
CATHOLIC YOUTH BROKEN BAY CELEBRATE THEIR FAITH

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**CATHOLIC
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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

CHANCERY

Bishop: Most Rev Anthony Randazzo

Vicar General: Very Rev Dr David Ranson

Chancellor & Executive Officer: Kelly Paget

**Diocesan Financial Administrator,
Director, Stewardship:**
Emma McDonald

Director, Diocesan Safeguarding:
Jodie Crisafulli
Tel: (02) 8379 1605

Director Communications:
Katrina Lee

Interim Director, Evangelisation Broken Bay:
Patti Beattie

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BROKEN BAY

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

CATHOLIC CARE

Executive Director: Tim Curran
Tel: (02) 9481 2600

Family Centres:

Brookvale – Tel: (02) 8043 2600
Naremburn – Tel: (02) 8425 8700
Tuggerah – Tel: (02) 4356 2600
Waitara – Tel: (02) 9488 2400

Hospital Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care:
(02) 9481 2600

Children's Services:
(02) 9481 2600

Disability Futures:
(02) 9488 2500

Services for Seniors:
(02) 9488 2500

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

BROKEN BAY NEWS

Editor: Katrina Lee
Staff Writer: William McInnes
Design: Chris Murray
Cover picture: John French
Tel: (02) 8379 1618
news@bbcatholic.org.au

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BISHOP'S MESSAGE

The Fifth Plenary Council of Australia

By Bishop Anthony Randazzo



The celebration phase of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia (PCA5) ended on Saturday, 9 July, as Archbishop Timothy Costelloe, SDB., formally closed the Council and presided at the closing Mass in Saint Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. The Solemn Mass was concelebrated by the Bishops and Eparchs of Australia along with the priest delegates. Participating in the Mass were delegates from among Christ's lay faithful, deacons, and consecrated women and men religious. Archbishop Anthony Fisher, OP., graciously hosted the final phase of the Fifth Plenary, 85 years after the last Plenary Council in Australia, which was held in Sydney in 1937.

Since the end of the Plenary Council, I have been asked on several occasions, "when are we going to implement the Council decrees in Broken Bay?" While the question itself is rather simple, the answer is not.

One of the great gifts of the PCA5 is the raising of awareness for the need to listen, to pray, and to discern what the Holy Spirit of God is saying to the church. If we have learned anything from our journey on the pilgrim way these past five years, it is that listening to the Spirit of God requires that we live life in the Spirit. That means

praying for and realizing the gifts of the Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (cf. Isaiah 11:2). It also means that we seek to be open to the Holy Spirit, who produces fruit in each of us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (cf. Galatians 5:22-23).

The work of the PCA5 does not conclude with a set of decrees, because the work of the Holy Spirit to bring the People of God to conversion to Christ, renewal in faith, and reform of life, is an ongoing work which belongs primarily to God. I would also like to emphasize that without conversion from sin, renewal and reform are not possible.

If I were to summarise my hope from the PCA5, it would be that the heart of our mission is evangelisation. As the community of the Church of Broken Bay, I hope that we will proclaim Jesus Christ to the world and humbly invite and lead people to Christ. If all the themes established for the Council began with this focus and the decrees from the Council end with this focus, then I think we will be fruitful in cooperating with the saving work of God.

The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, when speaking of the universal call to holiness, underlined the active responsibility of all the baptised as members of the Body of Christ (cf. *Lumen gentium*, Chapter 5). By this teaching, Vatican II set in motion an active apostolate that the Church has received from Jesus, "the mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the Kingdom

of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom" (cf. LG 5). The freshness of this teaching is that the apostolate does not belong to one group or another in the Church, but to all the baptised (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 863).

The Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, in keeping with the Tradition of the Church, has given the Catholic Church in Australia a renewed focus on its mission and apostolate of evangelisation in the world. The words of the Evangelist Mark ring loudly, *'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation'* (Mark 16:15). This evangelical command is one that unites the People of God to Christ and draws all the faithful into communion with the successor of Peter, the Pope, and the other Apostles, the Bishops.

As such, the PCA5 has served to remind the Church in Australia that synodality, collegiality, and the papacy

are all dimensions of the communion of the Body of Christ since the Church participates in the mission of Jesus Christ and lives the mystery of faith. Removing one or the other dimension means weakening ecclesial communion and compromising the mission of the Church as well as the proclamation of the Gospel.

Co-responsibility and synodality, collegiality and subsidiarity, are always at the service of unifying the People of God and enabling the mission of the Church to flourish. As we continue on the pilgrim way in the Diocese of Broken Bay, I invite all members of our community of the Church to pool your abilities and your wills for the common good and for the welfare of our communities of faith. There will be challenges that come from the PLA5, there always are when we profess our faith and our commitment to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. However, with the challenges also come grace – that marvellous gift of the Holy Spirit, who is with us until the end of time.

If I were to summarise my hope from the PCA5, it would be that the heart of our mission is evangelisation.

It is my desire that our Diocese of Broken Bay, and indeed all the dioceses and eparchies in Australia will flourish with fresh vigour as a fruit of the Plenary Council. These next few years will require determination and hard work from each of us so that faith will be deepened, and discipline preserved more fittingly and efficaciously in the various churches, as the needs of the times require (cf. *Christus Dominus*, 36).

Come, Holy Spirit, bless and unite all your people in Australia. Lead your Church into a hope-filled future, that we may live the joy of the Gospel.



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Vocational stories of our clergy

In August, the Diocese of Broken Bay celebrated Vocations Month, highlighting the importance of vocation to the priesthood, religious life, single life, or marriage. Here are some of the vocational stories of our Diocese:

Father Roger Delmonte
Assistant Priest
– Hornsby Cathedral Parish

I was ordained a priest in the Broken Bay Diocese in October 2021. I originally came from the Philippines and my vocation to the priesthood started when I was still very young, just a year before I graduated high school.



During that time, our Jesuit Italian priest was very sick and I saw him struggling to say Mass. I was at the back of the pews thinking who will replace this priest of ours when he passes on. I was thinking, maybe I could do something.

I joined a seminary for five years. I then applied to join the Jesuits and studied with them for seven years. After that, I was sent to teach in a high school and I realised it was tough to be a Jesuit and I just wanted to be a normal parish priest.

There was a time when I was trying to find who I was, so I was working for a year. There was a World Youth Day delegation to Madrid in 2011. I was told by the parish priest to join as one of the youth guides. It was there I rediscovered my vocation to the priesthood and it was very powerful.

I said, "Lord if you still want me to become a priest, I'm ready". I wanted to start afresh though and I had met a lot of priests from different countries at World Youth Day. It gave me the idea to become a priest overseas. I applied to Australia and got a response after just a week.

Five years later, I was ordained as a Deacon for the Broken Bay Diocese and ordained to the priesthood last year.

It was a journey, quite a winding journey, and it took me 20 years to get ordained but it all fell into place. I continue to respond to God's invitation to serve His Church in whatever way I can as a priest.

Father Sam French
Assistant Priest – Wahroonga Parish

I'm very recently ordained, at the end of 2021. My vocation's story is really about God's unsolicited call. I was just out of high school and I'd started a degree in psychology and one day when I was on the train, I was thinking about my future.



There was something that just felt wrong about psychology being my career path. I'd had a strong cradle Catholic upbringing and God was very much a part of my life but I'd just never considered the idea of priesthood.

But that one day on the train, that image of priesthood came into my mind. The moment I actually opened myself legitimately and fully to the idea of priesthood, I just had this overwhelming experience of the Holy Spirit that just overtook my mind. My objections just evaporated in the fire of the Holy Spirit.

I dropped out of university that day but did become a bit disheartened. I became involved in parish ministry and dated a girl but over the course of time, that calling from God never went

away and it just became obvious to me that God wanted me in the priesthood and there was no point fighting it.

There's six boys in my family and one girl. I'm number three. My brother Matthew, number four, joined the seminary at the beginning of 2021. There's obviously an openness to discernment and an openness to the spirit of God that we really inherited from our parents. We've been given an upbringing that has given us the opportunity to see clearly, God's will in our lives.

My view of goals has evolved from worldly things to now, within the context of priesthood, my goal is holiness. I've become more aware that I'm a redeemed sinner in just as much need of God as any of my parishioners. My greatest goal is to bring people to that relationship with God and into the life of the Church where they can receive sacramental grace and the love of God in the Eucharist.

Father Aldrin Valdehueza
Assistant Priest – The Lakes Parish

I was born and raised in the Philippines. I joined the seminary back in the Philippines for a local diocese in 2006 and I stayed in the seminary for six years but after that, I left.



At the time, I was confronted with my own personal history. I had been adopted and I only realized in the seminary that experience had wreaked havoc on how I viewed myself. I didn't believe in that unconditional love of God and I didn't

feel it. I discovered I was angry at God that I had experienced abandonment at three days old.

After a few years, I reconnected with my birth mother and that brought so much healing and reconciliation. I listened to her story and realized she suffered as much as I did. She said sorry for hurting me and I felt at the time, so much compassion. I really felt God was there for me and God met me in my pain. He allowed me to experience that he truly loved me and I felt very whole and secure for the first time.

Love is more than blood and that's the story I'm bringing in my ministry. It's leading me to accompany people who are struggling to make sense of their pain and their fate as well. I feel God has gifted me through my personal experience.

Leaving the seminary in 2012 led me to go to Germany and I came into contact with someone from the Diocese of Broken Bay. I wanted to entrust myself back to God.

