



I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Phil 4: 13

The Witness

Australian Schools of Evangelisation National Newsletter

May 2008

EVANGELISATION FOR BEGINNERS

The whole idea of evangelisation seems to be a stumbling block for many Catholics. They are not sure its something they need to do; they are not sure its something they are capable of doing; and there not sure its something they want to do, maybe its all just too hard.

First we have to be absolutely convinced that evangelisation is something that Catholics are called to do. The consistent teaching of the Popes in the last 30 years can be summed up as, "The Church exists to evangelise." Not only is evangelisation something that Catholics need to do, the fact is you can't be a real Catholic unless you do it. How can we encounter Jesus and then not want to share this incredible experience with others?

Second we have to get over the idea that you have to have a lot of theological knowledge or be very holy to evangelise. Evangelisation is not teaching it is simply sharing what God has done in your life, how he has helped you and how you have experienced the love and mercy of God. It is one sinner

sharing with another sinner where to find forgiveness and hope.

Third we have to be prepared to take up the cross and endure the heartache and hardship that evangelisation entails. Many shy away from, or give up on, evangelisation because it is too painful. They fear the risk-taking, rejection and commitment required are too much. The temptation is always there to opt for an easier more comfortable life as a disciple. Sorry no armchair rides for evangelisers, when Jesus said, "Follow me" to the disciples it was "Follow me to the Cross."

If you are convinced that as a Catholic you are called to evangelise; if you are prepared to pay the price in loving your brothers and sisters enough to want to evangelise; then we have put together a seminar to help you to be able to evangelise.

We have called this one-day seminar "Evangelisation for Beginners". This seminar would be suitable for people who have done a "New Life" course or a "Life in the Spirit" seminar.

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Prayer Tent Evangelisation By Adrian Commadeur,

At the February 2008 Moonee Valley Festival, St Monica's Prayer Group manned a prayer tent for the second year in a row.

Located between World Vision and the Leisure Centre tents, the participants who were mostly graduates of the School of Evangelisation, handed out free stickers, booklets, gospels, pens and erasers, and the Good News.

Although not many people asked for prayer, we handed out about 500 Miracle prayer cards as people passed the tent. Many responded very favourably when they looked and read the prayer. Being small it easily fitted into the pockets of people.



Above: Prayer Tent with Adrian Commadeur, Mary Crawford and Peter Fox.

The Miracle Prayer, based on Fr Rookey's prayer, includes an expression of sorrow for sin, asking the Lord to be the Lord and Master and requesting his blessings. It carries a promise that people will see a change in their lives, if the prayer is said sincerely for a time.

The evangelisers were able to share the Gospel of Salvation prayerfully with a number of people, but the overall impres-

sion is that people were more receptive, seeing the Catholic Church witnessing to their faith through us. We were present in the market place and exposed the love of God to more than 60,000 people attending the festival.

The Witness

This newsletter is published by the Catholic School of Evangelisation in Melbourne, Australia. It is published in April, August and December.

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Post, email or fax your articles of an evangelical nature, personal testimonies, jokes, news items, photos, advertisements, competitions, Bible trivia etc. to the Editor at the above address.

The Director and other members of the National Executive Committee of the School of Evangelisation do not necessarily endorse opinions expressed in articles within this publication.

Deadline for the next issue of

The Witness
11th July 2008

The School of Evangelisation acknowledges the efforts of all Coordinators involved in the distribution of this newsletter.

May God bless you!

School of Evangelisation MISSION STATEMENT

To contribute to the formation of evangelising parishes by offering a formation program which:

- ▶ FORMS DISCIPLES
- ▶ TRAINS EVANGELISERS
- ▶ ESTABLISHES PARISH SCHOOLS OF EVANGELISATION.

BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

By Pat Kelly, National Director

*“And to some, his gift was that they should be...
EVANGELISTS...to knit God’s holy people together for
the work of service to build up the body of Christ...”*
Eph 4: 11,12

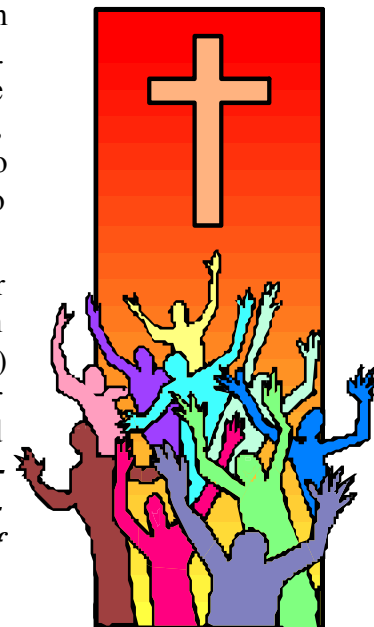
Over the last six months I have been part of our parish RCIA team. I’m sure many of you are, or have been, involved in RCIA programmes and know what a wonderful experience it is. Of course the climax is the Easter Vigil and I had the great joy this Easter of seeing two new Christians baptised and two received into the Church. You could sense that the whole congregation was excited to see these people become part of our parish family and I know that each one of us on the Team felt a special satisfaction in that we had played a small part in the faith journey of these people.

This is the joy of evangelisation, the joy of seeing people come to faith in Jesus and being incorporated into the life of the Church. I reflected on this last Sunday as I followed one of our new Christians as she walked up, with her family, to receive communion and heard another as she did the readings. They were visible evidence of the Body of Christ being built up.

Let’s not get distracted from this work of evangelisation. Let’s not grow weary of reaching out to others with the Good News of Salvation. It’s too easy to fall into the trap of just focusing on ourselves and our own problems, hurts and wounds. The best way to grow in your own spiritual life is to help someone else to come to Jesus. When we help a friend to find new life in Jesus, and see them filled with the love of God, the overflow of love fills and heals us at the same time.

As a School too we have to be careful not to be distracted from the work of evangelisation. It’s great to present the different formation courses and see people grow in their relationship with God but it can’t stop there. The aim has always got to be the training of evangelisers, not only to bring people to Jesus but to train them to bring others to Jesus.

We pray to God that in our new venture, “Evangelisation for Beginners” (see page one) we will be faithful to our charism and will indeed *“knit God’s holy people together for the work of service to build up the body of Christ.”*



EASTER SUNDAY: DEATH AND RESURRECTION

... By Bishop Joe Grech

I still visit the grave of a very dear friend of mine. She died relatively young. She was just a few days short of her fiftieth birthday. I visit the grave because somehow I do not want to lose the connection that I have had with this person for a number of years. At times the visit is tinged with sadness as I recall the happy times and as I look at the photograph displayed on the tombstone I recall the vividness and depth of her faith, the courage in the midst of adversity and the enthusiasm with which she deepened her relationship with Jesus Christ. Under the photograph there are the words taken from St John "I have come to give you life and life to the full".

Very often during these visits, I have often thought, how can people live without faith in the Resurrection of Jesus. Without faith in the Resurrection, my visits to the grave would end up in total depression. Life, beautiful as it is, would become meaningless and death would herald a total and utter loss. It is precisely in a graveyard, where everything speaks of death, that the resurrection was first announced. It is very fitting that it was in a graveyard where death seems to reign supreme that the good news of Jesus' resurrection was first announced.

This is the unique and powerful message of Easter. God can turn what seem to be tragedies into triumphs. No one else in this world can give us this promise of life after our natural death. Only Jesus can. St Paul speaks very passionately about this reality in Chapter 15 of his first letter to the people of Corinth, a sizable town in Greece. Speaking about death, he says Death where is your sting? Death where is your victory? He calls Jesus the first fruit of those who have died. What does this mean.

The first fruits are very important to the farmer. If the first fruits are good and healthy then all the harvest will be good and healthy. However if the first fruits are sickly looking and without life, then the whole harvest will display the same qualities. The first fruits manifest what the whole harvest is going to be like. Therefore, when Paul describes "Jesus as the first fruit of those who have died", he is saying "Look at Jesus, whatever happened to him is going to happen to all of us". Jesus died. We are all going to die. But Jesus rose again and it will be the same for each one of us. My firm

belief in the Resurrection teaches me that one day I am going to meet again with my parents and all those who have been dear to me. This is what this feast of Easter challenges and invites us to think seriously about.

