



Winter 2022 Newsletter VIC-TAS

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Josephite Companions

WINTER Newsletter

June is the month of
The Sacred Heart of
Jesus.

We remember and thank
the Sisters of St Joseph of
the Sacred Heart



Dear Josephite Companions

Our apologies that this Winter Newsletter is a little late. But better late than never. However Winter itself did not come late and another beautiful Season is well on its way. We have celebrated Pentecost, the Feast of the Sacred Heart and Mission month and the world seems to be returning to some sort of normality. For the first time since Covid the Newsletter is being printed and sent out again from Hawthorn East.

Sr Mary Fermio is still recuperating at Yarraville Convent and is very grateful for all your thoughts & Prayers. Her operation went well and she still has all ten fingers.

Group Surveys Thank you again for your responses to the survey we sent out asking Leaders to let us know how you want us to proceed for the rest of the year. The results of your responses are recorded on Page 6 of this Newsletter. We are delighted that there was a good response to having the end of year Mass at The Heritage Centre on Sat 1st November at 1pm.

Leongatha/Wonthaggi Group can be very proud of their members as they will welcome five new Josephite Companions for Enrolment on the eve of St Mary MacKillop's Feast Day. Nadia Stefani, Angelina Polato, Anne Briner, Pat Holloway and Kaye Liedtke. We all welcome them with much joy.

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*May the Sacred Heart of Jesus fill you all with love, that you
burn and glow with it more and more. Julian Tennison Woods 1879*

FRIENDSHIP

PRAYER

SERVICE

NEWS FROM LEONGATHA/WONTHAGGI Josephite Companions



PRAYER FRIENDSHIP SERVICE

Sixteen members, and intending members of Josephite Companions, gathered at The Esplanade Hotel in Inverloch on June 16th.

A very pleasant lunch was enjoyed by members from Fish Creek, Wonthaggi, Leongatha and Inverloch. After exchanging many vibrant conversations on various topics we concluded with the Josephite Companion Prayer.

We are delighted to announce that we are having five new members enrolled on August 7th, the eve of St Mary McKillop's Feast Day. Father Peter Bickley will celebrate the 11am Mass. Anne Marie Wilkinson will enrol the new Josephite Companions on behalf of us all and present them with their Badges.

Members and family will then gather at Leongatha RSL for lunch.

Mary Patterson, Leongatha



Greg Nelson Josephite Companion and Newest Member of Victorian Core Team

Dear Josephite Companions, as a new member of the Core Group, I have been asked to introduce myself.

I am a recently (2021) retired teacher. My career spanned more than forty years in Catholic Education. During this time, I taught in both Victoria and Tasmania; teaching primary schools within the Catholic Education system. For the last twenty years of my career I taught secondary school at St. Peter's College, Cranbourne. Quite a long time to be in one place!

Whilst in Tasmania I taught at St. Peter Chanel Primary School in Smithton. The school was originally staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph. This is where I had my introduction to the Josephite charism and also learnt of the work of Fr. Julian Tenison Woods.

In more recent times, I was a Learning Advisor in MacKillop House, one of the Houses at St. Peter's College. This experience deepened my appreciation of St. Mary of the Cross. It also enabled me to explain to the students the importance of the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the area of Catholic Education in Australia.



Personally, I am sixty-eight years young, married and have lived in my local parish of St. Agatha's for over twenty years.

When you retire, you are often advised to take up an interest. I am lucky to have three: I am sacristan and archivist at St Peter's College for one day a week, on the St. Agatha's Parish Council, currently serving as Chairperson and a Josephite Companion.

I look forward to journeying with you all.

Greg Nelson, Josephite Companions Victorian Core Team.

Never see a need without doing something about it.

The inspiring story of Lennie Gwyther & Ginger Mick

It's 1932 and Australia is in the grip of the Great Depression. One in three workers are unemployed. Decrepit shanty towns hug the outskirts of the big cities. A scrawny rabbit caught in a trap will feed a family for a week. Country roads are filled with broken men walking from one farmhouse to another seeking menial jobs and food.

On the outskirts of the South Gippsland town of Leongatha, an injured farmer lies in bed unable to walk – or work. World War I hero Captain Leo Tennyson Gwyther is in hospital with a broken leg and the family farm is in danger of falling into ruins.

Up steps his son, nine-year-old Lennie. With the help of his pony Ginger Mick, Lennie ploughs the farm's 24 acres and keeps the place running until his father can get back on his feet.

Lennie has been obsessively following the construction of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. He wants to attend its opening, in March 1932. With great reluctance, his parents agree he can go.

