



Josephite Associates, Victoria

Summer Newsletter 2011



HOLY DAYS and HOLIDAYS

The months seem to fly faster each year and by the time you receive this we will be at the beginning of Advent, with perhaps a busy time ahead—or maybe with tinges of loneliness, missing a loved one.

I believe that hope is the gift we need at this time of the year, hope for our world, hope in the goodness of others and hope in our future, a future gifted by God.

Recently I read a book called **House of Hope**, an allegory, for me, of Mary MacKillop and the beginnings of our Congregation. A middle-aged couple, she a

Doctor, he an engineer, who had lived in China for many years, felt a call from God to care for the abandoned children of China. Without any financial backing, but a deep trust that this was God's work they set about caring for these children. The first cot was set up in their lounge room, followed soon after by three others while they built accommodation.

Each child was provided with a nanny who loved them and made sure they grew strong and ready for adoption. Those who needed medical care received it. Funds and gifts poured in. They felt God was saying "I am their DADDY! I will care for them!"

Such hope in God was also Mary MacKillop's strong point, starting off her schools in a stable, trusting God would provide. Despite setbacks, opposition and poverty hope never left her and her Sisters.

When I travel around Victoria meeting Associates, I come home full of hope, that here are good people living the Josephite Charism, maintaining the presence of that charism in their parishes and workplaces. Since the last newsletter I have visited St Albans, Cranbourne, Tallangatta, Beechworth, Rushworth, Leongatha, and will be travelling the Gippsland line from Morwell to Orbost.

The mobile library gets good use and the travelling shop has been welcome at all venues. Many are now getting their newsletter by

email and I hope enjoying the colour.

Our Core-team has expanded and now includes Marie Mitchell from Numurkah. We look forward to the Leadership day with you in February and hope this will be an enjoyable experience for those who come.

So as we traverse these holy days of Advent let us walk, not run, taking time for rests and reflection making our coffee breaks a time to read, ponder and sit in awe and wonder at the birth of this child. Take time to look around you and see the gifts we have in our world.

Some of us will enjoy well-earned holidays, with family or at home. Family gatherings will ring with laughter and shared memories.

May hope fill your lives this Christmas. May sadness be healed, and grieving eased as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Mary Fermio R SJ



Inside this issue:

- 1 Editorial
- 2 Summer Reflection
- 3 New Core-Team Member
4. Opening Chapel at Kew
- Christmas Greetings
- Advent Prayer
5. Regional Meetings
- 6 Around the Traps
- 7 Around the Traps
- New Introductory Program
8. Financial Statement
- 9 Wonthaggi Centenary
- Pilgrimages 2012
- 10 Mary MacKillop Travels
- 11 News from Peru
- 12 Bulletin Board

Enclosures:

1. Prayer Sheet: Summer
2. Building our Nation prayer

Friendship

Prayer

Service

SUMMER REFLECTION

Today I asked the question—What is Christmas all about? I have been reading a lovely book called *A Friendship Like No Other—Experiencing God's Amazing Embrace* by William Barry sj. And here I think I have found an answer that suits me. The Birth of Jesus is the way God wants to make visible the great love which embraces us. It is the offer of Friendship by our God.

In the Chapter "What does God want?" the author takes the stand that what God wants is friendship. Not because God is lonely, but that God desires humans into existence for the sake of friendship. This of course runs counter to a lot of teaching in the past, when we feared the God who was judge, who could send us to hellfire and brimstone. He claims that this teaching does not have a long lasting effect but if anything turns people away from God.

The English Cistercian Aelred says instead of 'God is love' (1 John 4:16) but 'Shall I say... God is friendship?' Thomas Aquinas defined *caritas* as friendship with God.

Some would quote a psalm which says: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Ps 111:10) The fear extolled in this psalm is not a fear that makes us keep our distance from God, but one that fills us with reverence and awe. Fr Barry states that this beginning of wisdom might be the acceptance of God's offer of friendship, something that can be daunting, challenging and even a bit frightening.

During this Advent time as the celebration of the birth of Jesus draws near, let us draw closer to God as a friend. Often in prayer I find myself sitting next to Jesus beside a mountain stream, surrounded by beautiful trees, water chuckling, birds singing—we sit as friends and I share my time, my silence, my day with him and listen to what he wants to share with me. Maybe Advent is a good time to find your special place to sit with Jesus.

The prayer of St Anselm of Canterbury could be a useful prayer during Advent.

