



# Josephite Associates

• FRIENDSHIP • PRAYER • SERVICE

Josephite Associates NSW (Inc.) PO Box 184, Croydon NSW 2132 (Letters only) • 5 Alexandra Avenue, Croydon NSW 2132, (Parcels)

Phone 02 8741 2335

NEWSLETTER • March 2018

*Dear Josephite Associates,*

Welcome to 2018, greetings and blessings for the year ahead.

Thank you to the Sisters of St Joseph Regional Team for providing new office facilities for the Josephite Associates at 5 Alexandra Avenue Croydon NSW 2132. The postal address P O Box 184 Croydon 2132 remains. The new telephone number is 8741 2335; the most convenient time to telephone is Monday and Tuesdays 10am – 3pm.

The change made to the Membership Renewal Form in November 2017 inviting Associates to renew their membership via a direct deposit is proving to be most successful. Bank statements received from November – February reveal not only does the ID appear on the bank statement but also the name of the Associate. Grateful thanks to all who have renewed their 2018 membership and donations.

Josephite Associates NSW Inc will hold their annual gathering on Saturday 7th April 2018 in the St Mary's School Hall, 35 Percy Street, Wellington NSW. A separate invitation is enclosed in your March 2018 Newsletter.

The annual Josephite Associates Retreat will be held at St Joseph's Spirituality and Education Centre Kincumber South, from Friday 19th October - Sunday 21st October 2018. The facilitator will be Sister Jan Barnett rsj – Topic: 'Hearing Mary's call again – challenges for our time.' Application details to attend this retreat will be listed in the July 2018 Newsletter.

The majority of our Josephite Associates are in their senior years on their journey to God. One cannot over emphasise the importance of Friendship. Each person has their own trials, sadness and family difficulties. The true friend is there when needed. They are there to listen, guide and support us. For the Sisters of St Joseph who live in small groups and no longer in larger communities, how wonderful to see the care given by each sister with whom they now share their lives. Mary MacKillop says 'I can never think of God but as one of such tenderness that cannot be cast off.' May we all imitate these words and care for our families, companions and friends.

We continue to live in times of unspeakable violence in our world, road rage, dangerous driving (will any of us ever forget the scene of horror in December 2017 on the South Coast where a family of four lost their lives in the horrific car crash, the Dubbo tragedy, Fr Peter Neville run down whilst out for a Sunday evening stroll! 2017 has seen the conclusion of the Royal Commission and its recommendations! Where does this leave us as Josephite Associates?

This is our time more than ever to be people of prayer. Pray for the persecuted wherever they may be. Pray for our youth. 2018 is the Year for Youth. Pray for our country. Pray for the Catholic Church that we will never again be confronted with a repeat of sexual abuse. Pray for peace.

Whatever our need, God's grace is sufficient...His power inexhaustible...His love never-ending...With God all things are possible. Matthew 19:26.

St Joseph pray with us. St Mary of the Cross MacKillop pray with us, Fr Julian Tension Woods pray with us.

*Leonie Bell President*



*'Be full of forgiveness, hope and love'*

Mary MacKillop 1873

*'Do not seek to be regarded as anything but the servants of the poor'*

Julian Tension Woods – 1887

## Josephite Associates (NSW) Inc Governance Group

*President: Leonie Bell*

*Vice President: Position Vacant*

*Treasurer: Eileen Stevenson*

*Secretary: Maureen Rayner*

*North Coast Representative: Jan Lang*

*Group Establishment Co-ordinator North Coast –*

*Mary McNamara*

*South Coast Representative: Christine Sivewright*

## The St Joseph's College Perthville Ex-students Association biennial reunion

is being held on **Saturday 18th March 2018.**

The programme for the day commences with Mass in the chapel at 9.30am.

*A presentation by Dr Marie Crowley on 'Boarding at Perthville' at 11am is sure to be a highlight of the day.*

Lunch will be provided, so for catering purposes, please let us know if you are attending.

**Margaret Smith 47531031,**

email [cliffmargaretsmith@hotmail.com](mailto:cliffmargaretsmith@hotmail.com)

or **Jan Vote 0402 123 405,** [janlong@optusnet.com.au](mailto:janlong@optusnet.com.au).

Onsite overnight accommodation is available please contact, [perthville.coordinator@sosj.org.au](mailto:perthville.coordinator@sosj.org.au)

## A journey into the unknown

It was approximately nine years ago that I sensed an attraction to the Josephite spirit and way of life. I had met some of the Sisters and these women really impressed me; I was inspired by their way of living and being. In them I saw faith in action and so it was really a case of 'what they have-I want!

Over the years the attraction grew to the point where I found myself spending more time learning about Josephite charism and there was a longing in me to work alongside the Josephites in ministry. There was also a sense that God was calling me and I wanted to respond.

I am a happily married woman so becoming a Sister was out of the question. At that stage there was no obvious pathway, but after much prayer and discernment I made an appointment with a Sister in leadership and asked if there was any way I might have a closer association with the Josephite community. That meeting was the beginning of a long journey that eventually led to my becoming a Covenant Josephite.