So Lennie saddles up Ginger Mick, packs a toothbrush, pyjamas, spare clothes and a water bottle into a sack, and begins the 1000+ kilometre trek to Sydney. Alone. That's right. A nine-year-old boy riding a pony from the deep south of Victoria to the biggest and roughest city in the nation.

It doesn't take long before word begins to spread about a boy, his horse and their epic trek. The entire populations of small country towns gather on their outskirts to welcome his arrival.

In Canberra, he is welcomed by Prime Minister Joseph Lyons, who invites him into Parliament House for tea.

When he finally arrives in Sydney, more than 10,000 people line the streets to greet him. He becomes a key part of the official parade at the bridge's opening. Even Don Bradman, requests a meeting and gives him a signed cricket bat. The Sydney Morning Herald wrote let it be remembered that this little lad, when his father was in hospital, cultivated the farm – a mere child."..... *just such an example as provided by a child of nine summers, Lennie Gwyther was, and is, needed to raise the spirit of our people and to fire our youth and others to do things – not to talk only. The sturdy pioneer spirit is not dead ...*

When Lennie leaves Sydney for home a month later, he has become one of the most famous figures in a country craving uplifting news. These days you can find a bronze statue in Leongatha commemorating Lennie and Ginger Mick.

Lennie inspired a struggling nation.

We need to remember – and celebrate – Lennie Gwyther and his courageous journey 90 years ago this year.

Based on Garry Linnell's article in The New Daily.



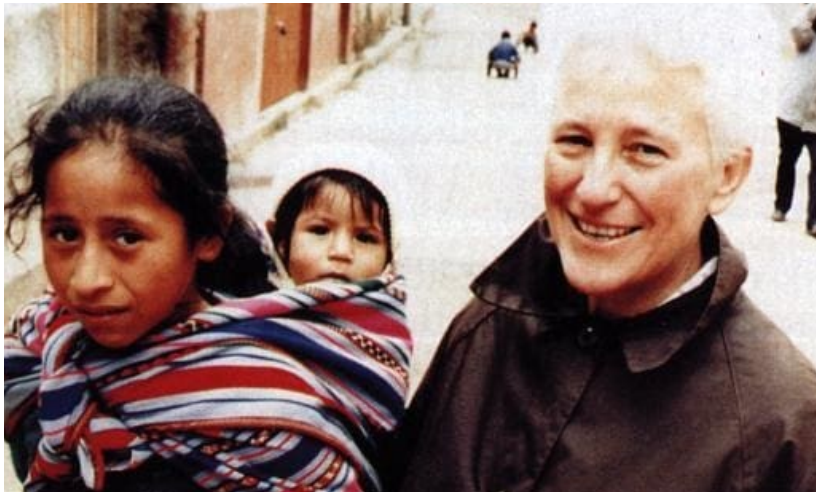
Lennie Gwyther after returning to Leongatha lived a quiet life on the family farm, until he died in his 70's in 1992.

Pic above—Statue of Lennie & his pony Ginger Mick , Leongatha

Pic right—This painting by local artist Bianca Stefani depicts Lennie's sole incredible journey from Leongatha to Sydney, through bushfire and floods, finally reaching Sydney in time for the Harbour Bridge opening ceremony, on 19 March 1932.



Reflect on the Life and Death of Sister Irene McCormack rsj. Josephite — Martyr



Sr Irene McCormack rsj with her beloved people of Peru

Sr Irene McCormack was born in Western Australia, one of six children.

She joined the Sisters of St Joseph when she was 17 years old and began teaching in 1978. Irene gradually became convinced that she needed to change her work within the Order. She felt a strong calling to serve the very poor.

In 1989 Irene went to Huasahuasi, a village in Peru in an incredibly steep mountainous area. The people were very poor and the Plaza in the village was the gathering place where there was an old Church and Town Hall etc. Messages were sent across the village by means of the church bells.

Irene loved the people of Peru and helped them where she could. She would dance and play with the children, some of whom had little fun in their lives. She encouraged the women to work together to sell their needlework for much needed funds. Sr Dorothy and Sr Irene would help to distribute food etc from Caritas parcels, sent from America.

On May 21, 1991 while Sr Dorothy was in Lima attending the dentist, the Freedom Fighters came to the village. Irene had spent her day as usual – watering her vegie garden and being with the children whom she taught to play and helped them with afterschool activities. She had returned home when there was loud knocking on the door. They were looking for the Sister. They dragged Irene down to the town square where four men, who supported the sisters, had already been arrested. The Rebels said the Sisters were collaborating with the USA by giving out American food, the people tried to tell them Irene was Australian, but to no avail. Irene and the four young men, Ruben, Augustine, Pedro and Alfredo, were all executed. Irene was made to lie face down on the ground in the Plaza, along with the four young men and they were mercilessly shot. Irene was shot in the back of her head by a fifteen year old girl.

