

FCJnews

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God works in beautiful
and surprising ways



Pictured left–right: Agnes Samosir; Beta (Emiliana Beta Suryawati); Maria Khaing Nyein Aye; Narni (Maria Sunarni); Cecilia Marip Seng Ja and Sisca (Francisca Arti Setiati). Please see pages 2 and 6.



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Welcome to the new leader

Members of the FCJ Communications Committee welcome home Sr Barbara Brown-Graham fcJ as Leader of the FCJ Sisters in Australia.

This is her column.

At present she is hosting a series of meetings with Sr Claire Sykes fcJ, General Superior of the FCJ Society, and her Council, as well as the Area Leaders from the Americas, Europe, Asia and Australia.

Pictured right: Cecilia speaking at her first profession of vows in Myanmar.

📌 **My desire to join a religious community came from wanting to work with others instead of on my own. My own hands can only do a little, but together with many other hands, I can do more for God's people.** 📌



On life's pilgrimage: my vocation story

When I look back at the journey I took in discovering my life's vocation, I see that there were times of joy, times of laughter, and times of learning: about myself, about who God is for me, and about vowed religious life. At the same time, while searching and learning all those things, there were many challenges as well.

I could have said that I was a fool in following God's call. I did take a huge risk in joining religious life, especially in becoming a Faithful Companion of Jesus, which required great trust in God. When I first talked to FCJ Sisters from the Yangon community and felt an attraction to their way of life, I was not sure whether I was suited to become an FCJ. But I decided to quit the job I had and leave my comfort zone behind with a zealous desire to know more about them. I don't know where the strength came from that gave me courage to ask permission from the bishop I was working with at that time to leave my job.

I left my home in Myitkyina, in the north of Myanmar, and came down to Yangon, way down in the south, not knowing yet where I could stay, where I could work, or what kind of job I could apply for in this the biggest, most crowded city in Myanmar, where I had no relatives or place to settle down. By God's providence, and with the help of Sisters Mary John Paul SFX and Christine May, I was offered the job of teaching English in the Myanmar Institute of Religious Study (MIRS), with free food and lodging. With that, I could look for a place to rent with my limited budget, and for a job on which I could live in Yangon. Finally, I was able to rent an apartment on the 7th floor, the only cheap place I could afford. I also got a job teaching English at the Campion Institute, which is run by the Jesuits. Many friends

were willing to lend me their helping hands.

At the same time, I was accompanied by Sister Marion fcJ as I discerned more deeply whether I was called to religious life. Then, I went through the different stages of formation as aspirant, postulant and novice, in which I was accompanied by Sisters Sisca, Narni and then Clare fcJ. During the periods of formation, there were many challenges, such as learning to live with people of different personalities in the same community, learning a new culture and language when I was sent to Indonesia, and learning to let go both of who I thought I was and of the things I used to do, especially during my postulancy and novitiate.

After almost six years of formation, I made my first profession of vows in Myanmar, on 8 December 2018. I was thrilled as this was the day I was officially accepted as a Faithful Companion of Jesus. I revisited the first call: how I foolishly decided to take up religious life. My desire to join a religious community came from wanting to work with others instead of on my own. My own hands can only do a little, but together with many other hands, I can do more for God's people. It gives me much joy that I have been accepted as an FCJ, and that I continue my journey with other companions; many hands with which to carry on God's mission in the world.

Cecilia fcJ

Requiem Mass for Sr Maryrose Dennehy fcJ

Thursday 20 December 2018
Our Lady of Good Counsel, Deepdene

Maryrose Walcot Dennehy was born in Malvern on 12 December 1932. She was welcomed into the world by her parents, Rhona and Jack, and her brother John, aged two and a half years. (Tragically John was killed in a car accident at the age of 36 leaving his wife, Jill, and three young children, Debra, Michael and Andrew.)

Maryrose began school aged four at St Cecilia's School, South Camberwell. The family then moved to Kew and Maryrose attended Sacred Heart School until Year 6 when she went to Genazzano FCJ College. In Year 10 she became a boarder as her parents moved to Merton and later to Sydney. She was school captain in 1949.

Maryrose entered the Society in February 1951, became a novice at the end of that year and was known as Sister Mary John. She made her vows in 1953 and the following year, with Barbara Hume, left by boat for England. It was no first-class cruise on the QE2! The journey took six weeks and Maryrose described the weather as 'hot as Hell'.

She spent a year in England and then went to Fribourg in Switzerland where she completed a Science degree in French and German! She then returned to England where she made her final vows at Broadstairs, Kent, and completed a Dip. Ed. at Sedgley Park, FCJ Teachers' College, Manchester.