I came to Australia in 2017 to join the Seminary of the Good Shepard.

This is where God wants me to live, and I can live that fundamental call to love through the priestly ministry. I've experienced a lot of adoptions. The Diocese of Broken Bay adopted me and Australia is now a home where I would like to spend the rest of my life with a profound calling to love others.

Father Jim McKeon
Parish Priest
– Epping &
Carlingford Parish



When I was 15 years old, I went to a Catholic youth retreat where I discovered I was

loved by God. This just changed everything. It changed my whole self of myself, it changed how I felt about other people. If I was loved by God, then I was good and it really changed my sense of self-worth.

It led me then to think, I want to share this with other people. I went to another youth event where there was wonderful praise and worship. I prayed to God, why can't you do something to make my Church back at home more like this vibrant event. One of the clearest things I ever felt God say was: "why don't you do something?"

I went back and started a little band to play music on Sunday nights. We weren't very good but we got better and I had the experience to actually be able to do something for God and for the Church.

As the years went on, I discovered the joy in doing that. When I finished school, I began to think what God would ask me to do with my life. I realized I could make a difference in the Church and so priesthood came to me one day. Every day as I thought and prayed about it, it became more and more right.

I was ordained in 1999 and although I've grown and changed a lot through seminary and beyond, I didn't have to become anything other than myself. God let me be my real self, my best self and giving myself to Him, I've been able to serve him for His glory and the good of his people.

For any young man thinking of priesthood, be involved in your Church and discover what God can do through you because what God can do through you now, He will keep on doing and only magnify, possibly in the gift of priesthood one day.

Deacon Peter McCulloch
Deacon – Hornsby Cathedral Parish



I was born in South Africa many years ago, into a large Catholic family. The Church has always been an important part of my life. I remember as a boy, having my dressing table set up as an altar at home. I always had this idea I'd be a priest and I was very much influenced by the priests of the parishes where we lived.

We migrated to Australia and along the way, I lost that dream as adolescence advanced. I started to lose my bearing after I got married. We had four children but I couldn't quite see how I was connected to Church apart from going to Mass.

I remember for many years, sitting in the front pew of Mass at the Cathedral wondering why someone doesn't ask me to get involved in a ministry. I didn't get any clear answers.

A little over 15 years ago, my wife and I went to Italy. As we were sitting on the train, I was praying, saying "Jesus, tell me what you want me to do and I will do it". About halfway through the journey, I got a loud and clear answer. He said: "I want you to learn."

I knew it meant I was being called to study theology and to apply to join the Diaconate. When we returned home to Sydney, I applied for the diaconate and applied for theological studies and four years later I was ordained. Since then, for the last 10 years, I've been enjoying myself enormously by serving the Church in the permanent diaconate.

It's a deeply meaningful thing to do and I'm only sorry I didn't come to it sooner.

Anyone wanting to learn more about vocations within the Diocese, visit: bbcatholic.org.au/vocations

Living out a vocational marriage

William McInnes

Christine and Bernie French have always seen their marriage as a vocation.

It's a vocation which has meant they have consistently sought to grow their children in the faith, immerse them in parish life and give them a strong, Catholic education.

But the fruits of that marriage have been greater than the pair might have ever imagined.

Not only have they have been blessed with seven children, one of them has become a priest, another is studying as a seminarian and they can't rule out another pursuing the priesthood or another religious vocation.

"We've always been open it," says Christine. "We see it as a great privilege, and an honour for us and for the kids that the Lord would choose one of ours."

Both Christine and Bernie had always felt a strong calling to marriage but still wanted to foster an openness to other vocations in their children.



The French family.

"For me, it was always marriage," says Christine. "I have always had a great respect for the religious life, and for priests and sisters and brothers, but for me, I was always wanting to be a mum."

Father Sam was ordained to the priesthood in 2021, the same year his

younger brother Matthew entered the seminary.

The French household was always a place where faith was put at the centre. The family would pray the rosary together, read from the Gospel each day and learn about the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

The children were actively involved in the parish community from an early age, and their parents led by example, serving in various parish ministries through the years. They would encourage them to go to confession and celebrate feast days.

Father Sam credits the vocation of his parents for encouraging him to fulfil his vocation to the priesthood.

"In a special way we'd like to thank our parents, our mums and dads, for raising us and distilling in us the seeds of our Catholic faith," he says.



(L to R) Matthew French, Bernie French, Christine French and Fr Sam French.

Father Sam made a special point of mentioning his parents' vocational marriage in the wake of his ordination to the priesthood.

"During our priestly retreat... Bishop Anthony pointed out to us that without the vocation to marriage there is no vocation to priesthood," he said last year.

"Through your love for each other and your love for us, you opened the pathway for us to respond freely to God's grace and his calling in our lives and for that reason we love you and we thank you."

As the boys grew up, they began dating, but the French's say they always had a sense there was a yearning for something more.

"Both Sam and Matthew had girlfriends come and go, but we could soon tell there was a definite



Matthew French.

happiness when they made the decision. Sometimes, somethings not quite right but as soon as they found their vocation, they found happiness."

The family also credits the Woy Woy Parish on the Central Coast, saying it's a parish which has always fostered vocations. Father Matthew Boland grew up in the parish and was ordained to the priesthood in 2016. Father Sam was ordained just five years later, and if his brother Matthew continues his journey as a seminarian, the parish will have produced three priests in just a decade.

Praying the rosary was an important element of Christine and Bernie's relationship. When they had children, it became even more important.

"We prayed it every night and the divine mercy too," says Christine.

"We taught the Catholic faith and tried to bring that into our married life with our children. Before the kids went to school, we did a Gospel reading. We also educated them on the Catechism and got them learning that.

"It was also important for us to have our kids involved in parish ministry. We encouraged them to be a readers and servers, go to World Youth Day, feel involved and feel part of the Church."

Growing up, the French's children regularly encountered priests and religious, getting to know them personally.

"Some of the Order of the Missionaries of God's Love, as young seminarians, would sometimes come and spend holidays with us," says Bernie.

"As I look back, I think it was good



Fr Sam French embraces his brother following his ordination to the priesthood.

for our kids to see this was an alternative and this was a vocation they could choose. We've had men and women over the years who have stayed, and they've seen them as very normal people."

While some families may not want their children to enter religious life or become priests, the French's have always seen it as an incredible blessing on the family.

"Whomever you want Lord, you can have," says Christine.

Even with one son ordained to the priesthood and another following in his footsteps, the French's say they can't rule out a third child also pursuing a religious vocation.

"Sometimes I wish more of them would choose that path," says Bernie. "It's all by the grace of God and we're very proud of it."

Answering God's call to vocation

William McInnes

Like many girls growing up, Sister Susanna Edmunds had dreams of marriage and starting a family.

She grew up in a faithful Catholic family and attended Mass every Sunday, even when the promise of McDonalds for lunch afterwards was sometimes needed to get her and her siblings into the pews some weeks.

Throughout high school she read the Bible diligently and became actively involved in the Church youth group, claiming the faith in a deeply personal way.

"In my teens I really developed that habit of leaning on God's will through prayer but I still had no sense he was calling me to anything but marriage," she says.

It was only at university, that God

made Sr Susanna's path clear and she was unable to ignore his call.

Studying engineering at the University of Sydney, she had the opportunity to complete some short theology courses where her passion for truth and God truly came together.

At the same time, she had come to meet the Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia, who had a strong chaplaincy presence at the university.

For Sr Susanna, it all came together, and she felt God's call, drawing her towards religious life.

"I saw the effectiveness of their witness, wearing the habit and I felt really at home and comfortable, praying with them," she says.

"I wasn't familiar with St Dominic or the charism, but I saw the life they were living and I loved it.

"No one naturally desires to give up the good things of marriage or to move to another country so I knew if it was something I desired, it was probably God pulling me towards religious life."

As each door opened, she walked through it. She went on retreat with the sisters and then was sent to the order's mother house in Nashville for another retreat.

"It just felt like home, and it was a great fit," she says.

She applied to enter the order as a postulant, entering a year of gradual transition from regular life to religious life. After three years, she made her first vows and then made her final vows in 2017.

"It's been a great adventure," she says.

"Jesus promises the hundredfold to those who leave their house, home and family. That's 100 per cent true."

Sr Susanna splits her time between teaching at Trinity Catholic College and the Seminary of the Good Shepherd. She also undertakes chaplaincy work at University of Sydney, helping other young women respond to God's call to religious life.

"Being on the other side, in the exact same place I grew so much and found my vocation, and to be walking with students and young woman is so wonderful," she says.

"We've been really blessed with one or two Australians joining our community each year."

Her public witness through the wearing of a religious habit allows her to connect to people from a vast



Sister Susanna Edmunds.

number of backgrounds, faiths and ages, introducing them to the Good News of Jesus and answering their burning questions.

“We see the census and people are questioning or leaving, but the Lord can use that and when people are asking questions, that’s great,” she says.

“A lot of the young people are really searching for truth in an almost post-truth world. When people find the truth of Jesus’ teachings, that encounter is at the heart of every vocation.”

While the separation from family and friends can sometimes present an obstacle to many young people discerning religious life, Sr Susanna

says any sacrifice was worth the infinite blessings.

“Sacrifice is part of life and is part of love. So, when the sacrifices do come, I think we’re especially blessed that the structure of our life is to look up to God,” she says.

