



Josephite Associates

* Friendship * Prayer * Service
- May 2008 -

Hello from the Coordinator

Easter came very early this year and the great feast of St Joseph was moved forward, not to interrupt the solemn days of Holy Week.

It was wonderful to see so many Associates join others in the Josephite family for the feast day celebrations at Baulkham Hills. I tried to meet as many as possible on that day. When we gather on these days I am always mindful of those Associates who would love to be there, but are unable, either through frail age, illness or distance. You were all remembered in my prayer on that day.

Once again we thank Srs Bridie O'Connell and Maureen McDermott, who led sessions for us over the early months of 2008. We have much to learn from each other, Sisters and Associates together.

On 2nd March the new Provincial Leadership Team took up office for the next three years. We welcome Srs Mary Quinlan, Antoinette Baldwin, Mary Ellen O'Donoghue, Therese Carroll and Ann Love. We promise prayers for them as they lead the province at this time in our history.

I continued to visit groups at North Leichhardt and Moree. Whilst in Moree I had the pleasure of meeting the Junior Josephite Associates in the primary school there. It made my heart sing to see such a Josephite spirit among the children and to know that the baton is being passed on.

Don't forget the **Tree Planting Day at Kincumber** on 25th May! We need your help.

Until next time!

Sr Helen Sanders.

Associates Office - Locked Bag 3031 Burwood
NSW 1805 - (02) 8741 2334

Coming Events—Associates

**Annual General Meeting
at Mary MacKillop Place
30th August 2008**

**Kincumber Retreat
12th–14th September 2008**
'The emblem's journey: the long way home'
Led by Sr Virginia Bourke rsj

For further information phone 02 8741 2334

Coming Events— Mary MacKillop Place

**Special Intentions Mass
'The Youth of the World'
8th June 2008**

**Guided Meditations
23rd and 30th June 2008**

Introducing Guided Meditation as a special prayer form where the Holy Spirit inspires our imagination and enables us to communicate with God in a loving relationship.
Led by Sr Elizabeth Crilley rsj

**Mary MacKillop's Feast Day
8th August 2008**

*For further information phone
the Ministries Manager on 02 8912 4818*

The newsletter is now available on the Web, at
<http://www.sosj.org.au/connect/NSWAssociates.html>

Prayers for the Sick

Maureen Dean (Belmont);
Eileen Halsall (Canberra);
Vera and Jack Sivewright,
parents of Christine (Lakemba);
Fr Vince Whiteman (Thirroul)

Margaret's Journey Continues

In the May 2007 issue of the newsletter we published the story of Margaret Paton's Mass of thanksgiving for healing and answered prayers. It turned out that Margaret had another special celebration still to come...

On 23rd September 2007, I rejoiced with Margaret and the Josephite Sisters when she was professed as Sr Margaret Paton of the Christ Child. This profession took place within Mass at the Mary MacKillop Chapel at North Sydney. Margaret had chosen beautiful Scripture readings and music to express her joy at this new stage of her commitment. As at her Mass of thanksgiving, she drew again on Briege O'Hare and Marie Cox's CD "Woman's Song of God"; this time she chose "For a Nun's Profession":

*My dear delight, my God, my heart of tenderness,
Come send your Spirit from above;
Create in me a new heart today;
Anoint me in your love.
For I have chosen you before a thousand others
And I love you more than any love;
I long for you with all my heart;
Yes, I long for you, my God.*

*Let my soul grow in strength, let me grow in grace,
May the beauty of your love find in me a human face.*



This struck me as a wonderful expression of the commitment that Margaret was making—relying not on her own strength, but on God's strength and gracious gifts. The Procession of Gifts was accompanied by East Timorese women playing their drums. These drums are very significant for Margaret, as she played a drum each week for some months and its vibrations helped to heal and strengthen her hand.

Once again, it was great to celebrate with Margaret and wish her well as she moved into this new stage of her journey.

Christine Sivewright, Lakemba

Moree Profile

Contact person Mrs Stella Cusack has been an Associate for a number of years and leads a Prayer Group at her home on Monday afternoons. When Sr Margaret Cusack came to town in 2006, it was suggested to this group that the members be invited to join the Associates as they had already assisted Sister in settling in to her new convent. Nine members accepted this invitation and put in their applications, which were accepted. We have grown since then.