Teach me to seek you
And reveal yourself to me as I seek
For unless you instruct me
I cannot seek you.
And unless you reveal yourself
I cannot find you.
Let me seek you in desiring you;
Let me desire you in seeking you.
Let me find you in loving you;
Let me love you in finding you.

May your Christmas be blessed with joyful love with family, friends and with the God who offers us friendship regardless of our weaknesses.

Mary Fermio rsj

CATCHING THE JOSEPHITE CHARISM

Introducing our new Core-Team Member

I am the mother of four adult children and grandmother of four—three teenagers and an eleven year old, so I am in interesting times with these delightful grandkids.

I grew up in the Numurkah area in a strong Catholic, Church-going family and was educated in Government schools in the area. After Secondary School, I became an infant school teacher in the Government system. My teaching career took me to Mary MacKillop country, but I didn't know anything about her at that stage. It was only after her Beatification that I came to know about her and her work as a teacher in the Portland and Penola area.

My first contact with a Josephite Sister was with Sr Mary Coman who was living in Portland conducting tours of Mary MacKillop sites and producing the Mary MacKillop newsletters and generally making parishioners aware of the legacy of this amazing woman. As a result of my friendship with Sr Mary and her infectious enthusiasm, I became "infected" too and began reading as much as I could find about this remarkable, but very ordinary woman who, with the assistance of Fr Woods, did extraordinary work among the poor and disadvantaged of their time.

Mary's ordinariness appealed to me and Sr Mary's 'down to earth' approach to all kinds of people, in all sorts of situations, seemed to encapsulate what I now realize is the charism as expressed by Mary and Fr Woods.

After the passing of my husband, I left Portland and returned to Numurkah to live. I became involved in church life and as a result, formed friendships with the Josephite Sisters who have lived here over the last six and a half years. It seemed a natural

progression to join the local Associates group, which has enabled me to learn more about Mary and Fr Woods and the Charism which I try to put into daily practice.

Since becoming an Associate, I have spent time as a Volunteer living in the Aboriginal Community of Amata in N-W South Australia. I now have a real appreciation of the difficulties these people encounter in accessing the services, that we regard as necessities of life, and how little heed is paid to the real needs which these people have. It was a fantastic experience to live and work in the Community. I now have a great love for these beautiful gentle, warm and welcoming people. I wish I was 20 years younger!!!!

It was a very pleasant surprise to be invited to join the Victorian Josephites Core Team and it was my great delight to accept the invitation. My hope and prayer is that I can make a thoughtful and considered contribution in the deliberations of the Team and I look forward to meeting up with the Associate groups in the Diocese of Sandhurst.

Marie Mitchell



BLESSING OF NEW CHAPEL AT SACRED HEART CHURCH, KEW

A large crowd attended the opening and blessing of the new chapel dedicated to St Mary of the Cross MacKillop on 8th August 2011. Bishop Tomlinson was celebrant and Sr Josephine Dubiel declared the chapel opened.

Fr Michael Kalka, an Associate, is to be congratulated on his initiative to honour our Australian Saint in this way. Our Sisters once lived in Kew operating St Anthony's Home for children, a work very dear to Mary MacKillop.



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

From the Victorian Josephite Associates' Core Team



Top Row: L-R: Mary Fermio rsj; Anne-Marie Wilkinson, Noreen McLeish;
Bottom Row L-R: Mary Ryan rsj, Betty Loftus, Marie Mitchell

ADVENT PRAYER

1.

Date: EACH WEDNESDAY IN ADVENT

TIME: 12.15 p.m.—12.45 p.m.

VENUE: Mary MacKillop Chapel
Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre
362 Albert St, East Melbourne.

Make it a lunchtime or shopping break.

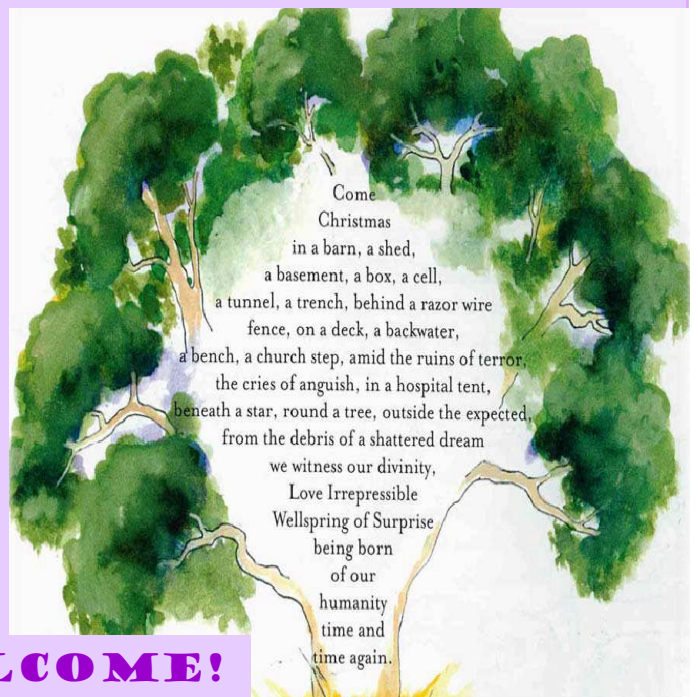
2.