Along the way I have discovered so much richness in the Josephite way of life, in which women strive to live an Apostolic community life offering friendship and reflective opportunities. I value Josephite hospitality with its down-to-earth grounded nature, its small acts of kindness and goodness that can make so much difference when life is difficult. I have loved being part of a community that searches out ways to live contemplatively in the midst of the messiness of life.

The Joseph Chapter document that shapes Josephite life and ministry, is concerned with real issues that touch all our lives and reflects upon our response to the brokenness, pain and suffering of so many and the destruction of this planet. I have been inspired by the struggles of the community as we strive to find meaning and positive ways to respond to these issues. I always come away from Josephite gatherings with a sense of hope. I have come to realise that Josephite ministry is diverse and am astonished by the many ways in which it touches the lives of so many people both here in Australia and overseas.

Josephite life as I experience it as a Covenant Josephite, gives me a framework in which to discover how I might live as a Catholic Christian today. The promises I made as a Covenant Josephite include committing myself to service of others, to foster my spirituality through prayer, yearly retreat and regular Spiritual Direction, and to participate wherever possible in local and Regional Josephite Community. This gives me a solid foundation upon which to live my life and supports and strengthens my married life and my contribution to the life of my local parish.

I am grateful that the Josephite community has had the courage to be open to new ways of being Josephite making all this possible.

*Val De Brenni*

*Extract from enews 10/8/2017*

The website for  
**Mary MacKillop Place, Mount Street, North Sydney**

[www.marymackillopplace.org.au](http://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.

*As we start the year and go back to our usual routines we remind ourselves each day that the Lord is always present in our busyness and the messiness of our everyday life. Let us take Jesus' advice to stop and rest a while each day. Let us be aware of his loving presence in us and around us.*

*Antoinette Mangion JA Blacktown*



*Come 'Away*  
(based on Mark 6:31)

*"Come away...*

To go on retreat is to take time away from the ordinary routine in order to immerse oneself in prayer and quiet. What is God calling you away from in order to draw closer to him?

*...by yourselves...*

Solitude is a time-honored spiritual practice. It differs from loneliness or isolation in that it is entered into willingly. Seek out a place where you can be alone, and savor the opportunity to befriend yourself and to place yourself in an awareness of God's presence.

*...to a secluded place...*

Thanks to technology, we seem to be living in a perpetual chat room. Silence is the sister practice to solitude. Set aside a period of time in which to turn off your cell phone and disengage from the computer. Revel in the quiet that ensues both externally and internally.

*...and rest awhile."*

Jesus' invitation to his disciples concludes with the enticing notion of rest. As such, it is a reiteration of Sabbath - a time in which to rest from labor. Consider what "belabors" you and how you might set it aside in order to rest quietly and peacefully in God's embrace.

Copyright © 2017 by Wilson & Goble

www.sosj.org.au

## Reflection: Where have we been? Where are we going?

It is the 20th birthday of Towards Healing, and our Church's adoption of formal professional standards processes. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, and Catholic Religious Australia, released their letter of apology to victims of Church abuse in December 1996. This was quickly followed, in February 1997, with the introduction of Towards Healing. Towards Healing is, of course, the process which guides the Church's pastoral response to allegations of abuse by Church personnel.

The Catholic Church was the first church in Australia to have a complaints management process, and, in many ways, we were also the first in the world. Other countries learned from Australia about how to do this work. While more needs to be done to improve our service, Towards Healing remains a quality example of a pastoral complaints management process.

It will be of no surprise to Territorians to learn that the Diocese of Darwin was THE FIRST jurisdiction to have its Professional Standards Resource Group in place. This happened within weeks of the launch of Towards Healing, and the launch in the NT included the appointment of members of the Professional Standards Resource Group, and training in relation to Towards Healing. I attended the very first meeting of Convenors (as we were called then) of professional standards, and have been attending ever since. And so it is my 20th year in this role as Director of Professional Standards for the Darwin Diocese.

But we must look further back than that to understand the road to Towards Healing. It was essentially the work of Bishop Geoffrey Robinson which resulted in the letter of apology, and the development of a process to respond to abuse by Church personnel. Bishop Geoff, from the Sydney Archdiocese, repeatedly brought the issue to Bishops and Religious Leaders and used at least one of his visits to the Vatican to raise the matter with the Pope. He made it his mission of change: and he succeeded.

As the idea for a Church complaints management process gained traction, Fr David Cappo from the Archdiocese of Adelaide became actively involved, and, very soon after, so did Sr Angela Ryan a Brigidine Sister. It is testimony to these three, and others, that we have what we have: and that we had it many years before others. I am proud of our Church and this

achievement. Many of the findings made by the Royal Commission in relation to our Church are not about Towards Healing; they are essentially findings in relation to some Church personnel's failure to use the Towards Healing as it was intended to be used.