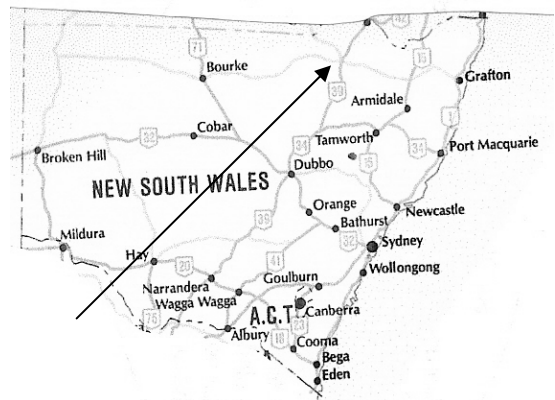
Meetings are held at Stella's home, as well as at the convent on special occasions, and it is anticipated that about four or five meetings will be held each year. Prayer, care and supporting Sister Margaret are the main priorities at present.

The Newsletters are much appreciated for news of what is happening in other groups as well as material on the life of Mary MacKillop. Some members attended Josephite schools around the state and have shared experiences.



Stella Cusack

L to R: Sheila Campbell, Ruth McGowan, Margaret Murray, Pat Houlahan, Mary Haddad, Kath Faulkner, Norma Meyer, Lalie Fletcher, Stella Cusack (Missing: Kay Gillan, May Coughlan, Georgina Peachey)



Josephite Pastoral Care Ministry at Claymore

In 1995 a Sister of St Joseph felt God was calling us to a ministry to the disadvantaged and marginalised tenants of the Claymore Public Housing Estate. She sent in a submission to the NSW Provincial and team. Sisters were invited to a special meeting to discern and vote on whether we begin this new ministry. After listening to the submission and after reflection and prayer, the voting was unanimous. So two Sisters arrived in Proctor Way at the end of 1996 to live in a four-storey townhouse and be a presence and offer pastoral care to the tenants. As they soon found out, this presence meant so much to the people, who loved to have the Sisters living in their street. These Sisters were very well received and became very much part of the local community, offering assistance where possible.

My ministry here began in December 1999. I came to Australia from Ireland in 1965 to enter the Sisters of St Joseph. After completing my religious formation and teacher training, I taught for nearly thirty years in Catholic primary schools in both city and country. In 1997 and 1998 my ministry involved acting as coordinator of a hostel for 15 female students from rural areas and from overseas. At this time I also did training and worked in a voluntary capacity ministering to people with HIV/AIDS. At the end of 1999, when I returned from Ireland after my mother's death, I was looking for a new ministry and was asked to come to Claymore. I felt this was just right for me at this time, as I had wanted for some time to work on the margin with the poor, as Mary MacKillop and our early sisters had done.

The suburb of Claymore was established in the late seventies. The whole suburb was government-owned houses, with the design based on an American style. It was not long till it was realised that it did not suit our Australian conditions. The population consists of around 48% single-parent families; a large percentage of unemployed; around 40% under 15 years of age; and people suffering from mental illness and addictions.

My ministry involvement is multi-faceted:

- Home visits, to offer companionship and support to single mums, and sometimes to help in filling out forms, babysitting, letter writing, assisting them with TAFE study, etc.
- Sometimes my visits are to newly-arrived tenants, to welcome them and let them know what services are available in the area. Sometimes it is to people released from prison, to assist them to settle back into society.
- Accompanying people to Centrelink or other agencies, just to offer support.
- Volunteer work at Claymore Public School Breakfast Club.
- After school "Kids Study Time" Program at Claymore Neighbourhood Centre.
- Supporting the "Books for Claymore" Program conducted at Claymore school to assist parents of preschool children to read to their children and to familiarise the little ones with the school.
- Support the "Kids in the Park" Program conducted by Burnside Uniting Care and supported by the Department of Housing and the local community.
- Parish Catechist Coordinator as well as teaching catechetics.
- Court support for women in domestic violence or for divorce proceedings.
- Court support for young people.
- Spiritual Adviser for the Parish St Vincent de Paul Conference.
- Writing letters of support to agencies, or letters recommending children from Claymore Public School to be accepted into Catholic High Schools.
- Accompanying parents to school interviews.

I am also on the Parish Council and have been on the RCIA team in my local parish and on occasions have done Communion Services during the absence of the priests. I feel very privileged to be accepted into peoples' personal lives. The people here are so open and friendly, and grateful for all one does for them.

