



# St Francis de Sales COLLEGE



## Justice & Ministry Representatives *Following in the footsteps of Jesus....*

It was with great excitement that the Junior JaM students loaded up trolleys with some of the donated items from College families for the Winter Appeal and personally delivered them to Vinnies.

## JaM & Toast Morning Fellowship

St Francis de Sales Colleges JaM (Justice & Ministry) team have been providing jam on toast and a milo on Thursday mornings to warm up the students and provide a chance for companionship and formation.



## Year 11 Retreat Mylor

The Year 11 students recently participated in their Retreat at Mylor Baptist Campsite, which was facilitated by presenter Sam Clear. Wil Size reflects upon his experience: "Sam's story really caused me to stop and reflect. His activities allowed me to be honest with myself and about my emotions, and this is not often encouraged in our society. It was inspiring! I actually cried during one of the reflection sessions. I've already taken steps in my life to align myself more with the idea of unity; the concept that inspired Sam to make the trip around the world. Going forward I believe I've benefited from this retreat in my personal life through the opportunity to reflect on Sam's teachings."

## Caring for our environment

The R-6 students recently planted hundreds of trees for National Tree planting day. Adjacent the College, towards the wetlands on the Laratinga walkway you can see this amazing effort.



## Understanding the Mass

The College students attend a Year level Mass each term. This term the Year 2/3 classes also had a special visit to Our Lady of Mercy during which Fr Richard gave an in depth insight into the name and purpose of items that are a part of Church and the Mass.



# PARISH LIFE

SPRING EDITION 2017



## MOUNT BARKER/STRATHALBYN CATHOLIC PARISH

Welcome to our first edition of PARISH LIFE, please enjoy a snapshot of the many and varied ways in which we are 'living Catholic' in our parish community.

## SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The Mt Barker/Strathalbyn Parish is committed to providing a program for children from the age of eight years to learn about and celebrate the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion. We like to refer to this as the Initiation Process. These young people, who wish to continue their faith journey through this process are learning what it means to be Catholic.

The Initiation Process is designed for families to share and prepare together over a ten-month period, starting in August/September each year, and completing their journey the following June. The children and their families are well supported by the Sacrament team of Fr Richard, Parish Priest; Mrs Sandra Lloyd, Family Faith Coordinator; and Mr Oreste Farrugia, APRIM of St Francis de Sales College.

A beautiful resource written by Kathy Horan is used by the children and their families as it walks them through the ten different themes celebrated in one book for each of the Sacraments. Throughout the course of the three books, families will come together as a whole group for four Family Sessions concentrating on one theme in each of the three books. There are three weekends throughout this time that the children will celebrate the Rituals of Baptism, Belonging and Commitment. We welcome our families back from Christmas Celebrations with a shared barbeque generously supplied by the Knights of the Southern Cross, and Fr Richard will visit families during the school holidays following Easter.

As we get closer to the Celebrations of Confirmation and First Holy Communion, we will spend time sharing together as a whole group in Mass, a shared meal and a Preparation Workshop at Strathalbyn in May, where the children create the banners they will display at Confirmation telling their faith journey story.

As we come to the climax of preparation in June, the children and their families celebrate together and with the Parish Community the Sacrament of Confirmation celebrated by the Archbishop or the Vicar General, and the children will celebrate their First Holy Communion the following weekend.

Families will come together this September as we begin a new journey with these children who want to learn more about their faith, learn what it means to be Catholic and make a commitment to their faith journey with the support of their families and the Parish Community. Just like us they are also learning what it means to be disciples of Jesus.

Sandra Lloyd  
Family Faith Coordinator  
Mt Barker/ Strathalbyn Parish  
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WE ARE LEARNING TO BE DISCIPLES OF JESUS

FOLLOWING JESUS' WAY



## Sharing our Faith Journey

### What does this mean to you?

For the past couple of months a small group of Strathalbyn parishioners have gathered for thirty minutes before the start of Sunday Mass to share personal reactions to that week's gospel readings. The discussion is informal, keyed often to particular phrases in the text that someone has found to be particularly instructive or challenging. It is shaped by life experience rather than knowledge of the bible and we have found many opportunities to laugh at ourselves as we have stumbled through tricky bits.

The gathering was prompted by a comment from one of our parishioners during the Visitation meeting led by Fr Philip Marshall VG in May: "People turn to God only when they encounter a crisis." How can we make our parish more approachable and helpful to people in trouble? We asked ourselves.

