



PARISH MAGAZINE

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

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REFLECTION THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD

DIANE GORDON

The moment we hear the word 'fidelity' we think of a promise that one person makes to someone else. It is assumed that once a promise has been made it should be kept. I may be free, and in most cases I am, not to make a promise; but if I make it and I realise what I am doing, then I am obliged to remain faithful to the promise I've made.

In order to better understand what we mean by the faithfulness or fidelity of God, we should look at the profound mystery of God's fidelity both on God's side toward us and on our side toward Him. Let's first look at the Old Testament, because there are so many passages, so many occasions of God having first chosen those who became his chosen people. He promised them. And then in the New Testament God made a covenant or an agreement with the new Israel, which of course is ourselves.

In the Old Testament, from the Book of Genesis, where God made a covenant with Abraham, on through the whole Old Testament, God promises to be faithful to his side of the covenant. He promised the Israelites protection from their enemies; prosperity in a promised land; He promised them growth as a nation; and He promised them that they would eventually people the whole earth. God said to Abraham: 'I will make my covenant between you and me, and will multiply you exceedingly'. It was at this time that we know God changed the name of Abram to Abraham.

On our part we are to remain faithful in maintaining peace of soul, peace of heart no matter what circumstances or trials or temptations God may send us. The word for faith in the New Testament carries the notion of confidence, certainty, trust, and assurance in the object of faith.

In the Bible the gift of faith is often accompanied by great works of faith. We see this gift in action when Peter sees a lame man at the Beautiful Gate and calls on him to stand up and walk in the Name of Jesus. Jesus said even a small amount of this faith could move mountains.

Those with the gift of faith trust that God is sovereign and He is good. They take Him at His Word and put the full weight of their lives in His hands and are not surprised when He answers a prayer or performs a miracle. Prayer on our part is the divinely revealed condition for God remaining faithful to His promises provided we have remained faithful. If we are to remain faithful we must pray.

Front Cover Photo

Shrine of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart

Randwick Parish

Photo: Rebecca Lazenby

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THOUGHTS ON MOVING HOUSE A TO Z

MAUREEN MCKENNA

For someone whose hero from the age of 4 has been Peter Pan, the boy who never grew up, the realisation that I had reached an age that permitted me to buy into a retirement village came as quite a shock.

I've lived in my Coogee unit for 26 years and the thought of selling it never entered my head. I'm 5 minutes from The Spot, 10 from the beach, 2 to Coogee Diggers RSL and 2 to buses into the City. Why would I want to leave?

The answer came in November 2015 with the arrival of yet another tenant whose noise, marijuana smoking and subleasing to hordes of backpackers saw me knocking on his door at in the early hours of the mornings asking for the noise to cease and being told where I could take my request!

...a village that ticked all my boxes...

Prior to his departure in August last year I was bemoaning my lot in life to two friends who suggested a retirement village. Initially I scoffed at the idea as my Peter Pan Syndrome came to the fore – retirement villages are for old people.

After a reality check that I was no longer a youngster I found that the seed had been sown and persistently nagged at my consciousness. The Plague of My Life in the unit above me was still making my life a misery with noise at all hours and the marijuana smoke filtering into my home. Another problem I had was the growing impossibility of finding a place in my street for my car.

Eventually I decided to look around the local area 'just for interest's



sake' for a retirement village. My list of criteria was not long – small, reasonably priced, ditto the monthly levies, off street covered parking and preferably Catholic. It was important that my neighbours would be like minded people.

In February 2016 I found a village that ticked all my boxes and which, as when I first inspected my current home, seemed to like me, strange as that sounds. There were no apartments available so I went on the waiting list where I remain.

My decision to move provided an excellent opportunity to declutter. First to be ruthlessly cleared was my storage space under the building. Books, videos, CDs and sundry 'treasures' all went to Vinnies. Old textbooks and teaching aids went into the recycling bins. Did I really need the teaching program and worksheets for Jane Eyre that I last taught in 1978? Seeing how I'd been retired for 11 years and had no intention of setting foot in a classroom ever again I tossed it!

Next on the agenda was to declutter room by room. More books, DVDs, CDs, glassware and crockery were added to the Vinnies pile. My rationale was/is the less I have to pack

the better. Then to get a real estate agent and have my property valued. Thanks to a friend I have a good agent in whom I have every confidence.

All the photos have been taken of my pristine, decluttered and at the time very clean home and the copy written. It will be ready to go on the internet as soon as I receive word that my new home is available.

At some time during all my frenetic activity I thought it would be wise to draw up a list of pros and cons relevant to selling and moving.

The pros included

- *The positive support of my family and friends*
- *Designated covered car space*
- *Upsizing to two bedrooms*
- *Close enough to my current location so as not to impinge on my life style*
- *Greater financial security*

Besides the stress that selling a home and buying a new one entails, I can only come up with one negative. I will no longer be the owner of a Title Deeds document that has my name on it.

Of course I'm apprehensive about my decision with questions that buzz around my head when I can't sleep. Am I doing the right thing? Will I be happy there? Will my new neighbours like me? Will someone buy my place? Will I get a good price for it?

I worry that the housing bubble will burst and/or interest rates will go up before I go to auction and I won't be able to afford to buy into the village.

Hopefully I'll be ensconced in my new home before too long. In the meantime I'm happy where I am and, like Peter Pan going to Neverland, will make do with taking the 'second star to the right and straight on 'till morning'.

LIFE ON THE EQUATOR

FR DOUG SMITH MSC

Last year, I revisited Kiribati, pronounced as Kiribas, a country straddling the equator in the central Pacific and consisting of 33 small islands (atolls) spread over a very large area of sea. If one is going to Kiribati, one is rarely on the way to somewhere else! These atolls are the tips (only a metre or two above sea level) of undersea volcanoes. Its capital is South Tarawa, about three hours by plane north of Fiji or about an hour's flight east of Nauru.

Its people are Pacific Islanders, and refer to themselves as I-Kiribati. Kiribati was once a British colony called Gilbert Islands and gained independence in 1979. The country was a battleground in World War II.

The population is just over 100,000, concentrated largely on the overcrowded chain of atolls called Tarawa. A single road joins them, and only last year was sealed, making a big difference to the prevalence of the fine white coral dust stirred up by the winds. The work was done by an NZ firm and Australia footed the bill. It was a job very well done. I saw only one pothole, and they added a red concrete footpath.

The people have their own language, but English is fairly common. They are a happy lot, and mostly life is subsistent village living, with a local diet of fish, coconuts and breadfruit. Rice is also a staple food. They use Australia's currency.