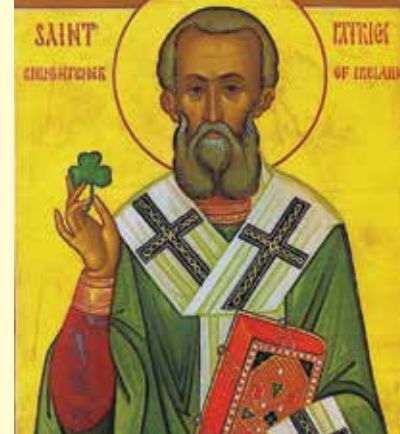
As well as the national initiatives to address Church related abuse, there were also local ones. In the years before Towards Healing, a group of people in Darwin, from the Anglican Church, the Uniting Church, the Catholic Church and lay organisations came together to form Project Susanna; borrowing from the work done by others in southern states under the banner of Project Anna. Participants in Project Susanna came together to discuss sexual abuse and the church. One result was the formation of an ecumenical training team of a small group of us who ran training for churches, clergy and anyone who would listen really!

Looking back, I doubt that anyone could have predicted that within 20 years, professional standards would have become such an accepted practice across the churches. Nor could anyone have predicted how great the need was for it. In more recent years churches have adopted a preventative approach, generally called Safeguarding, in our church communities. Sr Rose, as the Darwin Diocese Integrity Officer heads this work for us, as she engages with parishes and ministries to ensure we have a culture and processes that enable children and vulnerable people to be safe. This work will soon be carried out under the watch of the Church's new organisation: the Board directed Catholic Professional Standards, which will conduct audits of safeguarding practices. With local and national attention to the safety of our Church, we have reason to hope that there is never a need for a Royal Commission, such as we have seen, again.

Such a long way we have come – at least in regard to our approach to abuse within the Church. What has never changed though, is the commitment to ensure that those who have been abused are heard, and that all are safe. This will remain as we continue to advance our work in relation to abuse, providing a just and pastoral process for all who are involved.

Until next time.....

*Dr Sharon McCallum, Director, NT  
Professional Standards Office  
Extract from UNITY Edition 32 - September 2017  
used with permission*



### The Legacy of St Patrick: A Saint for our Times

Patrick was a man of prayer, an exile, a refugee; a justice seeker and a creative teacher. His legacy to us today is his spirit of prayer, his missionary methods and his readiness to speak and act with justice.

Many legends have sprung up around the story of St Patrick. The truth about him can be found in his own life story called His Confessions.

Patrick was one of many who was captured and brought to Ireland and sold as a slave. He says that it was here in exile and in loneliness that he came to know God, to have conversations with God, to trust in God and in God's love and protection (Confessions).

After six years of slavery he escaped, went home and studied. He says he could constantly hear the voice of the Irish calling him back. Eventually he was ordained a priest and came back to Ireland as a missionary in 432 AD.

His mission in Ireland was far from easy as he preached the Gospel and spoke out against injustice.

What is the legacy that St Patrick has left us?

His spirit of prayer! He had great devotion to the Blessed Trinity and one of the most beautiful prayers that we have is called the Breastplate of St Patrick. This prayer has also been set to music.

His missionary methods! He did not destroy the customs of the heathen Irish but he connected them to Christianity. So today in Ireland, there are many places of pilgrimage to sacred places and to holy wells that date back to long before the time of Patrick.

Patrick was an exile and a refugee. We can pray to him for the thousands of refugees who are fleeing persecution and violence and for those who have to migrate to find work. He spoke out with very strong language against slavery. His courage and example can encourage us to speak out today against human trafficking.

He preached and practised justice to all especially the poor, the down trodden and the persecuted, he also had great respect for women.

*Anne Boland rsj Ireland  
Extract from enews 28/3/2017*

## Volunteering – Living a life with meaning



The best role model for volunteering is St Joseph ‘the worker.’ St Joseph: just man... tireless worker...upright guardian.

On the feast of St Joseph the worker (May 1), which is also called International Workers’ Day, may the dignity of work be experienced by all. To see a world where we acknowledge that all work is about contributing to the good of the community and human flourishing! Where people have a safe, respectful and positive work environment that enables them also to enjoy the other good things in life!

One of the best decisions in my life was to begin volunteering with a group which was reaching out to people seeking asylum in our country. My reason for volunteering was that our government wasn’t doing enough for these people. Fifteen years later, I’m still trying to do myself out of a job. Thursdays, my volunteering day, have become sacrosanct! Many come to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC) to volunteer for all different reasons: 95% of the volunteers do so for the common good, others for social reasons or professional development. The ASRC is the largest not for profit organisation of its kind in the southern hemisphere. Volunteers make up 94.5% of its workforce – no other organisation can boast the same.

Associate Professor Dr Thomas Nielsen, University of Canberra, advocates a ‘Curriculum of Giving.’ We know that volunteering is not just good for our physical health, but for our psychological and emotional health too. Giving is one of the strongest predictors of increasing our health and happiness (Dr Thomas Nielsen).

