



Josephite Companions Newsletter VIC - TAS



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Summer 2020/21



Dear Josephite Companions

What unbelievable year we have experienced. As we move into the New Year, we can reflect where we have been and look forward with optimism to 2021. We pray for Northern Hemisphere countries who are fighting the Virus and that the Virus free conditions we are experiencing will continue. We pray for all those who have been affected by the results of the Virus.

May this Season of **ADVENT** and **CHRISTMAS** be a time of Spiritual Awakening and Renewal for us all as we await the celebration of the birth of Jesus. As we light the Advent Wreath, candle by candle, and we leave the manger cradle empty until Christmas Eve, we anticipate with the **HOPE, PEACE, LOVE** and **JOY** of the Season. Come Lord Jesus, come and be born in our hearts. *Noreen*

We are in the seasons of Advent and Spring, the seasons of Hope. Despite the chaos, restrictions on religious practice, lack of Mass and Sacramental Rites, physical suffering, poor mental health and the social consequences of the pandemic, we must remember that we have the gifts of Faith and Hope. These gifts culminate in the greatest hopes of humankind - belief in Jesus Christ and in eternal life.



In these times faith, family and friends provide stability and are keystones of our life values, thoughts and actions. For us the words of Mary MacKillop loom large " Be calm and full of hope" and as the Bible says, "Do not be afraid."

While the Josephite Associates have changed our name to Josephite Companions we should heed Mary's words of 1882, "Do all you can to work in unity." Hope is a powerful thing. It inspires us to attempt the impossible and it helps us to carry on during difficult times. Hope can come in many forms and for us it reveals itself in the courage and resilience of Mary MacKillop. As Josephite Companions we, like Mary endeavour to live lives of faith filled service to others and to share belief and hope in Jesus Christ. Core Team Member - *Christine Van Order*

Congratulations to Bishop Greg Bennett on his installation as Bishop of Sale on Dec 8th. We wish Bishop Greg and the Diocese of Sale all the best. We welcome Gary Vagg of Sebastopol to our Josephite Companions Family. Gary has completed his Introductory Program and will be inducted soon. *Noreen McLeish*

**May the Joy and Peace
of Christmas be with
you and your Family.**

**Leaders Day 2021
Heritage Centre
Saturday February 27th**

Arrive 9:30 for 10am start

Theme: **Companions**
Guest Speaker

Covid 19 Rules apply:

BYO Food please
Tea/Coffee will be available
No more than 2 from group
If you need car parking book at
Heritage Centre with Kate,
during Office Hours, 10am—
4pm.
RSVP noreen.mcleish@gmail.com

Year B - Advent Reflection 2020



First Week of Advent Mark 13:33-37 Listen to, Read, Reflect on Gospel

Leader: Advent is a time when we are challenged to listen to the Voice of God, and question what it is to wait with and for others, to wait for and with God. The voice of God challenges us to reflect on the nature of **Hope**.

Response: God of **Hope** empower us to respond to the challenges of the Gospel. Make us people of Hope, people of Peace, people of Good News. We ask this through Christ, our Hope. Come Lord Jesus!

Second week of Advent. Gospel: Mark 1:1-8 Listen to, Read, Reflect on the Gospel

Leader: Loving God you challenge us to be Prophets who will speak your Word and live your commands. Helps us to listen to the voices crying in the wilderness and to prepare the way for Jesus.

Response: A voice cries in the wilderness. Prepare the way of the Lord. Come Lord Jesus!



Third Week of Advent. John 1:6-8,19-28, Listen to, Read, Reflect on the Gospel

Leader: We are challenged to prepare a way for the Lord, by our actions and our attitudes.

Response: God of justice, you call each of us to be living witnesses of justice and hope. Grant us courage and faith to act and react according to gospel values. We pray, come Lord Jesus!

Fourth Week of Advent. Luke 1:26-38 Listen to, Read, Reflect on the Gospel



Leader: The virgin will give birth to a Son and they will call him Emmanuel, God-with-us.