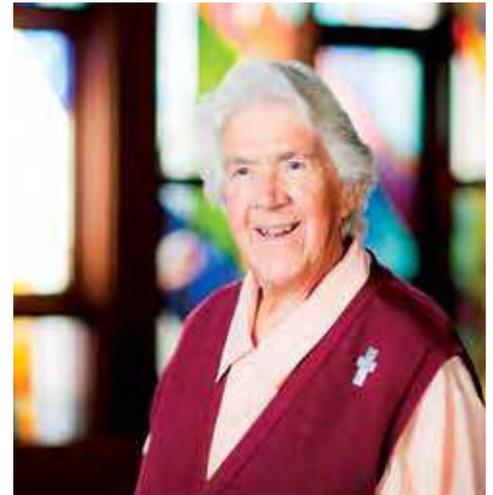
Sr Maryrose returned to Australia in 1960 and taught at Genazzano: English, History, Geography, Religious Education and French. She was also senior boarders' mistress. I was 11 or 12 when she arrived at Gen. We were somewhat fascinated by this tall, kind, lovely, gentle nun. There are many stories we could all tell about Maryrose! She was a very good teacher, fair and at the same time firm.

¶ Her ongoing and active contribution to the lives of generations of Gen girls and Gen families has been nothing short of profound. ¶

As boarders we had a lot to do with her and we loved her, we loved to imitate her. As you all know she enunciated her words very clearly! On one occasion she was telling us off for leaving all the lights on in the dormitory when we went down to 7.00am Mass ... yes 7.00am! She said: 'Girls, you wouldn't leave the lights on in your own homes.' I whispered to Rosaleen Breen at my table, 'some people mightn't have electricity.' Maryrose saw me and said, 'Helen, what did you say?' ... to which I replied, 'Sorry, Mother, I said some girls might not have electricity at home.' She responded: 'WELL I HOPE THEY BLOW OUT THEIR CANDLES!' The entire refectory burst into shrieks of laughter, including Maryrose!

On another occasion we were ploughing through a very doughy sort of cake dessert. Maryrose had obviously received complaints about some of the boarders' behaviour and she said to us 'as far as rudeness and boldness go, you boarders take the cake'. Again shrieks of laughter, including from Maryrose, as she knew we were in the process of trying to digest the indigestible cake.

In 1977 Sr Maryrose was appointed Principal of Genazzano, a role she carried out with the same dedication, love, care and compassion she had always shown in the classroom. There are endless wonderful stories



of Maryrose and Genazzano, which will be written about and talked about – too many to mention in a eulogy. In her letter to the Genazzano community announcing the death of Maryrose, the Principal, Ms Karen Jebb, sums up beautifully Maryrose's contribution to Genazzano:

Her ongoing and active contribution to the lives of generations of Gen girls and Gen families has been nothing short of profound and we will miss her deeply. In Sr Maryrose we always met a listening ear. She showed genuine interest in everyone she met. She exuded gentleness and wisdom. When you were in her presence you were always given her full attention and love.

I'm sure we can all say 'hear, hear' to that.

From 1983 to 1987 Maryrose was missioned to John Paul College, Frankston, where her experience was much appreciated at this time as the college was in its early stages after the amalgamation of The Marianist College and Stella Maris Convent FCJ. It was not easy for her as it was her first time teaching in a co-ed school, but with her usual grit and grace she got on with it. One of the FCJs on the staff with her at Frankston said that Maryrose worked very well with the staff in the middle school. It was a comparatively young staff and she put her energy into helping them and together they successfully built up that section of the school.

Sr Maryrose certainly lived out Marie Madeleine's instructions: 'we must go straight to God by the shortest route', although Maryrose's route was a little more circuitous than perhaps Marie Madeleine

continued next page

Requiem Mass for Sr Maryrose Dennehy fcJ continued

intended! Once again she was on the move, this time to Broome in 1988 where, with Sr Rosemary Crowe fcJ she pioneered the FCJ mission working through the Catholic Education Office.

She had always been gifted with an extraordinary sense of justice towards those in need. Her missioning to Broome to work with, among and for aboriginal people cemented this passion to champion the causes of those who were lost, forsaken and forgotten. Wherever she went on her mission, she brought compassion, hope, love, mercy – and fun. Unexpectedly, towards the end of that same year she was appointed Provincial in Australia, a position she held until 1995.

After a period of renewal at Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington State, USA, Maryrose was off to Yogyakarta in Indonesia (or as she pronounced it In-do-nes-ia) in 1997 where she stayed for nearly 10 years. She worked in Sanata Dharma Jesuit University tutoring in English, assisting in the formation of the younger FCJs, and had quite a few adventures! One of our Indonesian Sisters writes, 'Although she struggled in using Bahasa Indonesia, she always greeted everyone she met joyfully 'selamat pagi' (good morning). All the drivers in Sanata Dharma University knew her as they drove her to and from the campus. They were all touched by her friendliness to everyone'.