A couple of catechists brought the Faith to Kiribati, and when the first MSC arrived in the late 1800s, there were already hundreds ready for Baptism and a number of chapels built. Today the population is about 50% Catholic, and the OLSH Sisters have a Kiribati Province. One such pioneer Sister came from France at about aged 18 and was still there when she turned 99.

The climate is hot (28-32C) and humid, and it is amazing how quickly one adjusts to living on atolls with the



CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

sea about 100 metres away on either side. My recent visit was mainly to give the annual Retreat to the MSC priests and brothers working there. I stayed for a second week in case another group wanted a retreat. Not so. I was invited to spend the weekend accompanying the priest visiting an isolated island right on the equator.

...Diabetes is sadly common...

One never knows what to expect. I met there a young Australian man (his NZ girlfriend works for the UN in Rome – they met in Samoa and keep in touch by Skype). His expertise is in making and fitting prostheses - artificial limbs. A volunteer sponsored by the Australian Government, he loved what he was doing, especially as it allowed him to indulge his passion for surfing early every morning, despite the heat and humidity.

Diabetes is sadly common in Kiribati, so he was there to distribute and explain how to use special wheelchairs, designed in Great Britain for third world countries, made in China and paid for by the American Mormon Church. He had a Kiribati nurse with

him and a local man experienced with wheelchairs because he was using one.

Most atolls have a lagoon on one side enclosed by a reef, and the open sea on the other side, with the ocean floor a few kilometres below. On this atoll the lagoon is in the middle. I went around the island on the back of a motor cycle in a couple of hours, which left me feeling rather sore. What surprised me was to find lovely small churches dotted around the mainly Catholic island, with ceramic tiled floors.

Sadly, some fishermen venture into the open sea and are never seen again, or they are fortunate to land somewhere a thousand or more kilometres away, driven by the winds and currents. One such small group was a priest and a couple of catechists who left for another island one Christmas Eve, but never made it. Providently they landed a couple of weeks later on the southernmost Kiribati Island, but because it was a Protestant island they were not allowed to celebrate Mass!

Kiribati might be the only country without a street directory, as there is only one road on most atolls, which are comparatively narrow. The main modes of transport are the numerous minibuses, so many that timetables are not needed and fares are not expensive. Most trips are less than a dollar. There is a small plane service to many of the islands.

THE STORY OF ANNETTE MARIE MARSKELL OAM

Annette has been an active parishioner of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart since 1967. She was born in Mudgee NSW the youngest and sixth child of Nell and Ted Marskell. Her mother used to call the children the League of Nations because the ancestry on her mother's side was German Catholic and Scottish Presbyterian and on the father's side it was Irish Catholic and English Anglican – the Tykes, slang for Catholics, won.

...Prepares the Shrine...

Annette is very pleased that she was born on 24 May – the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians, the Patroness of Australia. She was educated at St Matthews College Mudgee by the Sisters of Mercy (the Bathurst congregation founded in 1867). She completed a day stenography course involving shorthand typing and bookkeeping at Mudgee Technical College.

After working in Mudgee for a few years Annette came to Sydney in November 1963. For three years she worked with a secretarial services firm in the city and lived at Strathfield. In 1966 she went on a working holiday to New Zealand. Returning to Sydney a year later Annette moved to North Randwick and began employment with AE Richards Pty Ltd a printing firm then based in Redfern. The firm closed in 1992 following the owner's ill health. The result? Annette was retrenched after 25 years of service.

1993 saw the start of Annette's employment at Matthew Talbot Hostel for homeless men where she was assistant to the accountant. After 14 plus years she retired in 2007. Annette is convinced that the work of the Hostel has changed the lives of many of the men who see the place as a haven for recovery.

Annette was a member of the committee for the parish Walkabout Group. Once a month buses were hired and driven by volunteer drivers. Elderly people who did not get out were picked up and taken for bus rides. They would be brought back to the Parish Centre for a singalong and afternoon tea prepared by the Catholic Women's Combined Eastern Area Group. When community bus services commenced and began to cater for older citizens the Walkabout Group ceased its activities.

In the 1970s Fr Tony O'Brien formed the MSC Lay Associates in the parish and Annette became a member. The Associates meet on the first Sunday of the month after the midday Mass. And during Fr Peter Robinson's time as Parish Priest she was a member of the Parish Council.

Another of Annette's role is as a Counter – the first woman to be one and she has worked with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Group. She is also a Eucharistic Minister and for some time took Holy Communion to sick parishioners.

...Travel and Horse Racing...

The Last Call Eucharist was commenced by Fr Chris McPhee in 2000 and Annette helped with its setup on Sunday evenings. Since being diagnosed with Parkinson's, she has stood down from some of her activities but still prepares the Shrine for Thursday's Novena to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart – she ranks that as her very special role – and remains a Reader at Sunday Masses.

While OLSH is her church Annette has a special affection for St Mary's Cathedral going back as far as her childhood. She is a Life Member of the Friends of the Cathedral and has been its Treasurer since 2011.



ANNETTE WITH 2014 MELBOURNE CUP

Travel and Horse Racing have been her interest for many years. Her father and her grandfather both owned and raced racehorses and Annette has attended every Melbourne Cup from 1963 to 2015. She has been on a number of pilgrimages, including to Fatima, Lourdes and the Holy Land and has twice visited Issoudun where the MSCs were founded in 1854 by Fr Jules Chevalier.

Cruising has been a great way for her to holiday. She has visited many places with many Cruise Lines but her favourite is the Cunard Line where Mass is said every day. She jokes that she has had more trips than winning bets.

Annette was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) on the Queen's Birthday 2003 for services to the community particularly through the Catholic Parish of Randwick and fundraising for charitable organisations.

Editor's note: Annette has donated the two Shrines of Mary Mackillop and Jules Chevalier and also the Statue of Jesus and Joseph in the St Joseph's Garden.

A LIFE IN PAINT – PAINTING SUDANESE REFUGEE LAWYER DENG THIAK ADUT

NICK STATHOPOULOS

Nick Stathopoulos, a son of Greek migrants, is known for his illustrations and hyper-realistic portraits and paintings and cover art. In 2016 his portrait of Deng Thiak Adut won widespread praise. Here he reflects of how it came about.