Research shows that volunteers live happier and healthier lives. There is so much more to volunteering than simply giving your time and skills to help others.

So, we go forward together as volunteers, together in the spirit of St Joseph the worker, living a life with meaning.

Prayer to St Joseph

Joseph, help us to listen to our dreams with compassion and openness as you did.

Help us to stretch, hold and deepen our relationships.

Open our embrace of the future as you opened your arms in embrace of a child.

In these hard times may we like you, dream compassionately, provide wisely and build community that can hold us together.

We ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

*Rita Malavisi rsj*  
*Extract from enews 10/8/2017*

### BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Happy Birthday to all Josephite Associates recorded in our Birthday Book who celebrate their birthdays in February March and April 2018

## A garden party: Raising awareness and funds for Mary MacKillop Museum Adelaide

The beautifully kept Kensington Convent Gardens, so dear to Mary MacKillop in her time, were a wonderful setting for the recent Garden Party which was organised as an awareness and fund-raiser for the Mary MacKillop Museum Redevelopment Project.

There were anxious moments in the days leading up to the event on account of the less-than good weather forecast, and wild morning winds buffeted those who were setting up for the afternoon. Then the sun shone, and around 300 people came to enjoy the Garden Party. Our guests included the SA Governor and his wife, The Hon Hieu Van Le and Mrs Lan Le, who happily mingled with visitors who were touched by their ‘down-to-earthiness.’

The afternoon’s programme was full and varied. It included musical entertainment, interspersed with fun activities for adults and children, and, of course, fund-raising! There was a major raffle, a well-stocked and high-class gift stall offering many bargains – and a silent auction. Items for all of these fund-raisers had been generously donated by the SA Sisters, our friends, trade suppliers, and Adelaide businesses.

The success of the day, both socially and financially, reflected meticulous planning, over many months, by the Museum Fund-Raising Committee, coupled with the behind-the-scenes ‘heavy lifting’ work of a number of key players, and an ‘army’ of volunteers who joined them closer to the event.

Sister Margaret Kenny, who hosted a number of relatives and friends whom she had invited, shared her insight:

Out of sight in our Convent, was a hive of industry..... What our visitors did not see was much more than a ‘well-oiled machine.’ It was an inclusive community in the Josephite charism: our students, teachers, Covenant women, Associates, staff members, supporters, Sisters, family and friends – all with ‘sleeves rolled up,’ working together in effective harmony.

Special mention must be made of the squad of senior students from Mary MacKillop College, Kensington, Mt Carmel College, Rosewater, and Loreto College Marryatville who gave us their Sunday afternoon, and cheerfully waited on tables, tempting our guests with a seemingly never-ending supply of delicious hot and cold finger foods, cakes, slices, scones and sandwiches.

So many people contributed in myriad, mostly hidden, ways to this memorable event. Their generosity, time and hard work guaranteed the smooth-running of the Garden Party, the joyful atmosphere that all enjoyed and the beautiful memories that now evoke smiles!

*Mary Ryan rsj – Co-ordinator – Mary MacKillop Museum  
Redevelopment Project  
Extract from enews 3/1/2018*

### NEWSLETTER IN BY EMAIL

Do you receive your Newsletter by mail?

Do you have an email address?

***Would you like to receive your  
Newsletter by email?***

If the answer is YES, please email us your request at  
[nsw.associates@sosj.org.au](mailto:nsw.associates@sosj.org.au)  
and we will update our database and forward your  
newsletter in future by email.

# Kincumber an oasis of peace

Eleven Josephite Associates and a Sister of St Joseph gathered at St Joseph's Education and Spirituality Centre in Kincumber for the Annual Josephite Associates Retreat, the topic 'Following Jesus: truly human One, the Christ who is God's eternal Word, beloved Son'.

We seemed to have waited forever to welcome Sister Virginia Bourke sj to facilitate our retreat, and we were not disappointed. Our numbers then were thirteen as the saying goes, 'unlucky for some' and we certainly were not! Sister Virginia gives completely of herself in her preparation and presentation we thank God for the spiritual insights received and appreciated during the sessions throughout the weekend.

The following are comments received from the evaluations requested from the participants:

- Thank you for the beautiful religious experience and friendship shared. Love to come back again. That I have the strength and the love for God to continue to face the challenges in faith. A great time!!!!

- What a wonderful time I had. It was like living in an oasis. I pray I am able to come back again. I thank God and everybody who keeps this place so very special. May many more people find inner peace, joy and friendship as I did!

- At Kincumber you feel you belong and loved as a family united with the Josephite Associates, St Joseph and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Thank you to Sr Ellen and the staff for the hospitality given to all. We look forward to our return in 2018.

*Kincumber Retreat participants 2017*

The newsletter is now available on the Web, at [www.sosj.org.au/news-events/list\\_newsletters.cfm](http://www.sosj.org.au/news-events/list_newsletters.cfm)



[www.marymackillop.org.au](http://www.marymackillop.org.au)

## Lend a hand to Hugo

We all know that the Josephite charism is alive and nurtured in our schools supported by dedicated staff, caring parents and outstanding students who 'see a need and do something about it'.