Since Maryrose's death we have received many messages of love and condolences from our Sisters in Asia, such as this lovely tribute:

“ She was such a great woman whose compassionate presence created a sense of home for those she lived with. It was a real blessing being in the same community with her in Baciro, Yogyakarta, and Moonbria Avenue, Kew.

She touched the lives of many: in Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, the International Christian Congregation, Duca Wacana University, the pineapple ladies in Demangan and Lempuyangan markets, and *becak* drivers, to name a few.

She has lived life to the full and is now enjoying the fullness of life with God.”

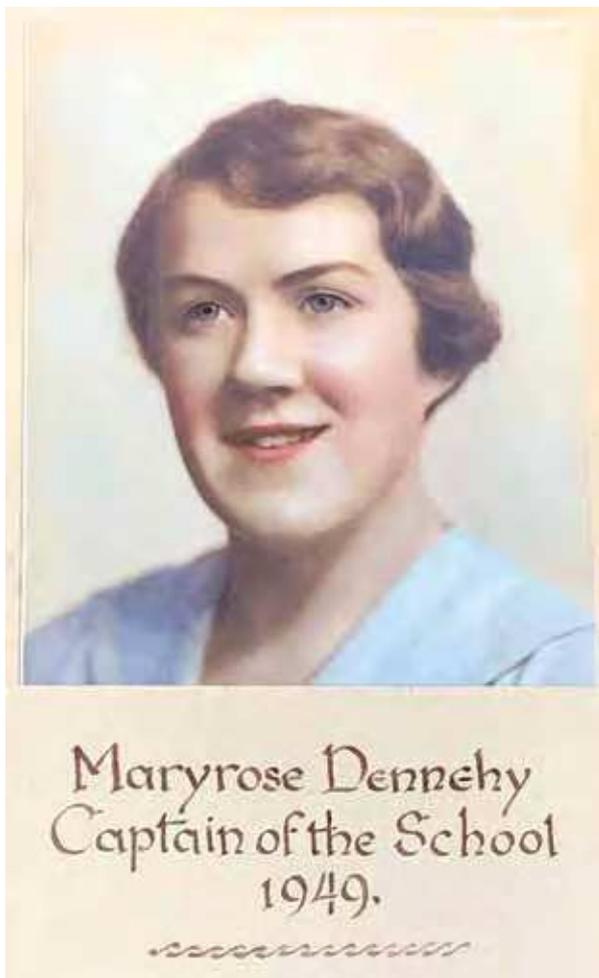
Maryrose contributed much to every FCJ Community she lived in. She was fun, she helped with the different chores in the house such as shopping, washing up, and visiting those in aged care and hospital. She loved going to the movies. She also lived very simply. We FCJs know too she could be quite determined at times! Sr Judith Routier, our former Provincial, sent me this gem on Tuesday:

“When Maryrose wanted to go on the Pilgrimage to France two years ago, both her doctors and I didn't think it was a good idea. She said to me: “Judith, I'm not disobedient but I am determined.””

It is well known among us FCJs that Maryrose was quite dedicated to the swimming pool! In Yogyakarta the driver would take her to the Radisson Hotel pool! Few things took priority over this ritual!

When we FCJs gathered at Moonbria Avenue on Sunday to prepare the Vigil liturgy, Sr Margaret Claver told us about the time in Indonesia she desperately needed to contact Maryrose. It was the time of the East Timor crisis and the Australian Embassy had contacted Australians living in Indonesia asking them to be vigilant for safety reasons.

Margaret Claver eventually found her at the University. ‘Maryrose, I need to speak to you urgently!’ To which Maryrose replied: ‘Margaret, I can't talk to you now as I am going for my swim at the Radisson’, and off she went!



Pictured above: Sr Maryrose as school captain of Genazzano FCJ College.

Right: Sr Maryrose is seated in the centre and front row of this group photo.

Right at base: Sr Maryrose in her early FCJ days.

If I invited every one of you to come up and say a few words about Sr Maryrose we'd still be here this time next week! She was a truly remarkable woman: intelligent, kind, wise, gentle, loving, capable and often very brave in her suffering, especially during the weeks preceding her death.

She had class, for example she barracked for Collingwood! She wasn't a loud, rabid, toothless supporter but she supported the 'Pies.

Years ago a few of us, including Maryrose, went to the footy at Waverley to watch Collingwood. I'm someone who likes to concentrate on the game rather than engage in idle chatter.

