New Land Release Ballina Heights

Buyers are being urged to act quickly to secure a site in the latest stage of the Ballina Heights Estate, with only 6 lots available. Stage 13a consists of 25 home and duplex sites ranging in size from 731 sqm to 921 sqm which are priced from $270,000 - $290,000. Buyers can secure a lot to build their dream home on now and pay later with settlement due in 2020. Land at Ballina Heights qualifies for the NSW First Home Buyers Grant and the NSW first home buyers stamp duty exemption. Located in Cumbabah, just north of Ballina, Ballina Heights Estate has become one of the region’s most sought-after land estates. Well-established, it features amenities including parks and gardens, picnic shelters, children’s playgrounds, sporting fields, and cycle and walkway links to the Ballina township, with future plans for a Shopping Centre, Long Day Care, Primary and High Schools & Aged Care Facility. Just a short drive to Ballina’s beautiful beaches and river, 10 minutes to Lennox Head and 20 minutes to Byron Bay. Contact LJ Hooker Ballina for a copy of the plan and price list.

Stage 13a

Ballina Heights Estate (Stage 13a)

$270,000 - $290,000

Contact Luke Shay 0416 275 607
Michael Shay 0427 862 711

LJ Hooker
Ballina Land Marketing 02 6686 2711

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As I watched pictures of Notre Dame cathedral burning in Paris, I was surprised at the sadness and loss which I felt.

I am not French and, except for the one visit to the cathedral and a few walks around it, have no real association with the cathedral. If it had been the Sydney Opera House or St Mary’s Cathedral I could understand my initial feelings, but this was not a Sydney building. Later that day I discovered that I was not alone in this response. People, all over the world, were moved. The sense of sadness was lifted when we knew that the cathedral was not destroyed and that it would be rebuilt. Why is the experience of Notre Dame so powerful?

I remember walking around Notre Dame and taking in the view of its graceful flying buttresses and observing so many others looking with wonder at its beauty. Somehow this building, though lace-like in its stonework and majestic in structure, did not draw attention to itself, but moved my soul to ponder higher things. I suspect that for the people of Paris, Notre Dame is more than a building, it is an expression of what it is to be French. I however, think that it is more even than this; it is an expression of what it is to be human.

Great buildings, classic works of literature, profound music, masterpieces of art and enduring teachings, are all expressions of the human spirit. They are attempts to reveal what is in the human heart and what it means to be human. Each, regardless of country of origin or culture, enhances our experience of life and expands the depth and meaning of that experience. They are classics. We are changed by them and each time we come back to them we do so as fuller people. They are not items on our bucket lists, they are part of who we are.

In the case of Notre Dame, this cathedral is more than an amazing place in which we can worship God. I think that it is a human statement – there is more to life than what we find in the world. It says that we are not confined by the limitations of the world, our spirits can rise beyond the world to a higher place, a place of beauty and peace. Whether you believe in God or not, you can’t visit Notre Dame without your spirit being lifted. The skill of the stone masons and the medieval architects is found in their ability to make their belief a reality in the on-looker.

The builders of Notre Dame didn’t just build a great church, they built an edifice which moves us to experience their belief in God and love of beauty. There is magic in the way in which we share the belief and inner experience of the builders. We rise above ourselves, we discover within ourselves the spiritual. Human genius has the capacity to infuse the spiritual into an artefact which becomes the means to a shared common experience and reality.

In a world which can so often be overwhelmed by noise, power, wealth and the need to be successful, it is good to be jolted abruptly from these accepted norms, even if the catalyst is the burning of a dear friend like Notre Dame. The shock of what we see awakens a space within our hearts and souls, a space which until now was dormant. We can rise beyond ourselves to God the fashioner of all that is beautiful. We can experience another side of ourselves.

Belief in God and Jesus Christ empowered the architects and builders of Notre Dame. The beauty of the Gospel which underpins the French nation, I believe also underpins Australia. We should take time to reflect upon the intersection of the Gospel and all that we value in Australia.

We have just celebrated the Holy Spirit. The pre-eminent experience of the Spirit is through the fruits of the Spirit such as “love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, gentleness and self-control”. The very things the fire of Notre Dame awakened in me.

May you receive the Holy Spirit and may the fruits of the Spirit be a leaven in your lives.

With my prayers and best wishes,
✠ Bishop Greg Homeming OCD
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Every magazine editor faces the challenge to find the ‘right’ image for the cover. It should be sharp, attract attention and carry a thought-provoking message.

For this issue of Catholic Life the task was easy…a young pupil from St. Finbarr’s School at Byron Bay standing in line and waiting to join the 2019 ANZAC Day March. Clutching the Australian flag and a photo of a sacred memory of a family member who answered the call.

It’s all there: youthful courage to march for an ideal, respect for self-sacrifice, love for country and the price paid for peace. In our continuing search for motivation, it is encouraging to know that each year in our Diocese, so many of our pupils with their teachers, march to the same beat.

This year ANZAC Day brought our country to a standstill and reminded us of the sacred virtues, whether weak or strong, that still have some influence in our society. It was a welcome respite from an election that had degenerated into a maelstrom of who is right and who is wrong.

For many, it was a warm feeling of being safe and involved…like a real beacon of hope.

It is interesting to note that when our beliefs and faith practice are challenged by upheavals in our society, we often ask the question: What do our youth think about this? Do they say: “When sufferings and tragedy come, we should examine the deeds and return in repentance?” Or do they say: “It will get better tomorrow”… like waiting for your pulse to return to normal!

In our world that rarely learns a lesson, it will soon be their turn to define what it means to be spiritually convinced about lots of issues. This includes peace that can enhance humanity in a fractured world.

The most predictable thing in life today is change. It is fast becoming a different world where change from the certain to the unsure is a fascination. There is more attention to what is predicted to happen than what has been tried and proven. What we see happening in our country in splurges of violence and wanton preparation for terrorism, scars the ideals and values that once were considered unassailable.

Domestic violence, abuse of children and the elderly continue to impair human life. With so many negatives is there any room left to recreate a better way where peace is re-established? Where is the starting point?

What effect will these tragedies have on generations to come? Looming large is global warming and the effects of climate change. As stewards of creation how best can we respond not just for our welfare but for the future of humanity?