DATE: 20th December 2011

TIME: 7 p.m.—7.45 p.m.

VENUE: Birth Site of Mary MacKillop
Brunswick St, Fitzroy.

ALL WELCOME!



Poem: Noel Davis

REGIONAL MEETINGS

HAWTHORN EAST

The Regional Meeting held at Hawthorn East on 17th September was a little disappointing! The three Core-Team members outnumbered the two Associates who came! Both enjoyed the day immensely and our photo shows them discovering the treasures able to be viewed on the Mary MacKillop website—
www.marymackillop.org.au

Even though we have approximately 200 Melbourne Associates on our mailing list, the numbers at the Melbourne Regional Days over the last three years have been very small, whereas the country Regional days are usually between 15 and 30. These days are meant to replace the Annual Meeting which many found difficult to get to because of distance. They also continue the Formation of Associates in their commitment to a Josephite way of life.



L-R: Clare Pree, Anne-Marie Wilkinson, Mary Ryan rsj, Maurine Phelan

EAGLEHAWK

We did it again!! Forgot to take a photo at the Eaglehawk Regional Meeting!

We had a lovely day with twelve enjoying the reflection and social interchange. The new Director of the CEO office Ballarat, Audrey Brown spent the first hour with us reflecting on Mary and the Will of God and enjoyed the Josephite welcome and friendliness.

Mary Ryan rsj had all the technological section working and we investigated the Josephite websites enrolling two Associates in the E-news.

Thanks to all those who provided such delicious food for our lunch and morning tea.



MORWELL

Twenty Three Associates from Morwell, Newborough, Wonthaggi and the Bunyip group gathered on a beautiful Spring day to share Friendship, Prayer and Service. They also took the opportunity to buy from the Travelling Shop which included some craft items from Peru.

Again all enjoyed the time of reflection on the life of St Mary MacKillop and the healing ritual during the second session. Days like these enable us to find some quiet time to reflect and pray and become aware of God's presence in our lives. During the sharing we realize the depth of experience we have among us and the insights that we share give greater meaning to our own lives.

Searching the websites enabled them to catch up with some of the work of the Sisters they know.

Thank you to those who manned the kitchen and organised the delicious food we enjoyed.

SWAN HILL

At their last meeting the Swan Hill Josephite Associates decided to have a session after Mass—Lunch and Knit—to knit squares for “Wraps with Love”. They hope to get other parishioners to join them. What a great idea!

LEONGATHA

On 23rd September four Associates were enrolled at Leongatha after the Communion Service. Maureen, Chris and Sr Lynette came from Wonthaggi to share the occasion and the morning tea that followed. The travelling shop was also well patronized. Enrolled Associates were from left: Anne Vaughan, Evelyn Stephens, Mary Patterson and Rita Lamers. Congratulations!



*The Charism is alive
in many hearts!*

YARRAVILLE

On 14th September seventeen Associates gathered at St Joseph's Convent, Yarraville for some reflection and to welcome Agnes Hopmans as an Associate. Anne Kennedy, Co-ordinator, had met with Agnes to cover the Formation program during the previous months. A delicious afternoon tea was then enjoyed and items from the travelling shop purchased. The Sisters of the Yarraville Community joined the Associates for the gathering.



LAKES ENTRANCE

At their first group meeting the Lakes Entrance Associates have agreed to raise awareness to communities around them via the internet of the green and gold day to be advertised in the Church bulletin and within the primary school. An intercession in the Prayer of the Faithful, from the Mary MacKillop website, will be included in their liturgy for World Peace Day. Their next meeting in December will be followed by a lunch together.