Maryrose said to me at one stage, 'What number is Daicos?' I replied, probably impatiently, 'No. 35 ... Maryrose, it's in the record!' A few minutes later, 'Well done, Daicos', clapping in her own unique style!

to the angel: 'Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word'. What an appropriate gospel story for today. Maryrose would have uttered those words many times in her own heart. She truly was a Faithful Companion of Jesus and her 'fiat' enabled her to go wherever the Society missioned her. With Marie Madeleine she could say:

*'Pour porter le nom de Fidèle Compagne de Jésus
Je donnerai tout ce que je suis.'*

*'To have this name, Faithful Companion of Jesus
I would give everything, all that I am'.*



❖ Maryrose contributed much to every FCJ Community she lived in. She was fun, she helped with the different chores in the house such as shopping, washing up, and visiting those in aged care and hospital. She loved going to the movies. She also lived very simply. ❖

Above all Maryrose was a Faithful Companion of Jesus. A measure of this faithfulness can be found in the people who made up her every day, trying to make better lives, better communities, better families, better schools, a better Church. In her loving, gentle, generous way, Maryrose served her Lord faithfully.

In today's gospel Luke tells us in the Annunciation story, Mary said



Maryrose, you will be missed by many. May you now rest in peace with your faithful companion, Jesus, whom you served so faithfully and whom you loved above all else.

Helen Buckley fcJ

Reflections from a Novice

✦ For nothing will be impossible with God. ✦ (Lk 1:37)



I am Maria from Myanmar, where the dominant religion is Buddhism. I became Catholic because I grew up in a convent of the Sisters of St Francis Xavier. This was the beginning of my vocation, I suppose. I have wanted to join religious life since I was 18, but when I approached one of the religious congregations, the requirements were so complicated that I couldn't meet them. Because of that, I thought that religious life was not my vocation. I continued studying and finished university without knowing what I wanted to be or who I really was. After that, I started working in different professional fields, but still didn't feel comfortable or happy working in any of those places. I moved on in life with feelings of confusion and uncertainty, searching for the meaning of life for a couple of years.

I met the FCJ Sisters in 2010, in a small restaurant that I had started in the church compound. Sr Sisca, an FCJ Sister from Indonesia, came to my restaurant and bought noodles, and we had a conversation. The following day, Sr Marion fcJ (from Ireland) came and invited me to have dinner with their community. I was very excited to go for the dinner and it was the first time I had been invited by religious sisters in my life. I went to the FCJ house for dinner and enjoyed it very much, though the food was very simple. I enjoyed the conversation and sharing life stories with them, and I didn't feel that I was a guest.

After we got to know each other, the Sisters asked me to stay with them in their

house to help them in practical things, such as dealing with the local authorities, managing the electricity and phone bills, etc. Since they were all foreigners, it was helpful for them to have a local person present in the house to help them navigate the local situation. We discussed this further and I agreed to stay in the FCJ house. It was easy to make the decision because at that time I was staying by myself in a dormitory.

I started experiencing the loving presence of God through the FCJ Sisters, and felt at home instantly. I was still working in my own restaurant and every time I came home I had the chance to share my experiences, both joyous and miserable. I felt safe in sharing everything and was encouraged by their words. I started praying regularly, and sometimes joined their community for prayers. Each Sister in the community supported me in many ways, especially in the area of spirituality. All my odd ways of living began to change into more normal ways of living. The care of the Sisters for me really touched my heart, and all my resentments about nuns from past experience totally turned to positive experiences. It was as if a miracle was happening in my life. Because of that, I wanted to know more about their spirituality and mission.

I began to ask who the foundress of their Society was, and about her words to the FCJ Sisters. I eagerly read about the life of Marie Madeleine d'Houët, and was inspired

by her courage and confidence to stand at the foot of the Cross, as Mary and the holy women had done in Jesus' time. I deeply admired her for her response to the 'thirst of Jesus and the thirst of the world'. I fell in love with the spirituality of the Faithful Companions of Jesus.

The desire to become a religious strongly appeared in my prayers and my mind. I began the FCJs' 'aspirant' program in 2012, and found myself working as a social worker in a program for street children. At that time, I felt that I was in the right place, and I was sure that this was the way God wanted me to be. I continued working as a social worker until mid-2015. After that, I let go of my job and began full-time formation in the FCJ Community. I started my postulant program in 2015 in Yangon. As FCJ Sisters live out the Ignatian spirituality, I started to practise it in my daily life and my relationship with Jesus grew.

Gradually, it became clear to me that my relationship with God was getting stronger, and I decided to join the FCJ novitiate in Indonesia. It was my first time living outside my home country, and it was a great opportunity to learn the Indonesian language and learn about their culture, politics and way of living. I got involved in Church activities, made pastoral visits to the neighbours, and taught English to the children. God always blessed me through the people I engaged with. I learnt many things from people to whom I ministered, such as kindness, openness and trust. At the end of the time of novitiate, I requested and received permission to make my first profession as a Sister in the FCJ Society on 8 December 2018.