It has been said that if you want to understand what is happening in a culture you have to listen to the stories it tells. These are troublesome times and the poems that we read and hear do not rhyme. Society has to heal itself before the pendulum begins to swing back.

For our Church, the healing is a way back that is more personal. I believe it is time to leave the ranks of the confused. Pope Francis recalls the words of St Paul:

“If one member suffers, all suffer together.” He continued: “By an attitude of prayer and penance, we will become attuned as individuals and as a community to this exhortation, so that we may grow in the gift of compassion, in justice, prevention and reparation.”

The ANZAC tradition continues to reflect those words of St. Paul: Courage, self-sacrifice, compassion, justice, reparation and prevention of evil… true peace for our time. Lest we Forget.

Father Peter M. Karam.
At this important time in the educational history of the Lismore Diocese and in view of the impending retirement of Mr David Condon following 20 years of service in the diocese, including the past 7 years as Director of Schools, Bishop Homeming has announced the appointment of Dr Sally Towns as Diocesan Director of Catholic Schools/Chief Executive Officer of the Diocese of Lismore Catholic Schools Ltd, to commence on 22 July.

Dr Towns is known in the diocese, having taught in diocesan schools for 10 years. Her appointments included teacher at St Patrick’s Primary School, Macksville (1998–2001), John Paul College, Coffs Harbour (2002–2003) – where she was the Campus Head of the Bowraville annexe – and teacher/middle leader at St Paul’s Catholic College, Kempsey (2004–2007).

In 2008, she was appointed Deputy Principal of Mackillop Catholic College, Hobart. During 2008 she was appointed Acting Principal of the College. Sally was appointed Principal in 2009 and continued in this role until September 2015.

From 2015 until the present, Sally has been the Director of School Effectiveness in the Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Cairns. In this role, Sally has taken on significant leadership and administrative responsibilities, including that of Acting Deputy Executive Director and Acting Executive Director.

As well as a wealth of administrative experience Dr Towns has an impressive academic profile including a PhD awarded in 2011 for an examination of the expectations and realities of students during their transition from primary to secondary education. As well, she has two Masters Degrees, in Education and in Educational Administration respectively, has completed the Australian Institute of Company Directors Course and is currently studying for Masters Degrees in Business Administration and Theology. In addition, Sally holds a B.Ed. and has professional accreditation in Religious Education.

In commenting on the appointment of Dr Towns, Bishop Homeming said: “This is a particularly exciting time in our diocese as we approach a new era of governance and renewal in the church. Inspired, faith-filled leadership will be critical as we build on those aspects of our diocesan culture that we value deeply. As we face the challenges ahead, we will need Catholic education which renews, regenerates and adapts to changing times.”
St. Anthony's Parish Community congratulates and welcomes the following 9 people: Stewart Barlogio, Tina Bele, Laura Maher, Grace McMahon, Courtney Midson, Shyne Mupunga, Mario Ricciuti, Jasmin Sleeman and Lisa Tierney who were received into full communion with the Catholic Church at the Easter Vigil.

The young and enthusiastic candidates had completed the RCIA course with the support of their sponsors and led by Father Paul McDonald who was aided by a small team of parishioners. From September 2018 to Easter this year, the group met each Tuesday night, to discuss the topics structured in the program that covered important elements of the Faith.

The Parish had welcomed eight new members during Easter last year and is grateful of this further addition of nine new members embracing the Faith this Easter, especially with the current antipathy towards Catholic Christianity in our society. Some of these new members of the Parish have shown an interest in taking on ministry roles within the Church community. The new members have also expressed a desire to seek further understanding of the Faith they have embraced by independent study.

The St. Anthony’s Kingscliff Parish is running the CAFE program during May and June which was run so successfully last year with large numbers attending each night that it was held. The program is very community oriented with those attending enjoying great company whilst discussing many diverse and sometimes contentious articles of our Faith. This education program should further develop and enrich both new and long-time members of the Church whilst employing a friendly and fun environment.

BOOK & APP REVIEW

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

DOCAT is a popular adaptation of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church, as it has been developed in important documents since Pope Leo XIII.

Young people have in this book/app the major documents of the Church in the original text and in guiding their actions by the maxims of truth, justice and charity that are contained in them.

Pope Francis has written the Foreword to this book.

WWW.YOUCAT.ORG
This year, as we begin the great Triduum and this evening celebrate the great Chrism Mass in which my brother priests will renew their vows and recommit themselves within the church to you, their people, with the vows they made.

This is a very special event, but I think in many ways what makes this Chrism Mass somewhat different to Chrism Mass’ of the past is that there is a darkness hanging over the church. There is a cloud covering us and that darkness in fact is being carried by each of you, by your clergy and by the Bishops of Australia. This evening it falls to me, the Bishop of this Diocese, to ask our Lord ‘what do you want to say to these, your priests, your sons, your brothers, your friends’.

I will take the liberty at the beginning of this short reflection to speak in the first person. What is it, my brothers, that Jesus wants to say to you? I believe that the first thing he wants to say to you is this: I called you with love and I called you in love. Because I placed my love in your heart, in your soul. You responded to that love of mine because it was already in you and my love, once given, is never taken back. In the midst of the darkness of this present time, my love remains in you. If only you would look within yourselves to find that love. The promise I made to you, I never take back. The promise that I made to you is who you are. You are the promise which I made to each of you on the day of your ordination and you carry that now.

In the midst of the darkness you carry and in the midst of the cloud which seems to be upon you I ask you to consider this. Now is not the time for glory and honour, rather now is the time of Christ who calls you to carry his cross for him. I carried the cross to Calvary for you and now you must carry it for me. I ask you in darkness to go beyond the darkness deep within yourself, to the place...
where my love is within your heart and to find me there, because darkness is given so that you might see my light. Any light that you have seen up to now, is not me. My light is the light which manifests itself within you.

And our Lord says to you walk with me this Easter Triduum; experience my cross, experience what it is to be me, because that is what you are called to be. We are called to be Christ. Go within yourself and find me within you.