Nick jokes that he was introduced last year by a gallery owner as the Hillary Clinton of the Archibald Prize. Perplexed he asked why. ‘You won the popular vote, but lost the election’ a reference to having won the People’s Choice at the 2016 Archibald Prize by a huge margin with his portrait of Sudanese refugee and lawyer Deng Thiak Adut. But not the Archibald prize. Deng’s face has now been seen in magazines, on TV and in his memoir *Songs of a War Boy*.

‘Deng came to my attention through a television advertisement for Western Sydney University, where Adut was a graduate. I was sitting on the couch nursing my wounds after a quadruple by-pass, unable to do very much, when the advertisement appeared. It movingly documented how Deng came to Australia following life as a child soldier in Sudan and how he put himself through law school, becoming a formidable refugee advocate and community leader. My partner sitting next to me turned and said ‘Archibald’.

The next morning I contacted Deng’s office, and not without considerable trepidation. The Archibald game is pretty cut-throat, and celebrity sitters are in great demand. That afternoon, despite his increasingly busy schedule, Deng replied in person, consenting to sit for me.

Giddy with excitement, I travelled to Deng’s Blacktown office to meet the man himself. As I waited – he was obviously busy – and in demand even before his book had come out, even before he had been nominated for Australian of the Year. I suggested we go out into the late afternoon sun, and suddenly all the details invisible in the dim light of the office became edge-lit and sharply pronounced.



DENG ADUT WITH HIS PORTRAIT AND ARTIST NICK STATHOPOULOS AT THE ART GALLERY OF NSW. PICTURE: BRETT COSTELLO

Deng has the most incredible face – pockmarked and lined with scars that radiate from a point above the bridge of his nose, up the entire length of his brow. It was chiseled and sculptural, the sort of face that is a gift for an artist. This was going to be a challenge.

And so began my four month odyssey painting Deng. I’m a very traditional practitioner. I’ve spent my entire life developing my style and process. What I do is time-consuming, laborious and painstaking. This painting was special, and I put all my effort and skill into it.

...lined with scars...

As the painting took form, I faced an issue that became progressively more acute. With Deng in demand, his ability to sit for me evaporated. I like to finish from life, and I really need to have the subject in front of me to capture that life-spark. Those eyes, those scars, tell a story that no ad could ever convey.

I had one last extended sitting. While I rendered the reflections in his eyes, the sweat beading on his nose, I noticed him shifting uncomfortably in his chair.

‘Are you alright?’ No, man, I’ve been shot four times; I can’t sit for long periods’.

I was mortified. ‘Deng, we don’t have to continue, why didn’t you say something?’

‘No, it’s OK man, I didn’t want to disturb your painting’.

So every moment he sat with me was painful for him. You can see it in the painting. Something held back. His pain – not just his physical pain – there was more. There was a real sense of a deeper mental anguish. Could I convey this with a brush, with paint? With the painting finished and submitted, I was about to find out.

At the Archibald Dinner Deng gave the keynote speech. I actually think this was the first time Deng had been in the Art Gallery. The art world was something clearly alien to him, and initially he struggled to find the right words, but eventually he spoke from the heart.

He described how there were no images of him growing up, only a single photo at age six, when taken from his mother and forced into the army. He talked about what it was like sitting for me, remembering how he got each scar. He ended his speech with the realization that his entire life was up there on that face, in my painting.

There was no eruption of applause, only a room full of lowered gazes and a palpable sense of shame. And I wept. I may not have won the Archibald Prize, but I had won something that for an artist, no prize could ever deliver.

CHRISTMAS AT MCDONALDS HELEN TAN

Helen Tan was a well-known shopkeeper in Randwick until misfortune took over her Christmas.

2014. It was to be a traditional Christmas. Turkey and the traditional trimmings. But it was not to be. The doctor told Helen Tan that 98% of her arteries were blocked and that there was a lump in her liver. It was time for a rethink – about Christmas and life. Christmas at McDonalds didn't seem so bad after all.

For Helen life was to improve. Three stents in her heart have made a difference and the lump turned out to be benign. 'Relax' said the doctor, 'slow down, smell the roses'. She has. Well, to some extent. She reluctantly closed her café but then discovered that Arthur, her husband, needed closer care as he had Parkinson's Disease.

Enthusiastic as ever...

Enthusiastic as ever Helen – Enthusiasm could be her middle name - not only provides support to Arthur but has become an advocate for better understanding of the condition. 'It's not an old person's disease' says Helen 'it can affect all ages and both women and men and it takes a variety of forms – with symptoms such as slowness of movement, muscle rigidity, instability, or tremor'.

For Arthur there were a series of falls and medication did not seem really effective and Helen turned to Parkinson's NSW for advice. One result was that Arthur joined an exercise class at St Leonards, called PD Warriors. It was an intensive course but the first problem for Helen was to find St Leonards. 'I'd never been there. I'm a true Eastern Suburbsite. I had no idea how to get there. Google maps are wonderful'. She now laughs about her lack of geography.

Helen stresses that there is no known cure for Parkinson's and no



single way to manage its effects. Arthur has responded well to the PD Warrior program. There are also social programs involving those who live with people with Parkinson's. Increasing movement is important. There is a Dance Class which is designed to increase movement and improve flexibility. 'I take part too', says Helen, 'you should see my dance steps'. Helen enjoys the benefits of these support groups but it is her prayers to God that sustain her. 'I have many blessings bestowed on me by my faith in God'.

Her interest is just not in Arthur's improvement. For those who are caring for a loved one with PD, Helen has some good advice. 'Don't be discouraged', she says 'that at present there is no known cure. Many treatments, such as exercise programs are designed to slow down its effects and allow a fulfilling and productive life. Find out what's best by contacting Parkinson's NSW. They are there to help'.

Helen was a nurse in Tasmania when she married Arthur in 1978. Arthur had been an accountant in England. Jessica was born a year later and has two children with Helen and Arthur doting grandparents. Matthew was born in 1981 and has been diagnosed with Asperger syndrome, a type of autism with symptoms such as difficulty with social interaction but he is highly intelligent in other areas.

If there was a competition for solving jigsaw puzzles, Matthew would win

every time. While Helen and Arthur are struggling with joining 10 pieces he has solved the 1000 piece puzzle. 'We now know', laughs Helen 'what it means to be frustrated'.

One of the reasons that Helen opened a café was the opportunity for Matthew to mix with the customers and increase his social and conversation skills. He was my best worker according to Helen, remembering customer names and their previous orders. I have a good memory and Matthew has one too.

God has been good to me...

'God has been good to me, in both the good and not so good times our family has had. When Matthew needed a Special Education Teacher, he had one, when he needed some special therapy it was provided. He needed a job and has now found one and is happy. And so are we' says Helen.