It is a big step for a lapsed or non-Catholic to front up to Mass. Our church is often portrayed in the secular media as a monolithic organisation in which a compliant laity—inspired by a mysterious 'leap of faith'—takes direction from a hierarchical clergy. An impression is given that we carry an out-dated mindset that has little relevance to the modern world. Why should any 'outsider' seek answers to life's problems from an institution that has passed its use-by date?

Our Sunday discussions tell a very different story. Our exchanges enrich our own Mass experience by uncovering layers of meaning that would likely have passed us by no matter how attentively we had listened to Father Richard's homilies. It will likely come as a welcome surprise to any 'outsiders' to hear how ordinary people find guidance and comfort from these texts written thousands of years ago and they will quickly realise that the same benefit is theirs for the asking. Then they will be outsiders no longer.

We hope that other parishioners will join in from time to time—once a month, perhaps? Everyone carries a story and every story brings light to others. *Chris Bagley*



Our inviting parish hall and separate meeting room at Strathalbyn is getting lots of use, from our own parish groups, individuals, community groups and for many and varied special celebrations. With the well kitted out kitchen, the sturdy trestle tables, comfortable stackable chairs and excellent air-conditioning, it can seat 80 comfortably for a meal, with easy access to a generously sized and paved courtyard. An electric whiteboard is also available. Bookings and any costs are through Sue Eckert on 8537-3053.



### The Knights of the Southern Cross

#### Mount Barker/Strathalbyn Branch

The Knights of the Southern Cross sausage sizzle after Mass at Strathalbyn provided a great opportunity for the Knights to introduce themselves and invite interested parishioners to come and along to a meeting and hear more about their formation and active works.



## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MACCLESFIELD? 150<sup>th</sup> CELEBRATION - WALKWAY - ATRIUM

### St James the Less is celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the church, opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1867.

The Parish and the Macclesfield community will be commemorating the occasion on Sunday Nov 5<sup>th</sup>, with a Mass of Celebration at 11am, Opening and Blessing of the Mary MacKillop Walkway followed by a shared lunch in the old Josephite school.

**The Walkway** is an extension of Mary MacKillop Way opened in 2012. The Way includes the footbridge linking the main street, church and old school and will now incorporate the extension walkway, skirting through the church grounds. The walkway will include historical signage and artworks honouring Mary's life and the presence of the sisters in Macclesfield from 1868.

### WORK IN PROGRESS

The Mary MacKillop walkway is a "work in progress". The Mount Barker Council have been extremely helpful in practical advice and assistance, co-ordinated through their Community and Tourism section as well as through the provision of a small community grant. The walkway itself is now in place and locals have already put its smooth compacted path to good use on foot, in wheelchairs and prams.

The stone and rustic cross marking the canonization of Mary as "Mary of the Cross MacKillop" has been added to The Way and the signage after much deliberation and discussion of content, is now at the printers. Tasks like spreading the mulch on the far side of the walkway, completing the path edging and providing a comfortable log seat are in progress.

The purpose of the pathway is being described as "providing a pleasant thoroughfare for residents and a meditative and interpretative walk for both locals and visitors". It is hoped that some walkers might treat it as a place to sit and reflect on their lives with a sense of the sacred.

One sign displaying art work depicting the sisters and townspeople fighting the 1939 bushfire, quotes Mary MacKillop "never see a need without trying to remedy it". We can all endeavour, with God's grace, to live that in some way in our lives.



## THE ATRIUM



Plans for the Mary MacKillop atrium to open in Macclesfield are well under way. A group of half a dozen people have been meeting monthly and have been making and gathering supplies. We now have most of the first essential materials largely completed. These materials include our sheep fold, good shepherd and sheep; our sand paper globe and puzzle map of Israel; the first two infancy dioramas of the life of Christ, and the advent prophecies. Next we will begin gathering supplies for our prayer table, art expression, and practical life work. We are planning to run some trial sessions next term and to open to the parish fully first term next year. If you would like to register your 3-6yo child for the atrium, or if you would like more information please contact: Teena Cobiak 0499172740

Note: for those who don't know, the atrium is a place provided for children to listen to God. It is part of the catechesis of the Good Shepherd; A spiritual formation process begun by Maria Montessori and Sophia Cavaletti.