“It’s a struggle to elevate that sacrifice but for us, there’s nowhere else to look and we’re very blessed with so many supernatural blessings.”

She encouraged families to support their children in vocation but acknowledged it was also a sacrifice for them.

“Parents have dreams for their families, but I’ve seen beautiful conversions in

families when they see their daughters so joyful in this life,” she says.

“When he’s calling you to it, he’s giving you the grace and he’s giving the grace to your family too.”

When asked how she’d help others to discern vocation, she is typically gentle in her answer, encouraging people to naturally follow God’s calling.

“Just take it moment by moment,” she says. “The Christian life is meant to be an adventure of friendship with Jesus. You can live that and start now, and when we’re living that moment by moment, he’ll open the doors.

“Don’t be afraid to ask him if he’s calling you in some way.”

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

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Youth connect at Central Coast Praisefest

More than 150 youth and young people from across the Diocese of Broken Bay connected on the Central Coast, for a night focused on fun and friendship, centred on God's mercy for us and others.

The Praisefest event in late August was hosted by Catholic Youth Broken Bay at Our Lady of the Rosary Parish, Gosford, and supported by various other youth ministries from across the Diocese including the Glorious team.

Expanding on the theme of mercy, Deacon Adrian Gomez hosted a panel of speakers who shared their experience of mercy given and received through social justice ministries.

Lachlan Smith – a member of The Entrance community – shared his

story of God's mercy in his life and then participants were guided into a time of Eucharistic adoration. Ten priests from around the Diocese made themselves available to serve the youth in the sacrament of reconciliation, allowing many to experience God's mercy first-hand.

Praisefest also welcomed many other communities and ministries from across the Diocese, including YFC, Youth Vinnies, WYD2023, Catholic Schools Broken Bay, a number of Central Coast youth ministers and Vocations Broken Bay to co-host the event.

The generous parishioners and clergy at Our Lady of the Rosary provided great support, including welcoming everyone with an excellent barbeque.



Expanding on the theme of mercy, Deacon Adrian Gomez hosted a panel of speakers who shared their experience of mercy given and received through social justice ministries.

Distance was not a problem for many enthusiastic school students who travelled from across the Diocese for the night.

They came from the most northerly end at MacKillop Catholic College, Warnervale to the very south at St Paul's Catholic College, Manly. Other youth groups joined from St Patrick's East Gosford and Epping-Carlingford.

The event was truly a collective effort. Some groups hosted stalls,



others performed live music or organized games.

One very popular event was the Dance Off where teachers, youth ministers, religious and priests brought the crowd alive with their dance skills.

The next Diocese-wide youth gathering will be a local World Youth Day in November on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, or the Feast of Christ the King.

Follow or subscribe to Catholic Youth Broken Bay social media, or follow BBNeighbourhoods for updates as the day approaches



The next Diocese-wide youth gathering will be a local World Youth Day in November on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, or the Feast of Christ the King.



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Broken Bay readies for WYD 2023 pilgrimage

Teenagers and young adults from across the Diocese of Broken Bay are counting down the weeks until World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, with the pilgrimage planning in its final stages.

The Diocese will be represented at the week-long Catholic festival by almost 200 pilgrims, who will get to engage with hundreds of thousands of other young Catholics from across the globe and participate in a Mass celebrated by the Holy Father.

The Youth of the Diocese experienced firsthand what to expect at two information sessions held during late August, learning some Portuguese dancing and phrases, while hearing testimony from previous pilgrims about the once in a lifetime experience that awaits them.

In July next year, the youth of Broken Bay will fly to Italy and begin the pre-WYD pilgrimage in the north of Italy, stopping off in Venice to see the beautiful St Mark's Basilica, then down to Padua, following in the footsteps of St Anthony of Padua.

From there, they will travel to Ravenna, where one of the earliest martyrs of the Church, Apollinaris of Ravenna, was killed, and travel to Bologna, home of St Catherine of Bologna, the patron saint of artists.

They will then visit the beautiful city of Florence and Siena, home of Catherine of Siena.

The young pilgrims will visit Assisi, where St Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan Order, was born and is buried, along with St Clare of Assisi. They will then go to Cascia and Rome before jetting to Lisbon for the World Youth Day festivities.

In Lisbon the pilgrims will spend a week being immersed in spiritual and cultural activities, including catechesis, prayer, Mass, fun, festivities and cultural engagement, culminating in the Papal Mass attended by one million people and celebrated by the Pope.

Following the festivities, Bishop Anthony Randazzo will lead the pilgrims in a three-day retreat in Fatima, visiting the sites of the Marian



apparitions in the city and experiencing one of the most spiritually important Catholic sites of the 20th century.

Many previous pilgrims say World Youth Day was a defining point in their relationship with Christ and the Church, and the experience is sure to be once-in-a-lifetime.

WORLD YOUTH DAY LISBON 2023

World Youth Day next year will be a wonderful celebration of youth and evangelisation.

I invite the young people of Broken Bay to join me on pilgrimage to Italy and on to Lisbon, Portugal, late July - early August for WYD23.



www.bbwyd.org.au Registrations Open

St John Paul II Shrine readying for opening

Plans are well underway for the official opening of the St John Paul II Shrine at St Patrick’s, East Gosford on 22 October which will be home to a First Class Relic of the Saint.

The Installation Mass of the relic, strands of hair, will take place on the saint’s feast day and be celebrated by Bishop Anthony Randazzo.

St Patrick’s parish priest, Fr Greg Skulski SDS said it is a huge blessing to have the relic of the much loved saint which will be on permanent display in the Church.

Fr Greg has been working with a dedicated team of parishioners preparing the Shrine and also a Pastoral Centre where people can come together for faith and formation, and learn more about the life of the saint who in 1986 was only the second Pope to visit Australia, although he travelled here when a Cardinal in 1973.

The relic will offer inspiration for evangelisation to not only the people of the Diocese of Broken Bay but all



The First Class Relic of St John Paul II. of Australia, becoming a destination for pilgrims.

“Many people know and love St John Paul II, even non-Catholics, and I think that the Church in Australia and our Diocese will warmly welcome the opportunity to visit the Shrine and Pastoral Centre,” Fr Greg said.

“In our parish we have many young people and families, and we would like to have this special opportunity to help them grow in their relationship with God and inspire them by the life and witness of this great saint.”

The parish has also commissioned a full length painting of St John Paul II for the Shrine by an artist in Poland . A statue of the saint will also be placed at the front of the Church.

Another first-class relic was obtained for the spiritual benefit of all the faithful of the Diocese – a bone fragment of Saint Faustina Kowalska. This will be installed on Divine Mercy Sunday at the Divine Retreat Centre, Somersby on the Feast Day of St Faustina, 5 October. St Faustina was the first saint canonised in the new millennium by the then Pope John Paul II.



St John Paul II.



The Relic will be installed in a dedicated Shrine in the Church.



Fr Greg Skulski SDS with parishioners at St Patrick’s, Gosford.

Ground-breaking development in community collaboration

The much anticipated Our Lady Help of Christians (OLHC), Epping redevelopment project is now well underway with a “turning of the first sod” ceremony having taken place on 12 August 2022 with the Parish’s development partner Levande (formerly Stockland) and aged care operator, Opal HealthCare.

The site is part of the Catholic Parish of Epping & Carlingford and is home to OLHC heritage Church and OLHC Catholic Primary School spanning more than 100 years in existence. Levande is redeveloping the site on behalf of the Parish which entered into a 99 year lease for the retirement living and aged care to operate on the site.

Commemorating this historic occasion for the life of the Parish and Diocese, ground was broken by Bishop Anthony Randazzo, Fr Jim McKeon, Parish Priest and Dominique O’Sullivan, OLHC Primary School Principal along with Levande CEO, Suzanne Dvorak and Opal HealthCare CEO, Rachel Argaman.



(L-R) Dominique O’Sullivan, Rachel Argaman, Bishop Anthony Randazzo, Suzanne Dvorak and Father Jim McKeon.

Also in attendance were Emma McDonald, Diocesan Financial Administrator and Danny Casey, Director of Schools along with representatives from the Parish and school communities and colleagues from Levande, Opal HealthCare and Richard Crookes Construction, the builder.

The redevelopment includes new Parish and school facilities comprising Parish offices, a 200 seat Parish hall, a primary school, out-of-school-hours care facility, presbytery and approximately 100 basement car parking spaces as well as the creation of a retail space for the benefit of the Parish.

Additionally, the \$200 million mixed-use development will deliver a 29-storey retirement living tower with 172 retirement living apartments, a clubhouse complete with cinema, bar and billiards room, a gym and heated indoor swimming pool, and rooftop terrace with BBQs and a private dining room for residents. It will also include a 132-bed residential aged care community operated by Opal HealthCare. The Parish presbytery will be accommodated on one floor of the residential tower.

It is envisaged there will be a number of opportunities across this multigenerational site for the Parish, school, retirement and aged

care communities and the wider community to interact, including the possibility of a communal community garden for the school, parish and retiree residents; volunteer opportunities for the residents at the school; and cross generational learning such as technology sessions run by the students for the older residents.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo said: “We are excited about this opportunity to create a multigenerational community with Levande and Opal HealthCare, where different generations will interact and add much value to each other’s lives. Through this unique partnership, I am confident that the Parish has created pathways for its long-term future and mission.

