



FRIENDSHIP  
PRAYER  
SERVICE

## NSW JOSEPHITE COMPANIONS

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

Phone 02 8741 2335

NEWSLETTER • March 2023

### Reflection for NSW Josephite Companions



*Stronger together*

As Companions we strive to make a difference. We serve those whom we encounter in our various ministries and circumstances in the same spirit as Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods. We look for those who are marginalised and most in need and see the face of God in them, we minister to them. We are the

voice of those who are ignored and put aside. We are the ones who journey with those who need our companionship. We are the ones who care for our common home Earth and try to bring awareness that we are one, all united in the same Body of Christ. This is the mission of the Sisters of St Joseph. This is our mission which we have to carry on keeping the charism of the Josephites alive.

We believe that we are called to a deeper relationship with God and with each other. God is ever present in each encounter we have, in each event of our life, in everything that is. Like Mary MacKillop we believe that God always provides and that we are never forgotten or neglected but held in unconditional love. The Cross is our companion; it is what binds us to our mission. The Cross is what makes our mission worthwhile as we go out as instruments of God's love to others.

Like Joseph who is our patron saint, we are attentive to God's voice within us and follow wherever we are called to go. Imitating his humility, compassion and justice we become co-creators of our world and our environment. Listening with attentive ears we share in the story of the most vulnerable among us and attend to their needs. With courage we move forward notwithstanding the obstacles that affect our contemplation, we strive to develop a deeper union with our God and become participants in God's plan of salvation. We become the hands and feet and heart of Christ.

This is our mission. Not only as Josephite Companions but it is the gift we have received through our Baptism. As soon as we are Baptised, we become partakers in the mission of Christ. Pope Francis very often says that we have to have our sleeves rolled up and get dirty meaning that we have to get out there, out of

our comfort zones and taking risks if we want God's kingdom to grow in our midst. This is our mission which is intensified through our calling as Josephite Companions.

I pray that this new year fills us with zeal and enthusiasm so that like Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods we risk all for God knowing that we are never alone. We are a sign of God's love to the world.

*- Antoinette Mangion*



**'Let St Joseph's true children remember their mission and seek first the poorest, most neglected parts of God's vineyard.'**

*Mary MacKillop 6/03/1890*

**'Let us do all we can to serve God.'**

*Fr Julian Tenison Woods 1875*

We would like to remind all Josephite Companions that contribution to the membership are now due. Membership contribution is from January to December. Thank you for your generosity.

#### NSW Josephite Companions Leadership Team

Antoinette Mangion, Geoff Barrett, Lyn Griffiths,  
Beverley Badcock, Anne Bailey, Aileen Young

# Launch of the book about us!

*Evolution of a Movement: Josephite Associates to Josephite Companions*  
1979-2019

Mary Cresp RSJ

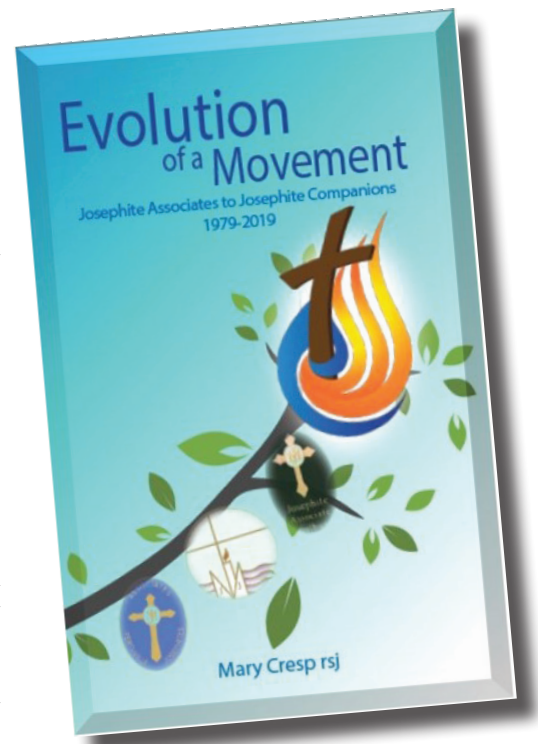
In her Foreword to *Evolution of a Movement*, Mary Hemmings, Chair of the Josephite Companions Leadership Team, muses on the opportunity reading the book gave her to 're-live' the story, to 'relish' it and to 'view it in its broader context'. As the book's author, I can identify with those feelings. I must say when I was asked to write the history, I was apprehensive – in the main, its beginnings were familiar to me, but I had little idea of what had had happened during the years of this century. Getting to know this part of the story has been a privilege. I have 'met' you all and feel I now know you as true companions on the journey.

