

The Catholic Parishes of

St Ambrose Woodend – St Mary's Lancefield and Romsey

St Brigid's Gisborne, St Ambrose Riddells Creek, St Patrick's Macedon



COMBINED PASTORAL NEWSLETTER NO 1

Dear Friends

Welcome to the first Pastoral Letter incorporating the Parish Communities of Gisborne, Riddells Creek, Macedon, Woodend, Lancefield and Romsey.

I am excited about this new chapter that we have begun as the Catholic Parishes of the Macedon Rangers. This Combined Pastoral Newsletter will be a quarterly way of sharing the faith and life of our Parish and School Communities.

As I look ahead, I am inspired by who and what we can be as a missionary community proclaiming the Gospel in this place. If you were to ask me what is the key to being that missionary community, I would say three words: Collaboration, Welcome and Hospitality. These three words are the lens through which we will look at how we will celebrate our faith and fellowship. During my recent retreat there were a number quotes from a book on Pope Leo XIV that inspired my reflection. (Pope Leo XIV Restless Heart Faithful Shepherd by Sr Gemma Morato Sendra, OP)

- Christian life cannot be lived in isolation; it is lived in shared bread, shared faith, shared questions, and shared dreams with fellow seekers of God.
- The encounter with Christ is not a one-time event or a memory from the past. It is an experience that renews, a call that echoes each day, deep in the heart.
- One of Leo XIV's most constant teachings has been about the need to walk together in community, shared responsibility, and mutual support. He wants us to remember that the Christian life is not meant to be lived in isolation-least in times of adversity.

- Mary is not passive or distant figure, but a believer, a faithful disciple, and the mother of the Church. In her, we see a model of attention to the Word, free obedience, and active contemplation. Mary does not observe history from the outside, she inhabits it with courage.

These words of Pope Leo XIV spoke to me of what will support and guide our journey as a faith community. I invite us all to reflect on these quotes and contemplate how these words of Pope Leo XIV inspire us as individuals and as a community of faith.

Fr John

THE SEASON OF ADVENT

Sunday 30th November marks the beginning of the Season of Advent. It also marks the beginning of the Church's New Year. During the coming year our weekend readings will come from the Gospel of Matthew, Year A

What Is the Meaning of Advent?

Within the Catholic faith, the season of Advent holds profound meaning. It serves a twofold purpose:

- **Preparation for the Birth of Christ:** Advent is a time to prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate the arrival of Jesus. We reflect on the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament, their fulfillment in Jesus our hope, and thus the mission of salvation he's given to us as members of the one Church he founded.
- **A Call to Conversion:** It's also a season of introspection and renewal. The liturgical colour purple reminds us the weeks of Advent call us to prepare our hearts and minds for the birth of the Messiah. It is a time not only to think of what we do in our homes to prepare for the birth of Jesus, but also in our hearts.
- In essence, this season is a bridge between the past, present, and future. It allows us to look back on the hope for the Saviour of the World, experience anew the joy of his arrival and also his reign in the present through his Church, and to prepare ourselves for his glorious return at his Second Coming.

Sundays of Advent



Each Sunday of Advent holds a special significance, as symbolized by the respective four candles of the Advent wreath:

First Sunday of Advent: This Sunday marks the beginning of the season and traditionally focuses on the theme of **hope**, symbolized by the Prophet's Candle which points to the long-expected Saviour.

Second Sunday of Advent: The focus shifts to **faith** with the Bethlehem Candle, reminding us of Mary and Joseph's

journey to the city where Jesus would be born.

Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday): In a departure from the usual purple vestments, priests may wear a rose-colored one at this Sunday's Mass, and rose is also the colour of the Shepherd's Candle. Both symbolize the world's **joy** for the long-expected Saviour's birth.

Fourth Sunday of Advent: The final Sunday before Christmas emphasizes the incomparable **peace** that our Divine Saviour brings and which the Angel's Candle heralds.

