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PRAYER AND PREPARATION  
FOR EASTER 2024  
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# BBN

PUBLICATION  
OF THE CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
BROKEN BAY

## #221

MARCH 2024





**CATHOLIC  
DIOCESE OF  
BROKEN BAY**

#### DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY

Tel: (02) 8379 1600  
Caroline Chisholm Centre  
Building 2, 423 Pennant Hills Rd  
Pennant Hills NSW 2120  
PO Box 340  
Pennant Hills NSW 1715  
[enquiries@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:enquiries@bbcatholic.org.au)

#### CHANCERY

**Bishop:** Most Rev Anthony Randazzo DD JCL

**Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia:**  
Very Rev Dr David Ranson

**Chancellor & Director of Mission:** Kelly Paget

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Chris Lee

**Director, Pastoral Discernment & Accompaniment:**  
Patti Beattie

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**Director:** Danny Casey  
Tel (02) 9847 0000  
PO Box 967  
Pennant Hills NSW 1715

#### CATHOLIC CARE

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Tel: (02) 9481 2600

**Family Centres:**  
Brookvale – Tel: (02) 8043 2600  
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(02) 9488 2500

**Services for Seniors:**  
(02) 9488 2500

**Permanency Support Program (Foster Care):**  
(02) 4320 7700

#### BROKEN BAY NEWS

Tel: (02) 8379 1618  
[news@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:news@bbcatholic.org.au)

**Editor:** Katrina Lee  
**Staff Writer:** William McInnes  
**Design:** Chris Murray  
**Cover photo:** Ash Wednesday at MacKillop Catholic College, Warnervale.

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## BISHOP'S MESSAGE

# Year of Prayer

By Bishop Anthony Randazzo



As we embark on the journey of the Year of Prayer 2024, a period of preparation for the upcoming 2025 Holy Year of Jubilee, I am filled with a profound sense of anticipation and hope for our community. This year presents us with a unique opportunity to deepen our spiritual lives and strengthen our communion with God and with each other.

At the heart of our Year of Prayer is the timeless guidance of the Lord's

**At the heart of our Year of Prayer is the timeless guidance of the Lord's Prayer, the very words that Jesus imparted to his disciples when they sought instruction on how to pray to God the Father. In both Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4, we find the essence of this sacred invocation, a beacon of light guiding us through the depths of our souls.**

Prayer, the very words that Jesus imparted to his disciples when they sought instruction on how to pray to God the Father. In both Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4, we find the essence of this sacred invocation, a beacon of light guiding us through the depths of our souls.

In particular, I urge each of you to reflect deeply on the words of Matthew 6:10, "Your will be done." This simple yet profound statement calls us to surrender ourselves entirely to the divine will, inviting God into every aspect of our lives as individuals and as a community. By embracing this sentiment, we open ourselves to the transformative power of God's love, allowing it to shape our thoughts, actions, and intentions.

As we contemplate where God resides within our lives, let us remember that we are invited into the communion of the blessed Trinity, called to journey together as disciples of Jesus Christ, cradled in the boundless love and fellowship of the Holy Spirit. It is through prayer that we enter into this sacred communion, forging a deeper connection with God and with one another.

I invite each of you to prioritize prayer in your daily lives. There is no substitute for the intimacy and solace found in personal private prayer, where we can speak directly to our Heavenly Father with open hearts and minds. Furthermore, let us come together in prayer as a community of the Catholic Church, reaching out to our sisters and brothers of other Christian communities ecumenically, and interceding for the peace and salvation of all the peoples of the world.

In his First Letter to the Thessalonians, Saint Paul urges the community of the Church to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess 5:17). Saint Cyprian reminds us that whoever does not have the church as their mother, cannot have God as their Father. He goes on to encourage all to pray incessantly and in unity, as one body of Christ, affirming, “who prays without ceasing, prays correctly.”

Saint Catherine of Siena, renowned mystic and Doctor of the Church, emphasized the profound importance of prayer in fostering a deep connection with God. She famously said, “Be who God meant you to be

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**Saint Catherine of Siena, renowned mystic and Doctor of the Church, emphasized the profound importance of prayer in fostering a deep connection with God. She famously said, “Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire,” highlighting the transformative power of prayer in aligning oneself with God’s purpose. For Catherine, prayer was not just a ritual, but a pathway to inner enlightenment ...**

and you will set the world on fire,” highlighting the transformative power of prayer in aligning oneself with God’s purpose. For Catherine, prayer was not just a ritual, but a pathway to inner enlightenment and spiritual growth. Through prayer, individuals can discern their true calling and actively participate in the communion and mission of Jesus Christ, igniting positive change in the world around them. In essence, Saint Catherine reminds us that prayer is not merely a religious practice, but a vital means of seeking truth, guidance, and communion with the divine.

Therefore, this year, let us not merely speak about prayer or read about its merits, but let us actively engage in the art of prayer itself. To this end, I am committed to joining together in prayer with various people and groups around the diocese throughout 2024, fostering a sense of unity and solidarity among our community.

Reflecting on the words of Saint Pope Paul VI, who said, “If you want to pray, let the words of the Lord’s Prayer echo in your heart,” and Saint Pope John Paul II, who emphasized that, “The Lord’s Prayer is the most perfect of prayers... In it we ask, not only for all the things we can rightly desire, but also in the sequence that they should be desired,” let us find solace and guidance in this sacred invocation.

As we embark on this sacred journey of prayer, might we not forget the example set forth by Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Through her prayerful and discerning “yes,” Mary allowed the Will of God to be done in her life (cf. Luke 1:26-38). Let us stay close to Mary in prayer, seeking her intercession and

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guidance as we navigate the twists and turns of our spiritual journey.

Finally, I echo the sentiments of Pope Francis who, quoting Saint Padre Pio, reminds us that, “Prayer is the oxygen of the soul.” May we breathe deeply of this divine oxygen, allowing it to invigorate our spirits and fortify our resolve as we embark on this prayerful journey together.

In conclusion, dear brothers and sisters, let us embrace the Year of Prayer 2024 with open hearts and minds, allowing the words of the Lord’s Prayer to guide us along the path of spiritual renewal and transformation. May our prayers be a source of strength, comfort, and inspiration, leading us ever closer to the merciful and loving heart of God and the fulfillment of His divine will.

With prayers and blessings,

+Anthony



A joyous day for the Catechumens.

## Rite of Election celebration

On the First Sunday after Lent 130 Catechumens in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) programs in parishes across the Diocese came together to be presented to Bishop Anthony for the Rite of Election at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, Waitara. The Catechumens, from 18 parishes and the Korean Chaplaincy, were accompanied by their RCIA coordinators, Parish Clergy, sponsors, fellow parishioners, family and friends as they took their next step on their journey to receiving the

sacraments of initiation. "It was so powerful and indeed a true moment of grace, to witness our Cathedral filled with Catechumens," Kelly Paget, Chancellor and Director of Mission for Broken Bay said.

"They have been called by God and have said 'yes' to continuing their faith journey with Christ and His Church. There was a sacred joy throughout the Cathedral as each name was ritually enrolled, and Bishop Anthony, on behalf of the Church, accepted their

candidacy. Observing entire families make a united decision of faith was an inspiring sign of hope."

The word Catechumen in the early Church was the name given to someone who had not yet been initiated into the sacred mysteries but was undergoing a course of preparation for that purpose. As unbaptised adults, they receive instruction in Church doctrine before admission to communicant membership in the Church. The RCIA program which takes between six and 12 months, is not just a time of instruction, it is also a process of spirituality and reflection on how they will contribute to Communion, Participation and the Mission of Christ, the three pillars of a Synodal Church.

"The Rite of Election, or enrolment of names, is the second major step, or Rite of the Process," Kelly said.

"It is preceded by the Rite of Acceptance, which takes place within the Parish context, and it is at this time when an Enquirer becomes known as a Catechumen. After the Rite of Election, they become known as the Elect.



18 of the Diocese's 26 parishes were represented.

“The Season of Lent is thus a time of purification for the Elect, along with the entire Church, which is marked by three parish-based ceremonies known as the Scrutinies. The final and pinnacle ritual moment occurs on the most sacred night of the year. During the Easter Vigil, the Elect are Baptised, Confirmed, and receive their First Holy Communion; becoming living members of the body of Christ.

“Their new life in Christ, celebrated with Easter Joy, becomes a vivid sign of grace in our Parish communities.

“The RCIA journey is a blessed opportunity, not just for those who say yes to the call, but for our entire community of faith. The beautiful rhythm of their time of preparation which leads us all to the celebration and joy of Easter, is something I



Bishop Anthony with Catechumens from Gosford.

would invite all the People of God in Broken Bay to reflect upon. The very design of the RCIA allows each of us the opportunity to reflect on our own faith life.”

More than 200 people attended the grace-filled celebration, promising to

keep in their prayers all those on the journey to coming into full communion with Christ and His Church. For anyone wanting to know more about the RCIA program please contact your local Catholic Parish.

Photos by Tom Croll

*A time to renew your spirit* *the genuine pilgrim experience*

<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Mary &amp; the Saints</h3> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Fatima to Lourdes</i></p> <p style="background-color: #800040; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Land only from \$4990</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Commences 10 June 2024. 11 Days. With Fr Anthony Mifsud.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Embark on the world's most requested Marian journey, traversing quaint villages graced by the footsteps of some of the Church's most renowned saints. From the anniversary celebrations in Fatima, through to the sacred city of Lourdes, this will truly be a pilgrimage so full of grace. <u>Also departs 10 September 2024</u></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Red Centre Pilgrimage</h3> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Journey to the Heart. Alice Springs to Uluru</i></p> <p style="background-color: #800040; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Land only from \$5790</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Commences 29 August 2024. 9 Days. With Fr Robin Koning SJ.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Something deep and mystical calls all Australians to journey to the heart of our nation to honour its symbols, stories and beauty in a prayerful spirit of awe and thanksgiving. <u>Featuring the Cross on Memory Mountain.</u></p> </div>	<div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 5px;"> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Soul of Ireland</h3> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>With Fr Thomas Stevens</i></p> <p style="background-color: #800040; color: white; padding: 2px; text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">Land only from \$6990</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin-top: 10px;">Commences 26 August 2024. 11 Days. With Fr Thomas Stevens.</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Prepare for a unique journey into Ireland's heart and soul. Come to the grace-filled shrine of Our Lady of Knock and witness along the way the unsurpassed beauty of Ireland's monasteries, rugged coastline and historic cities. <u>Belfast optional extension</u></p> </div>
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# Lent: A time to prepare and cleanse

Every year, the Church enters into the great Season of Lent.

Beginning on Ash Wednesday and lasting until Easter, Lent is a time for us to draw closer to Christ and enter more deeply into our relationship with Him, spending the 40 days of Lent dedicated to fasting, abstinence and prayer.

In Sacred Scripture, the number 40 signifies new life, new growth, and transformation.

In the Old Testament, the Great Flood lasted 40 days and 40 nights and the Israelites were in the desert for 40 years.

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**“In imitation of Jesus our teacher and master, we also fast (cf. Matthew 4:1-11). Like Our Lord, we will journey into the desert places of our life. Where the Lord has gone, we hope to follow, and so we must expect some challenges and temptations because the Gospel reminds us that this too was the plight of Jesus. Christians are people of hope, so during these moments of vulnerability, let us take shelter in God’s mercy and compassion.”**

In the New Testament, Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights in the desert and ascended into heaven 40 days after His Resurrection from the dead.