The story is told of a young man who went to visit William Gladstone who was Prime Minister of England from 1868 to 1874. This young man shared with the prime minister that he was keen on studying law. William Gladstone's reply was and what then? "Oh I would like to enter Parliament and serve in the House of Lords". "What then?" retorted the Prime Minister. The young man smiled and said, "Oh, I suppose I would die". "Yes" replied, Mr Gladstone, "and what then?". "I have no plans beyond that", the young man replied. "I have never thought any further than that". "Then", Gladstone replied, "Young man you are a fool. You need to go home and think life through". Easter gives us the response for that last question.

Moreover when we realize who we are in God; when we realize the great destiny that as believers we are called to, then, in turn, we can be a sign of the Resurrected Jesus to others. When we live our lives, doing the ordinary things in life extraordinarily well, we are a sign of the Resurrected Jesus. When our families try to live our Christian values and ideals, we are a sign of the Resurrected Jesus. When husbands and wives, fathers and mothers commit themselves to give the best to their children and to their marriage, we are a sign of the Resurrected Jesus. Every little act of kindness and generosity is a sign that our God is still alive today. Every time we teach ourselves and our children to think about others through "Project Compassion", Catholic Mission", we are being signs of the Resurrected Jesus.

Over the years I have met many people who are still powerful witnesses of the Resurrection of Jesus. Recently, I met this university student from Sao Paulo Brazil. She is energetic, she is intelligent, she has ambitions and she works hard. She also belongs to a Catholic community. In the evenings she goes and works with the drug addicts. She has been often threatened by those who traffic these drugs. One day one of the local drug leaders asked to meet her.



Formation Of Evangelisers - St Mary's N.S.W.

by Paul Farrugia, Wollongong Co-Ordinator

To what degree would you put yourself out to evangelise? Would you leap to it with all of your might? Would you break an arm to do it?

Lucy Grasso (Coordinator Sydney SOE) literally did just that, leapt into the running of the Formation of Evangelisers course and, with fullness of enthusiasm, managed to break an arm in the process. The hospital bed was very unwelcomed and before you knew it, Lucy was back with Eddie Grasso, Pat Kelly, Michael van Ommen and Fr Bob Bossini bringing to effect the equipping of course participants to reach out to parishioners of Our Lady Of The Rosary parish of St Mary in the true Spirit of evangelisation.

Have you ever had the desire to share your faith? To tell of the wonders God has done in your life? To invite someone into that faithful relationship you share with God through Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit?

Sharing good news is something we have all grown accustomed to. The expectancy of an unborn child; acceptance into a football team or university; graduation from courses and trades; promotions; recovery of a relative or friend from illness or incapacity. As varied as this list may be, we are all able to enthusiastically share the joy of our particular experience with others as though it is second nature to us. And why not? It is natural for us to share these joyous occasions which in turn bring joy to those with whom we share.

Why is it then, that when it comes to sharing the greatest of Good News – the sharing of our faith, the love of our God, the gospel of salvation we have in Jesus and the empowerment we experience in the grace of the Holy Spirit, most reservedly hold back?

As a Catholic Christian, growing up in the community of faith did not prepare me for the experience of “witnessing”, “reaching out”, “sharing” or whatever term one might want to use, which are all encompassed under the banner of “evangelising.”

Unlike the family community where expressing and sharing good news was experienced throughout my growing years, in my community of faith I lacked the basic experience necessary for the sharing of the most important of all joys of life – the sharing of God’s love with others.

I recall I used to envy a very dear old Anglican friend and brother in our Lord, who is now resting in God’s Kingdom. This man, who knew God and loved Jesus, had the gift of witnessing Jesus to workmates, the girl at the supermarket checkout, the person sitting near him waiting for the bus, doctors and specialists who treated him and the untold number of men and women he ministered to in his home – he never missed an opportunity.

Time and again my wife and I would ask: “How does he do it? How is he able to strike up a conversation leading to sharing Jesus?” As an electrician, prior to tackling a specific task; I would ensure I have all the necessary equipment and tools needed to get the job done. As a disciple of Jesus, willing to share the Good News of salvation through Jesus, I would similarly need to be adequately equipped in order to be effective.