The story that follows is proof that the work of Mary MacKillop, the Sisters, and encouragement from the community continues to make a difference in the lives of those in need.

I met Luke at a JJAMM gathering. Luke is an elected school Captain of Guildford Young College in Tasmania. He confided his remarkable story to me.

Luke has an autistic nephew, Hugo. Hugo's needs are quite substantial and his parents were facing the dilemma of finding funds for Hugo's early intervention treatment. Many are aware that the earlier the treatment and therapy for children diagnosed with Autism, the more beneficial for the child.

Luke confided to me that around Year 9 of his schooling, he was lost – a confused teen, defiant and getting into a bit of trouble at home and school. While cooling off in his bedroom one night after an argument with his mum, pondering his direction and the unhappy path he was heading down, Luke had an idea. Luke, then and there, decided to put his energy to use and start a charity to raise funds for Hugo's treatment. He started up the 'Lend a Hand to Hugo' charity and within three years raised the funds necessary for Hugo's therapy.

The 'Lend a Hand to Hugo' charity has grown to now raise funds to help other children on the autism spectrum finance their therapy. Luke sells fancy shoelaces and other merchandise for a slight profit to raise the funds.

Every year he enlists the help of his celebrity cricketing friends, including players such as Jordan Silk, Clive Rose, Ben McDermott, Cameron Boyce, Damien Wright and more, to put on a 'Lend a Hand to Hugo' Big Bash cricket gala day.

To think a 15-year-old boy can achieve so much. With a passion for justice, a love for his family and possibly a naivety that would not allow him to hesitate, consider the obstacles and so give up, Luke made a difference. It reminds me of a 15-year-old girl who had the courage to follow her heart and educate the poor and so begin to break the cycle of poverty existing in colonial Australia. Truly the spirit of Mary MacKillop lives on in these bright, passionate, dedicated young people we educate in our schools. It would seem that Luke saved Hugo, who is thriving, happy and doing his best. Furthermore, Hugo saved Luke directing him to work for change and use his talents to make the world a better place.

We can all be inspired.

We are privileged to have such a leader in our Josephite School in 2017.

*Karen Oxley Josephite Justice Office  
Extract from enews 10/8/2017*

### **Retreat/Reflection Days at The Vale Lodge, Tenison Woods Ave, Perthville.**

*Associates are invited to join in the following reflection days:*

**God in the Everyday:** A day spent in quiet, reflective prayer with some input and sharing, as we endeavour to recognise anew that God comes to me disguised as my life. We will look at moments in the everyday where we might encounter God and allow ourselves to be more fully present to such encounters. *"There where you are you will find God" St Mary MacKillop, 1871*

**Date:** Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2018

**Time:** 10.00 am – 3.00pm

**Facilitator:** Sr Mary Murphy sj

**Cost:** Donation. Lunch provided.

**Bookings:** 6337 2946; or 0429 186 564 by Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> June.

**Our Hospitable God:** A day in which I am invited to explore and experience the hospitality of God as shown in some Gospel passages. Hospitality gives and receives – we will look at God's hospitality toward us and ours toward God.

**Date:** Wednesday, 4<sup>th</sup> July 2018

**Time:** 9.30am – 3.00pm

**Facilitator:** Sr Mary Murphy sj

**Cost:** Donation. Lunch provided.

**Bookings:** 6337 2946; or 0429 186 564 by Monday, 2<sup>nd</sup> July.

**I Have Come to Listen:** If we are to grow into deeper and richer relationships we must cultivate an atmosphere of listening at our very centre to nature, to those around us and to God. An attitude of attentive listening will bear fruit in a life of awareness.

**Date:** Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2018

**Time:** 9.30am – 3.00pm

**Facilitator:** Sr Mary Murphy sj

**Cost:** Donation. Lunch provided.

**Bookings:** 6337 2946; or 0429 186 564 by Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> August.



## News from Josephite Associates Timor Leste

In 2008 a group of Timorese men and women were in Sydney preparing to attend World Youth Day. During their stay in Sydney they learnt about the Josephite Associates and seventeen of them became Associates.

Over the years some of these people have died and others have left the area. The remaining five members asked in October 2016 if the Associate group could be renewed, and they knew others who were interested. In January they invited people they thought would have an interest to come to a session in February 2017, to hear what the Josephite Associate Movement was all about. Much to my surprise over 20 people turned up.

It was explained that they would need to attend a monthly formation program, on a Sunday afternoon over the next six months, to understand the spirit and work of the Associates and how to come together as a group. This program was based around the ideas of FRIENDSHIP, PRAYER and SERVICE. They were also introduced to being in their own parish group, to work in 'mission' where the priest felt there was a need. A special emphasis was to care for the elderly, neglected and disabled.