We see in all these events in Scripture, a period of preparing and cleansing. It’s with this same spirit we approach the season of Lent.

While we are preparing to commemorate the death and resurrection of Jesus at the Paschal Triduum, we enter a period of cleansing ourselves from sin and from some of our worldly desires, in imitation of Christ’s journey into the desert for 40 days.

In his Message for Lent, Pope Francis called for the season to be a time of prayer.

“It is time to act, and in Lent, to act also means to pause,” he said.

“To pause in prayer, in order to receive the word of God, to pause like the Samaritan in the presence of a wounded brother or sister. Love of God and love of neighbour are one love.”

Bishop Anthony Randazzo echoed this message in his *Lenten Penance Letter 2024*.

“In our Catholic tradition, Lent is commemorated as a time for conversion, repentance, and renewal,” he wrote.

“In imitation of Jesus our teacher and master, we also fast (cf. Matthew 4:1-11). Like Our Lord, we will journey into the desert places of our life. Where the Lord has gone, we hope to follow, and so we must expect some challenges and temptations because the Gospel reminds us that this too was the plight of

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**In the spirit of growing closer to God, each of the faithful also obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday (26 May). They are also obliged to confess their grave sins at least once a year through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.**

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Through the Eucharist we receive grace from God, as we commemorate the sacrifice and death of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, while through Reconciliation, we experience the infinite mercy of God.

While through the Lenten season we may get caught up with the discipline and temptations of our penitential sacrifices, it’s important to remember the season is first and foremost about growing closer to God, and cleansing ourselves to prepare to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.

# A Lenten resource for everyone

While Lent provides the opportunity to reflect on our lives and our response to the call to participate in the Mission of Jesus Christ, a guiding hand along the path of prayer and reflection is always helpful.

A resource companion can help absorb the powerful experience of the traditional practices of intensified prayer, fasting and almsgiving

This year the Diocese of Broken Bay has produced a resource that can be used individually or as part of a group.

Called *"Participating in the Mission of Christ"*, for the six weeks of Lent the booklet includes an opening prayer, a reading of the Gospel text for that week, a reflection of the text by one of our priests, a personal testimony, and a closing prayer.

All the material has been prepared by members of our Broken Bay Church community, making this resource relevant to us and the journey we are on as a community.

Bishop Anthony writes in the Introduction; "In 2024, the Lenten season coincides with the invitation from the Holy Father, Pope Francis, to dedicate ourselves to a Year of Prayer in preparation for the Jubilee

Year of 2025. The Holy Father's desire is that this time of prayer be fruitful to reawaken and revitalise the desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to Him and adore Him, as we unite together in a great symphony of prayer.

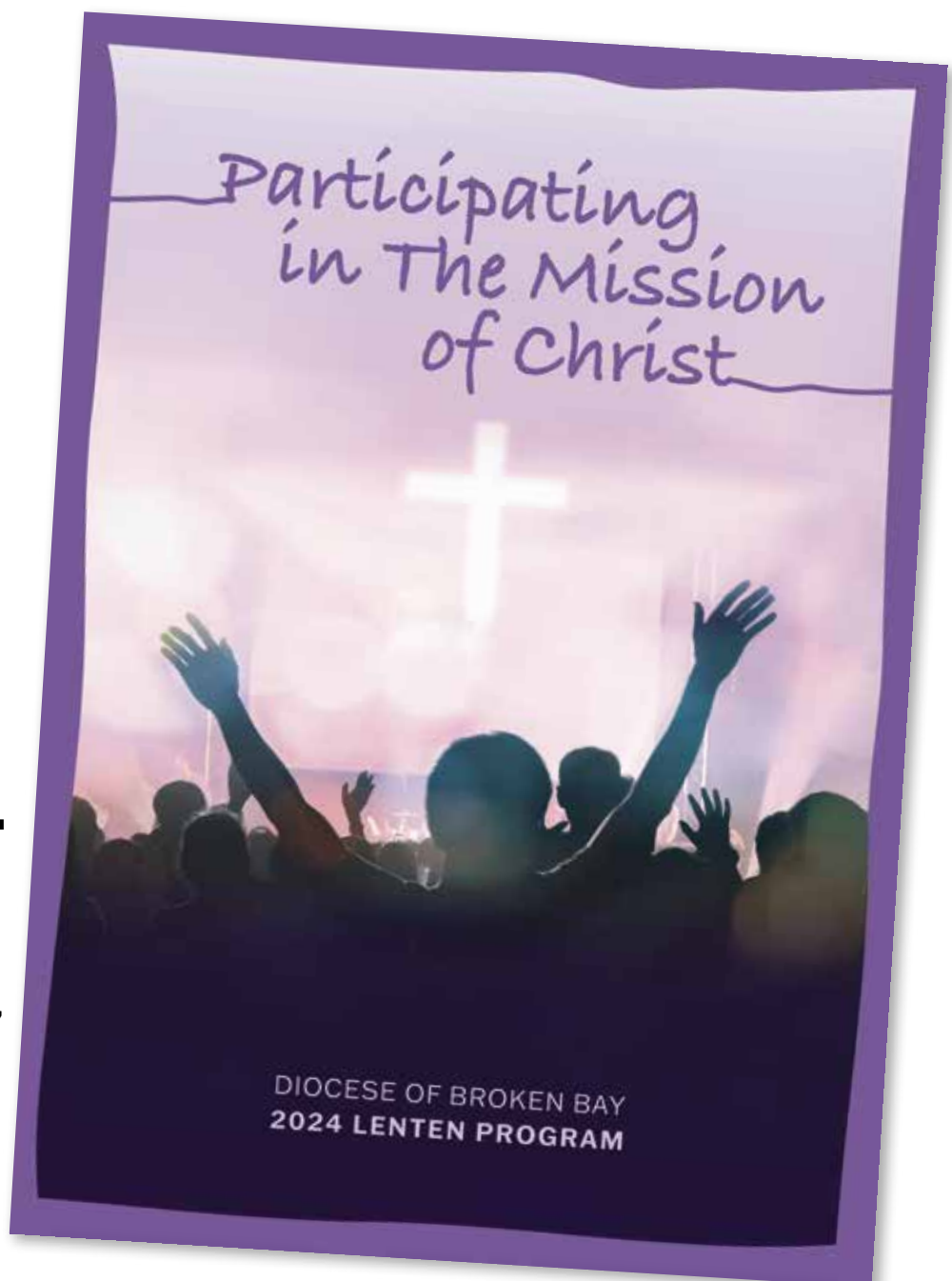
"My hope is that this Lenten resource will be a powerful experience of prayer

with Scripture, opening up the well of our hearts to the Word of God. I pray also that the Word be planted in our lives and transform them."

*"Participating in the Mission of Christ"* Lenten Program is available in all parishes and also as an e-flipbook on the Diocesan website at <https://www.bbcatholic.org.au/>

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**"My hope is that this Lenten resource will be a powerful experience of prayer with Scripture, opening up the well of our hearts to the Word of God. I pray also that the Word be planted in our lives and transform them."**





## Schools, parishes begin their Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday

*“Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”*

With these words, Catholics across the globe begin their Lenten journey, as ashes are placed on their foreheads.

These words come from the Book of Genesis after Adam and Eve committed the first sin and ate the forbidden fruit. By this act, death had entered the world, and every generation of humanity now bears the stain of this original sin.

It is a reminder of both our sinfulness and our mortality, and so prepares us for the Season of Lent, when we have a heightened focus on the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.

In the Old Testament, ashes were a sign to express sorrow for sins and faults. This tradition developed through the early centuries of the Church and by the 10<sup>th</sup> century, it became customary for the faithful to receive ashes on the first day of



Students from St Agatha's, Pennant Hills receive their ashes.

the Lenten fast, as an external sign of repentance.

Today, this custom continues, and Ash Wednesday has become one of the most popular days in the Church's calendar, as the faithful prepare to enter the Season of Lent and mark themselves publicly as Christians.

In his Ash Wednesday message, Pope

Francis said the receiving of ashes serves as a reminder of the humility every Christian must know, that they are dust and to dust they will return.

“This evening, in a spirit of prayer and humility, we receive ashes on our heads. This gesture is meant to remind us of the ultimate reality of our lives: that we are dust and our life passes away like a breath,” Pope Francis said.



“The ashes placed on our heads invite us to rediscover the secret of life. They tell us that as long as we continue to shield our hearts, to hide ourselves behind a mask, to appear invincible, we will be empty and arid within.

“When, on the other hand, we have the courage to bow our heads in order to look within, we will discover the presence of God, who has always loved us. At last, those shields will be shattered and we will be able to feel ourselves loved with an eternal love.”

Across the Diocese of Broken Bay, schools and parishes gathered in community to receive the ashes.

For those in the schools, Ash Wednesday represents a great opportunity for the students to learn more about the Season of Lent and consider things they could give up in order to focus on building their relationship with God.



Pope Francis receives the sprinkling of ashes in Rome.

For those in the parishes, it represents the start of a season where many will increase their spiritual disciplines, by attending Mass more often or receiving the Grace from the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

For some people this year, receiving the ashes will represent the beginning of the final period of preparation ahead of baptism or confirmation, as more than 100 people from across the Diocese prepare to be received into the Catholic Church at Easter.



Chatswood parishioners receive the ashes.



Students from St Martin's, Davidson.

# Learner Diversity Matters

## The Eileen O'Connor Catholic School is Launched

A new transformative and innovative model of inclusive education in the Diocese for students with a disability was launched at this year's first Bishop's Breakfast.

Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) announced details of the Eileen O'Connor Catholic School which will be a K-12 centre of excellence on the Central Coast and connected to a community network of Support Classes across the Diocese in existing CSBB Primary and Secondary schools and their parish communities.

More than 100 people gathered in Epping for the Breakfast in March which saw Bishop Anthony say it was a privilege to "walk with families as we embark on a journey filled with endless possibilities and growth for our students".

"Our journey to this momentous day is a result of the passion and hard work of many, and the unwavering belief in the transformative power of education," the Bishop said.



A guiding hand for new student Leo from his grandad Bill.



Already 46 young students have been enrolled and are receiving specialist teaching support.

The Eileen O'Connor Catholic School with purpose-built facilities for students with a disability will be located in the precinct of St Peter's Catholic College at Tuggerah on the Central Coast with building expected to begin on the \$60 million project in the near future. This will be the Base school.

However 46 young people with a disability have already been enrolled in the Eileen O'Connor Catholic School support network at St Martin's Catholic School at Davidson, St Brendan's Catholic School at Lake Munmorah and Prouille Primary School at Wahroonga. Next year students will join the St John the Apostle Catholic School at Narraweena.

The students are in Kindergarten to Year 5 and have 18 specialist teachers and learning support assistants.

CSBB Principal, Fiona Dignan, told the early morning gathering of leaders in education, business, politics, community representatives, social and welfare organisations and clergy, the Eileen O'Connor Base School will have a capacity for 200 students with small student ratios, sensory indoor and outdoor play spaces and

complimentary learning spaces to support collaboration with allied health professionals for tailored interventions and in-class support.

"We are already building the network of situating Support Classes within existing school sites," Fiona said.

"This enables the interaction and inclusion of students in school events and activities such as sport, carnivals, excursions and concerts.