I was thrilled that in her reflection on the book, Anne Benjamin picked up that the story of the Josephite Companions is one of relationships. If what I have written does no more than remind readers of this fact, then it is enough. We have been graced with a precious gift of the Spirit,



demonstrated in the lives of Mary MacKillop and Julian Woods, and re-interpreted over the years by hundreds of men and women in their own context. I hope that as you recall your local and personal stories, you will be inspired once again to nurture the gift and to develop it even more.

At the book-launch that took place at Kensington on Thursday 1 December, Professor David Hilliard gave a succinct yet informative and lively talk on the history of lay movements in the Church. Archbishop Patrick O'Regan then launched the book, speaking as a Companion himself about the relationships he has formed with Sisters and others who share the charism. Let us pray for one another during this Christmas-tide that we, who have been graced with the companionship of a Joseph who in his parent-hood nurtured in Jesus an understanding of what God's 'fatherhood' is like; of a Mary MacKillop and Julian Woods who



Front cover of the book 'Evolution of a Movement: Josephite Associates to Josephite Companions.'

handed on to us their understanding of God's compassionate love; and of all our forebears who likewise have incarnated God's presence to us in the ordinary – may we show to others today that same Great Love that embraces us all and calls us to be joy and hope in a world longing for both.

## 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, PO Box 184**

**Croydon NSW 2132**

**Phone 02 8741 2335**

*Thank you for all stamps received.*

**A sum of \$42,500 was raised the past year from stamps donated. From 2001 till now the total raised is \$486,000 (almost half a million). Thank you all for your generous support.**

## Lidcombe Josephite Companions - History

Our group began in November 1992, when local Sister of St Joseph, Sister Marcia Brady rsj, enrolled 52 men and women of Lidcombe parish as RSJ Associates in Mission after a Mass which was celebrated by our Parish Priest, Monsignor John Meaney. Certificates were presented by Sister Geraldine Kiss rsj.

Since Sister. Marcia, the Lidcombe RSJ Associates have been supported by a number of dedicated Josephite Sisters, including Sisters Joan Harrison, Marie Carson and Mary Baker, we currently have Sister Joanne Linh Le. In addition to reflections provided by our own resident Sisters, the Lidcombe RSJ Associates have had various other Josephite Sisters who have come in as guest speakers to talk of the missionary work being undertaken in other countries, such as Peru and East Timor.

Other highlights for many of the members of our group were in meeting the Sisters and other associates at the St Joseph Feast Days at Baulkham Hills, the St. Mary MacKillop Feast Days at Fairfield as well as the spiritual retreat

weekends at Kincumber.

In 2017, our leader for the previous 25 years, Dawn Fitzpatrick, retired as Group Leader. We were fortunate in having two other members, Rhonda and Tony Tanti agree to take on this role jointly. Their dedication to this role has been greatly appreciated by the current members.

Another major change happened in 2021. The Associates changed their name to the NSW Josephite Companions and a new Leadership Team started in Croydon. The focus on friendship, prayer and service to the community by our members has not changed.

There is still a regular group who come to our meetings on the first Saturday of each month. Fr. Epeli Qimaqima, like previous Parish Priests, is very supportive of the Lidcombe Josephite Companions group and is pleased to say Mass before the members move to the hall for their meeting.

Our group recently celebrated our 30th Anniversary with Mass at St

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## Lidcombe 30th Anniversary Celebration

In November 2022, the Lidcombe Josephite Companions celebrated our 30th Anniversary with a beautiful Mass and a wonderful lunch. The Mass was celebrated by our parish priest, Father Epeli, who has a very high regard for our group and holds St Mary of the Cross MacKillop in a special place in his heart. We were very blessed to have our founding sister, Sister Marcia Brady attend.

Our current Josephite sister, Sister Joanne read beautifully in the Mass & instigated a revised version of "For he's a jolly good fellow" to "For we are jolly good Companions" after the Anniversary cake was cut at lunch! We also inducted our newest member Harry with a very moving Induction ceremony and we conducted a Recommitment ceremony for our current Companions ensuring everyone's involvement.

It was a trulyspecial occasion, and we were also blessed to have former group members, prayer members and Antoinette, Bev and Lyn, from our Croydon office, join us the whole day. Antoinette was also invaluable in her help prior to the day with supplying the beautiful hymns and general advice, thank you again Antoinette.

At our lunch which was also attended by Father Epeli, Father Daniele and our 2 seminarians Justin & Peter, Sister Marcia spoke very passionately about our group's journey and how we continue to live by the Josephite charism. Sister Marcia started a photo album of our group in 1992 and continued to add to this over the years. Geoff Barrett spoke of our history and generously gave everyone a copy of this history. He also provided a book on the day containing many photos & booklets from over the years. A very happy & memorable day filled with lots of laughs, reminiscing and catching up with old friends was had by all.