All are invited to join us as we celebrate this wonderful time in our faith and family life. Fr Wahid and Fr John look forward to meeting you in the joy of this season. Times for our Christmas Mass, Penitential Service and Individual Reconciliation are below

Christmas Celebrations

Wednesday 24th

5pm Family Mass St Mary's Lancefield
6pm Family Mass St Brigid's Gisborne
7pm Family Mass St Ambrose Woodend
8.30pm St Patrick's Macedon (carols starting at 7.45pm)
10pm St Ambrose Woodend (carols starting at 9pm)
11pm St Brigid's Gisborne

Thursday 25th

8.30am St Ambrose Riddells Creek and St Mary's Romsey
10am St Ambrose Woodend.
10.30am St Brigid's Gisborne



Penitential Service in Preparation for Christmas

Wednesday 10th December Romsey 7pm
Wednesday 17th December Woodend 7.30pm
Thursday 18th December Gisborne 7pm

Individual Reconciliation

Saturday 13th 10am Woodend
Saturday 20th 10am Lancefield and Gisborne

New Chapter for our Parishes

September 19th 2025 marked the beginning of a new chapter for the three Parishes that proclaim the Gospel in this area known as the Macedon rangers. Fr Wahid and Fr John are excited about this new way working together.

Below is something Fr John shared with the Parishes of Woodend and Lancefield/Romsey, but now with the addition of the Gisborne Parish he would like to present this plan again. As we know across the Archdiocese the focus has been on Mission, Proclaiming the Gospel in a new and life-giving way, and how parishes might be structured in the future. In the light of this focus of the Archdiocese it is time that we began

thinking about what our Parish communities will look like in the future and how we will carry on the Mission on Jesus.

The key for us journeying together is to work in partnership. Having sought guidance from the Archdiocese the best approach for us here in Woodend, Lancefield, Romsey, Gisborne, Riddells Creek and Macedon communities is to begin looking at a structure that will help us work together.

Thus, the following structure is proposed.

COMBINED PASTORAL COUNCIL

(made up representatives from Woodend, Gisborne, Riddells Creek, Macedon, Lancefield and Romsey)



WOODEND



GISBORNE/RIDDELES CREEK

MACEDON



LANCEFIELD/ROMSEY

FINANCE COMMITTEE

LAY LEADERSHIP GROUP

FINANCE COMMITTEE

LAY LEADERSHIP GROUP

FINANCE COMMITTEE

LAY LEADERSHIP GROUP

As you can see by this simple diagram the Combined Pastoral Council would work with the Finance Committee and Lay Leadership Group in each community.

What is the role of each group?

Combined Pastoral Council: Representatives from across our six Mass centers that would look at the bigger picture of how our communities will work together towards partnership, keeping in mind each community's history. Examples of the things this group might deal with: keeping up to date with Child Safety Regulations, planning events both social and liturgical that involve all our communities, planning for the future.

Finance Committee: to oversee the best use of Parish Finances, to cover daily expenses, maintenance and future projects. Each communities needs to have its own finance committee to manger the finances of that community, as finances are held by each Parish community

Local Lay Leadership Group: to help plan and facilitate local events both spiritual and social, meeting the day to day needs of each community. This group functions like a Parish Pastoral Council, the only thing different is the name.

As we head into 2026 Fr John will be looking to implementing this structure of Governance and Finance to better help our Parishes move forward in partnership.

Jubilee Mass



On Saturday 10th October the Parishes of the Macedon Rangers gathered to celebrate this Jubilee Year of Hope. As St Mary Magdalene's in

Trentham was one the nominated Churches for pilgrimage in this year of Jubilee, we gathered to celebrate Mass. It was wonderful to see 70 parishioners from across our six Mass centers gather together. At the end of Mass, the celebrations continued with lunch at the Pig and Whistle Hotel. A great day was had by everyone.



Quotes about the day.

"Such a wonderful spiritual experience. The lighting of our individual candles of hope was so special."

"Was great to see so many people from all the parishes."

"The gathering was a great witness of HOPE and our faith in Jesus Christ."

"The meal the Pig and Whistle, was a great way to continue our celebration."

"Great food and conversation with new friends at the Pig and Whistle."