Three parish groups have been formed. Balide, Bedois and one a combination of Cathedral, Becora, Motael, Aimutin and Comoro. Each group meets monthly for prayer together, planning of 'mission work' and sharing of food. Four times a year all groups come together for friendship, to share the story about the 'mission work' they have accomplished, to have spiritual input to enrich their formation and to share food and chat together. These days are centred on the following important days, St. Joseph's Feast, Feast of the Sacred Heart, Feast of St Mary MacKillop and the Immaculate Conception (a major feast in Timor).

There was great excitement and a real feeling of deep joy last Sunday when four of the 'old' Associates renewed their commitment as Josephite Associates and twenty six were enrolled as Josephite Associates for the first time. Sr. Margaret Cleary, the Regional Leader for Centre West and Mary Hemmings, the Associate co-ordinator for Centre West joined us for this ceremony. Mary pinned their Associate badge on each new Associate. Margaret gave each their Certificate, an acknowledgement of their membership as an Associate and Kathy handed each one a Booklet, in their Tetun language, which was based on their formation program.

A special thank you to the NSW Associates who generously gave us the badges for the ceremony. To me it seemed very fitting that they came from there, just as the original Associates were part of the NSW group.

It was a wonderful journey and we have a real sense of 'good' things ahead. Already there are others asking if the formation program could be repeated in 2018, it is great to see that both men and women have been attracted to the spirit of St Mary MacKillop. For me it is also marvellous to have many of the new Associates coming from the parish community. A whole new group is being introduced to Mary MacKillop's spirit and her teaching 'Let St. Joseph's true children remember their mission to seek first the poorest, most neglected parts of God's vineyard.' (Mary MacKillop 1900).

*Kathy Jennings rsj – Timor Leste*

## News from Bathurst

A group of helpers in Bathurst co-ordinated by Sister Jean Cain rsj are responsible for the collection, preparation and dispatching of used stamps to Status International for Auctions, three times a year. It is amazing that the stamps keep coming in from lots of different areas of the State. (Our stamps are from people who are keen to help East Timor specifically). We sell our stamps 'close cropped' in 2.5 kilo bags of separate denominations which average 5,000 stamps per kilo. Our consignment for the December auction contained 16 of these bags, so you can see it is a very labour-intensive operation. (I have to admit that Sr Ruth Croome, Sr Christina and Sandra Christoffersen Associate, do almost all of the trimming, so I can't take credit for that and Sandra is responsible for the final sealing and packing of the bags, with a little help from a couple of extra hands – mine!). In 2017 we netted \$4,300 to send to Mary MacKillop International for our Josephite Mission in Timor Leste. That will go a long way in such a needy nation where education of the children is the highest priority of the parents, many of whom have had no education themselves.

*Jean Cain rsj*

## News from Blacktown

The Blacktown Josephite Associates invited the Lalor Park Associates to join them for a reflection morning on Monday 16th October 2017. Sister Frances Flemming rsj spoke about the charism of Mary MacKillop and the 'ingredients' so to speak that make up that charism. Twenty five Associates were present including eight from the Lalor Park Group, all agreed, we would continue to have other activities together. Some of the members from both groups recognised familiar faces and realised they previously went to the same school and were even in the same class (small world). We shared a prayerful morning together followed by a delicious lunch.

*Antoinette Mangion JA Blacktown*

## News from Boambee

Mary Russell has been called to eternal life. Mary was one of the two longest serving members of the Boambee Josephite Associates Group. Mary was dedicated an Associate in 1997 in Queensland.

The following is an insight of 'how to live one's life.' Mary was a resident of the Mater Christi Nursing Home and in very poor health. The group were planning on presenting her with a bouquet of flowers for her 20th anniversary to which she replied 'Please don't, I would rather you gave the money to charity' which we did. That sums up the faith life of this special lady. Eternal rest grant unto her O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon her, may Mary rest in peace. Amen.

*Mary McNamara JA Boambee*

## News from Gulgong

We continue to visit the sick and assist the parish by working mainly in the Church. Some of us attended the Wellington gathering last May and came home really inspired by Sr Anne Morrison's presentation. We continue to pray for the Sisters especially those with health problems.

*Margaret Evans JA Gulgong*

## Prayers for the sick

Helen Bache (Lakemba)  
Connie Barnes (Campsie);  
Eileen Bennett (Bathurst-Perthville);  
Maureen Blood (Canberra);  
Trish Buckley (Gilgandra-Perthville);  
Leone Carse (Canberra);  
Sr Jan Cetta rsj;  
Margaret Clapham (Warilla);  
Joyce Comer (Gulgong-Perthville);  
Angela Corby (Gilgandra-Perthville);  
Stella Cusack (Moree Group);  
John Estens (Coonabarabran-Perthville);  
Jenny Falvey (Georges Hall);  
Joyce Farnham (Belmont);  
Helen Geraghty (Eden Group)  
Shirley Gorrie (Campsie);  
Alma Halse (Canberra);  
Helen Harnett (Peakhurst);  
Jean Hogan (Oberon-Perthville);  
Maria Kopjar (Menai);  
Cecilia Lacey (Gilgandra-Perthville);  
Edna Lay (Prayer Member);  
Lynne Luxford (Blayney-Perthville);  
Pat McDonald (Peakhurst);  
Bev McKechnie (Gilgandra-Perthville);  
Jill McKenzie (Canberra);  
Ann McNamara (Gilgandra-Perthville);  
Carmel Martin (Prayer Member  
Kingscliff);  
Helen Meldrum (Coonabarabran-  
Perthville);  
Bob & Kathleen Morrissey  
(Coonabarabran-Perthville);