Now, I am missioned to study social work in Manila, and my formation is still ongoing. I ask God for the grace to welcome all the ups and downs of life lovingly, gently, patiently and humbly. The strength and courage of God are enough for me as I continue both my outer journey in Manila and my inner journey of the heart.

Maria fcJ

Genazzano celebrates 130 years



It was with great joy that Genazzano FCJ College community celebrated its 130th anniversary Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral on 21 February this year. Celebrant Father Brendan Reed, the college chaplain, led the large congregation in a Eucharistic thanksgiving for the contribution Genazzano has made to Catholic education in Melbourne over the years since its founding in 1889.

The college motto this year is *Gifted with Companionship and Hope*. At the beginning of the Mass a student from each year level walked up the nave carrying a gift to be placed by the altar, symbolic of all the gifts given to students and their responsibility to share these gifts with others in the community. The notion of *companionship* is integral to the charism of Venerable Marie Madeleine D'Houët and the fabric of the school, the word having strong ties to FCJ Sisters themselves and the way students are taught to companion others in all walks of life. *Hope* is central to Christian faith. We believe in life to come and while here we live in hope, acting with energy and enthusiasm and believing our efforts make a difference to lives of others.

The cathedral was full of colour as the new house banners were on display on the sandstone pillars and all girls were immaculately attired – socks up, ribbons in hair, badges in place, smiling and suitably reverent. Students, staff, FCJ Sisters, alumnae, families and friends all gathered to celebrate what Genazzano has meant and means today. Ms Karen Jebb, Genazzano Principal, spoke of the enduring legacy of the FCJ Sisters and their model of faith and apostolic service that reaches across the globe and through the generations. The Sisters, in pride of place at the front of the cathedral, were especially touched to be given a Genazzano rose and the acknowledgement of all the work – some known, much unsung – they have undertaken in their various ministries over the years. Many of them had taught at Genazzano at some time in their careers



FCJ Sisters Helen Mary Langlands, Helen Buckley, Joan Cartlidge, Ann Connolly, Dewi Gallang, Annabelle Delos Santos, Margaret Claver Hayes at the 130th anniversary Mass.

in education. Sister Joan Cartlidge (formerly Sister Eymard) was a great sportswoman and I remember especially how she encouraged netball and softball in my Year 8 – almost 50 years ago! A noticeable absence was that of Sister Maryrose Dennehy, Genazzano student, captain and former principal (1978-1982) who died in December. We know she was with us in spirit as her beloved *alma mater* celebrated its heritage. Seeing these wonderful women humbly and gratefully receive this little token of affection summed up that gift of gentleness so renowned in the foundress: *la douceur* – gentleness. What wonderful and enduring role models of faith, grace and the 'feminine genius' referred to by St John Paul 11 the Great.

All involved in this celebratory Eucharist understood its importance as a gathering of the Genazzano family and faith community. It was an acknowledgment of just how important education in faith and life is and how it can be rich and resplendent in the generations who sow what they reap in their good intentions and consequent actions. The very young and the wise elders were all in companionship in the cathedral, gathered under the Genazzano motto, *Fidelis*. This motto reminds us that we are faithful to God, to each other and to ourselves. Our final fitting hymn was *Companions on the Journey*. Its final verse sums up how the Genazzano community has been nurtured and nourished over the past 130 years.



*We have been gifted with each other,
And we are called by the Word of the Lord;
To act with justice, to love tenderly,
And to walk humbly with our God.*

This is the example that the Sisters FCJ have set for us. We have much good work to do as we follow in their footsteps, the next generation of companions building the next 130 years.

Ann Rennie

Former FCJ College Benalla student awarded Order of British Empire in London



In the recent Queen's Birthday Honour List (in the United Kingdom), Professor Anne-Maree Keenan was awarded an Order of the British Empire for services to podiatry. Anne-Maree holds a Chair in Applied Health Research at the University of Leeds and is the Assistant Director of the Leeds Biomedical Research Centre. She said, 'I am honoured to be nominated for this award. To be singled out is humbling, when there are so many others who are equally deserving'.*

Anne-Maree is the eldest daughter of the late Bill Keenan and Marg Mackerell, both from well-known Benalla families. A former student of St Joseph's Primary School and an Honour student at FCJ College, Benalla, in 1979, Professor Keenan still describes Benalla as home and tries to return home each year to visit her mother, family and friends.

After qualifying as a podiatrist in Melbourne, Anne-Maree worked in both public and private sectors. She taught at La Trobe University, Melbourne, and the University of Western Sydney before she moved to Leeds, in 2002, where she was employed as a Research fellow in the Academic Unit of Rheumatology at the University of Leeds. Her research portfolio is centred around the impact and treatment of the foot in musculoskeletal disease, with a particular emphasis on osteoarthritis. (College of Podiatry website).