OUT REACH ARCOSS OUR PARISH COMMUNITIES



St Vincent de Paul

St Vincent de Paul Society Conference in Gisborne responds to all those seeking their assistance throughout the Macedon rangers who we are what we do. And hopefully I can generate some interest in you becoming new members of our Conference. Their core work involves visiting people in their homes who have contacted the Society for assistance, often struggling with living expenses. During these visits, always done in pairs, we offer material assistance as well as friendship and support and

other avenues where assistance can be obtained, always affirming the dignity of each person regardless of their situation. During the last financial year, we were able to assist; *29 separate households and 49 home visits and 11 visits to other locations.*

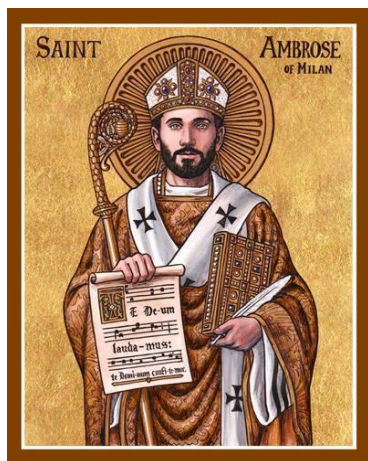
The Conference distributed assistance to the value of \$13,924 to the families in the Macedon Ranges consisting of; *Supermarket Vouches, of which a large proportion came from the generosity of our parishioners. Transport assistance – petrol vouchers Utility and medication bills, Furniture either held in stock or purchased, Vinnies shop vouchers and*

The Conference assisted two overseas SVDP Conferences, one in the Philippines and one in Thailand to set up local cottage industries. Recently a drive was run in the Gisborne Parish seeking new volunteers. We thank those who responded as new volunteers. Over the coming months we will be visiting Woodend, Lancefield and Romsey seeking new volunteers to help with the crucial ministry of responding to the needs in the Macedon Rangers. If you are interested in joining St Vincent de Paul Gisborne Conference please call Neville on 0417 117 151

Neville Spiers
Gisborne Conference President
St Vincent De Paul Society Victoria

Ambrose Care

Ambrose Care was started in 1996 and is an initiative of St Ambrose Parish Woodend where we seek to assist those in need. Over the years families and individuals have been supported both financially and pastorally. Ambrose Care has cooking day every few months to keep meals available for those in need. Whether you are a seasoned cook or just keen to lend a hand, the support offered makes a difference to those in need. Ambrose Care when asked also helps out with the occasional funeral catering.



Ambrose Care is a not-for-profit organisation with Funding derived from:
St Ambrose Primary School Fundraising
Ambrose Care Funeral Catering Fee
St Ambrose Parish Christmas Appeal
Gratefully received private Donations

Ambrose Care will, again, be supporting families in need this Christmas. Providing those families with gift cards for each of their children to spend on gifts. For any families in need of food, some food vouchers will also be gifted. If you are able to help, you can purchase a voucher from your preferred business and drop it into the Parish Office of St Ambrose School or you can give a cash or bank transfer of your donation directly to Ambrose Care. Ambrose Care will purchase the cards on your behalf. **Name: Ambrose Care BSB: 063-806 A/C: 10210993 Re: Christmas appeal** So we can distribute to families before the end of the school term, could all donations be in by Monday 8th December. If you know of anyone in need of some help this Christmas, Please email

woodend@cam.org.au

Columban Partnership Group

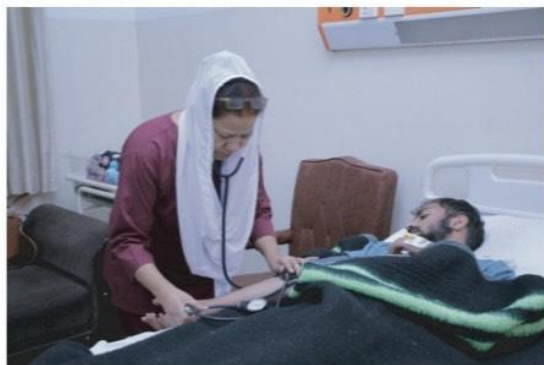
With the recent establishment of the Macedon Ranges Parishes, we thought it might be timely to introduce the work of the Columban Partnership Group, which was formed in St Brigid's Parish over ten years ago to support the work of the Columban Priests in their overseas missions.

In the early days, our team worked towards raising funds to support women living in poverty in a small town in the Philippines. With the support of monetary donations, they were able to access micro loans so that they could acquire a sewing machine and materials to produce goods for sale. In time, they were able to repay their interest free loan and the money would again be loaned out to another needy recipient. This project reflected the aim of the Columban Missionaries in offering a "hand up" rather than a "hand out!"