The children are delightful. The other day I visited a family of two little ones I teach Scripture to. Just after I arrived, the school phoned to say the little girl was ill, so dad went to pick her up. Mum had made me a cup of tea when the little girl arrived home. After she had brought me little statues of Jesus and Mary, she went to the kitchen and brought in a large cup of what looked like apple juice, but she said it was tea; she placed it on the table and put Jesus on one side, with Mary on the other side. She had brought in a cuppa for Jesus and Mary.

From page 3

Another little girl said Good Morning to me as I walked to Mass the other day. Then she said "Sister Julia, Reconciliation is great." She had started lessons in preparation for the sacrament. Recently a little boy stopped to talk to me on his way to school. He asked me where I was going. When I told him I was going to church, he said, "Enjoy it in church" and then called after me saying, "Be sure to listen in church."

A few years ago I assisted a young girl to get into Mount Carmel Catholic High School. She was in Year 8, having arrived from overseas the previous year with no English. Her mother was a single mum and also had a three-month-old son. When the girl was commencing Year 12, she asked me to help her with her major Religion assignment as she wanted to do it on Mary MacKillop. I agreed and took her to North Sydney one Sunday morning, to Mass and the museum. She did extremely well in her project, and grew to love Mary and what she stood for. She is now in her second year, studying a double degree at Wollongong University. She still looks to me for support or just to offer a listening ear.

I find that my ministry here is very rewarding and from the first moment I moved here, I have felt the presence of God. It reminds me of the song, "Truly Yahweh was in this place and I never knew." This is really Mary MacKillop territory. Each day, as I go about my daily rounds, I think of Mary MacKillop's saying, "Never see a need without doing something about it." There are so many needs here, but my motto is another one of Mary's sayings, "Do the best you can, and leave the rest to God." That is what I try to do, to relieve suffering wherever I can.

Sr Julia Hartnett rsj

Kincumber Retreat—February, 2008

The room was filled with a real buzz of excitement and expectation with the centrepiece displaying candles burning brightly to enhance the pleasant surroundings. Sister Bridie O'Connell rsj began the Friday evening session on the "Journey to Life" which invited us to receive the promise of hope and love that Christ brings to our lives.

Over the following two days, we journeyed together and the participation of all was enriching with questions raised and answered by Sister Bridie in her usual gifted manner. We discussed "At Home in Bethany" where Jesus, Mary and Martha shared time together and later, we contemplated if we were a Martha, Mary or perhaps both. There was time for personal reflection and we shared our story in various groups before coming together for a general discussion.

After we sang our closing hymn of praise on Sunday morning, we left the retreat ready and invigorated with a renewed spirit to continue on our "Journey to Life."

Jacquie Oudin and Helen Bache, Lakemba

Woy Woy Outreach

We Woy Woy Associates try to live the Josephite Charism, as best we can. At our monthly meetings we collect for a charity, and at Christmas 2007 we sent a cheque to the Josephite Sister at Walgett, to pass on to a family in dire need, who were suffering the effects of the drought. I received a beautiful thank you card back from Sister expressing her gratitude. Also four of the group filled a shoe box with goodies for people in the rural areas.

Beverley Purser, Woy Woy

Requiescant in Pace
Angelina Anthony (Surry Hills); Eileen Blanch (Tamworth); Carmelita Clohesy (South Australia); Bill Ertner, husband of Nida (Lalor Park); Honoria Ismay (Peakhurst); June James, aunt of Margaret Hughes (Belmont); Imelda Morel (Central Bankstown); Frances Roberts (Corrimal); Patricia Rowe (Revesby); Norma Scully (Kincumber)

Alice Mavis Wilson (2.2.1929 - 10.11.2007)



In 1971 I went to work at Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, and there I met Alice and we became friends. How, I don't know; we just clicked. Alice had a way of asking you a few personal questions at which you didn't take offence and if you needed help, advice or care, she was there. She opened her house, car and heart, and I can say I have never met anyone who didn't like her.

In 1983 she had a slight heart attack and after many tests, she was told the motor of her brain was damaged and she would lose the use of her legs and would be in a wheelchair. She said, "No, I will use another part of my brain", and that's what she did! She took up Yoga, Tai-Chi, the Alexander technique and Meditation. She went to TAFE to study Year 10 and in doing so, met many more people and our home (I was now living with her) was filled with young girls, mostly from Vietnam. Many of these girls were helped with English, as well as assignments. Alice also shared her house with many seminarians who came to work in the parish. Father would only have to say "Would you like a visitor for tea?" and we would find ourselves sharing our fish and chips most Friday nights. Over the meal, Alice would get them to share their hopes and dreams and give them a listening ear.