RUSHWORTH

On the Feast of Christ the King at Rushworth, three Associates were enrolled at the Parish Mass. They came from Stanhope, Colbinabbin and Murchison, all parts of the Parish. Parishioners stayed after Mass and enjoyed a cuppa with all Associates. Congratulations to Maree Stewart, Ron Grinter and Joan Armitage who completed the introductory program.



THE TRAPS

WONTHAGGI

At the request of the Parish Priest the Josephite Associates at Wonthaggi organized a box for petitions for prayer to St Mary of the Cross in the Parish Church. During November, at a Mass at Inverloch, these petitions were burnt in a prayerful ritual. They hope to make this an annual occasion.



TALLANGATTA

On a beautiful Spring day in November, nine women gathered to reflect on Mary MacKillop's life—her attitude to God's will and her forgiveness and to be introduced to the Josephite Associates. The Josephite Associates began in Tallangatta in the 1980's but had fallen into recession due to deaths and some moving away. As a result of this gathering we are hoping the group will be re-kindled and will become an enthusiastic Josephite presence in the parish. We were grateful for the use of the Parish Presbytery and to those who provided the lunch.

The filling of the Hume Weir has brought much hope to the area and it was a lovely drive along the road following the weir. From Margaret Hurley's house, where I stayed, one could gaze across the paddocks with the weir in the distance.



NEW PROGRAM TO BECOME A JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATE

During my years as Co-ordinator, many have enquired about becoming Associates, but do not live near or are able to meet with a local group.

An Introductory Program has been developed to allow people in this situation to do the program by themselves at home. The same five sections are covered as in what was called the Formation Program (now called The Introductory Program) and responses are completed on a sheet which is returned to the Co-ordinator for her response and then returned with the next section.

At the completion of this program an opportunity for enrolment will be organized.

As they would not belong to a regular group we would expect them to come to one of the Regional Gatherings each year to meet up with other Associates.

If you would like to become an Associate and cannot get to Group meetings, please contact me and I will arrange for you to commence the program. I feel very excited about this new program as I feel it will answer a need.

Mary Fermio rsj Ph/Fax 5367 2078
Email: associatesvic@sosj.org.au
Or PO Box 37 Bacchus Marsh 3340



**SEE THE
HAND OF
GOD IN
ALL THAT
HAPPENS**

Mary MacKillop 1880

FINANCE DETAILS

VICTORIAN JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATES

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE JULY 1 2010—JUNE 30 2011

| EXPENSES | | INCOME | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Postage Mailout Sept | \$561.44 | Associates Donations | \$5 064.30 |
| Postage Mailout Dec | \$560.28 | | |
| Postage Mailout Mar | \$560.28 | | |
| Postage Mailout June | \$559.12 | | |
| Coloured A3 Paper | \$359.28 | | |
| Total | <u>\$2600.40</u> | | |
| Badges | 649.09 | | |
| Toner Approx | 240.00 | | |
| Petrol Sr Mary | 957.30 | | |
| Stamps/Stationery | 287.90 | | |
| Miscellaneous | 281.16 | | |
| Balance | \$48.45 | | |
| | <u> </u> | | <u> </u> |
| Total Expenses | 5064.30 | | \$5064.30 |
| | ===== | | ===== |

We present these figures so that Associates will have some idea of where their donations go.

The above expenses do not include:

Cost of printing the Newsletter at Province Centre e.g Toner, power,
Wages of staff who do Printing and prepare for posting.

We are very grateful to all who forward donations. The CoreTeam has decided that, following the practice of most of the other Josephite Provinces, and recommendations made at the National Conference, we are introducing an **Annual Subscription of \$20**. Any extra donations will be gratefully accepted. If every recipient of the Newsletter pays this subscription we hope it will cover costs.

*If you wish to discontinue receiving the newsletter please advise the Associates' Office—
address on back page of newsletter.*

A form to be returned with subscription will be included in the March Newsletter.

SUBSCRIPTION

to

JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATES

From 2012 we are asking all Victorian Associates to contribute \$20 annually towards Associate Expenses. A form will be included with the March Newsletter in 2012. Should you wish to discontinue receiving the newsletter, please advise the Associates' Office at Bacchus Marsh. Details on back page.

DIARY DATES FOR 2012

LEADERSHIP OF ASSOCIATE GROUPS

Saturday, February 18th 2012
at the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre,
362 Albert St East Melbourne
10 am.—3 p.m. Lunch provided.

WONTHAGGI CENTENARY

The Centenary of St Joseph's School will be on **March 24-25, 2012** and happens to be the day when two sisters arrived one hundred years go.