Betty Murphy (Prayer Member Belfield);  
Alan Norgrove (Canberra);  
Nerolie O'Brien (Prayer Member  
Inverell);  
Ann O'Hara (Lidcombe);  
Allan Opferkuch (Moree);  
Flo Oxley (Lidcombe);  
Filippa Palazotto (Campsie);  
Maryann Paterson (Peakhurst);  
Helen Perrett (Warialda);  
Esme Quinn (Warilla);  
Pauline Rendell (Peakhurst);  
Moya Rivett (Bathurst-Perthville);  
Gloria Roberts (Oberon-Perthville);  
Helen Rowles (Oberon-Perthville);  
Trish Ryan (Orange-Perthville);  
Shirley Schmidt (Moree Group);  
Christine Sivewright (Bowral);  
Dorothy Spratt (Prayer Member  
Yennora);  
Norma Steele (Canberra);  
Audrey Steinmetz (Belmont);  
Kay Tuckerman (Thirroul);  
Bernadette Ulbrich (Lidcombe);  
Robin Vaughan (Narara);  
Ritz Wendt (Peakhurst);  
Jenice White (Ballina);  
Derek Wolfenden (Gilgandra-Perthville);  
Robyn Woodhouse (Gulgong-Perthville).

*We remain united in prayer for all our  
sick Josephite Associates and Sisters of St  
Joseph.*

## Litany of Julian Tension Woods

**Leader:** Julian, immigrant, priest, educationalist, geologist, and environmentalist, man of the people, co-founder of the Josephite Congregations, founder of the Perpetual Adoration Sisters, inspirer of many.

Let us lift our hearts in thanksgiving for the life of Julian Tension Woods:

Julian, you inspired the dispirited to live faith filled lives:  
Julian, your influence and ministry have continued to these days:  
Julian, you opened eyes to interest in, and care of the environment:  
When we feel lost, or in need of direction:  
When we feel overwhelmed by the challengers in our lives:  
When we feel the cross weighing on us:  
Julian your sense of participation in God's mission sets us afire:  
Julian, with your ability to search out and value God's gifts:  
When we're struggling with issues of justice:  
When we're making the cause of the poor our cause:  
As we relate to people from other cultures:  
Julian, as Josephite Associates help us to foster friendship:  
Julian, as Josephite Associates help us to lead simple lives of service  
Julian, as Josephite Associates help us to grow in prayerfulness

Pray for us  
Pray for us  
Pray for us  
Pray for us  
Pray for us  
Pray for us  
Be with us  
Be with us  
Encourage us  
Encourage us  
Encourage us  
Pray for us  
Pray for us  
Pray for us

### BLESSING:

May the abiding presence of God encourage us;  
May the abundance of God's love enliven us;  
May the vision of Julian Tension Woods inspire us;  
May our God bless us, the one who calls us to Mission;  
To live in Friendship, Prayer and Service. Amen.

## Requiescant in pace

Pat Byrne (Blacktown Group)  
Gwen Clancy (Bathurst-Perthville Group)  
Kieran Fitzpatrick (Menai)  
Rosa Gomez (Warilla Group)  
Irene Higgins (Prayer Member-Perthville)  
May Hudson (Warilla Group)  
Peggy Lawson (Quirindi Group)  
Warren Lennox (North Leichhardt Group)  
Gloria Monk (Canberra Group)  
Kevin Moore (Warialda Group)  
Sister Bridie O'Connell rsj  
Mary Russell (Boambee Group)  
Kath Squires (Bathurst-Perthville Group)  
Ned Steele (Canberra Group)

### Associates Office

PO Box 184 Croydon NSW 2132  
(Letters only)  
5 Alexandra Avenue,  
Croydon NSW 2132 (Parcels)  
(02) 8741 2335  
[nsw.associates@sosj.org.au](mailto:nsw.associates@sosj.org.au)

### Newsletter Editorial

Editor: Christine Sivewright  
Member: Leonie Bell,  
Design and Print: Paul McMahon

## Stamps Wanted



Used stamps wanted for the  
**Josephite Mission in Peru**

### Please send to:

Boxes of Stamps  
5 Alexandra Avenue  
Croydon NSW 2132  
Envelopes and packets to  
Stamps, Locked Bag 3031  
Burwood NSW 1805  
Phone 02 8741 2300

*Thank you for all stamps received.*

*Funds raised in 2017 - \$58,000.  
Thank you to Helen Bache, sorters and  
collectors.*

### Request from Bathurst

Used stamps for the  
Josephite Mission in Timor Leste  
Sister Jean Cain rsj Bathurst requests that  
stamps continue to be sent to:-  
Unit 1, St Johns,  
Tension Woods Avenue,  
Perthville NSW 2795

## A reflection on the spirituality of ageing

From speaking with and listening to older people I have come to believe that growing old is a time of many blessings and paradoxes.