Some may feel that Helen has a burden to carry. If there is one Helen regards it as a light one, helped by her faith in God. Going to church, participating, especially the joy of singing and being a volunteer is a side of her most of us don't see. What we do see though is someone full of life, enthusiastic and a joy to meet.

AN INTERVIEW WITH ANTOINETTE HARVEY

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Primary School has a new Principal, Antoinette Harvey. In this interview she talks about herself and the school.

Your background

I was born in Melbourne – I have one sister and three brothers, and my early schooling was at St Kevin's, Ormond in Melbourne. The family moved to Canberra and I attended St Francis Xavier's Primary School at Braddon. Merici College was where I did my secondary schooling. After leaving school I worked for a while in the Public Service. While working I studied part-time completing my Diploma of Teaching and Bachelor of Education at the University of Canberra. My first teaching position was at Campbell Primary School in Canberra in 1976.

First Impressions of being a teacher

I was very fortunate to graduate at a time when teachers were in short supply. When I graduated I had a choice of being in an Open Plan classroom (a new development then) or the more traditional fixed desks layout. I opted for the Open Plan classroom and learnt the value early in my career of the importance of teacher collaboration and peer feedback.

A little later when my husband, Ian, had a Fellowship at Osgood Law School at York University in Toronto, Canada, I did some further part-time studies in Mathematics while living there and at the same time managed to produce our first daughter. When we returned to Australia I had my second daughter and a little later had the good fortune to be appointed to a school which became the first of its kind in Australia.

It was at Telopea Park School, a Kindergarten to Year 10 bi-national French-Australian School. So early in my career I was exposed to differing ways of educating children and the value of exposing

children to another language early in their schooling. I spent several very rewarding years at Telopea before moving to Sydney eleven months after the birth of my third daughter.

Sydney became home in 1992. Where have you taught?

Well, first at St Mary's Catholic Primary School at North Sydney. I was there from 1995 until 2007 with a range of roles including classroom teacher, Curriculum Coordinator and Religious Education Coordinator, then I moved to St Michael's Catholic Primary School, Lane Cove in 2008.

I was there as the Mathematics Curriculum Coordinator and Year 4 Classroom Teacher. In 2009 I took up an appointment as Assistant Principal at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School in Mosman and later became Principal at St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Coogee in 2013. And now in 2017, I am at OLSH Randwick.

Time for study

Yes, along the way I acquired my Teaching Diploma, Bachelor of Education, GERRIC Certificate for Gifted and Talented, Certificate of Religious Studies and a Diploma in Behavioural Management. Later in 2015 I was awarded a Masters of Educational Leadership from the Australian Catholic University. I believe in being a life-long learner and the importance for teachers continuing their own education and being well equipped to integrate technology into their classroom teaching. Even kindergarten children are adept in using technology these days.



You're known for your 'Cup of Cs'. Sounds mysterious

No, it's nothing mysterious really, just my way of explaining my approach to education generally and how best to care for and develop our children. The first C is for a 'Catholic' education reflecting that Christ is central in all our lives, in what we do and by the way we teach and impart our beliefs to our pupils. Certainly, that faith commitment is what motivates our staff. I know our parish priests take a great interest in the school and that reinforces the faith development of our students and their families.

Then there's C for Community

Yes, building strong community relationships is very important and I am very committed to building on the positive relationships that have already been established at OLSH. Building partnerships with parents, the parish and the wider community is a priority. Parents are the first educators of their children, and the school, in partnership with the parish, strives to build strong support for parents in the education and the faith development of our students.

I don't want OLSH to be just a five-day community of staff and students. It's much bigger than that. We have an opportunity to learn so much more from the varied cultural background of some of our pupils. They have much to offer us

and we focus on ensuring there is an inclusive environment in which to learn about ourselves and our local community.

We plan on emphasising that aspect this year through our 'Harmony Day' when we will celebrate the cultural diversity of our families. Learning about the rich culture of others enriches our lives, and of course, those from overseas will benefit from knowing about our own history.

There's also an opportunity to be known and contribute to various local community events, including Earth Hour, National Reconciliation Day and environment focus days.

But more particularly, and closer to home I am keen to strengthen the links with the parish, by keeping parishioners informed about and involved in our activities. We have a number of very talented musicians at our school and I am hoping that we can establish a School Choir accompanied by some of our musicians to sing and play at school and family parish Masses.

Change Management sounds like another big C

Yes, and so important. Schools are not islands and are influenced by Federal and State Governments and various legislation, the Australian Curriculum, NAPLAN and funding. The Board of Studies and Sydney Catholic Schools initiatives and requirements also shape our schools.

By providing targeted and well planned professional development and leadership opportunities for our students and staff we equip them for change and maximise their full potential. Educational leaders call it 'capacity building' - students and staff are encouraged to develop their skills and fine tune their talents. Providing opportunities for 'Student Voice' and leadership

is essential in enhancing student academic and social outcomes.

These days, students take an active role in their own education by setting themselves goals and regularly evaluating their own learning. Similarly, staff in Sydney Catholic Schools set themselves Professional Growth in Action (PGiA) goals at the commencement of each year.

Together with targeted professional development opportunities and the National Professional Standards for Teachers, teachers have a clear direction of where they need to develop as professionals.

Technology is changing not only with how children learn, but also how teachers teach. In this ever changing educational environment teachers are continually updating their digital skills and we are fortunate at OLSH to have in place the Bring Your Own Digital Device (BYODD) program to enhance student learning. It is an exciting time for educators and it is essential that we all keep abreast of new technologies.

Are there special projects you would like to develop

Indeed. Every principal has a Wish List. The school is very fortunate to have such large grounds, and with more and more emphasis on protecting our environment I'm keen on developing a Gardening Club, involving all our students and educating them of the importance of trees, plants and an appreciation for where our food comes from.

Any other projects with a big C

Yes, OLSH has a very rich tradition, culture and history. I'd like to build a deeper understanding to reflect the school's Charism by renaming the school's sports colour houses from colour names to people. Key influences on the school over the

years include the Brigidine Sisters and the Missionary of the Sacred Heart (MSC) parish.

Our Year Six sports captains this year have expressed interest in researching the key influences for the renaming of houses. It's a great example of student leadership in action. I am also a firm believer in providing a balanced curriculum including 'STEAM' subjects - Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts and Mathematics alongside quality literacy learning and teaching.