“As part of the planning, the existing, heritage-listed Church will be preserved and celebrated as the site’s focal point in addition to ensuring the school’s reputation for excellence, inclusivity and warmth will be maintained, radiating a Catholic learning community where hearts and minds are formed and educated in a faith environment,” he said.

The Parish and school works are forecast to be completed by March 2024, with the retirement village and aged care community forecast to be completed at the end 2024.



Artist’s impression of Epping redevelopment project.

Patti Beattie to head Evangelisation Broken Bay

Gosford parishioner Patti Beattie has been appointed to helm the Diocesan evangelisation team, bringing almost three decades of parish and teaching experience from the Diocese into the role.

Bishop Anthony Randazzo appointed Patti as Interim Director of Evangelisation Broken Bay (EBB) in late June, following on from her work as facilitator for the Pastoral Discernment Central Coast Project (PDCC).

Bishop Randazzo received the recommendations of the PDCC project from Patti on 16 June at the Diocesan Clergy Conference, capping a year of close community discernment, capturing the strengths and opportunities for the Central Coast region.

"Throughout the past 12 months, I have been delighted by the many gifts and talents Patti has brought to her role and to the wider EBB team," said Bishop Randazzo.

"Her ability to draw people from all walks of life into this discernment process and genuinely listen to people has been remarkable to witness.

"As per my hopes, Patti ensured the project was one of authentic pastoral discernment that encompassed a sustained and prayerful study of the various factors which give the Central Coast deanery its unique character."

Patti replaces Tomasz Juszcak, who stepped down as director in June after close to two years with the Diocese.

"I am delighted to accept this new role," said Patti.



Patti Beattie, Interim Director of Evangelisation, Broken Bay, alongside Bishop Anthony Randazzo.

"It is an exciting opportunity to lead the EBB team, implementing Bishop Anthony's six key priorities through the activation of Stage Three of the One in Christ Pastoral Mission.

"May the Holy Spirit continue to guide us as we strengthen the important work of evangelisation for the whole community of the Church, together!"

Patti began her teaching career at St Agatha's, Pennant Hills in 1992 before moving to the Central Coast in 1995 to teach in several of the Diocesan primary schools in the area.

In 2013, Patti accepted a position at Catholic Schools Broken Bay in the Student Achievement team, supporting the pastoral care and wellbeing needs of students across the Diocese. In 2020, she was appointed Innovation Lead at Catholic Schools Broken Bay, to develop and implement the CSBB Towards 2025 strategy.

In July 2021, she accepted the

"It is an exciting opportunity to lead the EBB team, implementing Bishop Anthony's six key priorities through the activation of Stage Three of the One in Christ Pastoral Mission."

secondment position of Pastoral Discernment Project Facilitator, building on her extensive involvement in parish and Diocesan life to highlight key opportunities for evangelisation within the Diocese of Broken Bay.

As a parishioner within the Diocese, she has been a member of the parish liturgy committee, an Alpha coordinator, youth ministry coordinator and a WYD leader in 2016, 2019 and will also join the Diocesan WYD 2023 pilgrimage.

Bringing people into the “womb” of the Church

Every year in August and September, thousands of people across the globe begin the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, hoping to enter into the Catholic faith and become a part of the universal church.

For some, they may have experienced a calling from God,

others may be curious to enter deeper into an understanding of the faith, while others may have felt a calling to join the Catholic Church from another denomination.

The goal of the RCIA process is not just to teach people about the faith, but to nurture them spiritually, prepare them

for the sacraments and bring them into the heart of the parish community.

“It’s almost like the womb of the parish,” says Brother Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud, Sacramental Life and RCIA Coordinator at the Catholic Diocese of Broken Bay.

“These people are growing in their faith and being nourished in the faith. Eventually they will come to new life and be birthed into the community. It’s so much more beautiful than just simply being a course. It’s really a journey and it’s meant to be one that’s really personal”

Across Broken Bay, most parishes will run an RCIA program between now and Easter, nurturing those on the journey into the Catholic faith and welcoming them into the heart of the Church.

“It’s like getting a driver’s license and there’s a reason that it takes time,” says Brother Bernard.

“There’s a growth that needs to occur when you’re driving. You have to get 120 hours and live the life of a driver. You have to practice driving while you’re accompanied by a co-pilot that’s going to be with you while you’re learning to drive.

“It’s the same with RCIA. While you’re adopting this life, you’ve got a co-pilot, your sponsor or godparent, will accompany you, and help you build that relationship and encounter God.”

The RCIA involves three major rites and periods. The first rite is the acceptance into the Order of Catechumens, in which the Church accepts people’s intention to follow Christ. This is a time of enquiry and



Br Bernard Mary Fonkalsrud.

introduction to the faith for the newly accepted “catechumens”.

The next liturgical rite is the election or enrolment of names, when the Church formally approves the catechumens readiness for the Sacraments of Initiation (baptism and confirmation).

The third rite is receiving the Sacraments of Initiation, the most important of the rites, when the catechumens become fully incorporated into Christ and the Church.

The “neophytes” (newly planted) then enter a period of post-baptismal formation, where they are incorporated into the Parish community and reflect upon their baptismal experience.

The next few weeks represent a rich time for the faithful to consider who in their lives could be interested in seeking out a relationship with Christ and preparing for entry into the life of the Church, with the RCIA program set to begin in parishes across the diocese.

“The mission of the Church is not to give service to the poor, is not to do social justice,” says Brother Bernard.

“The mission of the Church is to evangelise first and by doing that, it naturally leads into those other things. I’m not saying we shouldn’t do those other things, but our first priority is to evangelise.”

Brother Bernard compared the journey of the RCIA to the formation of the disciples, preparing them to go off and evangelise the world.

“When Jesus rose from the dead,



he spent 40 days journeying with his disciples to prepare them to evangelise the world and that’s what RCIA is like,” he says. “It’s like spending those 40 days with Jesus before you receive the sacraments and are filled with the Holy Spirit. The sign you’ve evangelized well is that those people want to go out and evangelise.”

In 2021-22, close to 50 people completed the RCIA program and were welcomed into the life of the Church.

“It’s not about the numbers but the more we promote it and the more people experience the beauty of RCIA, the hope is that it would increase,” says Brother Bernard.

“It’s about having a personal invitation and often people never get asked. We don’t ask people about whether they’ve thought about becoming Catholic. And just because an RCIA hasn’t started, doesn’t mean they can’t start engaging with the community and the life of the Church.”

Brother Bernard says his goal is to equip every parish to facilitate an RCIA program, inviting more people into the life of the Church and into an encounter with Christ.

“It’s not just up to the parish priests, the RCIA coordinator or the team. It’s the mission of the whole parish and they need to get behind it and really encourage and support people.”

The Diocese of Broken Bay will run five workshops through September and October for those interested in finding out how they can facilitate and run an RCIA course in their parish.

The workshops will run weekly on Wednesday nights at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral in Waitara from 7:30pm, beginning on September 7.

“We want to prepare people so they can come to these workshops and get a bit of a crash course in how to run RCIA,” says Brother Bernard.

“Maybe you might feel like you want to be part of the team, you can come to these workshops and find out more.”

Brother Bernard encouraged every parish member to consider inviting someone to join the RCIA program when it begins, saying it was the responsibility of the whole parish to nurture the “womb of the Church”.

“It’s not just up to the parish priests, the RCIA coordinator or the team. It’s the mission of the whole parish and they need to get behind it and really encourage and support people,” says Brother Bernard.

“We’ve got exciting things happening and we’ll know it by the fruits.”

A Word from the Director of Schools



It is with great pleasure that I share with the wider Broken Bay community, some of the wonderful things that have been happening at Catholic Schools Broken Bay. Each edition, it is difficult to choose just a few but I hope that you enjoy reading our update and that it encourages you and your families to journey with us as we inspire hearts and minds to know Christ, to love learning and to be the very best we can be.

Earlier this term, we celebrated the Feast Day of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop (8 August). As the first Saint of Australia, Mary MacKillop is also patron to many of our schools in Broken Bay. Students from St Joseph's Catholic College East Gosford celebrated this great Saint with a pilgrimage and in this edition, we share a reflection of their day.

With a clear focus on delivering an authentic, professional Catholic education, delivered with care and compassion, we have continued to drive the work of our *Learning Improvement Program* across all our schools. Last edition of *Broken Bay News*, we explained the 3 drivers that underpin the Learning Improvement Program. This edition, we are placing a spotlight on Driver 1 – Strengthening a Catholic Culture that promotes learning, relationships, and human flourishing.

Our review of the Catholic education on the Northern Beaches has been progressing well with significant community engagement undertaken since we launched the project. Our Project Team remain committed to identifying all opportunities to strengthen and enhance Catholic Education in the Southern Peninsula of the Northern Beaches and delivering recommendations to Bishop

Anthony by October 2022. We are thrilled to share what our staff and parents have said about the engagement process so far and always grateful to receive feedback.

Our term culminated on Friday 1 July with a system-wide staff development day where more than 2,500 of our staff gathered in person and via livestream across 45 sites to continue to take forward our Learning Improvement Program. We were very grateful to Bishop Anthony Randazzo who delivered our session on Faith on this day. You can read about the day and hear directly from our students by clicking on the QR codes in the article.

Finally, a student's life extends beyond their daily routine in the classroom, and we are always proud to share with the wider community, some of the varied experiences and success stories that our students are enjoying. This edition we celebrate some of our students who had the opportunity to represent their schools at the Bear Pit Public Speaking Competition finals at the Parliament of New South Wales. A great initiative, encouraging confidence in young students and hosted by Members of Parliament.