Response: We thank you God for becoming one of us and one with us. Teach us to care for others as you care so tenderly and compassionately for each one of us. We pray, come Lord Jesus!

Canonisation Celebrations in Lakes Entrance. Louise Anketell



Our Lakes Entrance Josephite Companions met to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of Mary's canonisation.

It was very special to meet each other, for the first time this year, face to face and enjoy a meal together. We supported a café 'The Barn' which is situated West of Lakes Entrance. Businesses in our areas have suffered severely from drought, fire and Covid 19 impacts, so we 'saw a need' and helped just a little, by spending a few dollars there. Seven of our Josephite family attended: - Rev Barbara Logan, Sr Lynette Young rsj, Margaret Berlingeri, Lena Zagami, Grace Berlingeri, Pat Keon and Louise Anketell.

I watched a couple of the videos prepared for 10th Anniversary of Saint Mary MacKillop's Canonisation and thank you to all those involved in their preparation, they were very reflective. I like the name change to Companions, as it does more clearly speak of walking along/with/in the charism of our venerable Saint Mary MacKillop of the Cross.

Blessings always. Louise

FRIENDSHIP PRAYER SERVICE

News from The Scottish Highlands Companions in Nairn

Elaine de Ste Croix from Nairn, Scotland



I'm one of six Associates, now Companions, based in Nairn in the Highlands, in the parish of St Mary's where St Mary MacKillop spent a night or two on her travels around Scotland in the early 1870's. In our Church we are renovating a room where St Mary slept during her visit to Nairn, and it will be known as the Mary McKillop room.

Everything is locked down just now, sounds much the same as the situation in Victoria. We can't visit anyone in their home, or hold meetings and home visits are extremely restricted. It's especially tough for those living alone. We are allowed to attend Sunday Mass for now, (with strict protocols) but we can't meet

afterwards for a cuppa or chat which was always a lovely way to catch up. The feedback on the change to 'Companions' has been generally positive here, It aptly reflects the fact that we are all accompanying one another on our journey through life, as "*we are but travellers here*" of course. We are quite physically detached from the hub of activity on your side of the world though.

We celebrated the Canonisation 10th Anniversary celebrations, which was fantastic! It does feel as though we are really taking inspiration and strength from Mary's own pioneering spirit as we all navigate our way through this uncharted territory. I am pleased to have been able to pass on the limited activity in our own wee part of the Highlands. We will continue to be creative with our actions and support one another. I guess that's the challenge for all of us right now. God bless you and yours. Elaine

BACCHUS MARSH - 130 YEARS of Josephite Sisters

Three months after Mary MacKillop took Sisters to Numurkah, Mother Bernard accompanied four Sisters to the first Convent in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, Bacchus Marsh. They were met at the Station by Archbishop Carr, who had paid for the building and the land where the school was to be built in the future. Joining him was the Parish Priest, and all were welcomed by Parishioners.

The Sisters were transported by horse carriage to their new home on a hill on the outskirts of Bacchus Marsh, then a small town on the way to Ballarat. Their first home was a single storey house that had belonged to Dr Rae. The school was situated in Fiskin St, a kilometre or so from this residence. The Sisters attended the school on the Monday, 2 days after their arrival on Saturday 12th April 1890. In those days the Sisters rose at 5.00 am! In the years to come, school rooms were set up on land adjacent to the Convent and the school in Fiskin St closed.

We need to remember that the Sisters received no salary for their work. The families usually paid "school money" which was very little in those days and nothing if they could not afford it. I can remember going to school in the 1940's with one shilling, school money for the three of us. Some of you would remember mothers who helped to fill the pantries in January before the Sisters arrived, taking vegies and fruit to the Sisters, weekend baskets of cakes etc, butter from the local factory, eggs from your fowls, concerts and fund raisers to obtain money for the Sisters' fares to Melbourne, holiday expenses, new clothes. And in many cases the Sisters shared what they had with those families in greater need. They reciprocated with generosity providing hot cocoa to youngsters who attended first Friday Mass at 7 am and then took their toast to the convent where the Sisters provided a hot drink.