Anne-Maree's influence reaches far outside the podiatry profession and developing the next generation of podiatry



Above and right: Anne-Maree Keenan receives an OBE from Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II.

Left: Anne-Maree Keenan was a former student of St Joseph's Primary School and FCJ College, Benalla.

researchers. In addition to being the Assistant Director and the Training Lead for the NIHR Leeds Biomedical Research Centre, she is Deputy Chair for the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Infrastructure Training Forum, which oversees medical, clinical and non-clinical research training across the NIHR Infrastructure. Anne-Maree has been heavily involved in the NIHR strategic review of training and is the Lead Advocate for Podiatry in the NIHR.*

Professor Keenan said when she received a letter from the Cabinet Office in May she was initially alarmed. 'As an Australian citizen who has a permanent residence visa, I thought there must be something wrong with my visa and they were about to deport me!

'However, when I read the letter asking if I would accept the OBE it was a total shock. I was told that I couldn't tell anyone until the honour list was published.'

Her biggest task was keeping it a secret, as she quietly planned a trip to London to see the Queen.

'Her Majesty was not only well informed but interested in what I did and what motivated me and, more importantly, where

I was from, noting my Aussie accent.'

On top of her services to podiatry, Professor Keenan is also a passionate champion of supporting women in her industry. She is co-founder of the Leeds Female Leaders Network, an 800-strong organisation that brings together men and women to support female leaders across the Leeds health sector.

Anne-Maree's mother, Marg, would have loved to attend her investiture but due to ill health was unable to travel to London. Her sister Carmel from Maryborough, Victoria, joined her, along with Anne-Maree's husband, Tony Redmond, and step-daughter, Lowri.

FCJ College and the Benalla community are extremely proud of what Anne-Maree has achieved and wish her all the best with her future endeavours. Congratulations!

Lyn Tanner (Archivist and Alumni Co-ordinator, FCJ College, Benalla)

(*Extracts from the website of *The College of Podiatry, Leeds, UK, reprinted with permission.*)

ACU School Leavers' Program – Rome and London

In November 2018, a group of 20 young school leavers gathered at the Australian Catholic University campus, Trastevere, in Rome for an exciting and exhausting three weeks.

The Australian Catholic University offered this innovative immersion experience in Rome and London for NSW Catholic school leavers at the end of their HSC to explore the Catholic tradition and the foundations of Western civilisation. This program grew out of an idea of Cardinal Pell, to offer students a cultural and religious immersion experience at the end of their secondary schooling. I was lucky enough to be part of the teaching for this immersion program.

The three-week pilot program gave these school leavers the opportunity to deepen their understanding of how Christianity, politics and culture have shaped the Western world, and with it, the diverse, complex, and secular society of today. This program was specifically aimed at future leaders, to encourage participants to discover the story of the Catholic faith and its role in the development of Western culture and society through reading sessions, lectures, discussions and site visits.

The program offered scholarships to students from Catholic schools in NSW who had recently completed their HSC and had a strong record of academic excellence, a capacity for leadership, and a commitment to serving the community. The program in 2018 was a pilot, and as such only NSW students were included. They were selected from a list of students nominated for the Archbishop's Award. These students were a mixture of girls and boys, from both Sydney schools and regional colleges. They were a remarkable group, whose intellectual curiosity and determination meant they happily worked in what were often very long days. In future the students will include Victorians and students from other states.

The course was divided between two weeks in Rome and a week in London. Students participated in lectures and tutorials from Australian and international scholars and their topics included the development of the Papacy to Pope Francis, the rise of Islam and the Crusades, the Renaissance and the Reformation. They also studied the classical world of the Roman Empire and visited some of the ancient Roman sites of

the Colosseum, the Circus Maximus, Piazza Navona, and the Barberini Palace. They visited some of the most beautiful churches in Rome, including the Vatican, San Clemente, St John Lateran, Santa Maria Maggiore and the Basilica of the Holy Cross of Jerusalem. They attended a General Audience with Pope Francis, and met the Australian Ambassador to the Vatican, Melissa Hitchens, who spoke to them about the relationship between the Vatican and Australia.

In the Great Synagogue and the Jewish quarter in Rome they listened to a fascinating account of the history of the Jewish population of Rome. They were introduced to some of the great saints of the

places where St Francis lived and worked.

In London they visited the Houses of Westminster and met with a number of members of the Houses of Commons and Lords, including a member of Theresa May's cabinet, Jacob Rees-Mogg, who spoke with them about the implications of Brexit. On a visit to Oxford, they met with students, who took them to their colleges and talked to them about the life of students studying at this university. Other highlights of their London stay were visits to the National and Portrait Galleries and the pilgrim walking tour of London, which included the Tower of London and the place where St Thomas More was executed.