If you had a Magic Wand

Oh to be so lucky! By most standards the school is well equipped, thanks to the dedication and efforts of previous Principals and the Parents and Friends Association's fund-raising abilities. Most classrooms at OLSH provide flexible learning spaces but a couple need an upgrade to reflect a twenty-first century learning environment. To help with preserving our environment it would also be a boon to install solar panels on our vast roofs.

A really big Magic Wand would allow us to offer a second language. For some of us the English language is enough but our students will be living in a different world where English-only may not be sufficient. What second language? Asian or European. Perhaps both.

In your spare time

In my spare time I love spending time with my family, especially my grandson who has just turned three. I enjoy gardening, reading, travelling and catching up with friends. I have been blessed with a very supportive family and feel I have won the lottery in life.

I look forward to my new challenges and working with the OLSH school and parish community.

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Sr SALLY DUIGAN FDNCS

I was born in Mount Gambier, South Australia. the third in a family of ten children. There were three main influences in our lives growing up – politics, horse racing and religion. It was an interesting mix. My grandfather was a Member of Parliament for about 35 years and my father was a bookmaker. We were used to politics and horseracing and we were used to winning and losing.

My parents were always involved in St Vincent de Paul and the Church - we had quite a well-rounded upbringing. The Sisters of Mercy played a very formative role in our lives, as did the Marist Brothers and they opened up many opportunities for us. Sport was central to our lives and singing and drama as well. I always fancied myself being on the stage and becoming a famous actress. I loved participating in Gilbert and Sullivan Operettas and often had a lead role, which further enhanced this idea. I even went through a stage of seriously wanting to join a circus.

My friends and I put on lunchtime concerts at school to raise money for the missions. The Sisters as well as my parents instilled in us a sense of caring for others. At an early age I was attracted to the idea of being a missionary. When I was fifteen my older sister Mary-Anne, entered the Sisters of Mercy and my parents decided to move the whole family to Adelaide and I finished my schooling there at St Aloysius College.

After working for a couple of years I entered the Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. I was drawn to



this congregation because of its Missionary endeavours. I've been to places I never dreamed of way back when I made my vows in 1972 - Alice Springs, Bathurst Island, Philippines and for a short stint in Vietnam.

I even lived in Randwick from 1984 – 1988 when I was studying and I was involved in Antioch and went to the meetings every Sunday night after playing the guitar at Mass.

Since January 1989 I have been in South Africa and this has been the greatest adventure of my life. I first taught for 11 years in St Brendan's School – a co-ed secondary school in the bush with over 600 students.

Then Bishop Slattery asked me to head up the HIV/AIDS response in the Diocese of Tzaneen. Now I am the Director of the Holy Family Care Centre in the far north of the Limpopo Province founded by our Order in 2001 as a response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. I'm doing what I think I was 'born to do'. It's a Place to Call Home.

...greatest adventure...

The Sisters bring their own talents and gifts to the ministry with the children, helped and supported by wonderful volunteers who come from different countries for various lengths of time. Some volunteers return year after year – spending their annual holidays with the children. Currently Fr Vince Carroll MSC is living at Holy Family. It is great to have him as our Chaplain and he makes a fantastic contribution.

Holy Family is a place where we OLSH and MSCs can really live our charism of compassionate love. Here we learn to love these children



unconditionally. They teach us how to do this. It is something you learn to do every day.

The children come for many reasons but always because it is a last resort – when all other avenues of care have been explored.. The reasons for admission vary but many children have been abandoned, sexually abused, physically abused, orphaned, made vulnerable because of HIV/ AIDS.

Some come from horrific backgrounds and arrive very ill, malnourished, frightened, lacking social skills and generally very bewildered. It doesn't take long for them to feel at home and to change once they feel loved and cared for.

I love being at Holy Family. I love being with these children who are so resilient and so brave. I love living and working alongside our Sisters, the MSCs, the local people and with volunteers. I discover every day how to live the charism of our Founder, Fr Jules Chevalier MSC who encouraged us 'to be on earth the Heart of Christ'.

Holy Family relies on donations to provide quality care to the children in residence. Please contact: OLSH Overseas Aid, 2 Kensington Road, Kensington NSW 2033 Ph: 9663 3599 to see how you can support our mission.

SAINTS MARY MACKILLOP AND MARCELLIN CHAMPAGNAT

BR CHRIS WADE FMS

Their lifetimes did not overlap so it was never possible for them to meet. They lived at opposite ends of the earth. But their legacies have influenced our parish and have some similar characteristics.

In our parish church there is a very attractive shrine to Mary MacKillop. In installing it, the parish has paid a fine tribute to perhaps the most influential woman in the history of the Church in Australia – the Foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph, more familiarly called Josephites.

...the most influential woman...

The shrine is all the more significant because Josephite presence and mission hardly penetrated the well-settled eastern suburbs - apart of course from the magnificent and pioneering work of the Sisters in administering St Margaret's Hospital at Darlinghurst, where many of us were probably born. But let's start at the beginning.

Mary MacKillop was an Australian of Scots descent, born in Melbourne in 1842. Her family was poor and often troubled and to support herself as a young woman, she became a governess, teaching children on stations, including one at Penola in South Australia. There she met a visionary priest, Father Tenison Woods.

Woods had travelled in France where he had encountered the Sisters of a French Order called the Sisters of St Joseph, but founded 200 years earlier. They worked in small villages with country children and their parents, were close to the people and plain and ordinary in manner. As Woods said, these nuns 'had nothing of the fine lady about them'.

He believed that if there could be some similar group of Sisters in

Australia, they might be able to bring education to the vast areas of the outback where the Church struggled to make its presence felt. He talked with Mary MacKillop and discovered she had similar thoughts. Talk led to action and on 19 March 1866, in Penola South Australia, Mary adopted a 'religious' dress and with Woods, began the Sisters of St Joseph – Australian brand!

Young women joined Mary in droves – she was a charismatic leader with a strong vision, a gift for administration and ability to put up with, and overcome, opposition. As time passed, some bishops thought she was far too big for her boots and too ambitious. They tried to close her down but, nothing daunted her, she got on a boat and sailed to Rome to appeal her cause directly to the Pope.

...a visionary priest...

Don't forget she was young, female, penniless and inexperienced in church politics. And being of Scots descent was a no-no in an Australian church heavily dominated by Irish clergy and bishops. But as it happened, almost miraculously, Rome backed her vision and she got the necessary approvals.