After the massacre, the village women took Irene's body away to prepare for burial. In the town there are now 69,000 stones edging the track of a labyrinth, the number who met their death during this time of terror.

The Josephite sisters have not returned to live in Huasahuasi but have visited Irene's grave. In Huasahuasi, where Sr Irene lived and died, she is already known as Saint Irene. Hopefully Irene will become Australia's second Saint.

Sr Irene followed the call of Mary MacKillop:

"I have come to accept that effective action is a way of loving ... and I think

it is a Mary MacKillop saying "The poor deserve the best we can offer." Irene McCormack

* **Irene's Morning Prayer** *
* God, my Father, *
* you love me and forgive me. *
* So today accept all as gift *
* And ask to find you Lord, *
* The giver in the gift. *
* I choose to face life without fear *
* And to live wholeheartedly *
* In each present moment. *
* May my heart sing today *
* A song of loving, grateful praise. *
* Amen. *
* I am God's work of art. *
* I am precious in his sight. *

- * We Pray that we work together to bring hope to the lives of those who live in poverty
- * We pray for liberation and justice for victims of unrest.
- * We pray for deep healing in lands torn apart by chaos.

BLESSING

May the urgency of God's mission unsettle us
The compassion of God motivate us
The love of expand us
The healing of God encourage us
And my the Providence of God be our trust, now and always. **AMEN**

From ACT LOVE WALK Praying in the Josephite Spirit Trustees of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Rededication of Fish Creek Church



On Sunday 30th April, the congregation of Fish Creek's Church of The Immaculate Conception, and invited guests, welcomed Bishop Greg Bennet (Sale Diocese) who celebrated mass and the rededication of the church building,

The church was lovingly restored as a result of much energy from the local Josephite Companions and parishioners.

It was followed by an afternoon tea where five of our Josephite Companions were able to get together. I was particularly proud to see the church where I grew up and celebrated my Sacraments, restored as I remember it .

Noreen McLeish



Photos above, left to right:

1. Bishop Greg, Bennet
2. Immaculate Conception Church, restored
3. Lorraine Buntz, Josephite Companion - Newport
4. Josephite Companions Maureen Ellis - Mornington, Noreen McLeish—Hamilton, and sisters Bianca Stefani—Fish Creek, and soon to be companion Nadia Stefani. —also Fish Creek who were the main drivers for the restoration project.

HERITAGE CENTRE OPEN DAY REPORT

I attended the Mary MacKillop Heritage Centre Open Day on Saturday 18th June, with Greg who is one of my mates. We had a great day, went on the walk there were around twelve of us. We attended Mass in the Chapel, which was very special and finished up with soup and slices and a great cup of tea. The spread was terrific and then I purchased the two books on Mother Mary and Father Julian Tenison Woods (little unsure about this read) These books will be placed in my collection. Sr Patricia, who led the walk, and Sr Audrey, who I had terrific conversations with, mentioned their friendship with yourself goes back a long way. All in all what a great day! Gary Vagg Sebastapol

Gary is one of our newest Josephite Companions, in fact the first 'Companion' in Victoria.

By Gary Vagg— Josephite Companion Sebastapol (June 18th 2022)

Josephite Companions 2022

We would like to thank all those groups who shared with us how your group is travelling at the moment and how things have changed for your group during Covid.

From your feedback we have learnt the following:

- * That most groups are not ready for Regional Meetings yet.
- * That a few groups would like a visit from a member of the Core Team.
- * Some groups indicated that they would like to attend the Annual Mass in November. Which for this year will be held in the Chapel at the Heritage Centre.
- * Other comments were that the Newsletter is important to members.



Thankyou again for your input. And if you are keen to attend the End of Year Mass then remember the date **Saturday November at 1pm** Please let us know when you can because the Chapel has a limited capacity. *JC Vic Core Team*

R.I.P.

Eternal rest grant to them O Lord, and may perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in Peace.

George (Podge) Valance husband of Marge, Bacchus Marsh

Betty McClafferty of Yarraville Group

We remember all relatives and Friends of our Josephite Family who have died or are ill at this time.

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Direct Payment handed to Core Team Member **IN ENVELOPE WITH FORM FILLED IN, INCLUDED.**

JCoLT newsflash

May 2022



Dear Josephite Companions,

We are very mindful that these past two years have caused considerable disruption to people's lives in many ways. Some of you will have lost loved ones, others will have families whose livelihoods have been seriously impacted or homes that have been destroyed through floods. For some, it will have been not being able to be with family or friends because of restricted travel or not being able to visit sick family or attend funerals of loved ones.