What else does our Lord want to say to you this evening? Nothing more than what is in the Gospel. Unfold the scroll of the prophet Isaiah because it is within your own heart. It is not there to be read outside; you know it. And unfolding it he found the place that it was written. It is written not in a book, but in our hearts and we must read the scroll of our heart; to proclaim liberty to captives, to bring new sight to the blind, to speak the words of the Lord’s new year of favour. We are called to find him within ourselves and to find him in others, so that we might proclaim that our Lord is amongst us in our people.

Our job is to go to our people and say “have freedom because Christ is with you”; to see with the eyes of Christ not with the blindness of the world, to have the liberty of God’s favour; that is our job. Our job is simply the mercy of God. To recognise God amongst us because we know God within ourselves.

Never has there been a time when the church and the world has been in such a need of this ministry. You are the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. You are Christ in the world, you, he says, are my presence to my people.

**The Blessing of the Oils.**

So what do we do? Be Christ. What we do is insignificant. It is who we are which matters, because we can never do the work of Christ that was done 2000 years ago when he died, which we commemorate at every mass and every Easter, but we can be Christ because Christ has chosen you to be his presence now. And if you will allow yourself to be Christ, to let go of yourself, to no longer be self-conscious or afraid, to no longer be you but be him; then we are what we are meant to be. Then there is nothing more to think about my brothers, because you are called to be Christ.

It is not doing. How will you be Christ? By not being afraid to be the one that he has loved. He chose you for who you are. I am not Bishop, you are not priest, you are not deacon but you are the beloved of God and do not be afraid to be who you are. Don’t act, don’t be bishop, priest or deacon; that’s not why he called you. He called you because of the beauty of your soul. Realise your beauty and be that beauty for the people. And then seeing that, who would not want to be Christ and follow him. This my prayer; it is what I pray for. I believe that this is what our Lord wants your shepherd to speak to you.

And to you, the flock of these priests, love them, pray for them, recognise that they are human like you, because together walking in the love of Christ in our weakness; as Christ has ordained it, the church will grow as the body of Christ and this darkness will now be expelled by the light of Christ present in each one of us.

*Photographs by John Devoy*
St Agnes’ Church in the Parish of Port Macquarie has a sparkling new look with two stainless steel crosses installed atop its roof in early April.

Parish Priest, Fr Paul Gooley said the reason the new crosses were installed was that, during routine cleaning and maintenance of the Church and its belltower late last year, it was discovered that one of the 80-year-old concrete crosses at the top had concrete cancer and had taken some lightning strikes.

“At the time we took remedial action but in the interests of safety, a decision was made to replace the original crosses with ones made of marine grade stainless steel,” Fr Paul said. “We chose marine grade stainless steel because it is durable in our seaside climate and it weighs a lot less than the 380kg existing crosses. When the old crosses were taken down, a rough inscription was discovered on one of them, which may be the names and initials of the men who originally cast them.”

“It also appears the concrete crosses were actually, formed and poured on top of the Church, 25m above ground, which is amazing! The new crosses gleam brightly in the sun, which is, for me, a great reminder that Christ is ever-present in our lives and watching over the community of Port Macquarie,” he added.

Both priests of the Parish, Fr Paul and Fr Peter Wood, blessed the crosses prior to them being lifted into place by crane. Fr Paul is now looking at how we might display the salvaged concrete crosses in the grounds of the Church.

The new crosses were fabricated by Port Macquarie company Bonny Weld and installed by Danny and Daniel Moss, under the watchful eye of Trevor Dickson, St Agnes’ Parish Maintenance Coordinator.

Pope Francis has knelt at the feet of the leaders of South Sudan, begging them to give peace a chance and to be worthy “fathers of the nation”.

“As a brother, I ask you to remain in peace. I ask you from my heart, let’s go forward. There will be many problems, but do not be afraid,” he told the leaders at the end of a spiritual retreat for the political leaders of warring factions.

“You have begun a process, may it end well,” he said, speaking off-the-cuff. “There will be disagreements among you, but may they take place ‘in the office’ while, in front of your people, you hold hands; in this way, you will be transformed from simple citizens to fathers of the nation.”

“The purpose of this retreat is for us to stand together before God and to discern his will,” he said in his formal remarks yesterday, closing the two-day retreat in the Domus Sanctae Marthae, the Vatican guesthouse where he lives.

The retreat participants included South Sudanese president Salva Kiir and four of the nation’s five designated vice presidents: Riek Machar, James Wani Igga, Taban Deng Gai and Rebecca Nyandeng De Mabior. Under the terms of a peace agreement signed in September, the vice presidents were to take office together May 12, sharing power and ending the armed conflict between clans and among communities.

The retreat was the idea of Anglican Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury, spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, who attended the final part of the gathering.

He and Francis have been supporting the peace efforts of the South Sudan Council of Churches and, the Pope said again yesterday, they hope to visit South Sudan together when there is peace.

Francis told the politicians and members of the Council of Churches that “peace” was the first word Jesus said to his disciples after the resurrection.

“Peace is the first gift that the Lord brought us and the first commitment that leaders of nations must pursue,” he told them. “Peace is the fundamental condition for ensuring the rights of each individual and the integral development of an entire people.”
The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has welcomed Pope Francis’ new document on the investigation and reporting of abuse within Church settings, which enshrines some measures long in place in Australia but also makes new provisions that will give greater impetus to the Church’s safeguarding efforts in this country.

Conference president Archbishop Mark Coleridge, who represented the Australian bishops at the meeting of leaders of episcopal conferences at the Vatican in February, said the publication of Vos Estis Lux Mundi (You are the Light of the World) is the latest concrete outcome following that unprecedented gathering.

“The release of this document less than three months after the meeting shows that, for Pope Francis, the updating of universal Church law on the investigation and reporting of abuse against children and other vulnerable people is a real priority,” Archbishop Coleridge said.

“It’s a priority the Australian bishops share. Now all bishops conferences and religious congregations around the world will have to meet more rigorous standards. That’s a good thing.”

During the Conference’s biannual meeting this week, the bishops discussed the Church’s ongoing response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, including reforms related to those Pope Francis has introduced regarding accountability for Church leaders.