This is where the Formation of Evangelisers course comes into its own. This highly scriptural, motivating and very practical course served to equip all participants with the necessary formation and the means with which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, the believer is able to initiate and execute with power, the sharing of the greatest asset we have – Jesus.

I would recommend this course to all who wish to give credibility to God’s love by introducing Jesus in a very real and practical way.
(See p. 11 for the outreach resulting from this course.)



Train Travelling and Evangelisation

By Mike Dooley, Brisbane Graduate

At one stage in my life I had a job distributing Christian video tapes, most notably of the Dublin based Irish Veritas company, and the American 23rd Publications in New York. Duties with this latter position included setting up displays at appropriate conferences.

The major annual display was for the librarians of all the National Catholic Education Diocesan offices. The annual conferences were conducted in a different State each year.

One year the conference was in a northern suburb of Perth. During my visit to Perth I took a train ride on the recently opened northern line that was laid in the median strip of a split road major highway. The railway stations were up to 5km apart. The maximum train speed was 100 kph. It was unusual to see the train passing cars on the 80kph highway.

At the last railway station, the train moved onwards to turn around for the return trip to Perth. I was the only person on the station. Soon another man appeared on the platform. Something suddenly came over me, as though I was being pushed by an unseen force to go and speak to this man. I made the assumption that if it were the Holy Spirit leading me, then I would be granted the right words to say. I walked up to him noting the sign, "Perth" above him, and saying that I was a business visitor from Brisbane, and could he tell me from which platform side the Perth bound train would depart.



He then introduced himself as Alex, and asked what was my line of business. Seeing an evangelisation opportunity presenting itself, I responded that I was in the Christian video distribution business. Alex went onto inform me that he was Anglican but did not go to church, causing disappointment with his family. Just then the train pulled in to the station. Being younger, I reached the door first and went to sit down by the door of the diesel carriage. Something seemed to force me to change my mind, and I sat down in the middle of the carriage. Alex followed and asked if I minded him sitting next to me.

Alex went onto say that he was feeling further and further away from God and was wondering if God even existed. I shared the cut down version of my amazing story of when I was incredibly blessed by God in the Catholic Mass, followed by the cut down version of my wife being instantly healed by prayer from chronic asthma. Alex grunted that it was good for me, but that did not help him.

Seeing that the train was entering the next station, I asked Alex if I could pray for him. There was a grunting comment that it probably would not do any harm. In response to my "Right now?", Alex said there was not time. I put my hand on his shoulder and prayed aloud: "Please Jesus, show yourself to Alex in the course of the ordinary things of his life. Amen." Alex jumped up to hurry to the door before it closed. He turned his head, and with a smile said: "Thanks mate".

Cont. from P.3

EASTER SUNDAY ... By Bishop Joe Grech

When they met he told her that he and his friends were not at all happy with her work because she was being too successful in leading many young people to break their drug habit. This man threatened her. Her reply was very simple yet awesomely powerful. "Do you mind if I say a little prayer with you".

This man jokingly said. "Ah well prayer never hurts. If this prayer will give me more power to continue in my trade then I have no objection at all if you desire to pray for me". She prayed over him. Today he has joined the community and is working with young people in order to help them break this awful habit. These things cannot be done with human power. These things are achieved by the

power of our God who is alive in us through baptism and confirmation. Jesus is not the God of the dead but the God of the living.

We are going to be faced with many situations that at times are difficult and painful. When your children, parents, husbands, wives, relatives and neighbours come to you sharing a problem or a situation that is causing them anxiety and grief, have the courage to say, "Can I say a little prayer with you". Then talk to Jesus Christ who is alive, about what that person has shared with you. Believe in your prayers. Believe that Jesus Christ can continue to work with you and because of you because He is alive. Try it. You will be amazed what we all can achieve with this God who is here with us.

NEW LIFE BEGINS IN MODBURY ... by Neil Hayter, Graduate

On the weekend of 23rd—24th February 2008, the School of Evangelisation presented a New Life Lenten Retreat at John XXIII Catholic Church Modbury South Australia for 27 of us participants who were, with only a few exceptions, from the Para Hills / Modbury parish.