"Around one in 12 school-aged children have a disability. Sixty thousand more children will be in schools over the next decade.

"The demand for disability support is growing at four times the rate of enrolment. I believe Catholic Schools Broken Bay is leading the way in responding to this emerging need.

"We have a moral imperative to support families; to provide a safe space where education, therapy and faith come together, where we focus on the strengths of our students.

"Where we can inspire hearts and minds."



Above, Director of CSBB, Danny Casey; Bishop Anthony; Principal Eileen O'Connor Catholic School, Fiona Dignan, and some of the new students in their Support classes across the Diocese.

## Inspiring hearts and minds

Eileen Rosaline O'Connor was born in Melbourne in 1892. She suffered from a severe curvature of the spine. At around 115cm tall, for much of her life she could not stand or walk. Although her education was limited and she had no formal theological formation, Eileen O'Connor embodied a distinctive spirituality marked by an unwavering devotion to Our Lady. Her spirit inspired many people to seek her guidance and support. She co-founded the Society of Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor – also known as the Brown Nurses – to provide free nursing services to the poor, the sick, and dying.

There are numerous anecdotal and documented accounts of Eileen's

intercession in answering the prayers of the faithful.

Lovingly known as "Little Mother", Eileen died on 10 January 1921, aged just 28 years. Her body was found to be incorrupt when it was exhumed in Randwick Cemetery for internment in the Chapel at Our Lady's Home, Coogee, 15 years later. Lauded as a saint for many years there were calls for the official investigation into her reputation for holiness and her beatification process to be introduced.

This eventually happened on 20 February 2020 when a Mass was held to officially open the Cause for Beatification – a step closer to becoming Australia's second



Eileen Rosaline O'Connor.

saint after St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. The official motto for the Eileen O'Connor Catholic School is "inspiring hearts and minds".



## Opportunity for Northern Beaches Community

Plans are underway for the people of the Northern Beaches to engage in a pastoral discernment project across their region.

The Pastoral Discernment Northern Beaches (PDNB) project aims to understand the unique challenges and opportunities distinct to their deanery in order to develop a Pastoral Mission that enables the community to participate more fully in the Mission of Jesus Christ.

This project follows the Pastoral Discernment Central Coast (PDCC) project with the Pastoral Discernment North Shore (PDNS) project to complete the Diocesan initiative later in the year.

PDNB will identify strategies, tools, and resources that will support each person's Baptismal call to fulfill their

mission of proclaiming the Good News to all.

This means developing more effective strategies for mission by knowing and understanding the people, their circumstances, and opportunities that will allow effective implementation of Bishop Anthony's Pastoral Priorities.

The project will provide opportunities for the people of the Northern Beaches to engage in conversation and listen to diverse experiences of faith and life through a synodal process of participation.

During the months ahead relevant data and research from government and social welfare services, CatholicCare Broken Bay and Catholic Schools Broken Bay, will be gathered and collated to provide an informed social profile.

The final report of PDCC gave greater clarification of the needs and pastoral opportunities in that region including current and future needs of parishes and formation programs, youth ministry, Mass schedules, education and specific social needs.

In his Pastoral Letter to the community of the Central Coast following the project, Bishop Anthony said; "The project invited us to recognise the circumstances of the region, its opportunities, and challenges. It was conducted through local listening and dialogue sessions with the aim to develop more effective strategies for evangelisation within the region.

"We are now developing many of those outcomes and I look forward to seeing the fruit of our work."



The Northern Beaches project will also require the support and commitment of a range of people and agencies across the Diocese and the integration of several existing planning processes.

The project will be facilitated by the Director of Pastoral Discernment and Accompaniment, Patti Beattie, who also facilitated the Central Coast project.

“Community Consultation Facilitators will lead the listening and dialogue consultation forums, in each of the Northern Beaches communities, across the agencies, at the service of shaping a pastoral discernment submission for Bishop Anthony’s consideration, responding to the specific local circumstances and opportunities,” Patti said.

“All faithful are invited to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, and discern together through the gifts that the Holy Spirit has bestowed on each of us, to shape the way forward.”

*Further details, schedules and resources will be available soon in the Northern Beaches parishes.*

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## Bishop Anthony’s Six Pastoral Priorities

✝ The person of Jesus Christ, and His message of Good News

✝ A united message reflecting the voice of the bishop at the service of his people

✝ The Holy Spirit leads us in the way of discipleship

✝ Authentic Catholic education for the flourishing of human and faith development

✝ Building together a culture of vocation for all the baptised

✝ Justice and mercy place the poor at the heart of the Church

# Special Religious Education

## A Ministry of Good News and Hope

by Alison Newell, Diocesan Coordinator, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine

Religious faith groups play an important and fundamental role in the fabric of society in Australia. Faith as a source of spiritual well-being provides nourishment and growth at an individual level and at a school and community level.

The NSW Government recognises the value of religious education in the public school system. Enshrined in the NSW Education Act 1990, Special Religious Education (SRE) supports freedom of religion and conscience in the NSW public school system and has done so for over 140 years.

Catholic parents or carers voluntarily enrol their children into Catholic SRE classes. This is an act of faith and a request from the families to the parishes for support in the faith education of their children. Many of these families also present to the parish for Sacramental programs which provides a further opportunity for parish engagement with parishioners whose children attend public schools.

Michael and Ashlee Donnelly, a Catholic family from the Northern Beaches have three children enrolled

in Catholic SRE at their local public school and have this to say about Catholic SRE:

"The benefits of Special Religious Education in our state schools ensures families like us who for whatever reason selected a state primary school, are not disadvantaged when it comes to learning the foundations and values of the Catholic faith," they said.

"As parents we are grateful for these weekly lessons as we believe they provide age-appropriate extensions of what is taught in the local parish and what is reflected and discussed in the home environment.

"It also enables our children to come together once a week with a different group of peers that they can relate, engage and share valuable lessons with."

Michael and Ashlee applaud the choice they are given to provide their children with religious education in the public school system:

"As a family, we feel strongly about being given a choice for our children to further their understanding of 'specialised' education like religion and ethics within the school environment. The delivery of lessons is always engaged by passionate



The Donnelly kids attend a public school.

volunteers who genuinely care about being the best version of themselves and positively project these universal life values and lessons onto our children.

Having this opportunity to learn to be a 'good human' from a young age, plants quality seeds within our children which can grow to be life changing in the future."

SRE is a free service to families of faith whose children attend public schools. One hundred Providers of SRE of all religious faiths authorise and train volunteers to go into schools and teach children in the faith of their families. The SRE program enhances the spiritual tapestry of our nation and contributes greatly towards a culture of tolerance, respect, harmony, and an understanding that, in Australia, we are free to choose, to be educated and to practice our faith. It also provides students with a safe environment to explore questions of identity and faith.

*Enquiries about the Ministry of SRE can be made with Alison Newell, CCD Diocesan Coordinator on 02 8379 1637.*

*Every year, Pastoral Works Broken Bay (PWBB) supports CCD on their efforts to train catechists to provide religious education in State Schools.*

*Please keep the CCD team in your prayers and give generously to our PWBB May Appeal.*



The Donnelly family says SRE is important for their family.

## Being the face of God in the unknown

“The Catholic Chaplaincy team became our spiritual family,” says Eleanor, who accompanied her husband, Jonathan in the final months and weeks of his life at Royal North Shore Hospital. “When you have a loved one who is very unwell, the outside world keeps moving but inside the hospital it feels like a different world, and it’s not a place you want to be ... but the Pastoral Care team would come and uplift us. The comfort they brought was beautiful. At the end of every visit they would say, ‘God bless you’ and we really felt it.”

Various members of the Catholic Chaplaincy team would visit Jonathan and Eleanor during their time at Royal North Shore Hospital, including priests, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and Pastoral Care Practitioner, Louise. “Louise was an important part of our spiritual journey,” says Eleanor.

Jonathan was first diagnosed in 2019 and when they filled out the hospital paperwork, Eleanor recalls having the option of being visited by the Pastoral Care team. “I grew up Catholic and my husband was baptised Mormon, but he went to the Catholic Church when he moved to Australia, so it made sense to receive pastoral care from the Catholic Church.”

Eleanor says that at a basic level, the pastoral care visits meant that they weren’t just staring at four walls. “It meant a lot to have someone who wasn’t directly in our circle to come in,” says Eleanor. “Every time they left, we experienced a good, uplifting feeling. It was as if we had a new lease of life to get back on the saddle. They were patient, kind, empathetic and compassionate.”

It was a condition of the hospital that children could not enter the haematology ward where Jonathan

was receiving care. “With three children under the age of 12, that was really hard,” says Eleanor.

Without Jonathan’s immediate family by his side, Eleanor describes clinging to their ‘hospital family’ that was made up of doctors, nurses and other patients, and the Pastoral Care team that formed their ‘spiritual family.’

Louise says that she would always come away from a visit with Jonathan and Eleanor feeling enriched by their faith and their witness. “They were a beacon to us of what family life is, of what faith is and what hope is,” says Louise. “They were a couple very much in love. You’d walk in and they’d be radiating this joy and peace. I understand the role that we became in being a spiritual family to them, but equally they ministered to us by being who and how they are.”

Louise describes her work with patients and their families as a ministry of the unknown. “On a daily basis, a patient’s condition can change. Depending on how the patient is that day, they may or may not be in a position to want to talk. You’re entering a sacred space, a space where someone is very, very unwell and no one knows what the outcome is.”

Louise says that she relies on the patient to lead how her time with them will flow. “If a patient is comfortable with you, then you find that they share with you what is going on for them, not only physically but in their home life and spiritually. We take a very holistic approach.”

During her visits with Jonathan and Eleanor, Louise says that much of the time was spent sitting, listening and reflecting on what was going on for them. “I’d ask what they would like prayers for, and they liked it when I prayed,” says Louise. “I went in to serve and to wait on them. This is a



Jonathan, Eleanor and family.

ministry of being the servant. In *Dead Man Walking*, Sr Helen Prejean said, ‘I will be the face of God for you,’ and that is how I see my role.”

For Eleanor and Jonathan, pastoral care helped them spiritually, emotionally and mentally, and Eleanor describes it as the push they needed to go forward.

“My husband would always say that when he gets better, he would like to provide pastoral care for others. Unfortunately, he didn’t make it and passed away in July 2022. He was 39 years old.”

Eleanor has since completed the Diocesan Pastoral Care Course and has plans to volunteer at Royal North Shore and Mona Vale Hospitals in the future. “I would like to pay forward that feeling of hope,” says Eleanor. “I know the struggles, but I also know the joy and the hope that comes with receiving this support.”

For more information about this program please call 1800 324 924, email [info@catholiccareddb.org.au](mailto:info@catholiccareddb.org.au) or visit [www.catholiccareddb.org.au](http://www.catholiccareddb.org.au).

*Pastoral Works Broken Bay, the pastoral charity of our Catholic community supports CatholicCare’s Hospital Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care program detailed in this article. We are extremely grateful for your ongoing support.*

# Broken Bay farewells Fr Bill Aliprandi, a communicator of hope

28 May 1935 – 29 December 2023

The Diocese of Broken Bay has farewelled one of its founding priests, Fr William (Bill) Aliprandi, who is being remembered as a great communicator of hope.

In his more than sixty years of priestly ministry, Fr Bill served the faithful in a variety of ways and took every opportunity to embrace the cutting edge of technology to communicate the Good News.