“While Catholic leaders in Australia have been responding to the sexual abuse for three decades, we’re continually reviewing our policies and procedures to make Catholic settings the safest possible place for children and other vulnerable people. This new document from the Pope will be a great help in that,” Archbishop Coleridge said.

Archbishop Coleridge said the Church in Australia will continue to implement protocols that go beyond the requirements of the motu proprio.

“For example, reporting allegations to the police and other government authorities has been part of our Church practice for more than two decades. We remain committed to having the most effective practices possible,” he said.
When Theresa Ardler graduates from Australian Catholic University with a Masters of Religious Education this week, she will be wearing a Budbili, a Possum Skin Cloak, painted with the story of her mother’s ancestry.

Theresa Ardler’s Budbili carries her totem, the humpback whale, in an image of mother and her baby drawn from rock engravings at La Perouse, an Aboriginal Community on the shores of Kamay (Botany Bay). The landmark connects her with her ancestors and holds the spiritual connection of sea and their country. Theresa was born in Eora Nation, Sydney, her mother’s country of the Gweagal Clan of Kamay.

A Gweagal Aboriginal woman of the Eora region in Sydney, Theresa was born in Sydney, but grew up in her father’s country, the Yuin Nation in Booderee National Park within the Jervis Bay Territory (ACT), on the NSW south coast. The National Park was returned to its Aboriginal traditional owners by the Commonwealth Government in 1985 and Theresa still has a home she returns to regularly in the Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community.

When she started her Masters, Theresa envisaged becoming a teacher and ultimately a principal of a Catholic school. Instead she delved more into the relationship between her Aboriginal Spirituality and her Catholic faith she has found herself advising bishops and educating principals as to how to combine the two perspectives.

“Aboriginal Spirituality comes first. It’s my identity and my being and then if flows into Catholicism. I’m very strong in my Catholic faith. But, I changed my ideas along the way. My lecturers encouraged me to bring the Aboriginal Spirituality into everything I worked on during my masters and I found I could link it with Catholicism.”

Her work connects Catholic sacraments such as Baptism and Pentecost to Aboriginal spirituality, through natural elements. “When I weave the Sacraments of initiation together, I interlock them through our natural elements that are important to us all. For Baptism, it is water, which means new life. Pentecost symbolises the rushing wind and Confirmation, is fire. These natural elements hold great meaning in Aboriginal Spirituality. “Aboriginal Spirituality she says is the heart of her culture”.

Last year she rewrote and delivered the Genesis story through Aboriginal Spirituality and presented it to the Australian Catholic Communications Congress in Brisbane, on “The Power of Story” – Storytelling in Catholic and Indigenous Culture.”

When Theresa completed her Bachelor of Education at ACU, she became the first person in her family to earn a university degree. After graduating, she took a job as the first Aboriginal Education Advisor at the Catholic Education Office in Sydney, which is now called Sydney Catholic Schools Office. She advised teachers and principals on how to incorporate an Aboriginal perspective. She currently works at ACU, within the Institute for Positive Psychology and Education, as the Research Indigenous Liaison Officer.

This time when she graduates she will combine the European graduation regalia with the Budbili, Possum Skin Cloak, which she has made herself. Traditionally cloaks functioned not only as garments and blankets but also as a kind of passage for Aboriginal people travelling between clan areas, the engravings on the skin recording storylines and family connections. Her Budbili will be the beginning of her doctorate at ACU, which will Aboriginal Spirituality along the East Coast of Australia.

Theresa plans to donate this cloak to ACU and to make a second cloak, which she will burn in the traditional style with her father’s story. She will eventually be buried in that cloak, on her father’s country, situated within the Jervis Bay Territory.
Returning to Ordinary Time

The liturgical season of Easter actually finished with Pentecost Sunday but on the two Sundays since we have had the feasts of the Most Holy Trinity and the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, so the sense of special celebration has continued.

Rather than seeing this return to Ordinary Time as a going back to the ‘same old, same old’, we might consider it as the opportunity to resume familiar and settled patterns of liturgical prayer after the busyness of the last several months. It is a bit like getting back into normal rhythms of family life and household routines after the hectic rounds visitors and parties at Christmas time.

The name Ordinary Time that is used to describe that part of the church year outside the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter is rather an unfortunate term. To describe something as ‘ordinary’ usually suggests that it is unexceptional or uninteresting. However, the word ‘ordinary’ comes from the word ‘ordinal’ and is used here in the sense that the Sundays after the seasons of Christmas and Easter are counted in order.

There are two parts to Ordinary Time. The first falls between the end of the Christmas season and the start of Lent and the second from the Monday after Pentecost to the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent. In total there are thirty-three or thirty-four weeks of Ordinary Time in a year.

The reformed liturgical calendar restored the central place of Sunday in the celebration of each week and the primacy of Ordinary Time as a whole. Ordinary Time is the foundation of the liturgical year on which the major fasting and feasting seasons build. It is the time based around Sunday, the first holy day of all. It is best to think of Ordinary Time as one of the liturgical seasons – the longest season of the church year.

There is no such thing as ‘ordinary time’ in Christian worship. While music and decorations used during the high season of the Church year will be scaled down, the basic principles of good liturgy remain – scripture readings that are well prepared and proclaimed, large liturgical symbols that speak clearly of the meaning they carry and music that supports the rites.

This is the time of the Church year that does not require any great energy in preparation or celebration – just the ordinary commitment by all the faithful to entering into the liturgy with ‘full, conscious and active participation’. Ordinary Time enables us to devote ourselves to exploring the mystery of Christ in all its aspects and to celebrate the presence of God in the ordinary patterns of human life.
OUR LADY HELP OF CHRISTIANS PARISH SCHOOL, SOUTH LISMORE

ANZAC Day March and Acts of Service

On Thursday 25th April, our parish school proudly marched in the Lismore ANZAC Day March in memory of the thousands of people who gave their lives in service to our country and who still serve our country today.

We were extremely proud to carry our schools wreath and banner as we stood tall in our school uniform. It was an honour to have the opportunity to show our respect and give thanks for the thousands of people who gave their life for our country. We feel honoured to be able to commemorate the people who fought and died for our freedom so that we can live in the country we do today.