As Sisters gradually settled in Melbourne, Bacchus Marsh was the largest convent in the whole of Victoria so the Sisters would come there for their annual Retreat. Probably sleeping on straw palettes, several to a room to accommodate the number. By 1900 the original residence was collapsing, so a two-storey building was erected with room for boarders to stay during the week and classrooms. As numbers expanded a larger chapel was needed especially for retreat times and in 1905 a chapel, attached to the new convent, was blessed and opened. These two buildings were paid for by donations and loans. It wasn't until the 1970's that Sisters were paid a stipend for their teaching duties in schools. The generosity of parishioners was gratefully accepted and prayers for benefactors. These two buildings were paid for by donations and loans. It wasn't until the 1970's that Sisters were paid a stipend for their teaching duties in schools. The generosity of parishioners was gratefully accepted and prayers for benefactors were part of the daily routine. *Sr Mary Fermio rsj*



Josephite Companions Regional Days for 2021

Theme: Companions In Friendship Prayer and Service

Arrive 9:30 for a 10am start. We will have three 45min sessions and finish with BYO Lunch and a catch up at 1pm, with those who are able to stay.

Venues and Dates:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Morwell | April 17 th | Tennis Club Room |
| 2. Murchison | May 29 th | Catholic Church |
| 3. Pakenham | June 26 th | To Be Comfirmed |
| 4. Bacchus Marsh | August 7 th | Parish Centre |
| 5. Lakes Entrance | Sept 18 th | Parish Centre |

THESE DATES AND VENUES WILL BE CONFIRMED AT THE LEADERS DAY ON FEBRUARY 27TH AND IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER.

Advent & Christmas Video Reflections

The following website has been sent out from Emmaus Productions and has some beautiful and thought provoking insights into the birth of Christ. The Holy Christmas night – for adults, Hidden Figures- The Midwives At Jesus' Birth – Natalie Acton: Scripture Reflection. Are just two that I recommend.

<https://www.emmausproductions.com/special-feature/a-light-in-darkness-christmas-2020/>

This one will have you thinking - a Youtube Video sent from Sr Monica via our Sr Mary Fermio.

The Advent Season invites us to reflect upon how have I been a Christ Light this year or perhaps to see how this homeless man became a Christ Light. <https://youtu.be/oGt8Lnhgrz8> 'Enjoy' Noreen

Eternal rest grant to them O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them

R.I.P.

Vincent, brother of Tony Michael, Melton.

Pat, mother of Lyn Plummer, Sunbury.

Ann, sister of Sr Joan Healy rsj and Mary

McDermaid, Sunbury.

Maureen Bourke, Eaglehawk.

Isabelle, sister of Marj Missen, Sunbury.

Prayers are requested for the recovery of a young relative of Tony and Bernadette Barker, Pakenham.

USED STAMPS

Please leave a border of about 3cm around stamps.

Please forward stamps to:

STAMPS

Locked Bag 3031

BURWOOD NSW 1805

BOXES OF STAMPS TO:

5 Alexander Avenue,

Croydon NSW 2132



Thank you from Sr Helen Saunders rsj on behalf of Mary MacKillop Today, for your generous support. This year \$31,000 has been raised from the sale of these stamps at the Sydney Stamp Auctions. This money goes towards supporting women's skills.

JOSEPHITE COMPANION'S PRAYER

Companioning Spirit Intensify our living of the Josephite charism now as you inspired St Joseph, St Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods. Grace us with Friendship and Hospitality,

As we make community in the ordinariness of our lives.

Grace us with Prayerful Hearts that listen to your voice

And contemplate your presence in creation.

Grace us with Service,

Promoting human dignity and love of neighbour

Strengthen our commitment to live justly, love tenderly and walk humbly,

Conscious that we are participating in your mission.

Companion, encourage and enfold us in the fullness of Divine Love. **Amen**

