strangers. Due to the high prevalence of AIDS in the village (around 70%) many of the children have one parent or none. One of the VESA leaders explained that the more affection we are shown by the children usually means that they are shown very little at home.

Before I arrived in the village I thought the most important aspect of my volunteering was going to be the finished products that we could see such as the library, when in actual fact the most important part was showing some love to a beautiful group of children who stole all our hearts.

I'LL RIDE WITH YOU

RACHAEL JACOBS

Rachael Jacobs was on a train in Brisbane during the Lindt Cafe siege, when she saw a Muslim woman remove her scarf. She offered to walk with the woman, but wasn't prepared to become the catalyst for the #illridewithyou movement that was embraced by millions. Here, she explains why she reached out and the impact of her faith upon her actions.



When I first heard about the siege, I was frightened. My husband and brother work near Martin Place. I felt sick with fear for the hostages and shocked that something so terrible could happen in somewhere so familiar. I know Sydney as the beautiful, friendly city. My parents would take us to Martin Place to play, to watch the Christmas tree being lit, or observe the ANZAC Day ceremony. The horrors going on there at the time were unthinkable.

At the time of the siege I was living in Brisbane, and a stranger on the train opened my eyes to another type of victim.

As the woman removed her headscarf, I felt an overwhelming sense of sadness. I have no way of knowing what it feels like to be a Muslim woman, but attacks on women who wear headscarves are well documented. Stories of abusive street calls, wry looks and scarves being ripped off are part of their everyday experience. While many Australians don't understand the reasons some choose to wear a scarf, we can agree that no one deserves this treatment. Especially since we pride ourselves on being a free and tolerant society, where anyone is free to peacefully express their religion in their own way.

People have asked me why I chose to approach the woman. How did I know she was Muslim and did I know why she took off her scarf? The answer is no. I wanted to reach out to her without being patronising or drawing attention to something that was obviously very sensitive to her. I wanted to help, but at a loss at what to do. I was even somewhat clumsy when I approached her and said 'Put it on, I'll walk with you'.

Some have suggested this action was patronising, not just to her, but to all Muslims. And they may be right. Others suggested I sided with terrorists. Some people have even suggested this story was made up. Not true, these events did happen.

“Free and tolerant society”

Perhaps in the world of internet trolling and bad news stories it's too unbelievable to think that one stranger could help another. It may have shone a light on a deep dark secret we've been hiding - that Australia is not as tolerant, welcoming and harmonious as we'd like to believe. This makes us uncomfortable, for it's always difficult to recognise the evil in your own backyard.

I never intended to start a movement. I wasn't making a political statement. The twitter hashtag, #illridewithyou was not my creation, but I am very humbled that my actions were a catalyst for people to express some positivity amidst the darkness.

We all need to ride with each other, walk with each other, talk with each other and most importantly, listen to each other. Someone suggested that #illridewithyou should be expanded to include people with disabilities, the elderly, the poor and the marginalised. I couldn't agree more.

The fact is, we can all do better. My Catholic upbringing has deeply influenced my understanding of social justice. It's easy to hear God's words and not put them into action. 'Love one another as I have loved you' is truly our most difficult challenge. Jesus' word has no caveats. We have all been charged with the responsibility of loving each other, without boundaries or limitations.

Recently Pope Francis has taught us that the church is a place of loving welcome, not just for the virtuous, but a place to reach out to those the church has distanced itself from in the past. It's a place of love. As a teacher, I also know that those who need love most will show it in the most unloving ways. As a result of my action, I have been the recipient of internet trolling, hateful letters, threats, and a multitude of other negativity which very much shook my confidence. My challenge was to fight hate with love, and be an example to others of how we should treat each other. I privately contacted some of the more prominent critics, and all conversations finished with peace and friendship.

I am a lecturer at the Australian Catholic University, and I'm proud to say they have been hugely supportive of my actions. The University has a particular interest in interfaith dialogue, described as 'living the mission'. I have also been contacted by many members of the Muslim community, who express their gratitude and tell me what #illridewithyou has meant for their sense of belonging.

Let us walk with each other, particularly in troubled times. We have big challenges ahead and some may seem insurmountable. But I am certain that following a pathway of love will provide light in the darkness, and a solid foundation for a better world.

THINKING ABOUT THINKING

CARMEL MAGUIRE

I have been thinking about thinking. Vera Brittain, nearly three-quarters of a century ago wrote in *Testament of Youth* that thinking is 'a pre-eminently uncomfortable process'. Her book on the terrible carnage and suffering brought about by World War I has never been out of print and offers very satisfying food for thought about war and violence generally.

But action is much easier to resort to than thinking. No wonder there doesn't seem a lot of thought about issues in our society. Never mind the metaphysical, we do not give much thought even to relatively mundane subjects, such as schools, old age, health, taxes, and refugees.

“more difficult than giving up chocolate”

On all subjects of course we pick up the reassuring messages and ignore the others. I am reading with delight new reports from the United States which have completely exonerated coffee as a bad thing for us humans. What an advance on the years when drinking more than one cup per day was likely to lead to early demise, even one cup could disrupt sleep patterns and brain function, and any amount at all consumed by a pregnant woman was cause to call out the thought police. So whatever misadventures in thought, or lack of it, committed by us influential citizens of coffee-obsessed Sydney cannot be assigned to that particular beverage.