As a parish school, we are continually heartened and encouraged by the greatness of character we see developing in our students and young people before us. Our children want a world without conflict, without war. Our children value their families, friends and faith and they have a genuine desire to open their hearts to others and to continue to build understanding and peace across our world.

This to us is the legacy of ANZAC for our generation – the desire and ability of our young people to make this world a better place.

In the words of the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove, “I’ve also discovered that the spirit of ANZAC lives on in our young Australians today. My pride in them knows no bounds. They are magnificent…and I think we are very lucky in Australia for the quality of our people…”

Lest We Forget

ST MARY’S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BELLINGEN

We were very proud of the reverent, dignified and respectful manner in which our students conducted themselves at Bellingen ANZAC Day Services. As well as commemorating the fallen, students and families joined in prayers that celebrated love, justice and peace.
Honouring the ANZAC's

We have a long tradition of community involvement and our local ANZAC celebrations are testament to this. In 2019 over 50 students and staff from gathered across 2 locations, South West Rocks and Kempsey, to represent our school and pay our respects to the men and women who served our country in war by attending the ANZAC Day Marches.

Students march in honour of those who committed themselves to war, conflict and peacekeeping missions across the world both past and present. Students involved in the March are encouraged to share their family histories and consider how they could continue to honour these memories through deed and action. A strong parent-school partnership exists with families encouraged to accompany us on the journey as a representation of our solidarity and commitment to each other and to the spirit of the ANZACs.

Students not only represented St Joseph’s in the marches but through attendance at Mass, recognition of the ANZACs through prayer writing, wreath making and a special School ANZAC Day Liturgy.

We are grateful for the contributions and commitments of all to ensure that the memory of the ANZACs continue in the Macleay Valley into the future.

ST. FINBARR'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, BYRON BAY

Thank you to Fr David Gilbey, teachers and the St Finbarr's students who represented the school community for the Byron Bay ANZAC Day March and service. As always, it was a moving ceremony where we reflected and prayed for those who have fought for our country.
ST. MARY’S PRIMARY SCHOOL, CASINO

We must always March to Show our Gratitude

To do whatever it takes for ‘Community’ means we must honour & acknowledge the ANZAC sacrifice that has ensured our values & freedom is protected... the ultimate love. Our kids & us all need to know this & display our gratitude. Our families, students & staff turned out in huge numbers to do this on ANZAC Day at the Dawn Service & at the March as around half of our 490 students marched on our holidays alongside 24 staff. One of the ANZACs we are very grateful for is Sir Harry Chauvel. Harry is a local ANZAC Legend. He was born in Tabulam,16 April 1865. Harry was a senior officer who fought at Gallipoli & during the Sinai & Palestine Campaign in WW1. He was the first Australian to attain the rank of lieutenant general & later general. He was put in charge of the Desert Mounted Corps another first & thought to be the largest body of cavalry ever to serve under one leader.

In October 1917, Harry, with great courage led his men of the Australian Light Horse in the last great cavalry charge in military history as they captured the town of Beersheba, providing the men and horses with a vital water supply. They only carried a rifle & bayonet & were vastly outnumbered against Turkish plane, machine gun & cannon fire.

As a school we very much Respect & Remember Harry for his service to our great nation laying the way for the freedom, safety and great lifestyle we have today.

Lest We Forget

THEY SHALL GROW NOT OLD, AS WE THAT ARE LEFT GROW OLD;
AGE SHALL NOT WEARY THEM, NOR THE YEARS CONDEMN.
AT THE GOING DOWN OF THE SUN AND IN THE MORNING
WE WILL REMEMBER THEM  Robert Laurence Binyon
All around the country, schools, parishes and communities have given generously to Caritas Australia through its Annual Lenten fundraising campaign, Project Compassion.

Caritas Australia is the Catholic Church’s aid and development agency and part of one of the largest humanitarian networks in the world. Through this year’s campaign over $6 million dollars has already been raised to support the needs of poor and marginalised communities all over the world.

Held annually over the six weeks of Lent, Project Compassion raises both awareness and funds to eradicate poverty and promote justice. This year’s Project Compassion theme of “100% Hope” highlighted the role that young people like Thandolwayo, who no longer has to walk long stretches every day in her native Zimbabwe just to procure enough water to drink, can play in the solutions to the challenges facing their societies.

Caritas Australia’s Head of Engagement and Sustainability, Richard Landels, thanked the Australian community for their support.

“As giving generously at Project Compassion time, the people of Australia are showing that when we sow seeds of hope we reap the fruit of love and compassion,” Mr Landels said.

“For more than 50 years, Project Compassion has helped change the lives of millions of people. Yet it’s not too late to give, and by generously investing in our work you can give that last push which is needed to ensure that the most vulnerable are lifted up” Mr Landels said.

This campaign also told the story of students helping students. Some of the schools and parishes which have given most generously include St Pius, Adamstown in Newcastle, New South Wales, which raised $17,000 for the work of Caritas Australia through a ‘Caritas Ks’ event. At the event, 1000 students walked together in solidarity with the 663 million people, including young Thandolwayo, who must walk for water everyday.

For Adam Frost, Ministry Coordinator at St Pius X High School Adamstown, the issue of water scarcity was one of the driving factors which informed the theme of the ‘Caritas Ks’ competition and a wider awareness of the work of Caritas at his school.

“This Lent, we developed greater solidarity with Thandolwayo, and others like her. We need to make changes to how much water we use at home and at school,

as well as acting for change in places where clean water is so scarce,” Mr Frost said.

“She used to walk seven kilometres every day to get clean water. Caritas (the Catholic Aid and Development Organisation) was able to help Thandolwayo and her people in her village by installing a solar water filtration device, which brought clean water to the village.”

It’s not too late to give to Caritas Australia’s Project Compassion, which you can do online via https://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion

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Support Project Compassion
Donate today
1800 024 413 or caritas.org.au

Photo credit: Brooke Robinson
Adopt-a-Farmer

The students and staff held a fundraiser which highlighted the plight of so many farmers and their families. The children actively participated in a mufti day on the Rural Aid Adopt-a-Farmer day on which they were encouraged to dress as farmers and to donate to this worthy cause.