Former parishioners, friends and family all gathered on 10 January to pay their respects to the faithful pastor, in a Requiem Mass at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, Waitara.

In his homily Bishop Anthony Randazzo remarked on Fr Bill's incredible life, which was driven first and foremost by a desire to share the Christian faith.

"He communicated and taught that the Good News of Jesus Christ enables the Christian people to be ready always with an answer to everyone who asks a reason for the hope they see in us," said Bishop Anthony. "It was to this, Fr Bill dedicated his priestly life and ministry."

Fr Bill was born on 28 May 1935 in Griffith, New South Wales, to Eileen

Dorothy (nee Berry) and Antonio Aliprandi. He attended primary school in Queanbeyan before the family relocated to Sydney, where he attended St Brigid's Primary School, Coogee. He received his secondary education at Marcellin College, Randwick and entered the seminary after graduating.

He first studied at St Columba's College, Springwood before moving to St Patrick's College, Manly.

He was ordained on 18 July 1959 at St Mary's Cathedral by Cardinal Gilroy, alongside Fr Paul Foley, who was present at Fr Bill's Requiem Mass.

"The Church and world into which [Fr Bill] was ordained a priest in 1959 was quickly changing," said Bishop Anthony.

The changes stemming from the Second Vatican Council swept through the Catholic Church during the first decade of Fr Bill's priestly ministry. He served as assistant priest at Naremburn for five years before serving three years at Fairfield, where he also served as a chaplain to new migrants. He then went on to serve as assistant priest at Flemington, Kingsgrove, Five Dock and Enfield until in 1970, he took leave to work



and study at the BBC and Catholic Communication Centre in London and Dublin, driven by a desire to probe the world of Catholic communications.

"I suspect that if there had been Youtube, Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok back in the day, he probably would have researched and studied those platforms too," said Bishop Anthony.

He earned a Bachelor of Education at Cornell University in the United States of America in 1974. During his studies, in 1973, he briefly travelled to Bangladesh to minister for three months at the request of the Bangladeshi Bishops. He also took a holiday to Suva, Fiji in 1974 and directed training in radio broadcasting.

This desire to study and learn every means of communicating the Good News would follow Fr Bill for the rest of his priestly ministry.

Upon his return to Sydney, he held various parish appointments, while also serving on the Radio & Television Committee of the Sydney Archdiocese. He also sat on the Sydney Archdiocese Board of Management Clergy Remuneration





Fund, was a lecturer at the Catholic College of Education, Castle Hill (now Australian Catholic University) and was even the Academic Vice President of the Divine Word Institute in Papua New Guinea from January 1981 to October 1982 travelling to PNG on seven occasions during this period.

In 1983, Fr Bill was appointed Administrator of Belfield Parish for four months, before moving to Lindfield Parish, where he was appointed Parish Priest on 5 May 1983, a position he would serve in until 1987.

He became a founding priest of the Diocese of Broken Bay upon its creation in 1986 and served as a founding member of both the Broken Bay Council of Priests and the College of Diocesan Consultors.

In 1987, he was appointed Parish Priest of Kincumber Parish and ministered there for 10 years. He moved to the Northern Beaches in 1997 and served in the parishes of Collaroy Plateau and Narrabeena, until he retired from active ministry in 2003.

Fr Bill's priestly career was dedicated to communicating the Good News to people, whether

through technology, chaplaincy, education or pastoral ministry.

"In the Church, communication is more than just the latest fad or distraction, it is our *raison d'etre*, our very reason for being," said Bishop Anthony.

"The Church, in every age, continues the work begun on the day of Pentecost when the Apostles in the power of the Holy Spirit went forth into the streets of Jerusalem to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ in many tongues. For the community of the Church, we live in hope, and we are sustained by that same Holy Spirit. It is a hope for salvation, a hope of heaven, a hope for perfect communion with God.

In retirement, Fr Bill attended the Canonisation of Blessed Mary MacKillop in Rome in October 2010 and also served as Chaplain for the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America from 2010 to 2013.

He spent most of his retired years in Narrabeen, before suffering a stroke in May 2017. He moved into aged care at Gertrude Abbott Aged Care, Surry Hills for a short period before moving

to Mount St Joseph Home, Little Sisters of the Poor, Randwick.

In the early morning of 29 December 2023, Fr Bill passed away peacefully, at 88 years of age and in the 64th year of his priesthood.

In his Requiem Mass, Bishop Anthony said Fr Bill had lived a life of prayer, dedicated to serving others and communicating God's love.

"Saint John Paul II once remarked that Christian communicators will communicate hope credibly if they first experience hope in their own lives, and this will happen only if they are men and women of prayer," he said.

"Fr Bill knew this, and more than just knowing it, he believed it. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, he lived a priestly life, grounded in prayer, nourished on the Word and the Eucharist, and enriched through the grace of a sacramental life."

Fr Bill is survived by his niece, Fran.

*Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon him. And may his soul and the souls of the all the Faithful Departed rest in peace.*



# A Word from the Director of Schools

It is with great pleasure that I extend a warm welcome to you in the latest edition of *Broken Bay News*. As we embark on a new year, I am thrilled to share some of the exciting developments that capture the vibrant spirit of our Catholic community of Schools in Broken Bay.

I am always delighted to visit our schools, and this month I had the privilege of visiting Mater Maria Catholic College, Warriewood and St John the Apostle, Naraweena. We celebrated the remarkable achievements of our teachers who have recently attained NESA Highly Accomplished and Lead Status. Their dedication and hard work are truly commendable, and I am proud to have them serving in our Schools.

In the following pages, we introduce new principals who have joined our community. Their unique perspectives and leadership styles promise to contribute significantly to the growth and development of our schools. Let's embrace their fresh ideas and innovative approaches as we continue to strive for excellence.

Our feature on the exemplary *Teacher Incentive Program* aims to attract, develop and retain the best teachers. At a recent award presentation, we welcomed an extraordinary array of talented and capable young teachers and aspiring teachers to our system of schools.

For sports enthusiasts, our "Sports Wrap Up" section provides a comprehensive overview of the latest achievements, victories, and memorable moments from our athletic teams. Celebrate the dedication and sportsmanship of our students as they continue to excel on and off the field.



Stef Thom, Lead Teacher recipient with Danny Casey, Director of Schools.

Lastly, as we enter the reflective and contemplative Season of Lent, we are pleased to share with you how the celebration of Shrove Tuesday unfolded within a few of our schools.

I hope you find this edition both informative and inspiring. As always, we are committed to providing you with a glimpse into the dynamic world of education and the incredible stories that unfold within our community. I encourage all within the Broken Bay Community to stay connected and be a part of the ongoing journey of growth and success in our Catholic Schools.

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## CONNECT WITH US

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### LINKEDIN

[linkedin.com/company/csbb](https://linkedin.com/company/csbb)

### CSBB WEBSITE

[csodbb.catholic.edu.au/](https://csodbb.catholic.edu.au/)

### LOOKING FOR A CATHOLIC SCHOOL IN YOUR AREA

[csodbb.catholic.edu.au/schools/find-a-school/](https://csodbb.catholic.edu.au/schools/find-a-school/)

### INTERESTED IN WORKING FOR US

[csodbb.catholic.edu.au/careers/join-us/](https://csodbb.catholic.edu.au/careers/join-us/)

### STAY CONNECTED

If you have any news you would like to share with the CSBB Community, please email [comms@dbb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:comms@dbb.catholic.edu.au)

We would love to hear from you.



Melissa Stout, HALT recipient teacher with March Reicher, Principal, Mater Maria Catholic College and Danny Casey, Director of Schools.

## Cultivating Next Generation of Tech Leaders

At Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB), a new opportunity is shaping the landscape of post-schooling options with the introduction of the Digital Enablement (DE) Traineeship program. This pioneering program not only ushers in a new era for CSBB school graduates, but also cultivates the next generation of leaders in the tech industry.

Each trainee, equipped with specialised training and supported by a team of experts, is situated within a CSBB secondary school, a dynamic setting for trainees to



Director of Schools, Danny Casey addressing the 2024 Trainees, undertaking the Digital Enablement Traineeship.

kickstart their careers while providing essential technical assistance to staff and students.

The traineeship offers more than just a job; it's a pathway to personal and professional growth. Under the guidance of mentors, students not only earn an income but also gain invaluable hands-on experience and industry-recognised IT qualifications.

The commencement of a new cohort in 2024 marks another milestone in the program's success. Trainees, many of whom were CSBB secondary students just months ago, embody the vision of "Baptism to Year 13" articulated by Bishop Anthony, transitioning from student to employee within the CSBB community.

Under the leadership of the newly appointed CSBB Trainee Coordinator, Lincoln Parker, our trainees are set to embark on their two-year traineeship. CSBB looks forward to the future, committed to expanding the Digital Enablement program to further opportunities for employment and career advancement post-school.

## Catholic Schools Broken Bay Open Days 2024

We extend an invitation to all parents and carers to join us for our Open Days, where you can explore the vibrant and enriching learning environments across Catholic Schools Broken Bay. With 45 schools offering K-12 pathways across the Central Coast, Sydney's Northern Beaches and the North Shore, there is a wealth of opportunities for all students.

At Catholic Schools Broken Bay, we nurture students through a well-rounded educational journey, encouraging students to develop their faith, cultivate their academic excellence, and foster their creativity and imagination. Our goal is to empower and inspire students to reach their full potential and become their best selves – to achieve their dreams and aspirations now and for their unique futures.

We believe in placing students at the heart of our educational mission, providing authentic Catholic education delivered with care and compassion.

During our Open Days, you will have the chance to



experience firsthand the unique offerings of each school and how they can support your child's educational journey.

To find your closest Catholic Schools Broken Bay Open Day, visit the website here: [www.csbb.catholic.edu.au/schools/open-days/](http://www.csbb.catholic.edu.au/schools/open-days/)

To register for an Open Day, scan the QR code below.



## 2024 New Leadership appointment to Catholic Schools Broken Bay

### Carolina Murdoch

**Principal, St Joseph's Catholic College, East Gosford**

Carolina brings 28 years of teaching History and leadership roles in UK and Australian schools, including Assistant Principal at St Leo's Catholic College. Previously, she served as Director of Teaching and Learning at St Edward's College and Dean of Learning at Loreto Normanhurst. Dedicated to inclusive pedagogy and evidence-based improvement, Carolina brings strong communication and leadership skills to St Joseph's Catholic College.



*'As a principal of a girls' school, I hope that I can make a significant contribution to creating a generation of empowered young women who are keen to grasp the opportunities before them so that they can fully realise their potential in all areas of their lives; personally, professionally and spiritually.'*

### Kerry Paxon

**Principal, Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School, Pymble.**

Welcome Kerry Paxton, the new Principal of Sacred Heart, Pymble. With three years as Assistant Principal and prior roles including Leader of Inclusion and Student Engagement at Blessed John XXIII Catholic College, Kerry brings extensive experience within the Diocese of Parramatta. Her dedication to education is evident in her coaching and mentoring of teachers, ensuring every student achieves their best.