I hope you enjoy this edition of *Broken Bay News* across our schools and invite you to connect with us.

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INTERESTED IN WORKING FOR US



STAY CONNECTED

If you have any news you would like to share with the CSBB Community, please email comms@dbb.catholic.edu.au
We would love to hear from you.

Strengthening a Catholic Culture

As we journey Towards 2025 and beyond, Catholic Schools Broken Bay is committed to “Inspiring Hearts and Minds to Know Christ and Love Learning”.

Driver 1 of our Learning Improvement Program is about strengthening a Catholic Culture that promotes learning, relationships, and human flourishing. There are many initiatives we are working on to achieve this for our community through our new religious education curriculum, formation opportunities for staff and students and parish connections.

Development of Leadership Formation and Capability Frameworks. The CSBB Leadership Formation Framework has been developed and it has 5 leadership domains that align with the 5 goals of *Towards 2025*. The domains of the Leadership Framework are to Lead Evangelisation & Catechesis, Lead Teaching and Learning, Lead People, Lead Sustainably and Lead Continuous Improvement. Each domain refers to a verse from Scripture so that the link between who we are, what we do and who we are becoming is grounded in the Good News. The Leadership Formation Framework provides a language for Emerging, Intermediate and Experienced leaders to develop and reflect on their capacity to lead.

Similar to the Leadership Framework, the Capability Framework is based on the five goals of *Towards 2025*. The five groups of capabilities each refer to a verse of Scripture and consider the capabilities to support human flourishing, to work collaboratively, to be the best we can be with students at the centre, to support future focused systems and to build the capability of our people.

These Frameworks will support the development and success of all our employees across CSBB.



Strengthening Parish/School community relationships. New roles have been created at CSBB to support Principals, Parent/Carers and lead and implement strategies to strengthen relationships between families, school and parish communities.

Inspiring and faith-led Parent Engagement Coordinators are being implemented at schools to focus on two areas; supporting family wellbeing to promote learning and engaging all families in the Catholic school community to achieve better learning outcomes. Recruitment has commenced for these roles and we are looking forward to the improvement in outcomes these roles will bring.

Launching a new CSBB Catholic Charter. The CSBB Charter is an articulation of who we are, our way of being in the light of the Gospel within a complex and socially diverse society. It invites our students, their families and our people to accompany us as we seek to grow in relationship with Jesus and to understand and shape our world. Through 9 clear guidelines, it will help us work towards achieving our Vision and Purpose.

Launched to our System Leadership team through a series of retreats, we are looking forward to releasing our Catholic Charter to all who are part of, or wanting to join, our community.

Implementing a new Religious Education Curriculum. This year all of our Kindergarten classes have been implementing a new approach to Religious Education lessons. An innovative approach based on “Educating in Christ” by Dr Gerard O’Shea. It is grounded in the early learning principles of Maria Montessori and Sofia Cavalletti and includes the use of concrete materials to allow our young students to engage more deeply in Bible stories.

This way of learning gives time and space for children to reflect on what has been presented, connecting liturgy and Scripture.

Scan the QR code to see one of our Kindergarten classes in action





Pilgrims for a Day

Marking the Feast of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop

The Feast Day of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, saw St Joseph's Catholic College participate in a physical pilgrimage from Magenta to the Norah Head Lighthouse. This unique experience celebrated the feast day and presented an opportunity for students to unpack the life of Saint Mary MacKillop. Understanding hardships, purpose, resilience and the environment, students encountered not only a physical experience but an emotional and spiritual one.

The pilgrimage from the school grounds to the lighthouse included a 7km walk which took students 2 hours. On arrival, music, food, and a coffee van set the scene for discussions with peers on the journey that had just been experienced. The grounds of the Norah Head lighthouse held a liturgy to celebrate this special day presented by Simon Hyland, Senior Lead Evangelisation for Catholic Schools Broken Bay, Josh Cotter, Learning Partner – Youth Ministry and joined by Rachel Vala – Parish Formation and Resource Coordinator for Catholic Youth Broken Bay.

Josh Cotter provided a reflection on the day about the “Importance of the Journey” and how we are all on a journey together. A lesson provided on our personal journey and the role models we encounter in our

community can help shape who we are as the church, our decisions, faith, and future.

Pip Mercer – Youth Ministry Coordinator for St Joseph's Catholic College said of the day, “Our college celebrations for the Feast of Mary of the Cross MacKillop were an opportunity for us to come together as a school community, something needed after the past few disrupted years. Our physical pilgrimage walk reminded us of Mary's faith journey – from a humble young woman, who saw a world in need of practical actions to make a real difference, to a nun who committed her life advocating for those without a voice. Walking together bonds us as a school community in our calling to look out for those in need and respond with love – just as Mary showed us.”

It was an incredible and beautiful experience for the school community to be able to pause, connect and celebrate the life of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Scan the QR code to see more.





Our Students in the Bear Pit Public Speaking Competition

Organised by local MP James Griffith and open to all schools within Manly electorate, the annual **Bear Pit Public Speaking Competition** derives its name from the often loud and raucous NSW Parliament which has been nicknamed the 'Bear Pit'. This competition brings together the best public speakers from the Northern Beaches primary schools with the aim of encouraging confidence in students whilst promoting their ability to speak in front of an audience.

Our students joined the competition and have been busy writing and presenting speeches in the classroom. Selected finalists from Stage 2 and Stage 3 then represented their school at the Bear Pit Public Speaking competition finals at the Parliament of NSW on Friday 5th August 2022.

Seated on the Government benches, our students spoke from the floor of the Parliament, the same way the Premier or a Minister would during a session of Parliament.

Each student excitedly delivered their speeches in the Legislative Assembly Chamber (Bear Pit) to captivated audiences including other competing schools, their families and teaching staff.

A special mention to Matisse Year 3 of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Manly, who was awarded Stage 2 runner-up in the Years 3 and 4 Division for her speech on 'How I can help the environment?'



Congratulations also to Sophie and Zac of St Keiran's Catholic Primary School, Manly Vale, Amy and Ella of St Cecilia's Catholic Primary School, Balgowlah and Josh of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Manly for being selected to represent. We are very proud of your efforts and our teaching staff who promoted and supported this fantastic opportunity for students. Well done to all.



Enhancing Catholic Education in the Northern Beaches

Earlier this year, Bishop Anthony and Danny Casey announced the launch of a review of Catholic Education on the Northern Beaches.

Committed to renewing and strengthening Catholic Education on the Northern Beaches, the initial phase of this project has focused on community engagement.

Staff, clergy, parents and students across the 5 CSBB schools based in the southern end of the peninsula participated in open feedback sessions and an online “Have Your Say” survey was open to the wider community.

Over a period of 5 weeks the project team facilitated 15 Parent Focus Groups, 59 staff interviews, 10 student discussion groups along with Parish Group discussion and three Parish Meetings.

“We were delighted to work with members of the community across the focus groups and thrilled to receive over 300 online responses from the ‘Have your Say’ survey,” said Brenton Gurney, Project Lead for this review.

“The support shown and given by our schools and the wider community has resulted in valuable insights which will be used to form the proposal of recommendations to Director of Schools Danny Casey and Bishop Anthony Randazzo.”

The next stage of the review is to analyse the data collected, identifying emerging themes and opportunities, to develop recommendations to support the growth of CSBB schools in the Northern Beaches.

I appreciated having a voice in the future planning of our schools in the hope that our vision has a chance to be put into action. The discussions were focused around positive outcomes for students and families, concerns were listened to and not met with debate.

It was enlightening to hear other parents share their opinions and encouraging to learn that we all align on similar values and needs such as co-ed education in a local high school. Brendan Donnelly, St John the Baptist

It is encouraging to know that the management of BB schools is trying to paint a picture of what the users

– (students, teachers, parents and community) of the school system need and want from the system and their knowledge of the system. It reflects an understanding that schools are a living entity and a reflection of the communities they serve, that they are constantly changing and evolving. It also reflects a desire for partnership, not ownership of the BB school system. Asking for participation from the people most closely involved is a good strategy for gaining relevant information. Priscilla Chang – Yr. 3 teacher, St Marys School, Manly

The South Peninsula Project has been a wonderful opportunity for all members of our community to have their voice heard. All members of our community, including students, staff, parents and Parish in both our primary and secondary schools had the chance to reflect on what we do well as a school community and areas we could potentially improve. It has been wonderful for see our whole community join together for the future direction of our South Peninsula Schools. Alexis Conn – Yr. 1 teacher/REC, St Marys School, Manly

I felt the questions were incredibly well thought out and very constructive in terms of building solutions. The facilitators held the listening space for all involved with great compassion and balance. I found the process quite uplifting and sincerely felt like my voice had counted.

The two great changes going into this process was that people would feel it was a waste of time or that it would enter into a culture of complaint, but I did not feel either.

Incredibly well done thank you. Katrina Beanan, St Kierens, Manly Vale

Information and updates on this project will continue to be available on our CSBB (Catholic Schools Broken Bay) website.

Scan the QR Code to learn more.





(L to R) Danny Casey, Sally Egan, and Mark McCrindle.

CSBB's focus on Faith, Learning and Wellbeing

Staff development days are used by schools to build on the knowledge and skills of our teachers, school leaders and school administrative support staff through a targeted professional learning program.