The students raised in excess of $280 which goes to those in need. These funds will go towards purchasing hay, a hamper or water to assist the farmers and their families.

This is the second time that the students have raised money for the farmers and they have enjoyed putting into practice their growing knowledge of the principles of Catholic Social Teachings.

Rural Aid is one of the largest rural charities in Australia. It’s focus is to provide support to farmers and rural communities in times of natural disaster, as well as supporting the sustainability of the agricultural sector.

Compassion a Focus for Lent

This year’s focus for Project Compassion “Lives Change When We Give 100%” was the focus of the Caritas Leadership Conference hosted by St John’s College Woodlawn on March 19.

The leadership training day coincided with the launch of the college’s “Hearts of Hope” campaign that runs throughout the season of Lent.

In total 45 students from the Woodlawn’s Social Justice Committee and 60 students from other northern region schools within the Lismore Diocese participated in a range of workshops designed to increase awareness about issues around global poverty and deprivation.

Woodlawn’s Leader of School Evangelisation, Annette Reen, said the activities provided students with the opportunity to contemplate the finite resources of our planet and consider the inequity of resource distribution across the globe.

“Part of the day also involved the students hosting a barbecue so that the senior ministry team could present the face of Caritas to our College community and share ideas about the way compassionate actions can change lives,” she said.

The Caritas Leadership Conference was hosted under the tutelage of the Caritas Australia Justice Educator for QLD and the Northern Region, Kerry Drysdale and attended by St Mary’s Catholic College, Casino; Mt St Patrick College, Murwillumbah; and Trinity Catholic College, Lismore.
Celebrating our Mums

The St. Joseph’s school community celebrated all our wonderful Mums and Grandmas at our Mother’s day liturgy. The students and teachers had been busy in the lead up to the liturgy preparing posters, prayers, stories and practicing songs to show their love and appreciation for their Mums.

Our Mother’s day stall, which was run by our hard working parent forum, was a huge success with gorgeous gifts being purchased all week. The students loved being able to go shopping and buy gifts for their Mums and Grandmas.

After the liturgy a beautiful Devonshire tea was served at school which was a wonderful opportunity for these wonderful women to take a break from their day and enjoy each others company. What is more delicious than a scone with jam and cream!

Our school loved celebrating Mother’s day and it was an honour to be able to show our appreciation and gratitude to all these amazing women in our school community.

Partnership is One to be Treasured!

It is so wonderful to see the intergenerational relationships that develop during our visits to Crowley.

Our Holy Family students always have something very special to show the residents when we visit or when Crowley residents come to our school. Musical performances, plays, artworks are all items the children love to share. However the real treasure is in the relationships they form during this special time. Through reading, playing bingo, board games and just good old fashioned chatting, the students are enriched by the beautiful personalities and engaging life stories of the residents.

What a unique opportunity it is for our students and staff to have such a rewarding partnership with Crowley Village; one which we hope will continue for years to come and which we will treasure as one of the most fulfilling learning experiences here at Holy Family.
School Colour Fun Run

Late last year, six students, inspired and led by staff member Nick Houghton, competed in the Robotics regional competition, state competition and were eventually national finalists. Now, after having beaten 900 other teams from around the country, they have the opportunity to represent Australia.

School parents have been amazed and thrilled at the opportunities the robotics program has opened for the students at St Finbarr’s. The knowledge, the mentors and the inspiration has been nothing short of phenomenal and an exemplary example of project based learning. Extending their maths to solve stimulating quests using technology and programming used in the real world, creatively applying their linguistic skills to request and gather information and inform others in an engaging way, building models, designing logos, marketing campaigns, the learning has been diverse and rich.

Equally as important, the students have learnt resilience and team work in a way they had never experienced in the school environment before. To raise funds to assist with the team and the ongoing program at St Finbarr’s an enthusiastic parent group recently coordinated a Colour Fun Run and managed to create a wonderful community gathering.

The school came alive with colour, fun, food and entertainment on the Friday afternoon and parent and student feedback deemed it a huge success. The highlight of the evening was the soaking of coloured slime delivered on the heads of willing teachers! All this to help in sending our Robotics team to Arkansaw, USA representing all Catholic schools across Australia!

Tim Bleakley – Principal
Santa Teresa Immersion

On 11th April, the Santa Teresa Immersion group set off on the journey of a lifetime. With a few hugs goodbye from family and a quick farewell to Mr Miller, we boarded the bus for Brisbane.

Many ABBA songs later we arrived and after a quick dinner went our separate ways to bed before meeting at 5:30 the next morning to travel to the airport. After two flights, we finally arrived in Alice Springs, where we explored the red sand in our troope. That night we were lucky enough to visit Parrtjima, a festival of lights and colours that none of us will ever forget.

The next morning was another early start for a six-hour drive to Uluru. On this trip, we became well-acquainted with many flies, but the breathtaking views of Uluru made it all worth it. Although we returned at 12:30am, we got to sleep in the next morning before leaving for Santa Teresa.

The next seven days were filled with so many amazing experiences and Easter celebrations within the community and we will cherish our time there forever. Whether we were cooking up a storm for the elderly, playing with the children in the creche, assisting the ladies in the Spirituality Centre or preparing the Church, we all gained an amazing understanding of their culture. We made many new friends who inspired and taught us during our stay and we will treasure those memories forever.

We cannot thank the school, the community of Santa Teresa, Mrs King or Mrs Brown enough for what they have done for us. This experience will forever hold a special place in our hearts.

St. Joseph’s Primary School

Palm Sunday Ash Wednesday

Watching from behind the playground fence, students observe as Fr Felix lights the fire and begins to add palm leaves. The children have so many questions and are intrigued by what is going on. Fr Felix explains that we burn the blessed Palms from last year’s Palm Sunday to create the ashes for Ash Wednesday. We remind the kindy children that the ashes will have two days to cool down so they won’t burn their foreheads on Wednesday (this is important for kindy to understand).

Getting dressed into different gowns was a thrill for our year 2 students in the last week of term as they perform two plays dramatising Palm Sunday and the Washing of the Feet in front of the entire school.
100 YEAR Celebration

St Patrick’s Primary School celebrated 100 years of Catholic education in the Nambucca Valley on Friday 5th and Saturday 6th April. This was a significant milestone for not only our school community, but also for our parish and the wider community.