The retreat was voted to be a great success as evidenced by the following sample comments by the participants:

- * Overall well presented and informative. Some new ideas and lots to put into practice.
- * Excellent presentation, very well received. I would like to attend others.
- * A beautiful experience I would not have missed. Thank you so much for offering this to us.
- * Inspiring retreat course. Presented in a simple straightforward manner with meaningful and inspiring dynamics, which will stay with me on my journey in evangelisation.
- * The whole weekend has been a wonderful blessing in my life. I feel renewed and inspired to do more in my parish and my personal life.
- * Very powerful weekend. Exercises reinforced the words.
- * I found it very enriching and believe it will help me to grow spiritually.
- * I have been touched spiritually, mentally and

emotionally with wonderful group fellowship.

Thank you so much.

- * The whole weekend was just great. Everything was put plainly and clearly. I feel the Holy Spirit has blessed us all and hopefully will move in our community.

The retreat was the first in a series of teachings in the Evangelisation Formation Program to be held in the Para Hills / Modbury parish over the next 18 months with the object of training a team of evangelists. Para Hills / Modbury is the first parish in the Adelaide Archdiocese to undertake this program, which has proved successful in other States.

The main speakers at the retreat were Patrick Kelly, National Director of the School from Victoria and Carmen Sylvester, S.A. Coordinator. A dedicated local team ably supported them.

The teachings gave us a richer understanding of the basic Gospel message and were enhanced by brilliant power point presentations and symbolic group activities that were both meaningful and challenging. As a result, following prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, we responded by making a deeper commitment to God. We were also strengthened spiritually through prayer with each other. Indeed, we found “new life”!



WHAT AN AWESOME GOD WE SERVE!

The following is a true story which show how great is the love and protection God has for each one of us.

There was an atheist couple who had a child. The couple never told their daughter anything about the Lord. One night when the little girl was five years old, the parents fought with each other and the Dad shot the Mum, right in front of the child. Then the Dad shot himself! The little girl watched it all.

The child was sent to a foster home. The foster mother was a Christian and took the child to Church. On the first day of Sunday School the foster mother told the teacher that the girl had never heard of Jesus and to have patience with her.

The teacher held up a picture of Jesus and said, “Does anyone know who this is?”

The little girl said, “I do, that’s the man who was holding me the night my parents died.”

And The Heat Goes On ...

By Carmen Sylvester, Adelaide Co-Ordinator

March 15th was one of the many days that Adelaide had endured temperatures above 35 degrees. Early morning dawned warm and by mid morning it was already hot. However that did not deter 42 people from converging on the Hindmarsh Parish Hall for the first Faith on Fire Seminar for 2008.

Our seminar started with a cool drink before we were led into Praise and Worship by Daniel D'Silva. (Special Request: Please pray for Daniel and his wife who were involved in a serious road accident over Easter.) As we raised our voices to praise God we also raised our hearts to receive the Fire of the Holy Spirit and it was with great enthusiasm that everyone sang "Come Holy Spirit let your fire fall".

It was also with a deep gratitude that we thanked God for an air conditioned room.

Our Guest Speaker Fr Charles Gauci, one of Adelaide's most loved priests, was powerful in his teaching and in his challenge for us to live the authentic Christian life if we are to make an impact on our church and on the world. He challenged us to learn about our faith so we can be true witnesses in our world. We need to know why we believe what we believe and be credible witnesses to people who challenge us about being followers of Christ. He told us how important it was to come into a realization and conviction that we are loved deeply by our God. Once that happens we can truly embrace our own personhood and be able to love others as we love ourselves.

It was a great pleasure to welcome a group of New Life Participants from the Modbury Parish who took the opportunity for on going formation after their experience of the New Life course.

Secret of Paul Course

Our Lady Help of Christians,
East Brunswick, Vic.

Sat. 9th (all day), Tues. evenings 12th, 19th
& 26th August 08

This course develops the character, life and times of St Paul as well as his content and strategies of kerygmatic evangelisation.

The Year 2008 has been named the year of St Paul by Benedict XVI in recognition of the anniversary of Paul's birth 2000 years ago.