What follows is a harvesting of some snippets that have given strength and courage to enter more deeply into the inner cave of the heart. Here we encounter more intimately Beloved Mystery, the Companion of life's journey.

'...and they were talking together about all that had happened. And it happened that as they were talking together and discussing it, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but their eyes were prevented from recognising him.' Luke 24:14-15.

This snippet from the Emmaus story alerts the reader to be mindful – often the invitation to enter into this cave of the heart (which we are more frequently invited to do as we age), can be missed when focusing on increased limitations.

The poem below sends a blessing on those who are travelling in the Autumn season of life:

**May the light of your soul mind you.**

**May all your worry and anxiousness about your age be transfigured.**

**May you be given wisdom for the eyes of your soul to see this as a time of gracious harvesting.**

**May you have the passion to heal what has hurt you, and allow it to come closer and become one with you.**

**May you have great dignity, and a sense of how free you are, above all, may you be given the wonderful gift of meeting the eternal light that is within.**

**May you be blessed.**

**And may you find wonderful love in yourself for yourself.**

*John O'Donoghue, For Old Age*

We have recently experienced the entry into new life of several of our Sisters. Listening to the stories of their lives and the way they entered into and became one with the Crucified and resurrected Christ brings to life what St Paul meant when he wrote: 'All I want (long for) is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and to share his sufferings by reproducing the pattern of his death. That is the way I can hope to take my place in the resurrection of the dead. Not that I have become perfect yet.' Phil 3: 10-12.

Joy Ryan- Bloore has a commentary on these words: 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains only a single grain, but if it dies it yields a rich harvest.' John 12: 24. When we hear the stories of the lives of our Sisters, each a grain of wheat which, after many and varied deaths and resurrections have each born fruit. This is a great source of encouragement to all of us to invite Holy Mystery, our travel Companion to come in and stay with us.

....but they pressed him to stay with them...so he went in to stay with them...he broke bread and gave it to them... and their eyes were opened and they recognised him...(Luke 24:28-31).

Hopefully you can add this little collection of snippets to your own.

*Nellie Versluys rsj  
Extract from enews 10/8/2017*

## The hungry tree



A cast iron garden bench, in Kings Inns, Dublin, set me thinking of my Kimberley days and Aboriginal friends who say 'the land is my mother' while describing their various connections to the flora and fauna.

They prove the land is their mother by their deep love for it, their anxiety when it is violated through mining, their journeying to sacred sites and by recalling their myths and songs.

Now that I am more aware of the universe story and my relationship with it I find myself so Aboriginal. I am of stardust, have a story that stretches back beyond time and calls me to a deep love of planet earth, with the responsibility to keep her safe from violation. I visit her sacred places, listen to her myths, sing her songs, pray her prayers, drink her waters for health and healing and grow deeper into the intimacy of the land as mother.

My life is so dependent on planet earth for existence. 'Go back to Australia' said my doctor, 'you need some sun, some vitamin D. Are you eating your veggies, your fruit? You are low in iron, magnesium, potassium, zinc etc. What about protein, calcium? Are you having a balanced diet? Are you drinking enough water? Are you out in the fresh air? All questions that made me realise that the land is indeed my mother and is always there to nourish me.

I sit in my living room, warmed by the wood fire and the gas heating, reading with the help of sunlight or electric light. The gas and electricity enable me to cook my meals. The red bricks, roof slates, timber doors, double glazed windows, curtains and everything in my home originate from elements in the land. Yes, the land is my mother, warming and comforting and always caring for me.

Recently I visited Kings Inns in Dublin City, to search for 'the hungry tree' a large, ancient London Plane tree. The 80 year old tree is swallowing and wrapping itself around a cast iron garden bench. Half the bench is somewhere in the trunk. I recall images of outback Australia, corrugated iron roofing, old water tanks, windmills and forty four gallon drums rusting and deteriorating and being reclaimed by red, Mother Earth while in a green park in the city of Dublin, a tree 'feeds' on a cast iron bench!

Over 80 years ago a gardener in Dublin City placed the bench near the London Plane tree and as the magnificent tree grew it claimed the bench. The tree trunk looks gnarled, knobby and dignified while the garden bench looks defeated as it can never hope to be a proper bench! I am always in a mixture of sadness and amazement when I visit 'the hungry tree.' Sad at seeing the old bench struggle to stay a bench, amazed at the resilience and 'hunger' of the tree and ever conscious of how interconnected all living things are with Mother Earth.

*Clare Ahern rsj – Extract from enews 3/1/2018*