School History

The school’s origins date back to the early 1900’s. In our case, the Sisters of the Good Samaritan were approached to start a school in Macksville in June of 1918. The early school was based in St Patrick’s Church and would later move to the first purpose built school in 1928, which would later become known as the ‘Old Hall’. The Good Samaritan Sisters remained in the parish until 1954, when they were replaced by the Sisters of Mercy, who were based in Grafton. The Mercy Sisters maintained a presence in the school with only three remaining in 1999, when lay teachers and Principals were employed by the diocese.

Order Sisters were pioneers of Catholic education in Australia and their decline in numbers, especially in schools, has been a sad reality of the changes in our society over the past couple of generations. We are most grateful for their service and we are fortunate that they were able to endure hardships and separation from their families to move to unknown areas to live out their vocation.
Feast to Honour Mary

On Friday 24th May, we proudly celebrated the Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians with a mass honouring Mary, as our Parish’s guide and protector.

Back at school, we shared cake as a Parish School community, giving thanks for all the gifts we have been given and gifts we share with each other every day at Our Lady Help of Christians Parish School.

Just as the early church in Australia turned to Mary, we as a school community turn to Our Lady each day in prayer, asking her to guide us, to make our school a more peaceful place, to help us treat each other with respect and compassion and to strengthen us to share our gifts and talents with each other.
Xavier Students Kept Busy

It has been a busy start to the term with many exciting opportunities for students of Xavier Catholic College.

Congratulations to the 150 plus students and staff who, during their holidays, represented Xavier Catholic College at the annual ANZAC Day March in Ballina. Our College Marching Band once again, did us proud, leading the schools in the Ballina March.

Students in Year 11 and 12 have had the opportunity to participate in seminars focussed on study skills and motivation. The aim is to assist senior students to develop strong study habits. Students in Year 7 and Year 9 have been sitting the NAPLAN tests which are now completed online. An exciting STEM activity for Year 7 saw a variation to regular learning and routine, with the students working in small groups to develop skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. Students used team work, creative thinking and problem solving skills to complete a range of challenges such as constructing a catapult.

The College’s Project Compassion fundraising efforts for 2019 included pancake sales organised by VET Hospitality and Retail students, collections in Pastoral Care groups, six different projects coordinated by each of the House Teams and the traditional Easter Egg raffle. Students in Year 10 Ministry class created the Stations of the Cross as part of the traditional Lenten devotion.

The essential conclusion to the story of Christ’s Passion was also dramatised by Year 10 Ministry students with the Year 9 Dance class helping to express the joy of the resurrection in movement.

A number of religious opportunities are being made available to students at Xavier Catholic College in conjunction with other schools in the Lismore Diocese. Street Retreat, a Diocesan Discipleship Gathering offers to empower Year 11 students to return to their parish communities with a passion for social justice and a greater sense of the call of Jesus Christ to serve the poor. The gathering sees students travel to Brisbane to work with a range of social justice initiatives.

The College Leo Club took part in the annual Relay for Life. Each year for the past seven years, students from the College Leo Club have joined with members of the local community as part of this event. The Leo Club will also be assisting the Lennox Head Lions Club with their major fundraising event, a Games Night. This annual event is not only a wonderful community building event but a significant money raiser for local groups in need of funding. Our Leo Club members are to be congratulated on their efforts.

Lismore Diocese has a dedicated YouTube channel

The Lismore Diocese has a YouTube channel that can be accessed at: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYxOJNyku4JCl08vE7Q
Drumming for Wellbeing

We are using Djembe drums as a powerful vehicle in facilitating learning, building relationships and generating positive change within students. Peter Slattery, who is a teacher at the school, provides drumming time with individual students and small groups as part of the school’s well-being programme. The students are enjoying their drumming experience as they focus on increasing their confidence, working as part of a team, strengthening their social skills and building positive relationships.

Peter Slattery has been a classroom teacher for over 40 years. During that time he has attended a number of workshops including Drum Beat, African Drumming and Circle Drumming. Peter is passionate about the use of the drum as a teaching tool and is very aware of the cognitive and social benefits in drumming. He runs after school drumming groups for children and adults.

We are looking forward to Peter organising a full day workshop for all the students at St Joseph’s Alstonville on Friday the 7th June. This workshop will be providing the children with important experiences relating to music syllabus outcomes that address performance, organising sound and listening. The workshop will offer each student the chance to play the drum, be a part of a group in a meaningful and active way, whilst developing self-esteem and confidence. The day will conclude with an assembly where the children will be able to showcase their day’s drumming for their families and friends.
Celebrating Mother’s Day

On Friday the 10th of May St Joseph’s Woodburn school and parish community celebrated Mother’s Day with a Mother’s Day Breakfast and Liturgy. It was a special morning to acknowledge and honour mothers and grandmothers and all the important women in our lives who model God’s unconditional love for us.

School Leaders led the liturgy and spoke about the importance and love a mother has for their child. That is because mothers are our “living angels” and specialists at loving. They have the quality of being able to detect their children’s needs and then answers those very needs or desires.

A team of enthusiastic fathers and grandfathers cooked a delicious BBQ breakfast consisting of bacon, eggs, croissants and fruit. Families mingled and enjoyed the welcoming, friendly spirit of the morning.

Everyone enjoyed the opportunity and generations of families including great grandparents, grandparents and parents were appreciative of sharing in the celebrations.

Parish Family Mass infused with Solomon Island Culture.

On Saturday 18th May, Stage 2 students from Mt St Patrick Primary hosted a Parish Family Mass. The students, their families and teachers were responsible for hospitality, the readings and prayers and music. They were joined by guests from the Solomon Islands who provided traditional music and dance throughout the Mass. A sausage sizzle was provided after the Mass and the sharing of culture continued with additional performances from the Solomon Islanders and Mt St Patrick College students who had participated in the Solomon Island immersion program last year. It was a wonderful opportunity to come together as a community of faith and experience some of the culture from the Solomon Islands.
The Australian Catholic Youth Festival (ACYF) is a national gathering of Catholic young people established by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC). It exists to provide young people with opportunities to deepen their relationship with Jesus, be empowered to be disciples in the world today and encounter and celebrate the vitality of the Church in Australia.