In this parish we are lucky for the opportunity to listen to thoughtful homilies, some thankfully shortened on the blistering hot Sundays of

February. Lent seems to be early upon us and Easter eggs have been poured on to supermarkets shelves even before the last of the plum puddings have been banished. Aware of how little of Lenten denial had touched my behavior, I was intrigued to hear from one of our pastors in a homiletic aside that one of the sisters of his parish had resolved to give up road rage for Lent.

Definitely more difficult than giving up chocolate. It's up there with giving up coffee and much more likely to increase the sum of human happiness.

And for me, thinking about road rage, as a long-time practitioner, is chastening. From this lofty position in my eighties I look with disdain upon motorists in front of me who do not immediately respond to traffic light changes.

After a nanosecond I sound the horn, ready to add advice and not necessarily benign gestures to reinforce my message. As a pedestrian I also helpfully point out to motorists in car parks when they are going the wrong way in marked lanes.

On the street, cyclists who whip through pedestrian crossings defeat me. They are well away before I can recover the breath of which their unexpected near collision has deprived me. In the streets of Sydney, I am convinced that I am much more likely to be done in by a cyclist than an emissary of ISIS.

In the quest to overcome road rage I consulted some of the secular sources of advice on the Internet which suggest cultivation of mindfulness, 'a mental state of openness, awareness and focus'.

Meditation is promoted as one way to make progress towards it, and simple exercises for 'mindful walking' are also recommended. No

helpful prescriptions for 'mindful driving' seem to have been disclosed. I promise to listen intently to any homily or any other friendly advice on ridding me of bad behaviour on the roads. On the other hand, I should be very reluctant to accept that giving up rage altogether is to be recommended. Powerful endorsement by Jesus of rage used to good purpose has recently been brought to our notice in the gospel of the third Sunday of Lent.

“God's children on Nauru”

The temple was not cleared of its commerce by someone with a cool head. In our here and now, rage was not missing in searing indictment of government policy on refugees published by brave persons, clerical and lay, in our community.

The plight of those of God's children on Nauru judged genuine refugees but left without hope may be judged from the recent Facebook posting, 'A voice from Nauru'. A young girl provides evidence of brutal police and community response to peaceful protests. Another plus for social media since scrutiny of conditions by regular media has been made virtually impossible.

As a society we are complicit in the actions of governments of both major political colours in this country and do we think that we shall not reap the whirlwind? Or, maybe, we just don't think!

MEMORIES OF MY FATHER

ALAN GILL

For 23 years Alan Gill was the religious affairs writer for the Sydney Morning Herald. Here he recalls memories of his father, a soldier in World War I.

What did you do in the War Daddy? The question, and variants involving grandparents, great grandparents and even great great grandparents, have received renewed interest because of the centenary of the 'war to end wars', by which I mean World War I.

In my case the person I vowed to place under scrutiny was my father, Percy Gill who, by falsifying his age, enlisted, at age 15, in the British Army at the start of hostilities in 1914.

He died when I was 23, at which time I knew very little about his military service – a shocking lack of knowledge for someone who later earned his living as a journalist. It is an omission for which I still suffer guilt, made worse because my sister and I would tease him – 'Oh, come on dad;

“his beloved Life Guards”

not another of your war stories...' denying him of self-respect.

My mother, a sweet soul, never sought to question him about these issues either. But she would make tell-tale remarks, one of them about the ordinate length of time my dad spent showering and on his general ablutions. She whispered this was due to the incessant stench of life in the French and Belgian trenches.

One of the few stories I personally got out of him was about sleeping arrangements – 'You had to be pushed and pulled in and out of your bedspace'. He also said that when troops received a new supply of boots the old one had to be cut away from your feet.

Some people talk readily of their experiences, and upset younger generations if they do not. Within Jewish communities the reverse

often applies. Holocaust survivors wish to talk. The younger generations don't want to listen. I have seen families nearly come to blows over the issue.

How could my father be in the Army when so young? As he tells it: 'I was on an errand in the City and saw one of my pals who looked really smart in his uniform.

“Not another of your stories”

I asked him what the Army was like. And he said 'Marvellous'. Of course he was lying but I took the bait and visited a recruiting office where a sergeant said: 'Go home and shave the bum fluff off our face'. Feeling piqued, I walked to the more snooty Life Guards Knightsbridge barracks and tried again. Incredibly, presumably because of my height, they said: 'You're in'.

After being shorn and kitted out he spent his first night in a large upper room, with a blanket for bed linen and boots as his pillow. He woke up about six and was surprised to find the room deserted.

Wandering towards the window he looked out and saw a number of recruits, his own intake included, being drilled by a burly sergeant. Their eyes met. 'You thar...' shouted this worthy from the parade ground. 'Would you possibly care to join us?'