Seminars and workshops held during a staff development day give educators and business professionals an opportunity to learn and discuss new ideas and plan ways forward. These days are mostly held at local level and curated for the local school context. At CSBB, we think it's important that we also gather as a System of schools to engage in planning and activities as one.

July 1, 2022 was an incredible opportunity for our staff of 2,500 to come together, in-person and via livestream across 45 sites to continue to take forward our Learning Improvement Program.

The day focused on 3 key elements:

1. Faith and Formation
2. Learning Improvement
3. Capability and Wellbeing of Staff

The context was set by a short video featuring one of our own students. Scan the QR code to watch the video, find out where we have been, where we are going and indeed, why we are all here.



We were thrilled to have Mark McCrindle, one of Australia's best-known social researchers and demographers,

present to our staff for a second year running giving us insights into social trends that will impact the generations we are teaching. Mark's presentation was followed by a visionary outline for Evangelisation by Most Reverend Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay. Sally Egan from the NCEC then conducted an engaging workshop where staff were able to identify evidence of improvement in student outcomes and develop a roadmap for the future. The day concluded with a wellbeing session run by CSBB's Leader of Counselling, Melissa Feeny.

Staff were able to discuss the direction, ask questions, and reflect on what each session meant in their day-to-day work at their school or workplace.

Throughout the day, our staff were engaged by a series of videos featuring our own staff and students discussing their own **faith, learning, and wellbeing** journey.

Scan the QR codes to be inspired.

FAITH



LEARNING



WELLBEING





SAFEGUARDING MONTH *families*

SEPTEMBER 2022



CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF
BROKEN BAY

BUILDING MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS IN EVERY FAMILY

The Diocese of Broken Bay promotes awareness of
Safeguarding each September.

We invite all families to share with us your experiences of
how you connect as a family in the form of a story, a video or
a photo during Safeguarding Month of September.

Some suggestions might include exercising together,
bushwalking, baking or play a game.

Scan for
more
activity
ideas



bbcatholic.org.au/safeguarding/engaging-with-your-family

The most creative and inspirational
entries will be showcased on our
Diocesan Safeguarding Month webpage.



SCAN
TO
ENTER



Entries will be open September 1 to September 30.
*Submission of entries will be taken as consent to share
bbcatholic.org.au/safeguardingmonth2022

Building Safeguarding awareness in *families*

Every year in September, the Diocese of Broken Bay renews its focus on safeguarding, providing our diocesan community with new resources, launching new initiatives, and promoting the incredible work of our various safeguarding teams.

This year, the Diocese has chosen to focus on safeguarding in families, encouraging families to have conversations about safety and support within the family unit.

“Safeguarding describes the way we proactively support a culture of safety and care with those vulnerable children and adults we provide a service to in our Diocese,” said Angela Thomas, CatholicCare Broken Bay’s executive manager for quality, safeguarding, risk and compliance.

“This includes an invitation for all to participate in being alert to areas of risk and harm, and where those of us with particular responsibilities can take action to protect the most vulnerable and promote their welfare and wellbeing.

“This includes encouraging and empowering a culture of speaking up, where they can trust their concerns will be listened to respectfully and seriously.”

While the Diocese and its agencies have a focus on safeguarding all year round, the month of September is used to promote, highlight and raise awareness.

“It’s a good opportunity to launch new safeguarding initiatives, and remind everyone of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding, a commitment led by Bishop Anthony and the respective



Angela Thomas.

heads of Catholic Schools and CatholicCare,” said Angela.

By focusing on families, the safeguarding teams for Chancery, Catholic Schools Broken Bay and CatholicCare will highlight the integral role families of all shapes and sizes play in being a safe haven.

The month will support families on how to create and support connection within the family unit, which can be an important safety factor for children and other vulnerable members of the community.

“Studies have shown that emotional attachment to parents is a protective factor for children, and that when parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another, it also promotes trust,” said Angela.

“This place of safety is an ideal setting for parents to empower their children with the right information to recognise when something is wrong, and to be informed about what they can do about it. Our resources and initiatives this year will support parents and children to do this.”

Throughout the month of September, families will be encouraged to participate in various activities, bringing them together and giving them the resources to constructively talk about safeguarding.

“Our main initiative this month is to ask families to intentionally engage in an activity together. We want them to have fun, or learn something new, or take some time to connect about matters that are important,” said Angela.

“Once they have done this, we would love to hear how it went, and to be inspired through families sharing with us their stories, through a photo or video clip, or a poem or statement about what they did.”

These stories will be shared on the Diocesan website, helping people see how other families are engaging with each other.

“We hope their stories will inspire other families in their journey, and we hope to hear from both those who work in the Diocese, and those who participate through schools, parishes or CatholicCare services,” said Angela. “We’ll be creating a resources page on the Diocesan website for inspiration.”

As part of Safeguarding Month, the Diocese of Broken Bay held a liturgy of lament, prayerfully acknowledging the suffering caused to the most vulnerable members of our community and giving public expression to the sorrow felt by all.

For more information on Safeguarding Month, visit bbcatholic.org.au/safeguarding

Q&A with a long-term foster carer

To mark foster care week

Foster Care Week runs 11 – 17 September. It celebrates and acknowledges the work of foster carers and raises awareness of the need to attract more foster carers.

Children enter the care system because the State identifies that they're at risk. That is where CatholicCare steps in. For over 20 years, we have been providing care for children and young people who are unable to live with their own families, with the aim of providing stability and healing support. Partnering with our amazing community of dedicated foster carers and our therapeutic support teams, we care for up to 90 children and young people across the Diocese at any given time.

Roz is one of CatholicCare's incredible foster carers. She has been caring for foster children for more than 10 years. Here she tells her story.

Q. What type of carer are you?

A. We're permanent full-time carers of three girls (siblings) aged 13, 14 & 15. The girls have been with us for over 5 years now and they will stay with us until they are 18 – hopefully longer!

Q. Why did you choose to become a foster carer?

A. I have always been passionate about children. Early on in life I was a nanny. I then went on to work in the school system so have always been around children. I kept seeing the adverts for foster carers and I just couldn't shake it off. I had a wonderful childhood, as did my own girls, and I wanted to give that same experience to others. If I could take on more children, I'd gladly fill my house!

Q. Apart from yourself, who else did your decision to foster affect and how?

A. I have two daughters. My youngest was 17 when I started off with respite care. They were always very supportive but it definitely impacted on them. Also my parents and our wider family group. New children were coming into all of our lives – it's bound to mix things up but the positives have always outweighed the challenges.

There are challenges but overall it's been a very positive experience. Seeing the growth in the children and knowing they are on the right track feels so good...



Foster carer Roz and her daughter.

Q. What's the best thing about fostering?

A. It's so satisfying to see the changes in the girls. They tell me they are happy and feel safe and that is enough for me! I remember going away at Easter not long after the girls joined us and one of them said 'I can't wait to get home to my bed'. I'll never forget that. They were cared for in four different homes before they came to me. They know this is their forever home now and that's life changing for them.

Q. What differences have you noticed in the girls?

A. They are smiling, happy and physically healthier. Emotionally they are thriving. They are learning life skills.

Q. How have you found your overall experience?

A. There are challenges but overall it's been a very positive experience. Seeing the growth in the children and knowing they are on the right track feels so good. We're giving them something they've never had and that is very satisfying.

Q. There are lots of different agencies, organisations, and local authorities out there. Why did you choose CatholicCare?

A. Being Catholic ourselves, the fit was right. I did my research on other agencies but we decided the Catholic system was the one for us. We also worked in the Catholic Schools system so it made sense.

Q. What was the application and assessment process like?

A. Very smooth sailing. The application

process, interviews and training were very informative and we have access to 24/7 help if we need it. Our caseworker is phenomenal.

Q. What type of support do you receive from CatholicCare?

A. They are always happy to help and I feel we're working together to help the girls. It's not all on us. We receive a financial allowance to assist with the day-to-day needs of the girls too which is helpful.

Q. What have you found to be the most difficult thing about fostering?

A. The children come from challenging backgrounds and have experienced some awful things. Connecting with them can take time and patience but it's wonderful when it happens.

Q. What do you think puts people off becoming foster carers?

A. The magnitude of the commitment and the negative behaviours they hear about. We have never seen any major behavioural problems from the 8 children we've cared for. But rest assured that with CatholicCare's support, any challenges can be worked through. Many people believe also that when the children turn 18, they are removed from your care. That's not true – they just have the freedom to move on if they want to at 18.

Q. What would you say to anyone considering fostering?

A. If you're tempted, make the enquiry and see if it will work for you. I'd recommend you try respite care first – a weekend here and there – just to feel it out. You can opt out at any time. Don't have any regrets. The

"If you're tempted, make the enquiry and see if it will work for you. I'd recommend you try respite care first – a weekend here and there – just to feel it out. You can opt out at any time. Don't have any regrets. The CatholicCare team is there every step of the way."

CatholicCare team is there every step of the way. Helping children in need is an amazing experience. There are so many children needing care – whether it be for a week, for a month or for a lifetime. Every bit helps.

There are children in our community who have been through experiences few of us could begin to fathom and who, without our help, will go through a childhood without the love and support of a family. CatholicCare believe all children deserve a safe home, and by providing one we can help them build their self-esteem and develop the skills they need to succeed in life.

CAN YOU HELP A CHILD FEEL SAFE, HAPPY & SECURE?

We are looking for everyday families who might consider taking a child or young person into their home – to love and support them whether for one or two nights, a few weeks, months, or long term. Can you help? Please reach out on (02) 9481 2600 or visit www.fostering.org.au.