Although we have lost many beloved members over the years, our little group continues to meet each month for prayer & fellowship (& to solve the current problems of the world...) as well as raise money for Sister Josephine Mitchell & the orphanage in East Timor and Sister Myree Harris & Gethsemane Community. We continue to send gift bags of toiletries etc to Sister Mary Leahy for the Seafarers each Christmas. We also continue to collect stamps as we are all mostly of the era who still send letters! (and the generation who still have landlines...) We look forward to the next 30 years!

- Rhonda and Tony Tanti, Lidcombe Josephite Companions

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Joachim's Church and a luncheon at Dooley's Catholic Club Lidcombe.

### Current Lidcombe Companions include:

Geoff Barrett, Catherine Chia, Joan Claxton, Harry Dass, Anne Delaney, Dawn Fitzpatrick, Kathleen Gillett, Val Jenkins, Kath Maher, Pauline McGlynn, Laurel McNally, Ann O'Hara, Rosita Riel, Elizabeth Rooney, Anne Ryan, Kath Shaw, Doreen Smith, Mavis Symes, Anthony and Rhonda Tanti, Nola Walker.

- Geoff Barrett



*Harry Dass being inducted by Fr Epeli.*



*Celebratory lunch for the occasion.*



*Lidcombe RSJ Associates – Monthly meeting.*



*A discussion and reflection at Kincumber.*

## News from Mullumbimby/Bangalow and Byron Bay

The Mullumbimby/Bangalow and Byron Bay Josephite Companions began holding a street stall in the first week of May, to raise funds for East Timor, in 2011. We have to obtain council permission to hold the stall in the main street of Bangalow and the parish covers us for insurance purposes. Our members cook cakes, biscuits, make pickles, jams and all sorts of craft to sell on the day. We also sell good quality second-hand books and bric a brac. Each year our members also donate grocery items for a raffle. Most years we have been able to make up three hampers of groceries for 1st, 2nd & 3rd prizes.

We advertise the stall in the Parish Bulletin seeking donations from parishioners towards the stall and inviting them to come along on the day to support our cause. Our parishioners are always very generous gifting us with plants, produce, cooking, craft as well as cash donations. No street stalls were held in 2020 and 2021 due to covid restrictions. During these two years we took up a collection amongst our members and invited the parishioners to also contribute. Each year we raise around \$1,500 and over the years a total of \$17,590.45 has been sent to Mary MacKillop Today to provide educational resources for the children of East Timor.

Unfortunately, 2022 will be our last street stall. Like a lot of other groups, our members are all getting older and unable to do the things we did in the past. At our Christmas lunch we considered our future and a decision was made to only meet twice a year, to attend Mass on St Mary's Feast Day in August and to meet on the first Thursday in December for a Christmas lunch. Everything we do each day, we continue to do in the spirit of St Mary MacKillop, but we will be less active, basically becoming a prayer group. Praying daily for each other and for the special intentions asked of us. We also continue to collect used stamps for Peru.

- Janice Lang



Jan Lang and Frances Raisch inspecting the goodies for the sale and setting up the stall.



Jan Lang and Pam Lang behind table outside the Bangalow Newsagency.



## Feast of St Joseph

**On the 19th March** we honour our patron saint, St Joseph. Joseph in saying yes to God, in all humility accepted the plan that God had for him and humankind. May we like Joseph be always open and listen to God's voice with the ears of our heart so that we too may give birth to Christ wherever we are and to whom ever we encounter in our daily life.

### Prayer to St Joseph

Hail Guardian of the Redeemer,  
 Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.  
 To you God entrusted his only Son,  
 In you Mary placed her trust,  
 With you Christ became man.  
 Blessed Joseph, to us too,  
 Show yourself a father  
 And guide us in the path of life.  
 Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage,  
 And defend us from every evil.  
 Amen

We wish all Josephite Companions and Josephite Sisters a very happy feast.

## The Boambee Josephites Associates



Our group meets four times a year to celebrate and connect with the charism of Saint Mary MacKillop.

But we use email often to keep members up to date with our happenings. We have members from surrounding towns and villages so it is a good way to keep people connected and involved with the projects we are working on at the time.

Our meetings are joyous and prayerful and the Leadership Team prepare carefully to facilitate the Prayer, Fellowship and Service so necessary to enlighten, inspire and encourage our members. Learning more about the life Saint Mary lived and how she went about it forms the foundation of our meetings.

Some of our projects have been to send money to the Bishop of Lismore Flood Relief Fund.

Our Parish Priest, Fr. Michael Alcock had a milestone birthday and we helped in the celebrations as he is a great support to our group. Our members saved used stamps for the missions and knitted beanies for Sr. Mary Leahy who is the Catholic Sydney Port Chaplin for the Seafarers and Maritime Workers. We became involved with Sr. Myree Harris who is Coordinator at Gethsemane House and have been sending her donated new socks.