Purpose
The Australian Catholic Youth Festival exists to:

- Provide a high quality formative and experiential opportunity for young Catholics to encounter Jesus Christ, in the context of the Catholic Church in Australia;
- Listen to and discuss the issues and challenges in the lives of young Catholics in Australia;
- Evangelise young people and empower them to be evangelists;
- Provide young people with local examples and connections of vocations, social action, liturgy and prayer, catholic music and catechesis.

ACYF 2019 Prayer
Holy Spirit, Breath of God, you come to us in the stillness and silence of this Great South Land.

Give us the courage to open our hearts and ears, to listen to your voice as we seek to foster the growth of your Church in Australia.

Grant us the desire to know Jesus and say our ‘Yes’ to his invitation to spread the joy of the Gospel.

We ask for the gift of hope as you guide us in our search for purpose and meaning in our lives.

We pray together as young people that we may love and care for all of creation.

We make this prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord, our brother and our companion, who lives with You and the Father forever and ever.

Amen.

For more information go to: https://youthfestival.catholic.org.au/
There are seven cave churches carved into the Moqattam Mountain. The Monastery of St. Simon the Tanner is the largest and has an amphitheater with a seating capacity of 20,000. Then passing by the Garbage City in Cairo where it’s located in a very local neighborhood that calls Manshiyat naser, or “Garbage City in Cairo” as it’s better known as, is a slum settlement located to the southeast of Cairo. Its inhabitants are affectionately known as “Garbage People”, not because of their awesome Ed Hardy swag, but because they have been sustaining themselves for decades as Cairo’s unofficial sanitation crew.

The Garbage People, comprising mostly Coptic Christians, first immigrated to Cairo in the 1930s in search of big city dreams and land under their feet. Being very poor and without a solid 401k plan, they got by whatever way they could: living in makeshift housing and recycling the city’s compostable waste products by feeding it to their pigs.

Today, Cairo’s Garbage People make ends meet by going door to door to pick up people’s trash for a nominal fee, which is then brought back to their Garbage City neighbourhoods. There, they sort and recycle everything they could, using it for their own manufacturing.
Q/ Who are the Patron Saints of Australia?
A/ Until 15 January 2013 Australia had only one patron (which is normally the case for most countries) and that is Our Lady Help of Christians. The Feast day is celebrated on 24 May.

Australians have invoked the patronage of the Blessed Virgin Mary since 1844 under the title of our Lady Help of Christians. The title first came about in the sixteenth century when Pope Pius V included it in the litany of Loreto. Later in 1815 Pope Pius VII established Mary Help of Christians as a feast day after he returned to Rome from his years of captivity imposed by Napoleon Bonaparte.

For some time, though, Australia also had the patronage of both St. Francis Xavier (3 December) and St. Therese of Lisieux (1 October) who were co-patrons of universal missions.

This declaration was made in 1927 by Pope Pius XI. When Australia ceased to be a mission country under Propaganda in 1976 both St Francis Xavier and St. Therese of Liseaux ceased to be patrons of Australia.

A formal decree approving St Mary of the Cross Mackillop as second patron of Australia has been received by the President of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Archbishop Denis Hart.

On 15 January 2013, the Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, Cardinal Cañizares Llovera, issued a formal decree approving St Mary of the Cross Mackillop as second patron of Australia. This was in response to a request from Archbishop Hart and the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

Q/ What role do women have in the Church?
A/ The Church teaches that men and women are equal in dignity. The call to holiness is universal but the paths and means of following this call are different. Women and men are called to be leaven in the world in their daily lives, whatever job, service or hobbies they have. This can be achieved through building holy marriages and raising families or for some people consecrated life. The role of women in the Church varies, some are mothers, others are consecrated sisters, some stay at home and others work – all these roles are for the life and service of the Church - much like men called to fatherhood, consecrated life or priesthood.

Pope John Paul II in particular made many statements defending the place of women in the community, especially advocating for the needs of women in society, noting “as far as personal rights are concerned, there is an urgent need to achieve real equality in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic State.” (Letter to Women, 1995, n4)

He also affirmed women who are mothers, wives, daughters and sisters, women who work, women who are consecrated and indeed every woman “for the simple fact of being a woman!” (n2).

Despite the pope’s statements, and his acknowledgement that the Church and society has not always defended women’s interests, some women continue to feel that the Church has been slow to review her own structures and the actions of her own people in making this teaching a reality.
FOR displaced Iraqi Christians forced from their homes and living in displacement camps, the moment they have been longing for has finally come. After three years of occupation, the terrorist group Islamic State (IS) has been driven out of the area. Now, thousands upon thousands of people have the chance to go back to their villages in the Nineveh Plains—their families’ homeland since before the time of Christ.

But the task of repair and renovation is huge and the Catholic charity Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) — the largest contributor of assistance help since their escape from the Nineveh Plains— is determined to continue to stand with them. It is now or never. Their future is in your hands.

With your help, we can assist the work of the Christian Churches to roll out plans to restore thousands of homes devastated by IS, and continue to provide emergency and pastoral aid for Christian families awaiting resettlement.

A beautiful olive wood Comfort Cross made in Bethlehem, will be sent to all those who assist this cause with a donation of $20.00 or more and tick the box in the response coupon.

The Comfort Cross is designed to fit comfortably into the palm of one’s hand as an aid to prayer or meditation. It is ideal as a spiritual companion for yourself or for someone you love or care for.

Send to: Aid to the Church in Need PO Box 7246 Baulkham Hills BC NSW 2153
Tel No: (02) 9679-1929 Email: info@aidtochurch.org Web: www.aidtochurch.org

I/We enclose $................ to help Iraqi Christians return to their ancient homeland

I enclose a cheque/money order payable to Aid to the Church in Need OR please debit my Visa or Mastercard:

Signature

A Comfort Cross will be sent out to all those who can assist this cause with a donation of $20.00 or more and tick this box

Archbishop Mouche of Mosul, holding a broken statue of Our Lady, desecrated by IS.
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