He joined the parade just as an officer was about to make an inspection. A horse conveniently poohed. 'Pick it up, pick it up,' shouted the sergeant. My father looked around for a suitable receptacle. 'What do you think God gave you a pair of bleeding hands for?' was the reply.

There were compensations for life as an ordinary trooper while in Britain.

Troops guarding the royal palaces couldn't move a muscle, but would find notes tucked into their boots from children's nannies who had been passing with their charges.

There were a few other stories like that which I dragged out of him. The bullying ways of the non-commissioned officers (NCOs) had to be seen to be believed. Some of them became unexpectedly benign a few days before being sent overseas.

I decided to make amends for my tardiness towards him by buying an embroidered badge of his beloved Life Guards and getting it stitched to the breast pocket of an equally smart blue jacket. He wore it when he and my mother took a holiday in Paris. The combination was certainly impressive – too much so. My father awoke in the middle of the night to find a naked black man in his hotel room. The pair tussled briefly, during which my mother, thinking dad was dreaming, ticked him off for swearing. The intruder, who was covered in grease to prevent capture, slid from my father's grasp, on to a drainpipe and out of sight.

My father, finding that jewels and travellers cheques were untouched, retired to bed with the intention of reporting the escapade to the hotel staff in the morning. Alas, the blazer, which had been left hanging over a chair, was missing. So somewhere in Paris.



90 NOT OUT

JOHN DOWD

Photo Rebecca Lawrence



The first of the Dowds, John and Jane, arrived in Sydney in 1842, and moved to the Wellington district. A grandson, Jim, is credited with bowling out an entire opposition cricket team on more than one occasion. Another grandson was Walter (Wally) Dowd DCM, who was treasurer and player for the Randwick Cricket Club, President of Randwick Catholic Tennis Club, and president of the Randwick St Vincent De Paul Conference. That link to our parish has continued to this day. Grandson Bede, became a Christian Brother and granddaughter Gertrude, a Mercy nun.

Barney, another grandson, was my father and he wrote extensively including co-authoring a history of Archbishop Polding and of Fr Edward McGrath msc the co-founder with Eileen O'Connor, of Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor. He and his wife, Mary Anne (Mollie), had three children, Margaret, Marion and me. I was born in 1924 and my mother was taught by the Mercy Nuns of Woollahra and Parramatta. She was the youngest daughter in the Hogan family, well known builders who built their house in Waverley. She was in the first class to complete the leaving certificate about 1918. She died in 1988.

My primary schooling was at St Clare's and St Charles Waverley and secondary schooling was at Waverley College, leaving in 1941. I joined the Department of Main Roads and graduated from Sydney University as

a civil engineer in 1947. In 1951, I obtained a Diploma of Town and Country Planning. I left the DMR in 1949 and worked in Randwick Council and the Sydney City Council as an engineer, town planner and administrator of town planning in the City Building Surveyor's department. As a Town Planner I initiated proposals that led to the Southern Cross Drive being

located as now and not through Rosebery.

In 1962 I was sent by the City Council to report on the provision of fire stairs in multi storey buildings and the means of developing run down areas in nine cities in Europe and America. In 1956, I married Margaret Manning in Mary Immaculate Church Waverley where I had been baptised and received my First Communion. I was a member of their St Vincent De Paul Conference.

In 1967, Margaret, I and three of our six children, were given the Sabine polio vaccination, in a program for employees of Sydney City Council. Margaret became sick, was taken to hospital, discharged in 10 days, and on the 12th day could not walk, was taken back to hospital and discharged after 2 ½ months, never to walk again, being a paraplegic.

I later learnt that there is no known remedy for the vaccine causing adverse results and no legal entitlement to compensation from the patent holder, the Canadian manufacturer, and the four government authorities involved in its distribution.

Our youngest child was then only 13 months old. This caused a long lasting domestic drama. My mother helped out for the first weeks, then Margaret's sister and two cousins, with children of the same age in Canberra, took charge of the four

youngest children. Out of the blue, a lady, a recent convert, appeared and I employed her, the cost of which was supplemented by my fellow employees. In the meantime, I continued to work at the Council which I found stressful, and resigned in 1972.

I bought into a business with 70 salesman and 30 employees but sold out at a great loss brought about primarily by the 1972-1976 recession. I was without work for more than a year, and then succeeded in being appointed Deputy Chief Engineer at Botany Council, resigning in 1989.

Margaret encountered many medical problems. In the early stages I had the car modified by a man with no legs. A lever connected to the brake and the accelerator so that Margaret could drive the children to OLOR primary school at Kensington.

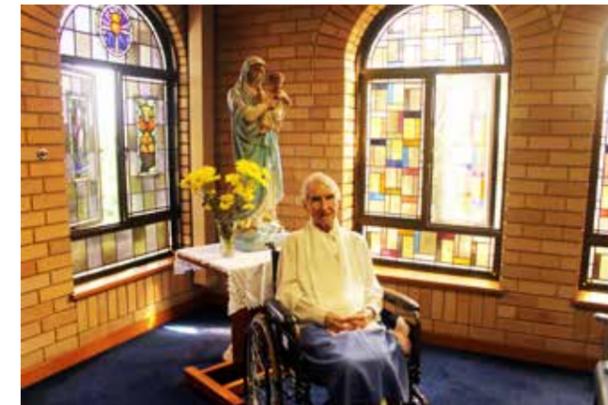
Margaret used a sliding board to transfer from the wheelchair to a chair, the bed or a seat of the same level. With parking available at OLSH we became adopted parishioners here.