In 2016, our fund-raising efforts changed focus to supporting the work of St. Elizabeth Hospital in Hyderabad, Pakistan. The team was introduced to Fr Robert McCulloch, who has worked in Pakistan for over 34 years, part of that time as chairman of the St Elizabeth Hospital Board and we became aware of the great work in health care that was occurring there! In a country that spent only 1% of its GDP on health in 2024, St Elizabeth Hospital provides much needed health care and health education and is free and open to all denominations.

Statistics at St Elizabeth in 2024 are:

- Patients seen in Out Patients Department **37,942**
- Patients seen in Emergency Room **22,304**
- Patients admitted to the hospital **5,442**
- Operations carried out **2,307**



With the establishment of the **St Elizabeth Society** and under the guidance of Fr Robert, the works of the hospital have expanded over the years. As well as the hospital, the **Mobile Medical Outreach Program** was established and in 2024 it provided free healthcare to 56,554 marginalised agricultural workers of all denominations. **The School of Midwifery** which offered training to young Pakistani girls has now been incorporated into the **St Elizabeth School of Nursing** after Fr Robert was able to establish a partnership with the Mater Hospital in Brisbane earlier this year. The **Home-based Palliative Care** nursing service now

provides free care in the home to an average of 30 terminally ill cancer patients every month. Some of our

earlier fund-raising efforts went to supporting Eric Siraj, now the hospital administrator, to travel to Australia and gain the necessary qualifications needed to establish this program at the hospital!

As well as the above programs, Fr Robert worked to establish **The Catholic Centre of Academic Excellence (CCAEE)**, which provides academically talented Catholic boys and young men the opportunity to overcome the economic, cultural and social barriers which arise from religious discrimination and family poverty. The course, which runs for 4 years, includes intensive English lessons, is totally free and runs from 4.30-8.30pm five days a week. At present, 69 students are enrolled and a further 61 graduates are now attending various universities and Tertiary Institutions. As well as this program, the **Catholic Youth Development Centre (CYDC)** offers a better

St Elizabeth is a 100-bed hospital and, while maintaining its specialization in maternity and Mother & Child care, is a provider of diversified levels of healthcare and surgical care including orthopaedic surgery.



life to illiterate Catholic young men in Hyderabad. It operates on the same site and accesses the same resources as the CCAE but runs at a different time which greatly reduces costs. The course runs for 3 years and covers basic learning content which eventually extends to a high school standard and again, is totally free. Both these programs provide a future for Pakistani Catholic boys and young men that they cannot access for themselves elsewhere!



Fr Robert McCulloch, second right, and St Elizabeth's administrator Eric Siraj meet Mater newborn Armani-Rose Richards with (left) and Mater Mothers' Hospital general manager Kerri Gane (The Catholic Leader)

I hope I have been able to convey the great work that is being carried out by the St Elizabeth Community under the auspice of Columban Missions. For a number of years, we have conducted various activities including Film Afternoons, Cross-to-Cross Walks, Open Gardens, etc. More recently, the generous donations from our fundraising activities have gone to provide lighting for the newly built orthopaedic operating theatre. Our current focus is to assist in the purchasing of solar panels which will allay some of the costs of electricity bills, a common worldwide problem! We hope our very generous supporters will continue to answer Christ's call to

assist the poor and support this great work.

All donations are fully tax deductible.

Jayne O'Callaghan on behalf of the Columban Partnership Team

St Ambrose School

World Teachers' Day – Hats Off to Our Teachers!



We recently celebrated World Teachers' Day by wearing a favourite hat or one specially created by our children! Although we appreciate the dedication of our teachers every day, this occasion gave us a wonderful opportunity to show our thanks in a fun and creative way. We certainly applaud our students for designing such



unique and imaginative hats — there were some truly wonderful creations on display! Each year, this day is marked internationally to acknowledge teachers all over the world. At St Ambrose, we honour our amazing teaching staff, as well as our dedicated CRTs, ESOs and Administration team. Together, they form a dynamic and caring group who give so much of themselves to our school community.

We thank them for their devotion to their vocation — for caring deeply, encouraging their students to immerse themselves in learning, empowering them to work together, and helping them grow into fine young people with Christian values and integrity. This year's theme was "Hats off to our teachers!" — and what a fitting way to celebrate those who inspire, support and empower our children every single day.

Much fun was had, and our heartfelt thanks go to all our wonderful teachers and to our captains Sonny and Asher for organising this initiative!