Her troubles were not over of course and she continued to be harassed and misunderstood for the rest of her life - hence the appropriateness of her name in religion, Mary of the Cross. She was forbidden by churchmen to enter certain parts of the country and driven out of others. She was even excommunicated for a short time. But she persevered, hundreds of young women continued to join her, and she established a Sisterhood peculiarly suited to the harsh conditions of outback living. There grew up scores of little 'St Joseph's School' sites across the continent, often in the most remote locations - the basic

reason why today a dedication to St Joseph is still by far the most common name for a Catholic entity in our country.

These Australian Sisters would go in twos to a settlement, they would go even if there were no access to regular Mass, they accepted shacks or lean-tos in which to live and teach and they were happy to live on the gifts-in-kind or few pennies given to them by the equally poor people among whom they lived and worked. They taught the faith to the children as well as passing on the precious gifts of literacy and numeracy. They did not need – and indeed avoided – big infrastructure, big locations or secure situations.

That is a very brief and inadequate life of the Mary MacKillop whose image we treasure in OLSH church. Last year, 2016, the Sisters marked 150 years since that Penola foundation.

How could the Marists resemble anything in that story?

The Marist Brothers have been in Randwick at Marcellin College since 1923, Their Founder was Saint Marcellin Champagnat, a Frenchman – as was Jules Chevalier, Founder of the MSCs.

...but like Mary MacKillop...

Born in 1789, the year of the Revolution, Marcellin grew up in post-revolutionary France with its turmoil and Napoleonic wars, an era in which the French church suffered major destruction. He had next-to-no education but as a gangling adolescent decided he wanted to be a priest. He wrote later that in the seminary, he learned to read and write 'only with infinite trouble'. After ordination, he was sent to a country parish near Lyon. There he soon discovered the terrible situation of the young people,

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JOLLY BY NAME...

JOLLY HO

There are many ways people become Catholics. Baptism as a child has been the traditional way. Not for Jolly Ho, a parishioner at St Margaret Mary's Randwick North.

Jolly was born in Canton China and went to a Catholic school in Macau with her two brothers and four sisters. When she was a little girl the house opposite where she lived was suddenly set on fire. Looking out the window she was afraid and began to pray, asking God to protect the occupants. 'From that night onward I have prayed to God asking for his protection and blessing to pass the night peacefully. He has never disappointed me' says Jolly.

In 1978 the family moved to Sydney and established a restaurant in Kingsgrove near Our Lady of Fatima Church. One day a neighbour took her to the church. 'I don't know if it was the ringing of the bells, or the sight of people receiving Communion that made me feel that the church was a special place. I did the shopping for the restaurant and I would make a visit to the church each day. It was the start of my wishing to become a Catholic'.

The Franciscan Friars had established the Asiana Centre Association in Ashfield in 1973 to organise the religious, social, educational and welfare activities for all people of Catholic Chinese background and Jolly enrolled in their RCIA program

in 2000. 'Until then my knowledge of God and my understanding of the Bible was very shallow' says Jolly 'but the program increased my love for God'.

The following year was a sad one when her husband died. They had been married for 31 years. But her friendship with the RCIA group helped her during her sorrows. And 'prayer became my daily rendezvous with God' recalls Jolly.

She became a Catholic at the Easter ceremonies of the Asiana Centre in 2003. Jolly says that she was changed after receiving her first Holy Communion, feeling free and relaxed and with nothing to really worry about.

The family sold the restaurant and Jolly who lived in Randwick had begun visiting both the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart and St Margaret Mary's churches while maintaining links with St Peter Julian's Church in Haymarket where she had become a Senior Server at their Sunday Mass after becoming a Catholic.

2006 was the year that started a long and strong association with the parish of St Margaret Mary's when Fr John Rate asked her to become a Senior Server.



JOLLY AND FR JOHN RATE

Mary Gallagher, a long time parishioner of the parish community at St Margaret Mary's says of Jolly: 'the parish is indebted to Jolly. Being a Senior Server is just one of the many roles she has taken on. We are a small group and Jolly responds readily and with enthusiasm to any request for help with our activities. There would not be too many volunteers who contribute to their organisation compared to Jolly's work'.

Daily Mass is no longer available at St Margaret Mary's and Jolly now attends daily Mass at the Clovelly parish of St Anthony of Padua. And, yes she now assists that parish too. 'I walk to the church from my home. Walking is good for the body and good for the soul. I often sing hymns as I walk and get the occasional strange look from passers-by. But I know God is by my side so there is always a smile on my face'.

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growing up as they were in almost complete ignorance. His discovery of a youth dying a miserable death in one of the outlying parts of his parish of La Valla convinced him of the need for teaching Brothers.

His were unlikely circumstances for a Founder: lowly status as a junior curate barely six months ordained, a country dialect rather than respectable French for speech and very limited formation or education. But like Mary MacKillop he was a strong and forceful character and a born leader and like her, he was spurred to action when he came across ignorance or suffering.

Pretty soon he had identified his first two potential Brothers. He found a derelict house which he cleaned out, made some primitive furniture with his own hands and in January 1817 invited these two young men to start the first of a network of tiny village schools under his direction. Scores of young men joined him. He called his group "Little Brothers of Mary", later modified by the Church to 'Marist Brothers'.

He was happy to go, as Mary MacKillop had gone, to the poorest and smallest places, to accept conditions that other Orders could not accept, and to trust completely in the help of Mary for the survival

of the work. Survive it did and spread around the globe, including Australia. In January 2017, The Brothers around the world, and our associates and ex-students, marked 200 years since the foundation by Father Champagnat in France.

So these two inspirational figures in the life of the Church, as I remarked at the outset, never had the opportunity to know each other, but shared a vision for the expansion of the Gospel among poor children and young people, even in impossible situations. God grant that their charisms inspire us to be faithful followers of Jesus in our own time and place.

HITCHMAN FAMILY

Melissa Hitchman is Australia's first resident female Ambassador to the Holy See. This is her story.

I could not have imagined - as a kindergartener during HH Pope Paul VI's visit to Australia in 1970, a uni student during HH Pope John Paul II's in 1986, a young mother during his subsequent visit in 1995, and a diplomat of some twenty years' experience during HH Pope Benedict XVI's visit in 2008 - that I would one day be presenting my credentials to one of their successors as Australia's Ambassador to the Holy See. Yet I did so on 8 September 2016. For those familiar with that Feast Day, you will understand how appropriate it was that Australia should have its first female resident Ambassador to the Holy See accredited on that day.