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DISABILITY SERVICES



COMMUNITY SERVICES



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

We are the social care and support agency of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Broken Bay, assisting children, young people and adults to live more enriched lives.

We provide quality services tailored to individual needs which consider people's social and cultural backgrounds. Our team are inspired, capable, compassionate and embody our values and demonstrate our mission in their work. In return for their passion and commitment we offer great benefits to ensure our people are motivated, challenged and supported to achieve their full potential including:

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EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

SALARY PACKAGING OPTIONS

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HOPE



COMMITMENT



SOCIAL JUSTICE



EXCELLENCE



PROFESSIONALISM

Meaningful roles that matter

Why Julian, Melissa & Nathan chose CatholicCare

As Julian's university friends were boarding planes to create change on the other side of the world, Julian had an epiphany. He had a few different jobs during his uni years, but it was his taste of the disability sector that stopped him in his tracks.

"I realised I didn't need to pack up my life and move overseas to make an impact. Through a career in social services – specifically disability, I could make change here, right now." Julian describes himself as a "builder" and "a bigger picture person" so an impactful career path was always his goal. What Julian didn't realise was that the impact would go both ways.

"Working with people living with a disability means that my perspective on the world is constantly challenged," Julian says. In a world where our honest opinions are tainted by self-doubt, perceived power structures and societal expectations, "we don't often get to hear people's genuine perspectives," Julian says. "Thankfully, we have people living with disabilities providing that."

In a society that tells us to strive for the big job, fancy car and large pay cheque, Julian acknowledges that a career in social services is not necessarily the pathway to that lifestyle. "You have to be willing to give and to perhaps settle for less than what the world says you should have," Julian says. Abundance comes in many other forms for Julian who wouldn't be the person he is today without the client encounters that have shaped him.

Melissa joined CatholicCare five years ago as the Communications & Engagement Manager. Her first role out of university was with the Royal Blind Society and she always knew she'd move back into this space. She held some very well paid roles in the

education and finance sectors but never felt completely settled. There was something missing. "I happily gave up the business class trips and working all over the world – all the elements of my roles that appeared very glamorous to anyone looking in. I couldn't shake the fact that I was working my backside off filling the pockets of the already wealthy, and being away from my family for long stretches of time. At CatholicCare, I know the work I do every day makes a difference in the lives of my fellow Australians. We truly walk alongside those needing a helping hand. And CatholicCare offers a wonderful work/life balance that I haven't seen elsewhere. This is where I need to be", she says.

For Nathan, he left the corporate world this year to join CatholicCare as a Data Analyst. As a Chartered Professional Accountant, he once specialised in tax and commercial accounting in the entertainment and technology sectors. Nathan was attracted to a career that could have a positive impact on people's lives, but he didn't

quite grasp how impactful the work could be until he commenced his role at CatholicCare. "Since starting, I've been meeting with the General Managers, getting to know the services we provide. Realising the good they bring to the community, I can see now that my work here has the potential to help the team make a positive impact in client's lives," Nathan says. Nathan looks forward to implementing technology and processes that help, rather than hinder CatholicCare's frontline staff, "I want data to tell the story of exactly how much good the team brings to the community, and I want that story to facilitate expansion of our services to more people in need."

It's this desire to create positive change that motivates so many of CatholicCare's staff and clearly their passion is showing no sign of waning.

For more information about a career at CatholicCare please visit catholiccaredbb.org.au. We have a number of vacancies available.



Julian & Andrew, Disability Futures client

Dom's Place

Our new homelessness service in Hornsby is already welcoming 20+ people a day

It has been nearly six months since CatholiCare opened their doors at Dom's Place in Hornsby.

Dom's Place supports men, women and families who are experiencing, or are at risk of homelessness. It shares its name and values with our friend Dom, a delightful young man who was involved with CatholiCare until his passing in 2021.

It operates as a 'one-stop-shop,' an inclusive space where people can feel safe and connected. Some people pop in to get a meal, wash their clothes and chat with a social worker to address housing needs. Others come and play a game of pool, use the computers and connect with employment pathways. Case management, counselling, groups and mental health supports are available, as well as referrals to other services as needed.

Other local services also operate from Dom's Place including legal, housing, cultural, financial and medical services.

People can drop in when they like, no appointment is needed, and we are

already welcoming more than 20 people a day.

Since opening, we have started smart recovery, wellbeing and self-care groups; walking and arts groups; BBQ breakfast and lunches; social outings including movie trips; and a 6-week drug and alcohol group that is being extended and expanded based on its previous success.

We have a gardening group kicking off shortly where clients will work together to create a garden for Dom's Place and we hope to start a literacy group shortly with the support of volunteers.

We are seeing some incredible outcomes already. Clients are engaging more with CatholiCare services and are achieving better outcomes since Dom's Place opened. They're bringing their friends and other people they have met to Dom's



Some of our client's wonderful feedback

to seek support from staff where they may not have previously reached out. Rough sleepers are accessing the services onsite and are becoming more open to housing supports.

We have also noticed that substance use in some client's has reduced since opening as they are engaged in a routine, accessing groups and embracing the connections offered on site at Dom's.

Some clients have advised that they want to volunteer at Dom's Place in the future or explore studies in community services which is wonderful to hear and gives us confidence that our services are making a difference.

Dom's Place is located at 9 Leonard Street, Hornsby and is open between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Please join our Facebook page [facebook.com/domesplacehornsby](https://www.facebook.com/domesplacehornsby) for more information or call 1800 324 924.



**CALL US
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MEMORY INNOVATIONS CENTRE

NOTICING CHANGES TO YOUR MEMORY?

CatholicCare's Memory Innovations Centre improves quality of life, wellbeing and helps support positive brain health for seniors in our community. Programs are designed to stimulate the mind and body to keep our brains healthy and are run both in Waitara and on the Central Coast.

- Brain Games focuses on activities and games designed to stimulate the brain and encourages you to engage in new and fun learning experiences including problem solving, riddles, quizzes and app-based learning.
- Let's Get Moving caters to all fitness and mobility levels with exercises designed to improve your cardiovascular fitness, strength and balance in a relaxed and fun atmosphere.
- Arts Smarts requires no prior art making experience just a willingness to have a go. Our facilitator provides individual attention while promoting camaraderie and fun. A variety of art making materials are used to unleash your inner artist!
- Food for Thought empowers seniors to prepare meals and snacks that may help support your cognitive health. Recipes are designed to be simple and cater to different dietary needs.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
11.00am – 12.30pm FOOD FOR THOUGHT Waitara	11.00am-12.00pm LET'S GET MOVING Waitara	10.30am – 11.30am BRAIN GAMES Central Coast	11.00am – 12.00pm LET'S GET MOVING Waitara
	12.15pm – 1.15pm BRAIN GAMES Waitara	11.45am – 12.45pm LET'S GET MOVING Central Coast	12.15pm – 1.15pm BRAIN GAMES Waitara
	1.30pm – 2.30pm LET'S GET MOVING Waitara	2.00pm – 4.00pm ARTS SMARTS Waitara	1.30pm – 2.30pm LET'S GET MOVING Waitara
	2.00pm – 4.00pm ARTS SMARTS Waitara		





VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

COMMUNITY VISITORS SCHEME

HAVE A CHAT
& SHARE A
CUPPA WITH
AN OLDER
PERSON
IN YOUR
COMMUNITY

**ONE HOUR A
FORTNIGHT**



Would you like to volunteer for an organisation with exceptional values? Are you passionate about achieving positive outcomes for seniors?

CatholicCare Diocese of Broken Bay is seeking volunteers for our federally funded Community Visitors Scheme.

Our volunteers have flexibility to choose a day and time that suits them, we just ask for a commitment of at least one hour per fortnight.

As a volunteer you will visit seniors in a local aged care facility or in their own home and help improve their quality of life. Affectionately referred to as CatholicCare's 'friendship program', you will be able to build new connections and positive relationships with someone who will greatly appreciate your company. The time will be spent having a cuppa, going on outings, reading together, listening to music, playing games and other activities.

**CAN YOU
HELP?**

Nicki Bispham, Volunteer Coordinator

P: 0418 435 304

E: nicki.bispham@catholiccaredbb.org.au

W: www.catholiccaredbb.org.au/volunteer

Foundations for a Missionary Mindset

By Pina Bernard
Team Leader
Parish Renewal and Discipleship

In Bishop Anthony's vision for our Diocese, he gives us a succinct statement that captures who we are as a community of the Church of Broken Bay. He writes that our Diocese "exists to evangelise, to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, gathered as one body and sent out to be missionary disciples."

A key aspect of what is expressed here is that we go out from ourselves, that we be "missionary". To reflect on what this means and how we can make this a reality, Evangelisation Broken Bay ran a Laying a Missionary Foundation Course through July and August, bringing together around 80 participants from across our Diocese.

The course began with a Retreat Day to explore the Good News of Jesus as individuals. Missionaries of God's Love Sisters Katherine Stone and Judy Bowe led shared their own encounters with the love of Jesus, and then invited the group to deepen their own relationships with Jesus through personal reflection and praying with others. The friendship with Jesus is what propels the Church to be missionary and share the Good News with others.

After this retreat day, the course continued with five Zoom sessions, each focused on different aspects of what it means to be 'missionary' in our parish context today. In his presentation titled Moving to a Missionary Mindset, Rev Dr Chris Ryan MGL, Director of the Areté Centre for Missionary Leadership, began by helping the participants see why this change is needed in our contemporary church context.