Our Local Artist Creates with our Students

Congratulations to our local award-winning artist, Daniel Butterworth, who was selected to paint one of the featured celebrities in the ABC television series Portrait Artist of the Year.

We had the great privilege of welcoming Daniel to our school when our building project was completed, where he shared his unique artistic style with our students and worked with them to create the beautiful murals of our local area at the front of our school. We were also delighted when Daniel agreed to paint a portrait of Christ, which welcomes all who visit our school and is proudly displayed in our entrance foyer.

Some families may have spotted Daniel on television on Sunday evening, where he created a striking portrait of his featured sitter during the competition.



PJ Day at St Ambrose! Our SRC organised our **Pyjama Day**, where students & staff were invited to wear their favourite pyjamas and donate a food or clothing item to our **school food bank**. These donations will soon be delivered to the Woodend food bank to support those in need. We sincerely thank our families for their **generous contributions** — your kindness will make a real difference to many in our community.



St Brigid's School

Jubilee Pilgrimage St. Brigid's celebrated this year's Jubilee with a whole school pilgrimage around Gisborne. Preparations included designing our own pilgrim shells to carry with us as we walked, as well as Rosary beads to remind us that we journey with the love of God and finally learning about several sacred elements of this Holy year. Our day began in celebration together in our church after which we ventured off in

year levels for our activities at various spots around town. Each experience enabled us to reflect on different elements of our own faith. We considered ways we can walk in Jesus' footsteps and ways in which we feel God's presence in our lives and in our world.



We contemplated our own stewardship in caring for our precious Earth and also times when we need to ask for forgiveness to repair broken or damaged relationships using the Holy Doors as inspiration. Our pinwheels reminded us that so many people support us along our life's journey, including God and that their presence in our lives makes us feel safe, loved, supported and hopeful. Each step of our Pilgrimage reminded us that life is a journey — sometimes easy, sometimes challenging — but when we walk together with kindness, courage and gratitude, we carry hope wherever we go. Like the "Pilgrims of Hope" logo reminds us, ups and downs are part of life but our faith is a source of strength as well as all the special people in our lives who support us along the way.

Throughout the day, “Hope” shone in our laughter, our teamwork, our care for one another and the way we kept going with strong hearts. Just like pilgrims, we discovered that when we look for God’s goodness in each other and the world, we find signs of hope all around us. Our day culminated in the creation of a giant display of HOPE, literally, with each member of our community joining together to create the word. It signified each of us being a “Pilgrim of Hope” for each other and the world.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CARD Our St. Brigid’s community have joined together to pack 34 boxes of joy for children in need through “Operation Christmas Child.” Coordinated by our Mini Vinnies, packing these Christmas boxes was a way we could turn our Catholic faith into an action that brings the true spirit of Christmas to life and that was being the heart and hands of Jesus for someone else. Our Catholic faith invites us to care for one another as members of one human family. Packing these Christmas boxes enables us to connect to others, even those far away and show that we stand with



them in love and support. Christmas is a celebration of Jesus who is the gift of hope to the world. By giving to others, we help bring that same hope and joy to families who may be struggling, reflecting God’s love in a real and practical way

St Mary’s School



Wow! We’ve been busy at St Mary’s **GRANDPARENTS DAY** On July 25th we had over 215 grand guests join us so that we could show them how much they’re loved and appreciated. This special day began with the most beautiful liturgy that brought a tear to the eye when the last song was played. Then we were able to show our grand guests a lovely morning tea to fire up their energy levels before they joined their student family members for an activity in the classrooms. Families were tasked with decorating a small square of calico material with their family



name and any unique way they chose to then decorate the square of calico material with their family name and any unique way they chose to decorate the square.



PREPS 100 DAYS On August 1st our Preps celebrated 100 days of school. What a momentous occasion it was. Their day was then jam-packed with activities based around 100. They decorated their special 100-day clowns, and each child brought

in 100 items. Their 100 items were so creative – there were 100 icypole sticks, rubber bands, button, beads, coloured crayons, and even 100 lego pieces! The students dressed up as 100-year-olds or as 100 days brighter!