*'I am blessed to have been welcomed into the Sacred Heart, Pymble community three years ago as Assistant Principal. Being the Principal of this school is a privilege and an opportunity for which I am extremely grateful. I hope that my leadership will continue to serve the positive community relationships, strong academic achievement and commitment to support and development of the whole child through extra-curricular opportunities. I hope to foster*

*collaboration, innovation and continuous improvement in a learning community that celebrates each individual.'*

### Margaret Holles (approved 18/2)

**Principal, St Phillip Neri Catholic Primary School, Northbridge**

Margaret has spent over 16 years in educational leadership working in the Sydney Diocese with the last 12 years being at St Vincent's Ashfield and OLMC Waterloo. Previously, she taught in the Canberra Goulburn and Wilcannia Forbes Dioceses. As well as an educational leader and classroom practitioner, Margaret has spent time as a literary consultant which continues to be her passion as an educator. She now brings all this experience to the community of St Philip Neri Catholic Primary School, Northbridge.



*'As Principal, my foremost goal is to create an inclusive and nurturing educational environment where every student feels valued and inspired to excel. I aspire to cultivate a culture of academic excellence, fostering a passion for learning with a growth mindset to nurture learning beyond the classroom.'*

### Maria Kennedy

**Principal, Our Lady Star of the Sea, Terrigal.**

Maria is a passionate educator with experience in a number of School Leadership roles. Before her appointment as Principal, Maria held the position of Assistant Principal at Our Lady Star of the Sea, Terrigal, since 2020 before stepping into the position of Acting Principal. Prior to this, she held the positions of Acting REC and Assistant Principal at Our Lady of the Rosary, Wyoming from 2014-2019. Maria is a passionate educator, driven by her desire to build the capacity of the teaching staff to better student outcomes in learning.



*'I hope to leave behind a legacy of empowerment. I want to inspire a love for learning, instil confidence in students and staff, and contribute to a positive,*

*inclusive school culture. For me, it's not only about leaving behind educated minds but empowering individuals ready to make a difference in the world.'*

### Tanya Appleby

**K-12 College Principal, Mackillop Catholic College, Warnervale**

"With over 35 years in education, Tanya previously led St Ursula's College in Queensland, where she earned accolades including the ACEL Educational Research Leadership Award. Her tenure saw the school recognised as the Australian Best Boarding School and a finalist for the Best Well-Being Program. Tanya holds a Master of Education, a Doctorate in Educational Philosophy, and has studied at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her commitment to Catholic values informs her leadership.



*'I aspire to develop a united, harmonious, aligned and innovative K-12 school community. A school that is a lighthouse for excellence in learning, with a strong commitment to student leadership and advocacy. I hope to continue to build on the spiritual, wellbeing and pastoral needs of students and staff. I am excited about the prospects of leading a K-12 learning community and supporting the interaction between the Primary and Secondary parts of the College.'*

### Paul Lynch

**Acting Secondary Principal, Mackillop Catholic College, Warnervale**

Paul comes to Mackillop Catholic College from St Brigid's Catholic College, Lake Munmorah, where he served as Assistant Principal after holding various leadership roles since 2016. His extensive experience includes leadership positions in all three educational sectors. Paul began his career at Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College, where he held multiple leadership roles, including Acting Deputy Principal and Director of Secondary School.



*'I will build on the strong foundation that's been laid at MacKillop; to be a place where staff enjoy working, a place where they*

are supported, heard and fulfilled in their roles. For the wider community to recognise MacKillop as the school of choice, that delivers high-quality teaching and learning, exceptional pastoral care and a strong co-curricular program... For the K-12 experience to be seamlessly connected where students can undertake their education with clear continuity between the stages."

**Kerry Power**  
**Acting Primary Principal, Mackillop Catholic College, Warnervale**

Kerry comes to us from her recent position as Learning Partner for Catechesis 3-6- Evangelisation and Catechesis at Catholic Schools Broken Bay. She mentors Future Faith Leaders and brings extensive leadership experience, including serving as REC at MacKillop College and St Patrick's Catholic Primary School in 2021. She is a dedicated and enthusiastic educator who leads and inspired others to strive for excellence.



*'MacKillop is a dynamic community with passionate and enthusiastic staff who want to acknowledge and inspire the head, heart and hands of learning. Establishing high expectations has developed a culture of excellence where students are supported to achieve their very best. As an educator it is a gift to see the fruit of your work! The beauty and wonder of leading in a K-12 community is the opportunity to see students grow and flourish. It brings me great joy to be able to see the twelve-year-old within the face of young adults and speak to them about their hopes and dreams beyond MCC. I feel very blessed to lead the RE Curriculum in action, invite our staff to develop a rich relationship with Jesus through prayer, formation and worship and deepen the connection between the College and our Parish.'*

**Trish Biok (approved 18/2)**  
**Principal, Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Waitara,**

Trish is a dynamic leader with over 25 years of dedicated service to Catholic Education. She has held various



senior roles, including Acting Principal and Religious Education Coordinator. Recently, she served as an Innovation Lead, Compliance Partner, and Collaborative Coach Lead at Catholic Schools Broken Bay. Trish's commitment to education extends to teaching roles at Notre Dame University and mentoring as a tertiary supervisor. She fosters a strong sense of community and partners with students and staff to promote personal and professional growth.

*'I feel incredibly passionate and driven to lead a Catholic school community, particularly one such as Our Lady of the Rosary, that is focused on quality education in a faith-centred environment. I commit to continuing to develop a positive and respectful culture at the school, where the focus is on working in partnership and as a team. Data-informed decision-making and engaging with evidence-based practices guide will build on and lead to improvement. Being a leader who educates the mind, heart and spirit will be a legacy I hope to leave.'*

**Natalie Ingram**  
**Acting Primary Principal, St Kevin's Catholic Primary School, Dee Why**

Natalie brings extensive experience from her roles as Learning Partner for K-8 Learning and Teaching - Student Achievement and Collaborative Coach Lead at Catholic Schools Broken Bay. She previously served in teaching and leadership positions within the diocese, including as Assistant Principal at St John the Apostle Catholic Primary School, Narrabeena. With a background as Religious Education Coordinator at both St John the Apostle and St Kevin's Catholic Primary School, Dee Why, Natalie is dedicated to our vision of authentic, professional Catholic education.



*'I am thrilled to reconnect with the St Kevin's school community this year. I am dedicated to inspiring a love for learning and fostering a positive, inclusive school culture. My focus is on creating a supportive atmosphere where everyone feels valued and empowered to be the best they can be. Faith formation is key;*

*ensuring students thrive spiritually, morally, and socially, and preparing all members of the St Kevin's community to make a positive impact in the world.'*

**Kevin Williams**  
**Principal St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, East Gosford**

Kevin is a respected Catholic leader with 35 years of service. He joins St Patrick's Primary from CSBB as Deputy Workstream Lead of Capability and Enablement. Kevin has been instrumental in implementing Collaborative Coaching, enhancing teaching practices and student outcomes. He has collaborated with Dr. Linda Bendikson to establish effective school improvement processes and mentored numerous school leaders. Previously, Kevin served as Principal of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Toukley, showcasing strategic vision and teambuilding skills. With experience as Assistant Principal and REC at various CSBB schools, Kevin brings extensive expertise to his new role.



*'I am blessed and privileged to serve as the Principal at St Patrick's, East Gosford. Under Father Greg's leadership, our school is very fortunate to be a part of a thriving and dynamic parish community. The rich prayer and liturgical life of St Patrick's enables the students to deepen their relationship with Jesus. People are important at our school. It is important that the Catholic identity of our school becomes evident in the network of relationships in our community - relationships that are grounded in the teachings of our faith and evidenced in strong relational trust and deep respect for each other. Learning is important at our school. Embedded in our school is a collaborative culture of continuous improvement, where we continually challenge ourselves to improve. We recognise and value the importance of embracing and building St Patrick's as a Professional Learning Community. Our learning culture is characterised by its clarity of purpose, critical teacher inquiry and an action orientation that, together, results in improved student learning.'*

# Securing a Bright Future in Catholic Schools Broken Bay

## ETIP and SUIIT Presentation Ceremony

Catholic Schools Broken Bay is committed to developing and nurturing the next generation of educators, and to addressing the teacher shortage by creating targeted pathways into the teaching profession for students from within our secondary schools.

In a moving ceremony on 30 January, twenty graduate and aspiring teachers were welcomed into Catholic Schools Broken Bay and presented with an *Exemplary Teacher Incentive Program (ETIP)* award. A further ten exceptional Year 12 students, from within our CSBB secondary schools, were recognised for their completion of Australian Catholic University's *Step Up into Teaching (SUIIT)* Program, successful completion of which culminates in an early entry offer to a teacher education degree.

The very reverend Fr David Ranson, Vicar General of the Broken Bay Diocese, presented the ETIP and SUIIT certificates, alongside Director of Schools, Danny Casey. The ceremony celebrated and paid tribute to teachers in CSBB schools, and teachers everywhere, who show up every day, in more ways than can possibly be imagined, for the young people entrusted to their care. Centred around a quote accredited to the great poet, William Butler Yeats: *'Education is not the filling of a pot, but the lighting of a fire,'* the ceremony utilised the symbols of light and fire, with our award recipients being called to live the fire of their vocation by letting their lights shine and lighting the way for others.

Ryley Delmage, Targeted Teacher Internship recipient shared his gratitude for the ETIP Program: "What excites me most about the ETIP Program is the opportunity to combine theory and practice. The program allows me to learn directly from experienced teachers, apply theoretical knowledge in a real classroom setting, and receive valuable feedback that will help me refine my teaching skills. This will contribute significantly to my professional development and prepare me for a successful career in education."

During the Ceremony, Danny Casey, spoke of the work



Exemplary Teacher Incentive Program (ETIP) Awards Recipients.

undertaken in CSBB over the last 3 years to: develop partnerships with tertiary providers; increase the quality of professional experience placements and establish new programs and pathways to attract, support, and retain the best teachers to CSBB. The first cohort of *Step Up into Teaching* students is a fantastic pathway into teaching for CSBB students.

Hunter Hauraki, Year 12 student from St Peter's Catholic College, Tuggerah, shared his experience of the *Step Up into Teaching* Program, emphasising the experience it has provided: "The Step Up into Teaching units has helped me reflect and affirm my career choice as a teacher and I am excited to move forward with my tertiary studies to be a future teacher"

Catholic Schools Broken Bay is honoured and privileged to be welcoming such an extraordinary array of talented and capable young teachers and aspiring teachers to our System and as our Director shared during the ceremony: "we wish our ETIP recipients the very best as they embark on their careers and hope they find all the welcome, support and encouragement they need to keep their fire alive in CSBB."

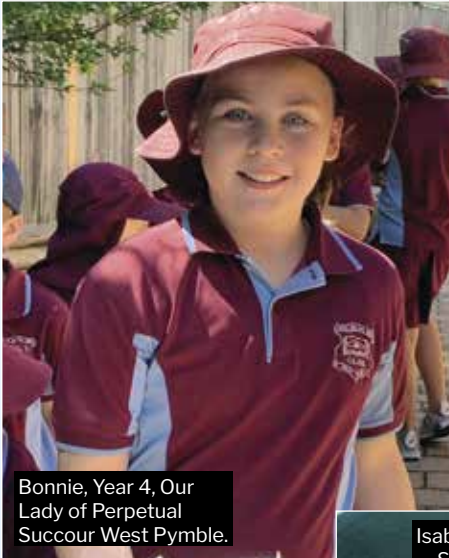
The *Exemplary Teacher Incentive Program* aims to attract, develop and retain the best teacher education students and graduates to Catholic Schools Broken Bay, providing them with financial support, dedicated mentoring by expert teachers, targeted professional learning and formation, and an employment-based pathway into the profession that complements their university studies.