NSW school leavers in a Vatican chapel, enjoying the opportunity to better understand how Christianity, politics and culture have shaped the Western world.

Catholic tradition, such as St Benedict and St Scholastica, St Clare and St Francis and St Catherine of Siena, and their role in the growth of Christianity in the ancient and Renaissance worlds.

Part of the immersion experience was community engagement and in Rome they visited the San Egidio community and in London the community of St Patrick's in Soho. They also had time to have some fun and they spent time learning about the food, art and music of the two cities.

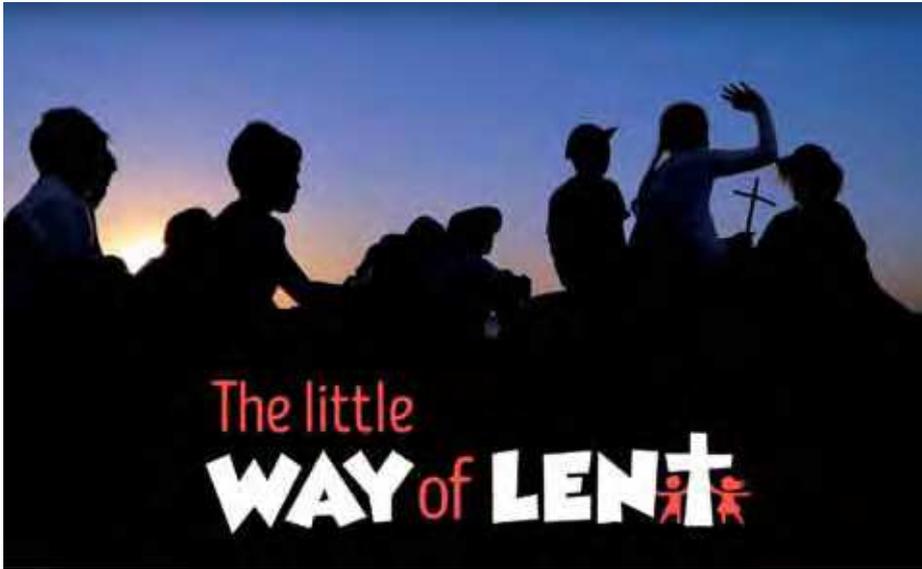
The program was a full one and each day students attended a reading session, a lecture and then a site visit. Most of these site visits were in Rome or London, but they were lucky enough to visit Assisi and were taken to

What was so impressive about this group of students was their capacity for learning and their intelligent engagement with all the material they were presented with. They had questions for all the speakers they listened to and they reflected on the material they studied.

Hopefully this pilot will be the first of a tradition and in the future Catholic students from all over Australia will be able to share in this rich experience. I found it a very rich and fulfilling teaching experience.

Anne McIlroy
(Teacher of English, History and Literature, Genazzano FCJ College, Kew)

The Little Way of Lent



might engender changed attitudes and behaviours at home, school or church. Gentle reminders to pray, fast (reasonably) and give to charity during the Lenten season were sprinkled throughout the series.



Drone shots were used in the opening footage, filmed on a Melbourne beach, and post-production included the editing and layering of incidental music. All scenes were shot in local botanical gardens so the sounds of nature can be heard and the odd bird seen on screen, as well as the props of crucifix and Bible *in situ* for each episode. When the wind ruffles my hair it is the wind, not special effects!

There was no budget for hair, costumes or make-up so it was all me and my own sartorial style, apart from the hat which the director wanted me to wear. Not sure if this was for an arty or authoritative edge – or this may have just appealed to children.

So, not quite a YouTube phenomenon, but I was happy to be asked and to do my apostolic bit. Waiting for the next gig!

Ann Rennie

It was a phone call out of the blue at the beginning of term. The producer had seen my name on an article I had written about the importance of the Religious Education teacher in helping the student in their faith formation. In an age of internet, health and education providers, such teachers are indispensable as *soul* providers.

She'll do, was the thought. A quick audio audition and a check that I was suitable for the small screen and the hosting job was mine. The 41 five-minute episodes in the series reflecting on the Lenten journey were aimed at an audience of upper-primary students. This was produced by Shalom World Media and entitled *The Little Way of Lent*.

The filming took the month of February, all weekends and a couple of evenings after school, with a director and three camera men. Some episodes were filmed in one take, others needed two or three, depending on light, shade, background noises, vocal clarity and audibility. I had to do my research and know my material and spoke straight to camera – no auto cue!

Each episode involved the day's gospel reading and an unpacking of this in accessible and relevant language for the young person. I expanded on how this

Pictured above: Images from the video *The Little Way of Lent*.