Camp to Phillip Island This year we went to Phillip Island for camp and it was so much fun! I really



liked the giant swing because it was 18 metre tall and I went all the way to the top. We had to pull a rope that realised us and sent us plummeting to the ground, then we swing back and forth until it stopped. I also liked the Twin Flying Fox because 2 people could go on

it at a time. It was really high and really long. When you went down you felt the wind in your face and you felt so free. We also sat around the camp fire singing songs, did archery, did a team obstacle course and so much more. This year was definitely the best camp I've ever gone on. Thank you to the teachers for making this an amazing last primary school camp. By Lara Farrugia



Feast Day We celebrated our Feast Day with a beautiful liturgy honouring Our Lady on her birthday. As part of this we unveiled the magnificent family quilt that had been created by families on Grandparents Day and then carefully put together by the



ladies from A Patch of Lancefield. We are truly grateful for all their hard work, as the quilt looks beautiful and will be hung with pride as a centrepiece in our Learning Street. After the liturgy we shared a barbeque lunch, had time for an icypole, and then it was time to start the fun with Kaboom Kids Sports! We had almost 150 dads join us on the day to celebrate **Father's Day**. There was music, some crazy dance moves and dance-off; there were vibrant colours and fun activities to dive into.

Art Exhibition and Auction Last term ended with our amazing Art Exhibition and Auction. Thanks to the collaboration of each individual class, we were able to auction off nine pieces of art. All funds raised will go towards new playground equipment for the students. The Art Exhibition was outstanding; such talent from our students. This was all led by our Visual Arts teacher Hayley O'Meara, a very successful exhibition thanks to all her hard work and dedication,

Holy Cross School



Year 6 Social Justice Market Supporting Macedon Ranges Wildlife Network

Our Year 6 students recently led a wonderful Social Justice Market on Tuesday, 18 November, raising funds to support the Macedon Ranges Wildlife Network, a not-for-profit organisation committed to rescuing, rehabilitating, and caring for injured wildlife in our local area.

Through the generosity of our students, families, and wider school community, an impressive **\$1,040** was raised, with **100% of the proceeds** donated directly to the Network.

The market was filled with colour, energy, and creativity, with stalls including:

- Sweet Treats
- Games
- Baked Goods
- Basketball Shootout
- Soccer Challenges
- Face Painting
- Coloured Hair Spraying & Braiding
- Temporary Tattoos



We congratulate our Year 6 students on their initiative, teamwork, and compassion. Their commitment to social justice reflects the heart of our shared mission to care for God's creation and support those who work tirelessly for the wellbeing of all living creatures. Their efforts will make a meaningful difference for wildlife across the Macedon Ranges.



Sacred Heart College

It's been a full and faith-filled term at Sacred Heart College.



We began Term 3 with a staff Faith Formation Day focused on the Jubilee theme "Pilgrims of Hope." We

drew inspiration from the letters of St Paul, who encouraged the early Church to live with hope and perseverance, and from Ursula Frayne, whose courage and compassion helped plant the Mercy story in Australia.



The symbol of the 'Red Door of Mercy' served as a reminder that our faith often calls us to cross new thresholds, welcome others in, and meet God on the journey.

Our Mercy Day celebration in October was full of joy and gratitude as we gave thanks for

Catherine McAuley and the Sisters of Mercy. We were reminded of Catherine's call to be "shining lamps, giving light to all around us."

Our Year 9 Reflection Day explored homelessness and housing insecurity, with guest speakers who shared their lived experiences and practical actions we can take to help our brothers and sisters in need.

This term we also commissioned our first group of FIRE Carriers (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education). These young leaders have taken up the call to help our school community grow in understanding of and respect for First Nations culture and spirituality – an important step in our ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Since 2009 our College has facilitated an annual immersion to Jarlmadangah Burru in the

Kimberley. Our most recent cohort of students came home full of stories, laughter, and new insights, telling us of their life-changing experience. One of this year's participants reflected:



"I still find it hard to find the words to describe the Jarlmadangah Immersion. We formed meaningful connections with both the school and Jarlmadangah community, learnt more about Country, and gained a deeper understanding of the culture in Jarlmadangah. It changed our lives in ways more than any of us could have imagined. There hasn't been a day that goes by where I haven't thought about Jarlmadangah, the relationships we've been able to create with each other and the land but also what the Country has been able to give me."

In Religious Education, our Year 7s have been part of an Archdiocesan curriculum trial exploring the Exodus story and now the Ancestors in Faith. They've been diving into the lives of Abraham, Sarah, and Jacob — discovering what trust and courage look like today.