Margaret passed away at Concord Hospital in 2008, having been taken there at her request. From the first day of her paraplegia, she said 'I offer it all to God'. She associated with many people especially in hospitals, doctors, nurses and fellow patients. She had the inspiration to see the best in everybody.

In thanksgiving I endeavour to go to Mass daily, and am very grateful for the midday Mass at OLSH. I have a job keeping up with the activities of my six children (Chris, Greg, Paul and Michael attended Waverley College; the two girls, Catherine and Elizabeth attended Brigidine College) and my ten grandchildren, all of whom live in Sydney but none in the Eastern Suburbs.

100 NOT OUT

Sr CONSTANCE DALEY fdnsc



Porcelain Cruet Set

In this interview Sr Constance Daley recalls some aspects of a life well lived. She will turn 100 on 21 May this year.

Why "Daley" with an 'e'? With a wry smile, Sister Constance quipped 'we're the aristocratic clan from the Highlands of Scotland'. Well, she added, 'that was what my mother said'. With remarkable clarity she can remember her childhood and delighted in recalling when she was five years old she nearly drowned in a water hole on their farm only to be scolded by her mother for being sopping wet. But when it came to football, the family were at one. Born in Essendon on 21 May 1915, the family – mother, father, a sister, and three brothers were all Bomber supporters.

"She is always right"

It was not until she was 34 years old that she became a nun, taking the name of Constance, the same as a Sister of Charity friend where they both had worked at St Vincent's Hospital in Melbourne. Her path to becoming a nun was not straightforward. 'At various stages I was discouraged and then I had to convince the Lord I had this vocation' she said. When she had decided, she went to confession and the priest asked her if she had ever thought of entering the convent. She was able to tell him right then that she had decided. That was in November 1949.

In 1952 she was sent to the Leprosarium on the Channel Island in Darwin Harbour – 'a sad place with

terrible conditions'. Two years later she was transferred to Sydney to assist with the establishment of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Hospital in Randwick. Her friend Sister Eileen Van der Lee was also a foundation sister of the hospital and 'we still meet for a regular 'pow-pow'.

1964 saw a change when she moved to the boarding school at Toowoomba, then when she was 50 years old she was transferred to look after the Boys Infirmary at the OLSH College in Bowral. It is hard to believe but the doctor there remarked to one of the other sisters that he never argued with Sr Constance. 'She is always right!'

For the next few years she held various appointments and also spent time with her ailing mother. It was also the era of Vatican II. 'There was a certainty about many things Pre-Vatican II' said Sr Constance 'but post Vatican II brought in some desirable changes'.

A major change occurred in 1974. An advertisement in the Women's Weekly offered lessons in Porcelain Painting. She always had a flair for painting and enrolled in the classes, learning all the techniques of painting with oils, watercolours and china painting and began producing various pieces. She sold some of her works and with the money bought her own kiln.

Sr Constance was then able to broaden her painting, using vases, plates, cups and saucers. A large plate of a stag head with mountains in the background was exhibited in the Art Gallery and she had some successes at the Royal Melbourne Show.

Porcelain Painting requires lots of patience and there are always a few mishaps. 'Fortunately I lost only a few pieces' she said. Not lost though is her notebooks of her business records from 1978 to 1994. By then her enthusiasm began to wane and she decided to sell all her works- books, paints, oils, all sorts of stuff. Sadly there are few pieces to see but her compendium is full of photos of her work.

Orders of nuns carry out various apostolates – nursing and teaching for example. Sr Constance has added another, perhaps an unusual one - creating things of beauty for others to enjoy. It was, for her, a mission of witness to God and for others who might otherwise not have contact with a member of a religious order.

In 2014 Sister Constance celebrated her 70 year Jubilee as a Daughter of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. In May she reaches her centenary. 'I have had a wonderful life' she says and her retirement is spent at St Joseph's Aged Care in Kensington.

References: articles by Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

MEMORIES OF THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY

JACK DWYER

The Holy Name Society was founded by the Dominican Order in the 13th century to emphasize the need for the faithful, especially men, to have a special devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. It was formally established in Australia on 25 March 1925 and the Society began at OLSH on 30th August 1936 as a men's only society. Here, Jack Dwyer a long time member of the parish remembers his association with the Society.