ETIP recipients are employed in schools for a minimum 1 day per week for the duration of their degree, some from as early as their first year of study, enabling them to be immersed in what it means to be an educator in the Catholic System, and offering a range of opportunities to connect theory and practice in authentic ways. They are then provided with a permanent teaching position on graduation.



Step Up into Teaching (SUIIT) Program Participants.

# Shrove Tuesday at CSBB Schools



Bonnie, Year 4, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour West Pymble.



Cleo, Year 2, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour West Pymble.



Cody, Year 2, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour West Pymble.



Emma, Year 6, St Patricks Asquith.



Isabelle, Kindergarten, St Patrick's Asquith.



Isabelle, Year 1, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour West Pymble.



Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, West Pymble students.



Sophie, Year 4, Our Lady of Perpetual Succour West Pymble.



Alana, Year 1, St Kieran's Manly Vale.



Holy Cross, Kincumber.

# The Rising Stars of Broken Bay with Success at the Polding Championships

2024 began with the resounding success of the Catholic Schools Broken Bay (CSBB) representative sports pathway at the Polding Basketball and Tennis event held in Coffs Harbour in new representative uniforms. The event marked a historic moment as CSBB welcomed its first-ever wheelchair athlete to trial for an able-bodied sport. The experience was invaluable for all involved, fostering inclusivity and understanding among the students.

Amidst the anticipation and excitement, thirteen CSBB students emerged, securing their spots in the prestigious Polding teams.

The basketball courts echoed with cheering in the stands when six out of eight CSBB boys earned their places, in the Polding Basketball Teams. Congratulations to

- Jack D: St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Willoughby
- Hayden G: Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Shelly Beach
- Edward B: St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Willoughby
- Cayleb K: Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Shelly Beach
- Floyd H: Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School, Chatswood
- Greyson W: Our Lady of Dolours Catholic Primary School, Chatswood



Back row (L to R): Kai, Mr Andrew Spencer, Greyson, Floyd, Edward  
Front row (L to R): Jack, Hayden, Cayleb, Jonah.



Back row (L to R): Billie, Alyce, Mrs Deb Northey, Georgia, Angelina  
Front row (L to R): Chelsea, Zali, Eve, Riley.

On the girls' side, four out of eight CSBB students earned their well-deserved spots in the Polding team, adding to the success of the day. Congratulations goes to the following students:

- Zali O: Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, Terrigal
- Billie K: St John the Baptist Catholic Primary School, Freshwater
- Alyce R: Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic Primary School, Shelly Beach
- Riley C: St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Manly



Students (L to R): Billie, Alyce, Zali, Riley.





But it wasn't just the basketball courts where CSBB students excelled. Tennis, selected three out of three CSBB girls for their polding team, showcasing their skills and sportsmanship. Congratulations to the following students

- Cataleya E: Our Lady of the Rosary, Wyoming
- Emilia A: St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Manly
- Emily W: St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Manly



L to R – Emily, Cataleya, Emilia, Karen Grant (CSBB Team Manager).



Students (L to R): Rafferty, Emilia, Cataleya, Isaac, Emily.

**“These CSBB school sporting events are vital opportunities for student learning growth and the unique learning diversity component of this specific experience made it particularly valuable.”**

Behind the scenes, the dedication of individuals like Andrew Spencer of Corpus Christi, St Ives and Deb Northey, of CSBB support office, ensured the smooth management of the students throughout the event.

Amidst the victories, there were also valuable lessons learned. Some of the tennis athletes experienced clay courts for the first time, expanding their skillset and adaptability for future tournaments.

The success of CSBB at the Polding event marked a promising start to 2024, setting the stage for even greater achievements to come. Broken Bay is proud of all our students in sporting talent and the sportsmanship with which they played and represented their school communities.

CSBB Leader of Sport, Karen Grant reiterated her belief that “These CSBB school sporting events are vital opportunities for student learning growth and the unique learning diversity component of this specific experience made it particularly valuable.”



**“Connecting to the Mission of Jesus Christ!”**

# MAY APPEAL

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**MOST REV ANTHONY RANDAZZO DD JCL BISHOP OF BROKEN BAY**

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## Liturgical Commission hits the right note

The newly established Diocesan Liturgical Commission held its first meeting at the end of February.

The Commission includes Clergy, members of Mission Broken Bay and experienced liturgical musicians.

Under the direction of Bishop Anthony, it will be fully informed on the state of pastoral liturgical activity in the Diocese including studies and programs taking place elsewhere in this field.

Bishop Anthony has asked the Commission to suggest and promote practical programs of every kind that may contribute to the advancement of liturgical life, especially in the interests of aiding priests labouring in the Lord's vineyard.

He said he looks forward to the Commission suggesting, in individual cases, or even for the whole Diocese,

step-by-step measures for the work of the pastoral liturgy, to appoint and to call upon people capable of helping priests in this matter as occasion arise, to propose suitable means and resources.

The Commission will oversee programs in the Diocese to promote liturgy with the cooperation and mutual help of other groups in accord with the Code of Canon Law (1983), 1216: *in the building and restoration of churches to ensure the advice of experts is to be used, and that the principles and norms of liturgy and sacred art are to be observed.*

Liturgical music is music that is part of the liturgy. It may be a setting of part of the liturgy to music, or it may be music intended to support the atmosphere and intent of the liturgy.

Singing is an integral part of the liturgy and a joyful expression of

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**Bishop Anthony has asked the Commission to suggest and promote practical programs of every kind that may contribute to the advancement of liturgical life, especially in the interests of aiding priests labouring in the Lord's vineyard.**

those gathered. The Gospels inform us that Jesus and the Apostles sang at the Last Supper, and the Apostle Paul exhorted the early Church communities to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with thankful hearts when they gathered.



Photo left to right: Libby McManus – Commission Minutes Secretary, Mission Broken Bay, Rev Peter Dowd – Chaplin Royal North Shore Hospital, Rev Dr Stephen Hill – Vicar General, Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, Rev Stephen Hacket MSC, Commission Chair and Provincial Superior for Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, Rev Robert Borg – Diocesan Master of Ceremonies and Parish Priest, The Lakes, Simon Hyland – Catholic Schools Broken Bay, Kelly Paget – Chancellor & Director of Mission, Mission Broken Bay and Joshua Willard – Director of Music, Pittwater Parish.

# A word from the Executive Director of CatholicCare



Tim Curran.

2023 finished with a flurry of activity at CatholicCare with many important IT projects and service expansion initiatives underway. These will continue through the first half of 2024 and keep many of our staff and managers particularly busy. On the IT front, we are investing a lot of time and money to strengthen our systems to improve the security of our data – something that is becoming increasingly important to all organisations, and especially so for organisations like CatholicCare who manage vast amounts of sensitive client information. Other IT projects include the implementation of a new Human Resources Information System so that we can better support our staff, and the creation of a new incident and complaints management system which will assist us to continuously monitor the quality of our programs and identify opportunities to improve them.

Key service expansion activities include new disability Supported Independent Living (SIL) homes on the Central Coast and in Northern Sydney, the construction of a refuge for women and children fleeing domestic violence in Northern Sydney, the development of a new Early Learning Centre on the Central Coast, and the expansion of our Permanency Support

Program. We are also preparing to increase the range and scope of our men's behaviour change program and various counselling services across our Diocese.

All this activity is outlined in our Strategic Directions brochure available on our recently revamped website at [www.catholiccaredbb.org.au](http://www.catholiccaredbb.org.au). Some of the other major activities planned for the coming year include:

- The establishment of additional paid and volunteer engagement roles to help forge stronger links between CatholicCare and the parishes and schools across the Diocese
- An expansion of our community aged care services to include the provision of Home Care Packages (HCPs)
- The creation of career and leadership development programs for CatholicCare staff
- The introduction of an Outcomes Measurement Framework to help us better understand and measure the real impact of our work on the lives of the

individuals and families we support; and

- The development of an Environmental Impact Plan and commencement of initiatives aimed at reducing any harmful environmental impacts associated with CatholicCare's operations.

The last of these initiatives is particularly exciting as it will provide our organisation with an opportunity to both respond to the challenge Pope Francis posed in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si'*, as well provide staff and volunteers an opportunity to participate in activities to improve our environment – something many are tremendously passionate about. We will look to enlist the energy and expertise of volunteers across the Diocese as we set about this important work, so please stay tuned for future announcements on how you can support us.

Finally a reminder that we are constantly looking for more people to work and volunteer with us as we expand our services. Please take a look at our current vacancies – the careers page link is below.

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## CONNECT WITH US

### FACEBOOK

[www.facebook.com/CatholicCareDBB](https://www.facebook.com/CatholicCareDBB)

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### WEBSITE

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

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## Relinquishing the family dream

“But he’s a great dad,” is the phrase that CatholicCare Domestic Violence Caseworker, Fernanda hears all the time. “The kids don’t see him when he’s violent,” the woman will say, yet she will tiptoe around the house in a constant state of distress and vigilance. “Kids can sense that,” Fernanda says. For Tegan, she put up with extreme physical violence and gaslighting because she wanted to believe that her abuser was a good dad. She yearned for the tightknit family unit, the camping holidays and that father daughter bond, and it took a lot for Tegan to relinquish that dream.

Tegan describes her relationship with Daniel as “wonderful” when they first got together. They had big plans for their future, and over time they bought a home and became parents to a healthy little girl.

Tegan first realised that something was odd on the night they moved into their family home. After dreaming of this moment for years, Daniel decided to go out and get drunk with his mates.

When Tegan became pregnant, Daniel started to become violent, and the physical violence peaked when their daughter, Sophia was one. “Daniel drank a lot and smoked marijuana,” Fernanda says. “He had a way of convincing Tegan that everything was her fault.”

When Tegan began receiving support from CatholicCare in September 2022, she knew that there were problems in her relationship, but she found it very difficult to identify the violence.

“Tegan needed a lot of reassurance because she felt guilty for going behind his back,” Fernanda says.

Initially Tegan didn’t feel ready to leave.

Fernanda explains the importance of respecting the woman’s wishes, where appropriate, and honouring her timing. “In those first three months of working with Tegan it was important that we listened to what she thought was safest to do. The moment when a woman chooses to leave is very risky because the perpetrator suddenly experiences a loss of control, and they can become erratic and unpredictable.”

Fernanda spent three months safely planning with Tegan until she was ready to leave. Tegan and Sophia moved into safe accommodation and ended up staying for three months until they could secure a private rental. “The positive impact of moving out on that little girl was instant,” Fernanda says. “Sophia was suddenly so calm, so peaceful and so settled. Tegan could see how much better her little one was for leaving, so that motivated her.”

Fernanda says that it was beautiful watching Tegan become confident in her own decision making. “She didn’t

hesitate at all in taking up the lease, which was a huge change from when I met her. She was so much more empowered. The counselling that CatholicCare assisted her to access helped a lot with this, and she came a long way in understanding domestic violence and not taking responsibility for her ex-partner’s acts.”

Daniel also received extensive support from CatholicCare and is currently engaged with our Men’s Behaviour Change Program.

It was a beautiful journey, and I was very lucky to work alongside Tegan.” She spent so long trying to ‘fix’ the problems because she wanted that dream person.” Fernanda says.

Tegan hasn’t given up on her big dreams for the future, but those dreams now come from a place of knowledge, awareness and deep confidence in herself.