'Back-to' celebrations will be on Saturday afternoon, Parents and Friends Ball that evening and the Sisters' Mass on the Sunday morning followed by picnic style lunch.

Parishioners are looking for photos and memorabilia particularly for the years before the school moved to its present site. Maybe some Associates went to school there, moved away but have some photos etc. if you send them to the school, they will be copied and returned.

St Joseph's School, PO Box 182
Wonthaggi 3995 Ph. 5672 1052
Email: principal@sjwnthgi.sale.catholic.edu.au

AUSTRALIAN PILGRIMAGES 2012

Two National Pilgrimages "***In the Footsteps of Mary MacKillop***" will be held in 2012.

From next year the Australian Pilgrimage will begin in Melbourne, the birthplace of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop and end in Sydney where she is buried.

The **first** Pilgrimage will commence at
Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre on **Wednesday 11th April 2012** and conclude
at Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney on **Saturday 21st April**.

The **second one** commences
Wednesday **24th October** and finishes on Saturday morning **3rd November 2012**.

The Pilgrimages will leave Melbourne for Adelaide,
via Penola and then on to Sydney

For further details please contact
Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre 03 9926 9300
email : mmhc@sosj.org.au

we are but travellers here



MARY MACKILLOP TRAVELS VICTORIA

BY MARY WICKHAM RSM

I have in front of me five pages typed up from the 1891 travel diary of Mary MacKillop. Perhaps 'notes' or 'jottings' would be a better description. Most entries are simply records of people met, details of money spent and donations received. The writer is not so much concerned with personal revelations as with keeping a brief account of activities. Here extensive and hectic schedule had a dual purpose: to visit the children who had been placed in foster homes from the orphanage at Surrey Hills, which had been founded the previous year, and to beg for donations to help the Home's struggling finances.

It is doubtful whether Mary MacKillop expected her diary to be read one hundred and one years after she wrote it, just as it is doubtful whether we can really appreciate what such a journey meant in the age of horse and buggy and steam-train. In the winter of 1891 Mary and her companion, Sr Margaret Mary, traversed the colony of Victoria. Setting out on July 20, she spent time at Ballarat, Camperdown, Mortlake, Geelong, Maryborough, St Arnaud, Dunnolly, Llanelly, Charlton, Korong Vale, Wycheproof, Sandhurst (Bendigo), Pyramid Hill and Echuca. The Account ends on August 6.

What is fascinating about this little travelogue is that despite the telegraphic and business-like tone which predominates, there are little flashes of colour here and there, and several extended anecdotes, which reveal a great deal about Mary. Her writing is free of the inevitable reserve one would find in a circular, and is not concerned with the decorum of nineteenth century letter writing. In these few pages Mary MacKillop wrote with a vivid and unadorned immediacy. We gain a fascinating insight into the human being who was a saintly human being. Here straight off the page, we hear her, and her own words bring her to life.

The Mary MacKillop who made this physically demanding journey was in her fiftieth year and her health was to deteriorate rapidly in the following years. The second entry in the diary, made in Ballarat, reminds us that she already suffered the vagaries of ill-health, the weary understatement make the reader more conscious of the reality. 'Did not feel well; was glad of a rest'. She and her companion spent considerable time at railway stations waiting for connections. Several times she mentions being caught in a heavy shower, and the difficulties involved in getting from place to place. Yet the woman whose bones presumably ached sufficiently for her to comment, 'we had some very rough driving about Eagle Hawk and Myers Flat', still had enough of the keen horsewoman of her youth to revel in a contrasting experience, 'after a splendid drive of sixteen miles with a pair of quick horses, arrived at Mrs Cameron's'. There is a zestful glint in her eye there.

Mention of Mrs Cameron leads us to consider some of the people Mary met during her trip. From the pages of the diary one has the overwhelming sense that she

loved people—not in some abstract or pious way, but that she was a tremendously sociable person. She was interested in people; she enjoyed a good chat, an entertaining story, a laugh. She was deeply compassionate and considerate. The diary entry of July 28 is an example. Arriving at St Arnaud station they are met by a May Gormly. Mary MacKillop writes that this lady is a niece of a Mrs P Jennings, and that she has an elderly mother, 'a dear old lady', whose sister is Sr Patrick. A few days later she writes to a Sr Patrick, presumably the same one. There is genuine gladness in her tone that she met both Mrs Gormly and her mother.