One Sunday each month a large congregation of men attended the Holy Name Society Mass. The church would be filled to capacity. The members were designated into groups of approximately three pews per section with the group leader on the end seat. Mass commenced with Benediction followed by a sermon on a current affairs relating to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

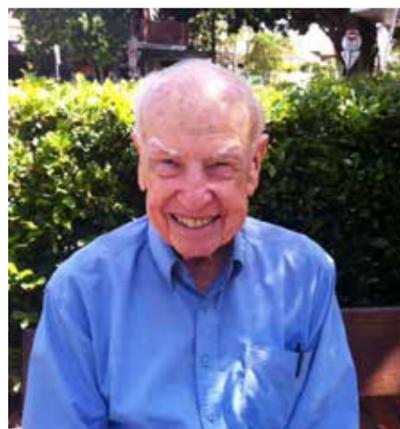
Hymns were sung at various times during the mass and the singing was done by all with great enthusiasm and often rising to a great crescendo. One member in our section had a very loud rough voice, much louder than any of us and certainly overpowering. My father who was a Section Leader was approached by the Priest and asked if he would discretely ask this loud singer to tone down his voice a little. My father said perhaps it would be better for him to speak to the gentleman.

However! Nothing was done and it was quite amusing as everyone knew of the priest's request but no-one was prepared to do anything as the person in question was a well-

respected parishioner and did not realize he was causing so much concern.

So, he continued with his loud voice often drowning out the more melodious voices of the other men. After Mass we would often gather and laugh about that singing.

Members were issued with a badge and worn with pride in the lapel of our suits at all time. I still have mine.



Jack Dwyer

The Holy Name Society was one of many thriving sodalities (for example, the Sacred Heart Society and the Children of Mary) that were a major part of Catholic parishes in Australia. With the advent of changes following Vatican II these sodalities have all but disappeared from parishes.

The insignia on the Holy Name Society badge with X (Chi) and R (Rho) are the first three letters of 'Christ' in the Greek language and Chi-Rho is the oldest known monogram for Christ.



Legend has it that as a pre-Christian symbol Chi-Rho signified good fortune and became an important Christian symbol when adopted by Emperor Constantine. He reported that he saw the symbol in the sky. He then adopted the symbol on his battle shields and standard and believing that through the symbol he won a battle to become the emperor of the whole empire. As Emperor he allowed Christianity to flourish.

The Chi-Rho is also the origin of the tradition of abbreviating 'Christ' in 'Christian' or 'Christmas' to 'X.'

The month of January is traditionally dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus. This feast is celebrated on January 3.

AN INTERVIEW WITH Fr ALFIN BUARLELE msc

Fr Alfin was ordained on 11 February 2012 and is a recent appointment as an assistant priest at OLSH. In this article he tells us about himself and his experiences.

Your early life

I was born on 1st May 1982 in Ambon, the capital of the island of Maluku in Indonesia. I have two sisters, and a brother who is a Missionary of the Sacred Heart Brother, who has been studying to be a priest in the MSC Scholasticate at Manado, Indonesia. My early schooling was at Junior High School, and in 1997 I entered the Minor Seminary in the Diocese of Amboina in Maluku for four years. It was not quite the start of wanting to be a priest. That began earlier.

When did you begin thinking about being a priest?

When I was four years old. I read a book, 'Best Friends of Jesus' with stories of the saints, who were very human and humble. I asked my father 'is a priest the best friend of Jesus'. 'Yes', he said. At that time, I then told him that was what I wanted to be.

My grandfather was a pilot and my father, as a supervisor in education, thought I might become a pilot too, but he was happy with my decision. My mother who was a nurse and then became a teacher, dreamt that I might become a doctor, and she too was happy for me to become a priest. Sadly, she passed away in 2007 before my ordination.

2001 was an important year in the start of your priestly journey

Yes, that was the year I entered my pre-novitiate year as an MSC in Manado and started to study at the Major Seminary. The next year I moved to Karanganyar, Central Java to do my Novitiate year. After finishing my Novitiate year and taking my first vows as an MSC, I moved back to Manado to continue my formal studies in theology,

philosophy, psychology, pastoral, anthropology and sociology at the Major Seminary. These studies continued for the next few years all the while helping me gain deeper knowledge to become a priest.

I was engaged in pastoral work and as I had some musical background I was involved in seminary and parish activities conducting the players of musical instruments and choirs for Seminarians, young adults, and many groups of choirs in the parishes.

You have a musical background too?

Self taught! But I am happy to learn from anyone who can play musical instruments. When I was in the Scholasticate at Manado, I joined a musical group, to learn about music, especially music in the church. If there was a choir group at either parish or diocesan level we were asked to be a judge for the competition. So that was another way of my learning about music.

I like singing, and I can play the guitar, ukulele, organ, and the flute. I was obviously pleased to be appointed to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart parish when I learnt that it has a reputation for its music and singing activities.

When did you first come to Sydney?

After I took my final vows in 2009. I'm not sure why I was posted to Sydney, but I believe that it was God's plan and His mission. I also realized that it was obviously the decision of my superiors and the MSC Provincial in Indonesia. Another surprise was that I had an operation to remove my gallstones, something of a surprise too for someone so young. Being in Sydney



in December 2010 gave me the opportunity to attend a Technical and Further Education course to improve my English skills.

In March 2011, I went back to Indonesia and became a deacon in June 2011. Later that year in August I was posted to Canberra to the St. John the Apostle MSC Parish at Kippax. I completed my service in the diaconate in January 2012.

Why did you choose to be an MSC priest?