As we learn to live with Covid in our different places, many of us have also developed a greater sense of gratitude for some of what we may have, in the past, taken for granted. We have come to appreciate what is in 'our own backyard', in terms of discovering the beauty in our own states/countries when travel is limited. We recognize the 'gift of giving', as denoted by our health workers and also those who understand the science of disease and medicine who have worked tirelessly to enable us to move through this time. In the words of Mary MacKillop - **"Gratitude is the memory of the heart"** (MM 1907).

As reflected in the article written by Carolyn Grimward, a Josephite Companion from Queensland, (p3) the opportunity for Leaders of Josephite Companions to gather online in April provided us with the gift of a valuable occasion for all to be enthused through input from Sr Clare and also through the interaction with other Companion Leaders. This illustrated the value of connection and learning from one another, something which we have had less of through this time of Covid.

Covid, though, has also given us the 'gift of online sharing' and so, we will make use of this medium again in September with a further opportunity for leaders to gather online. This will be on **September 17th**. We will have a prayer and focus time on the theme of 'Hope', followed by a time of working through some points of Administration regarding our groups. Further details to Leaders of groups will be provided in the coming weeks. Any suggestions of what you would like included would be very welcome. (Email mary.hemmings@sosj.org.au or phone 0417 871 904)

Included in this newsflash is information about the **National Pilgrimage** that is planned for October this year...the first one for a few years! Quoted costs are available until June 30th. Please let others who may be interested in this experience know about it.

Wishing you many blessings

Josephite Companions Leadership Team (JCoLT)

Mary Hemmings, Beverley Badcock, Pauline McGuire, Helen Dougherty, Anne-Marie Wilkinson, Moya Campbell rsj, Clare Conaglen rsj



Sacred Heart Reflection

*'The heart of Christianity is the Heart of Jesus,
a passionate devotedness to the well-being of
humanity.'* ¹

Photo by Hernan Pauccara: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/frozen-wave-against-sunlight-1210273/>

The Feast of the Sacred Heart calls us to reflect on the Heart of Jesus, the heart of the One who showed us through words and actions how we can contribute to the well-being of our world. He who touched the eyes of the blind, reached out to those who were on the fringe and accepted those who were ostracized by wider society, offers hope and a pathway forward for humanity providing the inspiration for us to find ways to continue his mission in our world today, just as Mary MacKillop did in her time.

In 2016 when Josephites celebrated 150 years of mission and service, the phrase 'Listening to the Heartbeat of the World' was adopted as the theme for that year of celebration. This theme continues to be named and reflected today in the Mary MacKillop Museum in Adelaide, in the gallery that highlights the many ways that Jesus' mission is continued by those with a Josephite heart today, through ministries such as Mary MacKillop Today, schools, aged care, support of those in need, walking with others, be they in Timor Leste or Peru, Australia or Aotearoa New Zealand. Listening to the heartbeat of our world requires us to be tuned into the evolving needs of our communities. These may be in our local spheres as well as our worldwide community.

There are many cries that we hear, from those caught up in war and communities struggling with floods and other disasters, to families facing poverty and people just needing a listening ear. We can become overwhelmed by the needs that we see and read about at times. Our Companions' Mission statement calls us to '...respond to the call to live the Josephite charism of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods in our daily lives...to make a difference in our local area and so further the Reign of God in our world'.

Fr Claude Mostowick msc reminds us that

'God's reign has no boundaries. It is present wherever people love one another or share one another's burdens, advocate for justice and peace and work to build up a just and peaceful community. Being inside this reign is largely determined by how we respond to the other, especially the one in need: the hungry, the naked, stranger, those in prison, and the sick.' ²

Thus, each of us is invited to be God's heart on earth. Each of us will do this differently because of our circumstances and capacity and the needs we see. Opening our hearts to others will, in turn, enable us to be touched by them. May the Heart of Jesus which reflected the unconditional love and tenderness and mercy of our Creator God bring about renewed hope in our world.

1. David Richo, *The Sacred Heart of the World: Restoring Mystical Devotion to Our Spiritual Life* (Paulist Press: 2007), 5–6 in Centre for Contemplation Dec 17th, 2021

2. Fr Claude Mostowick Edmund Rice Centre Nov 12 2021

https://www.erc.org.au/justice_reflections_from_fr_claude_mostowick_121121#:~:text=Justice%20Reflections%20From-,Fr.%20Claude%20Mostowick,-posted%20by%20Erc