If you, or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence please call 1800 324 924, email [info@catholiccareddb.org.au](mailto:info@catholiccareddb.org.au) or visit [www.catholiccareddb.org.au](http://www.catholiccareddb.org.au).



We are the social care agency of the  
Catholic Church in the Diocese of Broken Bay

*CatholicCare*  
Diocese of Broken Bay

CatholicCare works alongside our parishes and Catholic Schools Broken Bay, as another organisation within the Diocese, also reporting to Bishop Anthony.

P: 1800 324 924

E: [info@catholiccaredbb.org.au](mailto:info@catholiccaredbb.org.au)

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# How to support someone struggling with their mental health

Has someone ever come to you and shared that they were having some mental health concerns, and you found yourself lost for words? If so, you are not alone. Our human instinct is to make the person feel better, so we want to tell them they'll be okay. We want to relay stories of people who've come through the other side. We want our loved one to see a glimmer of sunshine in the darkness they are drowning in. But any attempt of positivity on our end is met with resistance ... and we are left helpless, confused and with no idea where to start.

Sound familiar? CatholicCare's counselling team have put together some answers to frequently asked questions on this topic.

## **Q. Someone has shared with me that they are struggling with their mental health. Where do I even begin?**

A. The most important thing to do is listen, genuinely and without judgement. If someone approaches you, it is a sign that they trust you and feel comfortable confiding in you. They are seeking help, so it is important to recognise this as an opportunity to connect and to support this person. If throughout this conversation you identify that the person has self-harm or suicidal thoughts, it is important that you stay with them and seek professional help.

## **Q. What are some helpful things to say to someone who is dealing with mental health concerns?**

A. Focus on language that connects with the person's emotions, acknowledging and validating their concerns. For example:

"I'm here for you."  
 "You are not alone."  
 "Let's talk about it."  
 "What do you need, can I do something to help you?"

## **Q. What should I avoid saying?**

A. It is important to avoid saying anything that dismisses or criticises a person's emotions. It is also important not to minimise how the person is feeling. For example:

"Don't worry about it."  
 "You will be fine."  
 "You are just trying to get attention."  
 "Everyone feels like that at times."

## **Q. I always seem to get so invested with the person I am helping. How do I set boundaries without it seeming like I don't care?**

A. It is important to be honest and transparent about what you can and cannot do as this builds trust with the person. Once you have acknowledged and validated the person's words and emotions, it is okay to consider what you need to do and ensure that you meet your own needs as well as helping the person with their needs.

Remember, setting boundaries is a healthy practice that allows you to offer sustainable support. It doesn't mean you care any less. In fact, it helps ensure that you can maintain a long-term and meaningful connection with the person you're helping. For example:

"I care about you, and I want to help as much as I can. I know you need support right now but shortly I will need to pick up my children/ attend a work meeting so is there someone we can call to be with you? I will pick up my children/attend my meeting and then call you to check on you and make a plan together."

## **Q. What are the signs that someone is not OK?**

A. Signs of declining mental health can look very different in everyone. However, some of the common signs to look for include:



- Changes in behaviour
- Changes in mood – looking sad or irritable often
- Withdrawing from social activities or events
- Not sleeping
- Being unwell often
- Losing interest in activities that they normally like to do
- Work performance changing
- Feelings of overwhelm.

When feelings become overwhelming or confusing, counselling can be very helpful. At CatholicCare we work with you or your loved one to overcome challenges and stress. We listen, talk through experiences and help you think about ways forward.

To find out more about how CatholicCare can help, visit [www.feelingblue.au](http://www.feelingblue.au), email us [info@catholiccaresdbb.org.au](mailto:info@catholiccaresdbb.org.au) or call us today on 1800 324 924.

**Call 000 immediately if you, or someone you know, is experiencing a life threatening emergency.**

For support around the clock, you can find a helpful list of 24/7 counselling and support services here [www.catholiccaresdbb.org.au/crisis-support](http://www.catholiccaresdbb.org.au/crisis-support).



# Becoming a more Synodal Church

The Catholic Church's massive multi-year synodal process while divided into stages has progressively gathered momentum.

Pope Francis said this process, which involves prayerful discernment, attentive listening, and respectful dialogue, is an ecclesial journey that has a soul, which is the Holy Spirit. "Without the Holy Spirit there is no synodality", he has said.

For the People of God in parishes around the world this journey means walking together, speaking, and listening to each other as a member of the Church to understand how God might be speaking to all of us through the Holy Spirit.

Last October the pace picked up with the first session of "For a Synodal Church", at the Vatican, and will do

so again for the second assembly in October this year.

In the meantime, the Diocese of Broken Bay is continuing the practical process towards a listening and accompanying Church with the

synodal dynamic evident at a recent seminar.

More than 60 participants including staff from CatholicCare, Catholic Schools Broken Bay – leaders and Parent Engagement Coordinators



More than 60 people attended the event.



– clergy and parishioners came together for the *Becoming a More Synodal Church* seminar. Also attending were Consultation Facilitators, those nominated by their Community Leader, who will lead the consultation, listening and dialogue sessions in their communities during the Pastoral Discernment Northern Beaches project.

Chancellor and Director of Mission with the Diocese, Kelly Paget, who attended the Synod last October as one of the 10 Oceania non-bishop members appointed by Pope Francis, outlined the Diocese's synodal journey over previous years as well



Parishes, CatholicCare and Catholics schools were represented.

as the next steps in preparation for October.

Facilitator for the day was Br Ian

Cribb SJ who provided expertise on Listening and Discernment and the Conversation in the Spirit of Methodology. Forming small groups, participants had the opportunity to practice spiritual conversation, the aim of which is to create an atmosphere of trust and welcome, so that people can express themselves more freely. This conversation focuses on the quality of a person's capacity to listen as well as the quality of the words spoken.



Small groups allowed people to express themselves openly.

Patti Beattie, Director, Pastoral Discernment and Accompaniment for Mission Broken Bay also shared with participants the aims and objectives of Pastoral Discernment Northern Beaches.

## History of the current Synod

**March 2020:** Pope Francis announced that the theme for the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October 2023 would be "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission".

**October 2021:** The journey towards the celebration of the Synod opened in dioceses around the world and Pope Francis invited the entire Church to reflect on this theme that is decisive for its life and mission.

**May 2022:** Australian dioceses published local reports on their consultation process. Based on those reports and using content for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia relevant to the Synod, the National Centre for Pastoral Research prepared the Australian synthesis.

**October 2022:** The Holy See released the Working Document for the Continental Stage. Each Continental region in the world was invited to engage with the document.

**April 2023:** The Oceania response was published.

**October 4-29, 2023:** The first assembly of the Synod took place in Rome. Based on the discussions of those at the assembly, first, a Letter to the People of God was published, followed by the Synthesis Report.

In anticipation of the second assembly of the Synod due to occur in October 2024, bishops' conferences have been tasked with consulting with their dioceses and leadership groups on the content of the Synthesis Report.



## St Ives excited to build for the future

Corpus Christi Parish, St Ives is looking to the future, with plans to renovate and revitalise its presbytery and parish office.

The current presbytery and office building, built in the early 1960s, has supported the parish through six decades, but now it is in need of a makeover to make it fit-for-purpose and bring it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Under the current proposal, the existing office spaces would be converted into a residence for up to three priests. A new extension at the back of the existing building would then provide space for the parish offices and reception.

“Our presbytery and office, priests and staff, play a very important part in the running of this parish,” said Fr Greg Chee OCD, parish priest of St Ives Parish.

“The buildings themselves are not

the ultimate end. It is the making of disciples and the individuals ministering in these buildings which contribute significantly to this end.”

Currently, the building hasn’t been able to accommodate the priests of the parish and they have needed to live off-site in leased accommodation.

The integration of the parish offices with the new presbytery will not only allow the priests to cater for the pastoral needs of the parish, but also create a permanent home for parish priests for decades to come.

The Parish of St Ives was the first Cathedral of the Diocese of Broken Bay from 1986 until 2008 when Bishop David Walker inaugurated Our Lady of the Rosary, Waitara as the Cathedral of the Diocese.

The Parish has been under the pastoral care of the Discalced Carmelites since 2008.

As the Cathedral Parish, St Ives was host to many important events in the life of the Diocese, including many ordinations. Parishioners from other parishes will share fond memories from its time as the Cathedral.

The Parish has set itself a fundraising goal of \$500,000 for the project. The Diocese will also contribute half again of the amount raised.

Parishioners are organising a variety of fund raising activities in the coming months.

Donations of any amount are warmly welcomed.

To donate to the [bbcatholic.org.au/st-ives/about-our-parish/presbytery-update](https://bbcatholic.org.au/st-ives/about-our-parish/presbytery-update)



## Carlingford Antioch still going strong after 40 years

Epping and Carlingford Antioch is still going as strong as ever after celebrating 40 years at the end of 2023.

On 24 September 2023, the group celebrated four decades since the first Antioch weekend was held in the Carlingford Parish in 1983.

Even after all that time, the ministry still attracts more than 20 people every Sunday, to share their faith and give talks.

Antioch takes its name from the place of one of the first known Christian communities in Acts 11:26 *"It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians"*.

Antioch is a group for young people, run by young people. Antioch aims to give young Catholics a supportive community and a chance to develop their faith with friends. The meetings consist of a range of activities including music, talks, share groups, prayer, games and food.

"We show our faith in words and in action," said Joanna Mak, Youth Minister for the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford.



Leaders from 40 years of Antioch.

"We are committed to helping our parish community through music, altar serving and various ministries at the youth Mass and also committed to social justice such as serving meals to the homeless, donating food to JRS, sponsoring a child and fundraising by running an annual trivia night which is why we hope to keep going for another 40 years."

A young Deacon Vince Casey introduced Antioch to the parish in 1983 after he attended an Antioch weekend the year before at Maroubra Bay.

"I felt drawn to the exciting developments happening in the post-

Vatican II renewal of that time so, I made contact with leaders in Antioch and was warmly welcomed to an Antioch Weekend," he said.

"It was a powerful experience. I saw 80 young people coming alive in their faith and in their joy of being part of a Christian community. If I had any doubts about ordination, they vanished on that weekend."

Endurance, down-to-earth peer leadership, prayer, hard work, parish support and a clear program are at the heart of the program's success.

The 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations brought together Antioch groups from across four decades for speeches and conversations, bringing together people of all different generations to celebrate the transformative power of the ministry.

Today, Epping and Carlingford Antioch meets every Sunday evening 6-8pm after the 5pm Youth Mass and BBQ.

For any enquiries about joining Epping and Carlingford Antioch, please contact the Youth Minister, Joanna Mak on [Joanna.Mak@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:Joanna.Mak@bbcatholic.org.au)



Epping and Carlingford Antioch is still going strong.



## Chatswood's Capstone retreat deepens faith in young adults

In late January, Chatswood Parish's Capstone Young Adults group went on retreat to Jamberoo Abbey.

Led by Fr Marek Woldan, the retreat was part of a course called New Life, a program prepared by School of New Evangelisation established by Jose Prado Flores in Mexico in 1980, which then spread to many other countries.