I am accompanied on this journey by my husband, Dr Adrian Hitchman and children Emily (23, resident in Canberra), Sara (20, just having joined us after graduating from ANU), Blythe (would now be 18, deceased, with us in spirit), and Grace (12, at Marymount International School Rome). I am grateful to them for their generosity in supporting me in my role. It is one of life's joys to share it with them. FaceTime and Viber have transformed our family dynamic!

I come from a loving, faith-filled family. I attended Sts Peter and Paul's Garran and St Clare's College in Canberra, belonged to the Parish of the Transfiguration, and received sound formation through the Archdiocesan Catholic Youth Ministry. They were, and remain, vibrant communities. Similarly, my family has a special place in our hearts for OLSH's Hartzer Park in Bowral, which has always been a place of welcome, peace and discernment for us. As I matured, so did my views. The role of conscience, free will, mutual respect and accountability are central to my expression of faith.

I completed a Bachelor of Economics (Hons) at ANU in 1988 and returned as a mature age student with a family

to complete a Master's of National Security in 2012, inspired by my parents' example years earlier. After some time in the Bureau of Industry Economics, I joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, with a stint in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Much like faith, it is a privilege in international relations to collaborate towards the common good.

I have been posted to London, undertaken several short term missions and visited every continent on earth except Antarctica. My husband had that one covered!

As Romans, and the Catholic Church, think in terms of millennia, our seven months here has been but a moment in history. Nonetheless, we have been warmly welcomed by the Curia, diplomatic corps, Australian religious community and diaspora. Rome now feels like home. I am grateful to my predecessors for the foundations they have built and the committed team at the Embassy for working with me to strengthen the bilateral Australia-Holy See relationship.

Many have asked why we have a post here. The Holy See is both a state recognised in international law and the governing body for the Catholic Church of 1.3 billion. According to the 2011 Census, Catholicism has the highest representation of the Christian Churches in Australia, with 25.3 per cent, or five million, identifying as Catholics. HH Pope Francis is recognised as a global leader and exercises considerable moral authority over a broad international agenda.

As Australia's official representative to the Holy See under the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, my focus is on the state to state relationship.



The key objectives for my term are

- (1) promoting the convergence between an innovative Australian Government and reformist papacy
- (2) raising the profile of the broad agenda Australia and the Holy See have on issues such as conflict prevention, peacebuilding, anti-human trafficking, indigenous and gender empowerment
- (3) leveraging the value add Australian religious – some global leaders of their congregations – provide in Rome and
- (4) harnessing the energy of the Australian Catholic University's Rome Centre, which attracts students and mid-career professionals to study and contribute to greater understanding between Australia and the Holy See.

Our website, www.holysee.embassy.gov.au, has further information on our activities. Please register with us if you are in Rome, so we can include you in our events! We hope to lure OLSH's own 2017 Senior Australian of the Year, Sr Anne Gardiner, to Rome for one at some point. Also look out for our soon-to-be-released Vatican Voices on the website: our profile on Australians making a difference to the Holy See. We will also be launching an internship program with a modest stipend, for a postgraduate student to contribute to the Embassy's work every few months. Finally, the Embassy will soon establish a digital presence. So you will be able to follow us. We look forward to hearing your views and sharing our own.

PLACES IN RANDWICK: RANDWICK RACECOURSE

Hannah Hibbert, Archivist at the Australian Turf Club writes about the Randwick Racecourse.

The area at Randwick now known as Royal Randwick Racecourse was in use from the early 1830s with the first horse race being held on 17 April 1833. Known as the 'Sandy Course', its opening revitalised public enthusiasm in racing. A subscription list to raise prize money allowed annual races, a training track and occasional hurdle contests to be held until 1838 but the course soon deteriorated.

For a while racing moved to Homebush but it soon became clear that this course would not give racegoers the security it needed. Access issues for spectators, lack of enthusiasm from members and an increase in rent for the course all contributed to the decision to find a new space to race.

The government had retained the 202 acre site at Randwick and in 1842 the Australian Jockey Club (AJC) was formed. Instrumental in the decision to choose Randwick as the new course was the first president of the AJC, Sir Edward Deas Thomson. The land was leased to the AJC and secretary George Rowley and 15 other members undertook a liability for £50 each to raise the funds to renovate and improve the track. With the money raised, £3000, including donations from the public, a proper turf surface was laid and a modest grandstand built.

In 1861 the first race at Randwick under the command of the AJC was run. A few years later the future of the club and course was guaranteed with the yearly fee set by the NSW Government at 'one black peppercorn per annum'. From these modest beginnings the Club and course flourished with the AJC creating rules and regulations around how, when and where racing was to take place. Building programmes and track development were encouraged and staff numbers increased. An

association with the architectural firm Robertson and Marks began in 1907.

Though they specialised in residential and warehouse buildings they also became prominent across the racecourses of Sydney designing racecourse grandstands for Victoria Park, Rosehill Racing Club, Warwick Farm, Canterbury Park and Moorefield. At Randwick, totalisator buildings, a new Paddock teahouse and extensions to the Officials Stand (still in place today) were designed by them and overseen by Chairman Sir Adrian Knox.



During the wars, the course was made available to army recruiters and for infantry exercises. Meetings were held and the proceeds were transferred to a variety of relief funds. During the 1930s and 1940s, Randwick racecourse became the site for new enterprises such as the apprentice jockeys school (1933) and drug laboratory for the testing of horses (1947).

Building developments up until the 1950s were all part of creating spaces that would hold the huge crowds coming weekly to Randwick. Horse racing at that time was an integral part of urban recreation with spectators having no other option than to physically come to the racecourse to place their bets and watch their horses.

From the 1950s however, a gradual shift came about. Mechanical totalisators were changed to computerised ones, off course betting was more prevalent and then live telecasts in the 1980s meant that the architecture at Randwick was servicing fewer and fewer racegoers. The stands of this era were designed to meet the need for a high standard of comfort rather than to provide seating for large numbers of people. This trend has continued through to today.

In 1992, Queen Elizabeth II visited Australia and opened the newly built Paddock Stand. Randwick Racecourse was granted the right to call itself

'Royal Randwick', the only racecourse to have this accolade as a permanent fixture. A letter from the personal secretary of the Queen states that 'Her Majesty was particularly glad that she was able, on this occasion, to legitimise your traditional title of Royal'.

Since the earliest days Randwick Racecourse was part of the community. Hosting not just races but other sporting and community events. In 1970, Pope Paul VI celebrated Mass at Randwick as part of his pastoral visit to Australia. The Racecourse was also the site of a Mass held by Pope John Paul II in 1995 for the Beatification ceremony of Australia's first potential saint, Mary Mackillop. It was also the site of the vigil and final Mass of World Youth Day 2008.