Although I attended a diocesan seminary I was attracted to being an MSC because of the Order's emphasis on the Spirituality of the Heart. For me that is the central focus of what it is for me to be an MSC and then a priest. I also grew up in a parish where the Parish Priest was an MSC, and some Formators in the Minor Seminary were also MSCs. And on that first visit to Sydney in 2010, I spent some time at the monastery in Kensington so I had the opportunity to live with the MSCs there, getting to understand their way of life.

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PLACES IN RANDWICK - HIGH CROSS PARK

Randwick Council had its beginnings at the area now known as High Cross Park. On 22 March 1859 a public meeting there, then just vacant land, called for nominations for election to its first Council. Nine candidates put their names forward and six were elected as inaugural Councillors on 29 March. The area was later dedicated in 1881 as a site for public recreation and there are records indicating that Children from the Randwick Asylum for Destitute Children across the road in the Catherine Hayes building held their annual fete there.

The Park borders on Cuthill Street named after Dr Cuthill the benefactor of the Asylum who suffered a violent death by a bullet fired by the husband of one of his patients who had died.

In the centre of the Park is a stone cenotaph unveiled by Australia's seventh Governor-General Lord Forster to commemorate local residents who served in World War I and World War II.

The Park has now been proposed as the terminus for the South East

Light Rail service from the city to Randwick. Randwick Council has supported the concept of light rail to Randwick but there are differences of view about its route, especially the likely damage to the park. Much the same transport controversy existed in 1869 when the Council set up an omnibus stand at the Park for an hourly bus service from the city to Coogee. By the end of that year it was unhappy about the unsatisfactory state of the traffic. History has the capacity to repeat itself.

References: *Randwick* by P Corby; *Randwick District Historical Society*

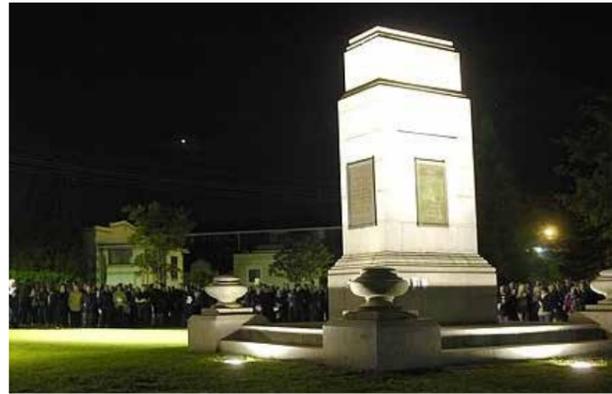


image: google.com/images

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You've adopted a motto for your priestly role?

Yes, it is 'I am with you always' (Matthew 28:20). It tells me that Jesus is always with me and guiding me in my priestly duties and it emphasises that as a priest I am here to serve all people and I am here for everyone.

Your ordination?

It took place on 11th February 2012, at St. Fransiskus Xaverius Cathedral in Ambon, on the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. I believe that God has given me Our Lady of the Sacred Heart as well to look after me. I then spent the next three years as an assistant priest in the Kippax parish.

Now you're at Randwick. Impressions?

It's early days yet but I feel very much at home. I have come to the family of God and we are one family in God. Fr Peter, Doug, Tim, Alo Tamnge and Br Tru have been most welcoming. The parishioners too have made me feel at home and I want to share in the full range of parish activities. I'm gradually meeting the various parish groups, visiting the schools, nursing homes, and especially working with young adults with Br Tru.

I've even have had time to do the tourist things of seeing the sites of Sydney and, of course, playing badminton and tennis, having a swim, watching movies, and looking forward to enjoying the AFL football.

Plans. Do you have any?

As an MSC, through our presence, we pray and work together with parishioners and society, that the Sacred Heart of Jesus be loved everywhere, especially in the heart of every person. I believe in the love of God and that God loves me. I also live in the MSC community who share that love to one another. And this is our mission, to share, bring out, and live the MSC Spirituality and Charism in our parish and society.

It is time to bring our lives to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, and into our pastoral ministry. May God bless all of us.

DISCOVERING CUBA

Two months before President Obama announced the restoration of diplomatic ties with Cuba, parishioners Max Berghouse and his wife, Lynn visited Cuba. This is their story.



image: google.com/images

In October 2014 we spent three weeks in Cuba to see this country before it changed although no one had any idea of the pending rapprochement between Cuba and its arch enemy America – a potential apparently brokered by the current Pope.

A bit of history. When Spain controlled about 50% of Latin America, it divided its empire into four great vice-royalties, and from two of these, whose capitals were Mexico City and Lima in Peru, vast mineral wealth in gold and silver was extracted over a very long period. Both cities became world-class monuments to architecture and art and supported a thriving Creole aristocracy. Cuba on the other hand was a vast sugar plantation where imported African slaves were worked to death producing the increasingly cheap sugar so desired by Europeans.

Cuba was the only Spanish possession which did not seek independence in the early years of the 19th century and because of its substantial wealth and psychological importance to Spain it began to develop more in terms of art and architecture.