As the year draws to a close, we're grateful for the many ways our students, staff, and families bring faith to life each day. A big thank-you to our College Chaplains, whose quiet presence and prayerful care keep the heart of our community strong. As we move into Advent, may this season of waiting open our hearts once more to the joy and hope of Christmas — the birth of Christ, our light and our peace.

Saul Travers-Hucker

Director of Faith and Mission

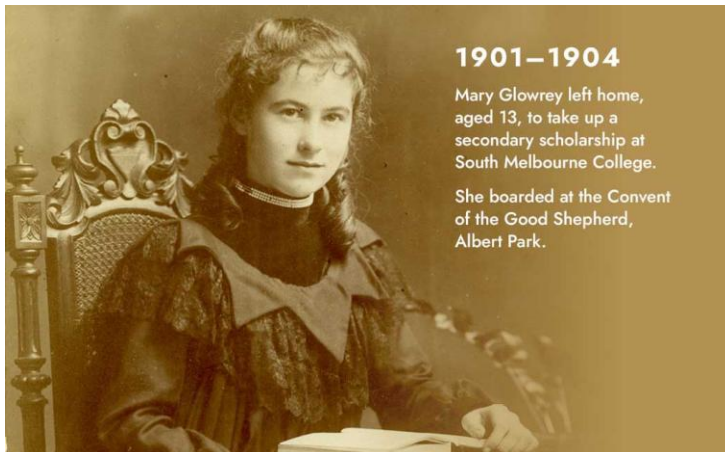


Lates News from the Archdiocese

Pope raises Mary Glowrey to Venerable Australian woman's cause towards sainthood advances

The cause for sainthood for Australian-born doctor and missionary in India Mary Glowrey has advanced after Pope Leo XIV recognised her 'heroic virtues' on 21 November 2025.

Venerable Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey, as she will now be titled, is just the second Australian, after St Mary Mackillop, to be accorded this status.



Born in the Victorian town of Birregurra in 1887, Glowrey was an experienced doctor in Melbourne hospitals and private practice when she travelled to India, aged 32, and entered religious life in Guntur, located in present day Andhra Pradesh. She spent 37 years in service to marginalised women and children.

Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne Archbishop Peter A Comensoli expressed 'deep joy' at the news.

'A proud daughter of Melbourne, Venerable Mary of the Sacred Heart Glowrey was a trailblazer— one of our early female doctors—before answering the call to serve in India,' he said. 'Her healing hands, her compassion, and her bold spirit were a living sign of God's tenderness. May her example and intercession continue to inspire Aussies and people everywhere to live lives of service and holiness.'

Glowrey completed her secondary and tertiary education in Melbourne through scholarships, graduating from the University of Melbourne in 1910 (MBBS) and 1919 (MD). She joined a Dutch religious congregation in India in 1920.

Known as Sr Mary of the Sacred Heart JMJ, she dedicated her life to caring for marginalised women and children in India by providing medical treatment and establishing healthcare facilities, training programs, and support networks. In 1943, Glowrey founded what is now India's largest non-government healthcare network, the Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI). She died in Bangalore (Bengaluru) in 1957.



Glowrey's cause was initiated in India by the Bishop of Guntur, where she spent much of her life. It continues to be supported by the Congregation of Jesus Mary Joseph, the religious society to which she belonged. Pope Leo's decree marks the second major step in the formal process toward sainthood, signifying that the Church has officially found evidence of a life marked by extraordinary virtue. The

next phase, beatification, will require the approval of a miracle attributed to her intercession.

Glowrey's story has been remembered and shared in Australia by her family and by members of the organisation of which she was the first president when it was formed in Melbourne in 1916, now known as the Catholic Women's League of Victoria and Wagga Wagga. Current president Jane Munro said Glowrey's faith and selfless dedication have inspired many for more than a century.

'We hope more people come to know about Mary Glowrey's life and legacy,' she said. 'We invite everyone to view the Archdiocesan webpage about Mary Glowrey or arrange to visit the Mary Glowrey Museum in Fitzroy.'

Archbishop Comensoli encouraged the faithful across Australia and beyond to keep her cause for canonisation in prayer. 'May the day come when the Church names her Saint Mary of the Sacred Heart,' he said. 'May she pray for us and help us walk ever more closely with Christ.'