Then there was Mary MacKillop! I knew nothing about Mary, but soon learnt and before long we were leading a group of Associates at Belmore. Alice had a simple faith and if she lost or misplaced something or wanted a parking space, she would ask the saint who wasn't too busy to help and they usually did. After a long fight her legs began to weaken and walking became a great effort. She went into a nursing home and from there went to her rest.

At her funeral Janine, her middle daughter, said her mother had three loves: her family, her God and Mary MacKillop. I would add another, the love of people. I thank God she took me into her heart, home and family and on the journey which was her life.

Rest in peace.

Lillian Stansell, her friend

Friends of Mary MacKillop

Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC) Parish School, Rosemeadow

The Friends of Mary MacKillop were founded in 2007 to promote and encourage our wonderful primary students to take up the challenge and be prepared to be involved in an outreach programme. We meet each Thursday at lunch time for some input in leadership for young people and to develop their sense of spirituality based on needs. For part of it we have used the model of the Mini Vinnies programme. Primarily we are meeting for friendship, prayer and service. The children are very enthusiastic, caring and willing to take on any opportunity to assist.

This has included leading the Project Compassion element of Lent throughout our school community. They are responsible for collecting boxes, counting money and reporting to the rest of the school community on their progress to date. Another group is assisting in the collection of used stamps that are then sold to assist schools in East Timor.

We are looking towards visiting our local nursing home to develop connections with the older members of the wider community. We also hope to make contact with residents of St Anne's Nursing Home at Hunter's Hill, with the support of our local St Vincent de Paul conference. Contact will also be made with older people who were former religious teachers and no longer have connections with young people. This will be through email, letters and cards.

The children have formed teams to work as a co-leadership model. They take responsibility for running their team. The teams are: Penola, Alexander, Flora, Julian, Mary Smith sgs (founding principal of OLHC), St Vincent de Paul, Peter, Joseph, and Joanna Barr-Smith. As you can see they are named after prominent people, places and works of charity closely linked to Mary MacKillop. After Easter we intend to Celebrate 08 with a party and hope to design a badge and logo for the Friends.

David Graham and Samantha McGarrity

WYD Cross at Bombala

On their 12-month journey the WYD Cross and Icon are travelling to each of Australia's 28 geographic dioceses, visiting at least 400 communities. Bombala was one of those communities, visited on Friday 22nd February, 2008.

The Associates group, of approximately 15 people, was fortunate enough to be able to contribute to the ceremonial visit. Their first initiative was to coordinate and make 400 bookmark crosses. The next initiative was to enhance the Mary MacKillop display at the local museum, which was the old Convent and where Mary MacKillop stayed on her visit to Bombala in 1899.



A story quilt of Mary's life was made from sections of the toile, as were the curtains setting off the window immediately behind the bed. Using the craft of Iris Folding, a cross was made from rich-coloured fabric, in gold and rust. We are calling this The Cross of Praise and Thanksgiving, for the life of Blessed Mary MacKillop and her Sisters.

As this was finished in time for the WYD Cross and Icon visit, it is a fitting reminder for our beautiful young people as they journey to the centre of their being.

*May the golden sun shine down on them,
And may Mary walk beside them as they journey deserts dry.*

Adapted from input by Carol Badewitz, Bombala

From His Side

(written for WYD 2008 by Carol Badewitz)

From His side shall flow living water
From His side shall flow living bread
From His side shall flow the love intended
For His people who need His love to live.

We thank you Lord for bringing us together
And for those who couldn't join the fray
We thank you Lord for this younger generation
That they in turn will show your loving way.

For those who've helped to bring this altogether
For those who've journeyed far away from home
May God bless the work you have shared in
And bless you too and hold you safe in his love.

Let us all then join our hands together
Let us all let go of our pain
Let us share this love of our Father
As we journey the way back home again.

Stop Press! Another place being visited by the WYD Cross and Icon is Claymore (see page 3). We will publish a report of this visit in a future issue of the newsletter.

**In the Footsteps of
Blessed Mary MacKillop
Australian Pilgrimage**

14-24 October 2008

For more information, contact:
Sr Therese Leydon rsj
Phone 0417 683 123
t.leydon@bigpond.com

Sr Margaret Knagge rsj
Phone (02) 8912 4818
Margaret.Knagge@sosj.org.au

**The Website for Mary MacKillop Place,
Mount Street, North Sydney is
www.marymackillopplace.org.au
for**

**Coming events, Feast and Memorial
dates, Pilgrimage information and an
invitation to a place of prayer with our
Australian Saint.**