From the middle years of the 19th century certain sections of the community rebelled continuously against Spain and the country became 'free' in 1901 although 'free' in this context is a bit of a misnomer because the country was effectively

controlled by America which permitted or perhaps even encouraged massive corruption on the part of the ruling elite.

We were interested to find out whether the very real poverty of Cuba was due to American intransigence or the limitations of a socialist command economy.

The long-term American embargo has certainly not been easy for the Cubans. The extent of poverty can be judged by the fact that when the Soviets withdrew, having spent about 20 years subsidising Cuba's only export, sugar, there were acute food shortages and a significant part of the population slipped into starvation.

Educated Cubans are profoundly dispirited with an economic structure

“It really is a time warp”

which severely limits access to both computers and the Internet. Everyone to a greater or lesser extent deals in the black market just for survival.

All are entitled to state rations but there is still sufficient poverty so that many people cannot buy their monthly rations. The much vaunted state health system is probably very good. Thank God, neither of us felt sick enough to need medical intervention but I understand that patients going to hospital have to bring their own bedding and food! Doctors, even highly qualified surgical specialists earn a salary of about \$10 a week. Incidentally that's why so many Cuban medical practitioners are keen to take state-controlled positions overseas. For example while we were there,

the government implemented a programme to supply rural Venezuela with more doctors, where Venezuela would pay the Cuban state and Cuba would increase the salary of the doctors in Venezuela.

Infrastructure is crumbling and public services are inefficient. I don't see any real prospect of reconciliation between Cuba and America because the Miami-based Cuban community remains exceptionally opposed to the Communist regime in Cuba. So when Fidel Castro passed control of the country to his younger brother Raul, he had very little option but to embark upon a program of controlled liberalisation.

There is really no industry. So tourism, especially for people from countries which don't make travel to Cuba difficult, is now vitally important. This has created a 'mini revolution' such that younger, generally university educated tour leaders with facility in one or two foreign languages, can expect to receive a daily \$10 tip from each couple they escort.

Havana city is built on a very large bay and across the generally wide boulevard abutting the bay are hundreds of crumbling but quite beautiful dwellings, some divided into small flats and some simply empty. These are the places that will be taken over by well-to-do Europeans and Americans as summer accommodation, just as they will take over and revitalise the hotels. Building and maintenance just about stopped in 1960 when the new regime came to power. It really is a time warp. We could not get over the fact that millions of Cubans are enduring substantial privation to give us tourists a quick vision of the immediate past.

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THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY

For more than 160 years a Catholic newspaper has been published in NSW, beginning with *The Australasian Chronicle*, which underwent several name and management changes (*The Morning Chronicle*, *The Chronicle*, *Sydney Chronicle*). It was succeeded in 1850 by *The Freeman's Journal*, which was printed on an old hand-turned 'mangle' in the gallery of St Mary's Seminary, in a building adjacent to the first St Mary's Cathedral.

The Freeman's Journal was not an 'official organ' of the Church, but a general newspaper with a focus on Catholic and Irish affairs with an unashamedly Australian outlook. It was able to draw on the best minds of the day to become an eminently intelligent source, one that was never out of touch with what was happening in the local community. One of its greatest achievements was its work for Catholic education and its tireless (although unsuccessful in its time) crusade against unfair discrimination of denominational schools.

In November 1895, a new Catholic newspaper - *The Catholic Press* - began, arising from a meeting some months earlier of Sydney clergy who desired to take up the call of Pope Leo XIII for Catholic newspapers to 'counteract the appalling efforts of torrents of infidel filth that deluge the homes of our people, that desecrate the sacred sanctuary of family life, that poison the fountains-springs of society'.

The Press promised in its first editorial to offer a 'sound healthy Catholic opinion on the great questions of the day'. The two papers remained vigorously independent and often had editorial positions that were notably divergent, especially on such questions as conscription during World War I. The Freeman adopted the style of the condescending, older and more authoritative journal, habitually referring to *The Press* as 'our junior contemporary'. In early March 1942, several weeks after the last issue of *The Freeman* had appeared, *The Press*

also announced that it would cease publication. From these two a new publication arose, *The Catholic Weekly*, as the official organ of the Archdiocese, to provide a single editorial voice for the Church in Sydney.

In 2003 with a new look in recognition of a growing younger Catholic population the Weekly confidently describes the life of Sydney's Catholics with its own mix of local and international news, with special features, regular columnists and supplements. It seeks to take on a broader reach beyond the white Anglo-Celtic Catholic to the wider, truly universal, contemporary Church in Sydney with a distribution to 500 parishes in NSW and interstate.

The Catholic Weekly is available each week in foyer of church - \$2.

STATUE OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER

Fr PETER HEARN msc



Parishioners may not know that from a long time past, the gardens around our church are named.

Beside the Presbytery are the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart gardens. On the car-park side of Ventnor, the new garden is dedicated to Fr Jules Chevalier, founder of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.

The new garden immediately beside the Avoca Street gate is dedicated to St Madeleine Sophie the foundress of the Religious of the Sacred Heart, and it will have a memorial to Sr Philomene Tiernan RSCJ who died in the Malaysian Airlines tragedy over Ukraine in July 2014.