He explained our world has changed and where previously "mission" was seen as going to a non-Christian country, now "mission" in our globalised context is, in fact, much closer to home – bringing the Gospel to those around us, our family, friends and neighbours.

He added the faithful were called to mission in the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28, telling his Apostles to "go make disciples" and continue making the divine love of God present in the world today (Mt 28:16-20).

Fr Chris said that a missionary mindset positions us to see Church through the lens of people who are outside or new to our community, and who we seek to invite and welcome.

He presented six characteristics of what a missionary mindset might look like: a reliance on the Holy Spirit, the kerygma (proclamation of the Good News of Jesus) becoming central to the life of the parish, adopting an outward focus, an emphasis on evangelisation, a pathway of growth, and evangelised people that evangelise.

This vision of a missionary Church is an exciting vision for the future, but it takes intentionality to make it a reality.

This vision of a missionary Church is an exciting vision for the future, but it takes intentionality to make it a reality. As individuals, we can adopt a missionary lens by speaking more about our faith to those around us, or by simply inviting friends to Mass or another parish event. As parishes, a process of pastoral planning can be helpful in making a missionary focus a reality across the whole parish.

The Parish Renewal and Discipleship Team is working with parishes in evangelisation initiatives and in pastoral planning. To discuss further, please contact Pina Bernard, Team Leader Parish Renewal and Discipleship, on 8379 1627 or 0432 682 239 or pina.bernard@bbcatholic.org.au



Parishioners listen to Sisters Katherine Stone and Judy Bowe at the retreat day.

The Lakes welcomes 34 new members

Fr Aldrin Valdehueza

The Lakes Catholic Parish joyously welcomed 34 new members of the parish community during the Vigil Mass on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Trinity, on 11 June 2022, in the Church of St Joseph, Narrabeen. It was presided over by Most Reverend Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay.

Due to the delay caused by COVID-19, it is the largest group of catechumens and candidates to be initiated into the life of the Church in one liturgy. The celebration echoed the household conversions and baptisms into the Christian faith of Cornelius (Acts 10)

and Stephanus (1 Corinthians 1:16), because we had a whole household baptised, parents officially received in the Catholic Church, and children receiving the sacraments of initiation.

Each of them has a story to share as they journeyed to the baptismal font which is being described the Baptistry of St John Lateran: “Here is born a people of divine lineage, generated by the Holy Spirit who makes these waters life-giving; Mother Church gives birth to her children within these waves”; and for others to finally journey home to the Catholic faith.

The clergy of the parish are grateful

“Here is born a people of divine lineage, generated by the Holy Spirit who makes these waters life-giving; Mother Church gives birth to her children within these waves”

to those who assisted with the program, firstly, the parishioners for their constant prayer and secondly, for those who sponsored and provided hospitality over the many weeks of catechesis.



The Carrasco family following their baptism at St Josephs.

The Carrasco family’s journey to Baptism

Throughout our lives, we’ve had many touch-points with the Christian faith – from Sunday School, Scripture and Bible Studies, through to a love of the theology section of university libraries and a reverence for the role of religion

in history. Spirituality has always been important to us, but we didn’t belong to a denomination. And with extended family being Anglican, Catholic, Born Again Christians and Christian Scientists, our impression of Christianity centred on the

personal relationship between the individual and God; not the Church.

As is the case with many people, having our own children brought our connection with Christianity into focus. We knew we wanted our

boys raised with Christian values, within a like-minded community, with pastoral care to help steer them on their journey. However, the boys' first Christian school wasn't Catholic – it was founded by the church in which we were married.

We soon came to realise that we were looking for a more structured approach to embedding Christian values into their environment and began thinking about the differences in denomination.

We soon came to realise that we were looking for a more structured approach to embedding Christian values into their environment and began thinking about the differences in denomination.

It was at this point that we started attending St. Joseph's Church, to get a feel for the community and observe the Catholic faith in person. We became regulars in the back pews, learning about the nuances of the Church, getting to know the community, and after a year decided to also do a tour of the Parish schools.

We were charmed by the authenticity of character that we found amongst the Lakes Parish, which extended seamlessly into the school environment. Despite the children not being Baptised, we were fortunate to have been accepted into St. Rose, and decided to continue learning about the Catholic faith, as a family, by undertaking the OCI Program.

We wanted our boys to wholly experience the spiritual environment we had now trusted with their care, and made the decision to go with them on that journey.

"We wanted our boys to wholly experience the spiritual environment we had now trusted with their care, and made the decision to go with them on that journey."

In the months that followed, we felt the full embrace of the Catholic Church community, benefiting from the guidance and support given by the Priests, Church Leaders, and other families who had also made this decision.

It's been a fantastic induction to a holistic way of life, that made sense of what we had been looking for, and we really look forward to it continuing just as it has begun.



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WE HAVE YOUR SOLUTION



Bishop Emeritus David Walker accompanied by clergy from across the Diocese outside Our Lady of Dolours, Chatswood.

Bishop Emeritus David Walker celebrates 60 years of priesthood

Bishop David Walker celebrated his 60th anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood on July 22, with a special Mass at Our Lady of Dolours Church, Chatswood, alongside Most Reverend Anthony Randazzo, Bishop of Broken Bay, clergy, parishioners, and Serra Club members from many parishes across the Diocese.

The evening commenced with a well-attended Mass celebrated by Bishop David and enhanced by the singing of the parish choir. An expansive supper was prepared by the Chatswood parishioners.

Vicar General Father David Ranson, parish priest of Chatswood, commenced the formalities. He offered his congratulations to Bishop David, who had also been ordained Bishop at Our Lady of Dolours Church, and also spoke about the Bishop's involvement in the parish.

Bishop Anthony also congratulated

Bishop David on achieving 60 years of priesthood indicating that he had recently celebrated 30 years since ordination. Bishop David humorously interjected saying "the second 30 are the hardest".

In recognition of this amazing milestone of 60 years ordained, the Serra Club members decided to have Bishop David's Chalice and Paten, presented to him by his family in 1962, refurbished for the occasion. President of the club, Terry Scanlan, presented them to Bishop David thanking him for his great support for Serra as Bishop of Broken Bay and as Episcopal Adviser to Serra Australia through his role with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

Terry thanked Serra members and The Serra Foundation for their generosity in bringing the project to life. Bishop David cut the anniversary cake which was shared with all in attendance.



Bishop Walker cuts his anniversary cake.

Father David then presented Bishop David with a gift on behalf of the parish. The Chatswood parishioners said it was a wonderful celebration worthy of a wonderful man and they looked forward to the 70th anniversary of ordination celebrations in 2032.

Holy Cross Kincumber celebrates 180th anniversary

It may be considered compact by today's standards but the beautiful sandstone Holy Cross Church at Kincumber was built by faithful and very skilful parishioners, block by block.

And the timber ceiling and doors were also carved by the dedicated pioneers more than 180 years ago. Most were farmers and market gardeners who brought their stone masonry and joinery skills with them when they arrived in Sydney from overseas and settled around Brisbane Waters.

On 6 August Holy Cross Church, the third oldest continually used Catholic Church in Australia and the birthplace of the Catholic Church in the Brisbane Waters, hosted today's parishioners and guests to its 180th Anniversary celebrations. Parish Priest Fr Bogdan Skupien welcomed Bishop Anthony Randazzo who celebrated Mass with parishioners and guests.

The Sisters of St Joseph also have a special connection to the Church and Kincumber with a number of them at the Mass and celebration.

In 1887 the presbytery and grounds were placed by Cardinal Moran at the disposal of the Institute of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and became a home for boys established by Mary MacKillop. More land was gradually acquired and put under cultivation.

In the 1880s the area was still quite isolated and most goods had to be transported by ferry with the boys having to learn the skills of farming, dairying, gardening, baking and carpentry.

Unemployment was high, especially in the cities, and the intention was to provide the boys and young men with skills they could use to find future work.

Mary MacKillop, now St Mary of the Cross MacKillop would make the long trek to the home to visit the Sisters, even sleeping in the small sacristy.

Until 1966 the site remained a home for boys when it was then used solely for retreats and more recently as a modern conference and retreat centre.



Bishop Anthony Randazzo celebrated Mass for parishioners and guests in the historic church.

Although the Church is no longer surrounded by acres of ploughed fields, its surrounds and adjacent historic cemetery is carefully and lovingly maintained by today's dedicated parishioners, very proud of their historic beginnings and service Holy Cross continues to provide for the community.



A number of the Sisters of St Joseph also attended the Mass and celebrations.



A local who grew up on the Central Coast and is now the Federal Member for Robertson, Dr Gordon Reid, joined Fr Bogden and Bishop Anthony Randazzo for the 180th Anniversary Mass at Holy Cross.

PASTORAL WORKS Broken Bay

With your help and generosity, we can reach further and wider in helping our local community, and more deeply connect us to the mission of Jesus.



Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD)

supporting Catechists who take the Gospel to state school students



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helping those who are vulnerable, experiency loneliness or sick in hospital

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St Lucy's School

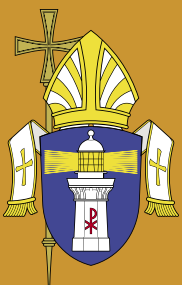
K-6 students with disabilities

St Edmund's College

7-12 students with disabilities

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