Here are the testimonies of those who went on the retreat:

*The Capstone Retreat last week in Jamberoo has been nothing short of life changing – it has gifted us with so many means to lead our lives in true faith with Jesus, and has provided us with an everlasting purpose to provide for others in example with His outstanding grace. Through discussions of God's love, sin, re-conversion and salvation in Jesus, our eyes have been opened to His abundant grace and blessings over all. We have immense gratitude for Fr Marek for organising the retreat as well as the leaders: Bettina, Clara and Clive and all the fellow young adults with whom we have shared this experience with. Thank you for allowing and encouraging us to open our hearts to live in true fellowship with Christ*

**Joseph and Jenevieve**

*The Capstone Retreat was a spiritual revival for me and a reminder of God's love. I've had a spiritual drought for the past few years so I am glad I finally answered God's call, to approach and talk to a Priest. Father Marek's empathy to my journey and his gentle guidance was what I needed to return to practicing my faith. I now have a community of brothers and sisters I can grow and nurture my faith with. Thanks be to God!*

**Daven**

*For me, the Capstone Retreat was a great opportunity to truly connect with my friends and grow in the faith side by side, as we connect and grow close to our best friend: Jesus.*

*The Capstone Retreat was a truly life changing experience and has already inspired great positive change. The speakers, all selected from amongst the young adults, prepared great, engaging talks and activities, and we had great fun whilst also exploring deep, challenging topics. Truly, we felt the presence of the Holy Spirit flowing through everyone, and we've grown tremendously in loving each other and loving God!*

**Bryce**

*The Capstone Retreat has provided me for the first time in my life a stronger sense of spiritual purpose*

*and a stronger desire to serve others. It has given me the finally needed clarity and path to grow my faith in the right direction. I am eternally grateful for Father Marek's kind and selfless guidance to help nurture our spiritual faith journey with our fellow young brothers and sisters in Christ during this retreat!*

**Peter**

*"Such a wonderful opportunity to reflect on how we can live more God centred lives, see the Holy Spirit at work and build closer friendships within Capstone."*

**Carla**

*For me, the capstone retreat was a reminder of the friendship and joy that Jesus offers to my life. Sharing meals and wholesome conversations are part of the joy that draws me closer to God. This retreat opened my eyes and heart spiritually, through its challenging message... to choose Christ above all else. It's hard to do so, as an adult, when I depend and desire so much, even if it is good. But I chose to give myself completely to God as best as I can, because it is he who makes me a better friend, brother, son and man.*

*I thank God for this.*

**Andre**

## Fr Bogdan now calls Australia home

Fr Bogdan Skupien was born and raised in Poland, and spent more than a decade ministering as a missionary priest in Papua New Guinea, but he now calls Australia home.

After serving in the Diocese of Broken Bay for more than five years, Fr Bogdan became an Australian citizen on 29 January 2024.

"I had visited Australia many times in the past 12 years," Fr Bogdan said.

"I was visiting friends and admired this beautiful country. Australia is a great country, full of friendly and open people."

He said the welcoming and open culture in Australia had driven the desire to become a citizen.

"Australia is an interesting place with the great culture and a very diverse nature," he said.

"Most important are the people you work with. They are always happy to help and support you in all your efforts. Whatever you try to do, you are never alone and there is always someone with you."

Arriving in the Diocese in 2018, Fr Bogdan initially served in Terrigal, followed by a period at The Lakes Parish, then Epping & Carlingford. He became Parish Priest of Kincumber at the start of 2024, after serving the parish as Administrator.

"After working in three parishes and meeting many great parishioners and priests, I decided that I wanted to be a part of the 'Australian family,'" he said.

"Last year I applied for an Australian citizenship and on the 29 January, I made the pledge: 'From this time, under God, I pledge my loyalty to Australia and its people...'"



Fr Bogdan is now an Australian citizen.

Fr Bogdan grew up in a country village in Poland and entered the seminary straight after school. He was ordained to the priesthood in 2001 and served as an assistant priest until 2004, when he asked his bishop if he could become a missionary, inspired by an encounter he had with a priest who had served in Papua New Guinea.

He arrived in Papua New Guinea in 2006 and was assigned to Mendi in the Southern Highlands Province. He served there until 2018, when he decided he needed a break in Australia.

"In 2018 I decided to come to Australia for good. I was warmly welcomed by the Vicar General Fr. David Ranson, and I started to serve in the Broken Bay Diocese," said Fr Bogdan.

"I thank God for that chance to become a citizen of Australia and all the good people who supported me on that journey."

Fr Anselm Lakra, recently appointed Assistant Priest at Chatswood Parish, also became an Australian citizen in January.



Fr Bogdan supported by friends including Fr Jim and Fr Marek.

## New faces at parishes in 2024

A number of parishes across the Diocese will have some new faces ministering to them in 2024 while others will farewell some clergy as they step away from active ministry after years of service.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo has announced a number of new clergy appointments for 2024, for parishes across all three deaneries.

Manly-Freshwater Parish will have the most significant changes, as Fr David Taylor steps down as parish priest to move to lighter duties in early March. He will be replaced by Fr Chima Ofor.

Fr Chima completed his seminary formation in Holy Spirit Seminary, Brisbane, where Bishop Anthony was rector at the time. Bishop Anthony also traveled to Umuahia, Nigeria to witness Fr Chima's ordination in Mater Dei Cathedral, Umuahia, on 30 July 2011.

Fr Chima returned to the Archdiocese of Brisbane, where he served in multiple parishes before being made parish priest of Petrie Parish in 2015. Fr Chima came to the Diocese of Broken Bay to complete doctoral studies at the Australian Catholic University in Sydney in 2021.

He will be assisted at Manly-Freshwater by Fr Marek Woldan, who moved from Chatswood in early February. Seminarian Matthew French will also be on pastoral placement in the parish.

Deacon Peter McCulloch will conclude his appointment at the Cathedral Parish of Hornsby and move to lesser duties. Deacon Peter has faithfully served throughout the Diocese since being ordained in 2012. He will be



Fr Chima Ofor.

available to assist various parish priests as requested and to exercise his diaconate ministry, but this new chapter will allow him to spend more time with his family.

Freshly ordained Deacon Hien Vu has been appointed as Deacon at the Cathedral Parish of Hornsby.

Seminarian Rosan Mathew has also moved from the Cathedral Parish of Hornsby, assuming an appointment at the Parish of The Entrance.

Fr Eliseus Shin will also move from the Cathedral Parish of Hornsby and has been appointed assistant priest at the Parish of The Lakes.

Fr Shiju Simon OSH and Fr Thomas Aluckunnel have become assistant

priests at the Cathedral Parish of Hornsby, moving from French's Forest and Lindfield-Killara parishes, respectively.

Fr Roger Delmonte has moved from Hornsby to Lower North Shore as assistant priest, while Fr Anselam Lakra has moved to Chatswood, from Hornsby, where he will serve as assistant priest.

Fr Biju Mathew has moved from Lower North Shore to French's Forest, where he will serve as assistant priest.

Fr Sam French will also move from priest in residence at the Parish of Wahroonga to priest in residence at Watsonville, retaining his appointment as Director for Vocations.

## Easter: The heart of our faith

Within the Christian calendar, there is no more important period than the Easter Triduum.

The Easter Triduum is the period of three days that begins with the liturgy on the evening of Holy Thursday, reaches its high point in the Easter Vigil, and closes on Easter Sunday evening.

During this time, the Church recalls the Passion, Crucifixion, Death, burial and Resurrection of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

This period is the pinnacle of our faith, commemorating Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, and His victory over death.

Beginning on Holy Thursday, also known as Maundy Thursday, the Church celebrates the Mass of the Lord's Supper. This Mass commemorates the Last Supper, when Jesus first uttered the immortal words celebrated in our liturgy, "Take, eat. This is my body."

During this Mass, the priest will also wash the feet of a number of people, imitating Jesus washing His disciple's feet.

At the conclusion of the Mass, the priest will move the Blessed Sacrament to an altar of repose where the faithful are encouraged to participate in Eucharistic adoration. Others may choose to engage in a Seven Churches Visitation, visiting seven churches to pray before the Blessed Sacrament at each church, imitating the visiting of the seven basilicas of Rome by early pilgrims.

The significance of Good Friday is marked by the fact it is the only aliturgical day in the Latin liturgical year, meaning the Mass is not

celebrated on this day. The faithful are encouraged to fast and the Celebration of the Passion of the Lord takes place in the afternoon, traditionally at 3pm, the time when Jesus died upon the Cross. The altar is bare, without cross, candlesticks and altar cloths, and the holy water fonts are emptied. This feeling of emptiness is meant to remind us of the emptiness of a world without Christ.

On Holy Saturday, the Church remains in this way, as a reminder of Jesus' body in the tomb, symbolising death, grief and despair. At this time Jesus visited the spirits of those who had died.

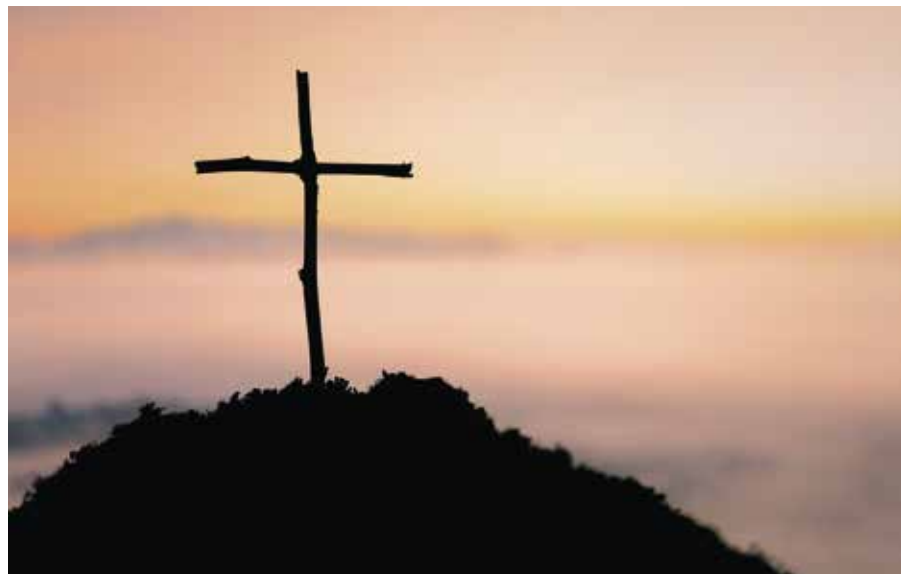
The Easter Vigil on Saturday night marks the high point of the Easter Triduum, when the first Easter celebrations begin, marking the Resurrection of Christ from the dead. Life swings back into the Church, as the altars are redecorated, catechumens are baptised or confirmed, and the holy water fonts are refilled. This celebration continues through Easter Sunday, as those unable to attend the Easter Vigil take part in rejoicing in the Resurrection.

### Easter Monday offers a day of reflection for Jesus sacrificing His life on Good Friday and rising again on Sunday.

Easter Monday offers a day of reflection for Jesus sacrificing His life on Good Friday and rising again on Sunday. Although scripture does not detail any specific events on Easter Monday it does begin Jesus' 40 days on earth before He ascended into Heaven. During this time Jesus appeared at believers, healed the sick and spread the Word of God.

While only Sunday is a Holy Day of Obligation, the public holidays allow many of us an opportunity to attend Mass every day from Thursday through to Monday, allowing us to fully experience the Easter Triduum.

*See your local parish bulletin or website for Easter Mass times.*





"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

(John 3:16)