The Way of the Cross

Cities are places of joy and sorrow, grace and disgrace. They are places of blessing, because in them the glory of God, so many men and women made in the image of God, are gathered together. They are places of woe, because in them this image of God can be so easily disfigured and disguised.

There are bright city centres to which all roads and pathways lead, and there are the city fringes of shadow and alienation. The holy and unholy are built together by its saints and sinners. In its social crucible we can offer glory to God, or be seduced to the worship of alien gods.

Jerusalem in the time of Jesus was not much different.

(Sr Verna Holyhead SGS, Introduction to *Way of the Cross* booklet)

At Station 6, *Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem*, we were reminded how Jesus welcomed the company of women during his life.

At Station 10, *Jesus and the good thief*, we were reminded that Jesus offered Paradise to the thief who believed.

At Station 13, *Jesus is taken down from the cross*, we prayed that we might be part of the harvest of Jesus' sacrifice for our salvation.



On a bright Good Friday morning a group of Companions in Mission joined in the annual *The Way of the Cross*, an ecumenical initiative instituted by the Melbourne City Churches in Action. We met outside St Francis' Church in the CBD, where Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop was baptised, and with a procession of about 3000 other Christians we followed a route pausing at the Stations of the Cross located at other denominational churches in the city centre.

We paused twice at St Patrick's, our own beautiful Gothic revival cathedral. In our hearts, many said a prayer for the restoration of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Our last stop was St Paul's Anglican Cathedral.

The walk took about two hours. People of all ages, some carrying palms and placards, walked behind the banner praying and singing the processional chant.

“...with a procession of about 3000 other Christians we followed a route pausing at the Stations of the Cross located at other denominational churches in the city centre.”

At each Station, a leader read from Scripture and then prayers were said. Many of these prayers reflected the underbelly of city life, the poor and marginalised and those afflicted by different hurts and sorrows; those thirsting for justice or simply a roof over their head.

At Station 4, *Jesus before Pilate*, we prayed for the wisdom to know when to speak and when to keep silent.

During the course of the walk along main roads and tram routes, we lost each other occasionally, but knew we were blessedly safe in this peaceful crowd.

Many Catholics would have attended the 3.00pm services in their local parishes. We thought that this might be another way of meditating on the last journey of Jesus in the company of other Christians – and, of course, with our own Companions in Mission, who well understand how our own journey came about because of the original women at the foot of the cross, whose model inspired the Venerable Marie Madeleine d'Houët to found the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus.

Anne Rennie

Pictured above: Companions on the Journey – Good Friday 2019.

How time flies!

It has been 40 years since the FCJ Sisters undertook the mission to establish a Catholic primary school in Langwarrin in the south-east of Melbourne and build up a vigorous parish community.

The 40th year celebration took place on Saturday 27 October 2018 and Sr Rosemary Crowe fcj, accompanied by Norah McCluskey, travelled to Langwarrin for this wonderful anniversary.

Upon arrival, Rosemary was warmly welcomed and directed to a special car spot with her name on it. Then, into the church and led to a VIP seat!

During the Mass, celebrated by Bishop Peter J Elliott and parish priest Fr Martin Adichilamackal, Rosemary was asked to stand up to be acknowledged as the FCJ first principal. This action resulted in a huge round of applause. Another honour was having one of the school houses in her name: Crowe House (red). At the end of Mass, she was invited to a private interview with the Bishop.

It seemed like just yesterday that a frontier group consisting of Sisters Margaret Kennedy (RIP), who at that time was Regional Superior, and Superior, Ita Joyce (RIP), Antonia Ginnivan (RIP), Rosemary Crowe (first Principal) and Helen Buckley (teacher on staff) established such a legacy.

The school officially opened on 7 February 1978 in a newly completed parish centre, a large building, the main part of which was an assembly hall used for Mass on Sundays. Four classes, totaling 104 children, occupied the four corners of the hall and were partially



screened off from one another by bookshelves and cupboards!

In those days there were five members of staff: Sisters Rosemary and Helen, Mrs Lorretta Heys, Mrs Trish Henry and Miss Marion Burke.

The school was well on its way when in 1982 it was time for the departure of the FCJ Sisters, who continue to be so proud of such a mission.

With a 5-star rating as a Sustainable School in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, St Jude's school and parish community takes pride in the care of all people, and of all things in creation, be they natural or made by humans.

As from the very beginning, the community has been strongly bonded in building and maintaining a school and a faith community. Everyone works closely together to continue a commitment to shared education and shared celebration of its Catholic identity, its Catholic vision and its Catholic traditions.

Norah McCluskey

Pictured left: Sr Rosemary and Riley Dunsmuir (a present student).

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