Its long history has influenced the development of the surrounding area, providing employment and support. Though the nature of the sport has changed and competition for leisure time has increased, people continue to gather at the racecourse to celebrate the thoroughbreds and engage in local activities.

POWER FAILURE

CARMEL MAGUIRE

More than 30 years ago, Neil Postman warned that we were 'amusing ourselves to death'. The idea had surfaced more than 50 years earlier than that. In 1932 Aldous Huxley chastised the public in his *Brave New World*, set in the year 2540, for their addiction to amusement. In the Australian summer, satisfying any addiction to amusement can be quite challenging. It is difficult to disagree with Sydney Morning Herald critic, Don Anderson, who describes the television programs showered on us in the holiday season as 'abysmal tripe'. How earnest then is our pursuit of pleasure and to what lengths and depths are we prepared to go?

The notion of our essential triviality appeals to the kill-joy doom-sayers. Sadly many of them adopt the mantle of Christianity and their targets are often the youth of our villages, and parishes. Billy Graham's son, Franklin, in 2008 saw Christian youth culture in crisis, in a society which has 'lost even the semblance of a moral compass'. Strong on the

...toddlers on the bus...

evils of Islam, he accused President Obama of having brought the Muslim Brotherhood into the White House. In 2017 he was set to read an inspiring message at Donald Trump's inauguration, apparently not sensitive to the widely advertised aberrations of the new President's moral compass.

Of course, with Google, Facebook, Twitter and the streaming services online, the extremes are there for the taking. And I have to admit that I am a relentless pleasure seeker, in the theatre, in the cinema, in and under the sea, and not least in conversation.

I am happy to drive a few hundred kilometres to see exhibitions of art treasures and cultural objects.

Recently after exulting in the wonders from Versailles, and the landmarks in human history made obvious in an exhibition of objects from the British Museum, I was knocked sideways by the beauty of the tiny blue wren



SPLendid BLUE WREN: WIKIPEDIA

which hopped up and looked at me as I panted in the shade in the Canberra Zoo. The greatness of art topped by the perfection of a tiny bird.

I hope that we privileged citizens of a wealthy country can continue to enjoy the amusement which is at our fingertips. And age is no barrier.

Sometimes I wish it was, especially when I see toddlers on the buses, oblivious of the world around them, absorbed in tiny screens set up for them to watch cartoon characters cavort. They are missing, not only the ugly canyons through which the light rail will glide, but much of the sound of human language and the endless drama of human interaction. But why criticize the young, when without the screen of our mobile phones how could most adult passengers endure the journey?

Shakespeare reckoned 'All the world's a stage' - for us, the world may be not so much a stage as a screen. What could some of the consequences be? Are skills being lost more important than cursive writing? Or is the escape to screen a reprieve from awful reality? Is the

news too much, or is there too much news? In a recent conference on the future of newspapers in the age of digital media, one guru advanced the possibility that the more information made available to people, the less well-informed they become.

Evidence may be sought in the United States where 'alternative facts' are not only admitted in political discourse but embraced by large sections of the population.

But there is little comfort to be gained from the gaucheries of President Trump and his family. Disillusion is widespread right here too. Some is misguided, with a preference for the 'alternative facts' produced to deny climate change and refugees' rights to seek sanctuary. There is also a power failure much more serious than any that blacks out our screens.

...greatness of art...

Faith in our institutions, political and religious, continues to be badly shaken by the facts of fraudulence and abuse for which there are no alternatives to shelter behind. Among world leaders, some seem afraid to speak up in case they lose votes, some who speak up are prone to spout self-aggrandizing nonsense. Those at the coal face in institutions where power has been abused who speak out and speak sense deserve our unstinting support. Happily they have in Pope Francis a guiding light, highly unlikely to be extinguished by power failure.

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THE BACK PAGE

WITH FR PETER

'Know the truth, and the truth will set you free...' (Jn 8:32). I find these words of Jesus ringing in my whole being. I am writing this in the midst of the first week of the Royal Commission into Institutional Abuse of Children, and the so-called 'Catholic Wrap-Up': more like a 'Catholic un-wrapping' of individual and institutional failure to protect children in care with its attendant destruction of lives, anger at decisions made by leaders or the failure to make them, and the attendant sense of shame.

While I was prepared for bad news, I simply did not think it could be as bad as what we received. The scale of the incidents, the reversal of all that we stand for as people who bear the name of Christ, wounds us all. One Church leader stated it would take generations for the Church to regain its moral authority in society.

From time to time some years back on behalf of the MSC administration I have met survivors of abuse by Church personnel, and found the encounters, personally, the most difficult I have been involved with. 'Sorry' seems such a small, even pathetic, word in the context of their lives. Endeavouring to enter into the pain and loss of a survivor leaves one still very much on the outside of their experiences.

I have been humbled by the graciousness of their acceptance of apologies offered and what may be of assistance to help them in the healing process. Others contend with ongoing distress. Tragically some have to contend with addictions, and some find it difficult to enter into stable relationships so shattered has their confidence been. I have encountered people of courage and beauty in their tears.

It is not just better to know than not to know – it is essential to know. I remind myself that it was largely journalists and people who felt abandoned or outside the church who have brought all this to a head.

It took the help of the secular authorities to do that for us. Was not the Holy Spirit, 'the Spirit of Truth', active in all this 'un-wrapping'? It reminds me that we must be discerning when we would be too critical of the secular society in which we live: It has served us well in this fundamental matter.

I read a beautiful book, *Child Arise! The Courage To Stand* by Jane N. Dowling, a survivor of sexual abuse by a priest. The book won the Christian Book Award last year. She wrote: 'What I hope for my book is that it can get into the hands of as many survivors of abuse as possible, because I believe it's a journey, where one feels a deep hopelessness and despair. And the pain is overwhelming, but I believe that God's word has a power to transform that pain and suffering into love.' She continues: 'It was something that I felt called by God to write and I saw a need, so I was simply trying to respond to that need. But I wasn't really looking for any sort of public recognition so for me to receive the prize tonight is really overwhelming,' she said.

I pray that survivors like Jane will be sources of healing and inspiration for us all. In this Year of Matthew I take consolation from what I call the bookends of Matthew's Gospel: 'His name will be called Emmanuel' (1:23) and the very last words of the Ascending Christ: 'I am with you all times' (28:20) - which speak of the abiding presence of Christ within his Church, our source of light, life, reconciliation and hope.