The remaining garden is dedicated to St Joseph the Worker, and hence it has the figure of Jesus as a child being instructed by Joseph – the setting is presumably his work bench at Nazareth. When the statue was delivered a large ruler and a pair of pliers were included to go into the hands of Joseph. However, we thought they cluttered the lines of the statue and did not include them.

St Joseph, intercede for our families, that they may be places of love, mutual service and good humour. Keep us true to Christ and loyal and involved members of His Church.

Amen.

Why St Joseph the Worker? Work, human labour, is an essential condition for human life to be fulfilled. Work, properly undertaken, is an act of co-operation, even co-creation with God the source of creation. John Paul II in his door-stopper encyclical *On Human Work* stated that work was the key to human well-being, social

development and stability. It is a matter of fundamental justice for societies to ensure all have meaningful work to undertake – and not leave it solely to 'market forces' to provide employment.

Each week at our Thursday Novena to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart we have petitions from people seeking work – sometimes as many as eight each week. There is a real joy in reading out letters of thanksgiving when petitioners find work and write back in thanksgiving. We know then that someone, especially maybe a provider for a family, has some fundamental security which is their right.

St Joseph, of course, is prayed to as the protector of the Holy Family and hence, of all families. Pope Francis had his name included in the Eucharistic Prayer after a 2,000 year wait! For us MSCs St Joseph is a major figure and in our vows from the past, we called on him and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart to help us be faithful, as he was, to his commitments to Mary and Jesus. Personally, I place any building or refurbishment issues under his care.

EASTER 2015

photo Juan Rojas



The Choir, Holy Saturday



Stations of the Cross

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Because there has been so little change, there are some quite spectacular Art Deco buildings of the 1920s and 30s which really would not require much to return to their original grandeur.

“Not everyone can be an Oscar Romero”

My young tour guide was quite shocked that we would come to Havana just to see Art Deco architecture. So we spent one full day travelling and more or less educating him. He was a delightful young man and he and his wife were, just as we

left, advised that she is expecting twins as her first children. The happiness this has brought them is diminished by the fact that they now must consider leaving the country for a more secure future for their children.

The last issue is the regime's attitude to the Church. Although the country is at least nominally overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, since American intervention in the country there has been missionary activity by Protestant denominations, especially Baptists. It was only in 1995 that the government legitimised formally the public celebration of the Mass.

Mass attendance is very much like Europe and Australia: a general absence of young people. The church hierarchy also seems quiescent; more concerned with private piety than any public stance concerning human rights etc. That should not be interpreted as a criticism. Not everyone can be an Oscar Romero.

Is Cuba worth visiting? If you haven't seen, particularly Mexico City and Lima and lastly Buenos Aires, then I think the answer is no. If you have some background into Latin American history and culture, then I think Cuba is worthwhile and it is certainly not expensive.

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'magazine' in the Parish Office.

THE BACK PAGE

WITH FR PETER

How quickly holidays seem to evaporate once one is back in the saddle! I had the joy of travelling through the Out Back of Queensland, NT and SA again this year. What a contrast to the trip last year – drought then, floods this time round and the floods put out the savage fires in SA just as we entered the state from the North. To see the Todd River flood in Alice Springs is a rare thing, and even rarer is to see Uluru and Katajuta (the Olgas) in the very centre of the country with water cascading down them! Do you remember that poem of Dorothea Mackellar?

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror
The wide brown land for me!

Well, it certainly lived up to this imagery. I am surprised at how many Australians have travelled the world, especially Europe and Asia, but not ventured much past the Great Dividing Range in their home country. I do recommend it.

We are pretty well settled into our new offices – to complete the work, we need to open up the air-conditioning, await some office furniture, and turn a former office into another meeting room and we're finished. Thanks to one and all for their generous co-operation in the fund raising for this new building. The Donors Book lists will appear before long in the foyer for people to check that we have the correct names to be entered into the final edition.

There is much to be done in refurbishing the church: there has been extensive water penetration bubbling out the paint and plaster. The Building Committee will be convened after Easter to draw up a plan of attack. Meanwhile, we are about to move the 'new' (8 years old) sandstone Baptism Font out of the Church as it is unmanageable for the crowds who attend multiple Baptisms. It will become a fountain in our garden beside the Church. We have a generous donor to facilitate that.

You may know that there is to be a Special Convention on the Family, in conjunction with the Synod on the Family in October. This convention will be in Philadelphia and we are happy to have two families – one each from SMM and OLSH - to attend.

Are we not constantly distressed by the stream of stories coming out of the Middle East where people of so many faiths are persecuted? We do what we can by way of prayers and remembering them and our practical efforts to support them with the special collection before Christmas and our own efforts on Ash Wednesday. It all seems so little...in the face of such huge need.

The MSC community is making an effort. Since 2013 ten containers of much needed supplies donated by our local parishes – school materials, books, household items and the like have been shipped to our mission stations in the Pacific. These efforts have been coordinated by our MSC Mission Office. Extra volunteers to help with this work are always welcome.