We have a member who visits Mary Help of Christians Primary School at Sawtell and meets with the Junior Joeys regularly. It is a delight to hear her reports and they made a donation to "Mary MacKillop Today" from their fund-raising Joey's Pyjama Day.

But our big project, which had us planting pot plants, knitting and sewing all year was preparation for the Parish Christmas Market Stall in November. Our aim was to raise funds for St. Therese's Orphanage in East Timor for the education of women and girls.

Closer to home we have an aging membership, some of whom do not wish to come to meetings anymore but support us with prayers. We keep in touch using phone calls, hand written letters and visits when appropriate. These are the people who built our group in the beginning and it is good that they are still interested in what is happening.

At the other end of the scale we have enrolled six new members at our last meeting for the year. These wonderful people, full of energy and hope have renewed us with their enthusiasm during the year as they walked with us to see what was involved in being a Josephite Associate member.

One of our members went on the Australian pilgrimage called "In the Footsteps of Mary MacKillop" and was full of praise for the experience. She shared some of her adventures with us as we finished up the year. The year has slipped past very quickly and we give thanks for the opportunities we have had to spread the charism of Mary MacKillop and we pray for the motivation to be more open when the Spirit calls, to be able to spread the Good News in this wonderful part of our country, Australia.

- Lorraine Kirkaldy



*Our new members: Madonna Dechphant, Michelle Harrison, Gai Roff, Val McFadyen, Alan McFadyen and Stella Tegg.*



*Sr. Fidelis and members at the Christmas Market Stall.*



*This is Father David King who helped out on St Mary's Feast Day when Fr. Michael was away.*



From Pope Francis – His words

## Your Journey Together

Brothers and sisters,  
if we are to welcome God and his peace,  
we cannot stand around complacently,  
waiting for things to get better.

We need to get up, recognize the moments of grace,  
set out and take a risk.

We need to take a risk! Today, at the beginning of the  
year, rather than standing around, thinking and hoping  
that things will change,

we should instead ask ourselves:

“This year, where do I want to go? Who is it that I can  
help?”

So many people, in the Church and in society, are waiting  
for the good that you and you alone can do,  
they are waiting for your help.

Today, amid the lethargy that dulls our senses,  
the indifference that paralyses our hearts, and the  
temptation to waste time glued to a keyboard in front of a  
computer screen, the shepherds are summoning us to set  
out and get involved in our world,  
to dirty our hands and to do some good.

They are inviting us to set aside many of our routines and  
our comforts in order to open ourselves to the new things  
of God, which are found in the humility of service,  
in the courage of caring for others.

Brothers and sisters let us imitate the shepherds:  
let us set out with haste!

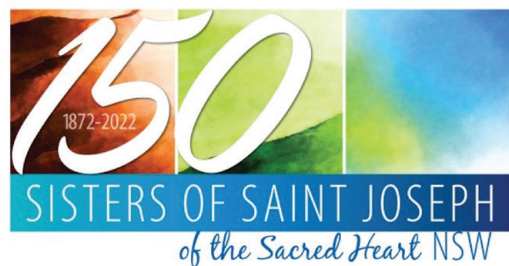
Pope Francis - January 1, 2023

*We pray for the souls of our departed  
Companion brothers and sisters*

Ruth McGowan  
Iris Mahony  
Pauline O’Gorman  
Therese Rumph  
Hyacinth Murphy  
Patricia Sykes

Moree  
Tamworth  
Latham  
Bombala  
Bombala  
Boambee

Please let us know if anyone from your group passes  
away or leaves. We can include them in our prayers.  
Thank you



## INVITATION

Sister Anne Porter and the NSW Regional Leadership Team  
extend a warm invitation to attend the Closing Mass  
of our Sesquicentenary Year.

The Mass will be celebrated on  
Saturday 15 July 2023 at 2.30 pm  
in Mary MacKillop Memorial Chapel  
Mount St North Sydney

Celebrant: Bishop Brian Mascord, Bishop of Wollongong

Following the Mass there will be an afternoon tea in the Auditorium.

Public transport is recommended

## RSVP

by Friday 30 June 2023 to Josephite Companions Office

Phone 8741 2335 or email [nsw.companions@sosj.org.au](mailto:nsw.companions@sosj.org.au)

..... will be coming to the Closing Mass on Saturday 15 July.

### Companions' Office

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

We would like to remind all Josephite Companions  
that contribution to the membership are now due.  
Membership contribution is from January to December.  
Thank you for your generosity.

### Email Address

Please let us know if you changed your email address.  
If yes, please contact us with your new details at:  
[nsw.companions@sosj.org.au](mailto:nsw.companions@sosj.org.au)