Later in the evening Mrs Gormly is responsible for the meal at the presbytery which was quite a gathering including four priests. The little asides reveal much about Mary MacKillop.: 'Fr Scanlan was excellent company. He has a most extraordinary manner of laughing'. The next day it is Fr Scanlan's driver, Jim, 'a comical character', who takes them on that earlier mentioned 'splendid drive'. Excellent company, good humour, these make the experience a lively one.

Throughout the diary she lists the donations she received on her begging mission. In one place, though, she also records a one shilling expense she incurred for charity at Sandhurst (Bendigo) Railway Station. She came to beg; she did not hesitate to give to a beggar. A shilling and sixpence had purchased tea and sandwiches for her and Sr Margaret Mary during their long wait at the station. One imagines that their long wait was fortunate for the recipient of the shilling.

To be continued ...



HAVE CHAIR, WILL TRAVEL

In the MMIM newsletter in March, I wrote a story about our dental Health program in Peru and the dentist who works on the program Dr Christian Segura.

Christian is very committed to assisting his fellow Peruvians, particularly those who live in poorer communities on the outskirts of Lima. It is hard to describe the landscape in which Christian and Sr Margaret Malady work. The foothills of the Andes mountain range come right down into the outlying communities of Lima. The bald faced hills of rock appear in amongst houses and streets. People build on them and even carve an existence into the side of them!

To reach some of the communities high up on the tops of some of these hills is tricky. The only way to get there is by foot! Christian and Sr Margaret were concerned that they were not looking after the dental health of some of these more distant communities so Christian decided that the only way to do this was with a mobile dental chair and a mobile kit of instruments. MMIM thought this was an excellent idea and so with your support we have purchased a mobile chair. The chair can easily be packed up and carried although Christian will have to use all his strength to climb the many stairs up to the communities. Taking the dentist to the people means that those who were too far from Christian's Motupe clinic and couldn't afford the bus fares to get there, will now be able to get access to dental care for their children.



ASSOCIATES' BULLETIN BOARD - SUMMER 2011

FROM THE OFFICE:
This edition hopefully will come to many Associates via email. If you are still receiving it by post and would like it by email, just send an email to the address below. You can view it in colour on the sosj.org.au website, under news and events/newsletters.

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For all enquiries related to
Josephite Associates,

*Death is not extinguishing the light
But merely putting out the lamp
Because the dawn has come.
Tagore.*

In love and prayer, we are mindful of those who mourn the death of family members and friends.

We particularly remember
Dave Patten, husband of Iris, Orbost
Stuart Boulton, husband of Laureen, Warburton
Peg Tyler, Bunyip Group
Mena Crameri, Eaglehawk
Joe Rush, husband of Molly, formerly Nagambie
Bernie, son of Pat and Vin Frewin, Euroa
Marie Limbrick, Numurkah
Kitty Whelan—Iona
Stan Douglas—Bacchus Marsh
Albert Torr—Father of Lyn Plummer, Sunbury

BRINGING CHRISTMAS JOY

As a group you may like to think about those in your area who may miss out on Christmas joy.

- a small gift to residents of Aged Care
- Small Christmas cakes to elderly people who live alone
- A Christmas Muffin to any of these
- Organise a morning or afternoon tea for those who are housebound. Co-opt other parishioners to help as drivers etc
- Suggest the Parish School might sing carols at the Aged Care Residence.
- Bring a donation among your own group at a special morning or afternoon tea or lunch and send to a needy family or organization.
- Help someone with their shopping
- Care for some children while the Mother does her Christmas shopping
- A Christmas Card to all Aged Care Residents
- Consider if any parishioner would like to be driven to a Christmas Day Mass

And I am sure you can think of other ways of Service in the parish and local community.

USED STAMPS

Thanks to those who have already collected and forwarded stamps for Peru. Keep them coming!!
Send to:

**St Joseph's Province Centre
Locked Bag 3031,
BURWOOD NSW 1805**

Mark envelope **STAMPS**
THANK YOU!



TIMOR LESTE WE FORGET
Dedicated to the people of Timor-Leste, their courage and loyalty, in their independence and prosperity.

Produced by Albert Street Productions this DVD gives a portrayal of the history of East Timor to the Independence referendum in 1999. The second part looks at the work of the Sisters of St Joseph in Teacher and health training and the role of Australia, the struggle for the Timorese to obtain its resources and enable growth in its country. **It would be great if each group had a copy to pass around.**

**Mary MacKillop East Timor Mission
PO Box 299
ST MARY'S NSW 1790 \$25 inc post.**