Enquiries: Adrian on 03 9337 2051

The Bishop Lady's Déjà Vu Day

... by Sandra Bishop, Melbourne Graduate

With a sense of déjà vu, I entered the parish hall at Hindmarsh for the "Faith on Fire" retreat day. It was just on twelve years ago that Fr Wahid Riad, Mary Portelli, Malcolm Lock and I entered the same hall to present the first South Australian School of Evangelisation course. How time flies and how lovely it was to spend the day with some of the participants from that original school and the subsequent courses I have been privileged to present in the 'city of churches'. It was wonderful witnessing how the Adelaide School is working together to reach out and evangelise.

Everything Fr Gauci spoke of seemed to confirm the Adelaide Team and their ministry. He spoke of the need to be informed about our faith and also to live our faith. The courses, retreats, seminars and bible studies being presented by the team are assisting the faith development of many Adelaideites and from what I have witnessed they are truly living their faith in an exemplary manner.

As Fr Gauci spoke I commented (by whisper) to Carmen – "Doesn't he gesture like Bishop Joe" – must be something they learned at school in Malta. He had some great insights and memorable one liners. He spoke of the importance of silence – external and internal. He said when we are silent and allow a person to feel that they have really been listened to, then they will be more likely to hear us.

He spoke of the importance for people to grow in their love of God which then ultimately results in their love of self and that love flows on to others. Anyone who has participated in a "Formation of Disciples" course will bear witness to the improvement in their love life – love of God, acknowledgement of self worth and love of others. Yet another confirmation for the Adelaide Team.

My day back at Hindmarsh also caused me to recall some of the missing faces, those of the past graduates of the various courses who have now entered eternal life – Fr Albert Ole, Jacob Kriek and Bill Smith – no doubt they are still supporting the Adelaide team with their prayers and intercession so that the team will display Fr Gauci's mentioned four signs of an authentic community: Eucharist, worship, fellowship and love.

Editors note: Sandra was one of the first teachers in the School of Evangelisation. She was Secretary for many years and founding Editor of the Witness.

FORMATION IN CATHOLIC TEACHING

The Sydney School of Evangelisation presented the 'Formation of Catholic Teaching' Course (Matthew Course), as a Six-week Lenten Program for the Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, St. Mary's N.S.W. The Course focused on the exploration and enrichment of the Sacraments.

Forty parishioners attended the course during morning and evening sessions (repeated) to experience the richness, grace, strength and reality of the Sacraments as a visible focus of God's presence and activity in the world.

This course helped participants to strengthen their faith, to come to a deeper knowledge and appreciation of the Sacraments. It helped them to re-

discover the person of Jesus in their life.

Participants commented how they experienced the effective way of God's love, care for them and the community, through the Sacraments in bringing healing, holiness and the call to serve and share their faith with others.

I would like to thank the support of Fr Bob Bossini, SDB, Parish Priest, who presented teachings at the course, together with three members of the newly formed Parish Evangelisation Working Group namely, Jasna Bekic, Jenny Rydzewski and Pam Kelly (Parish Sacramental & Pastoral Outreach Co-ordinator).

Lucy Grasso, Sydney Co-Ordinator

Sale Diocese News

The Sale team are currently conducting a 'New Life' course in Drouin parish over 6 Tuesday evenings. This is the first time we have held a course over evening sessions, which seems to suit a greater number of people. We are also planning a weekend 'New Life' course for youth after World Youth Day especially catering for WYD pilgrims. It will be held in the September school holidays.

On the 16th—17th & 23rd—24th August we will have a 'Formation of Disciples' course in Traralgon following on from the 'New Life' and 'Emmaus' courses held there last year

.... *Cathy McLure, Co-Ordinator*

It is great to see some of our graduates offering to be leaders for the World Youth Day pilgrims in Sydney. The SOE have also been invited to help with Days in the Diocese and the 'Fly Away to Heaven' flyathon – a public reception will be held at the Latrobe Valley airport for the 15 pilots who are flying around Australia to raise funds for WYD pilgrims from East Timor.

Traralgon graduates of the SOE are also actively involved in Parish Visitation, assisting Sudanese refugees and will be helping to conduct a six week seminar called 'This Promise is for You' in May & June.

Cont. from P.1

EVANGELISATION FOR BEGINNERS

This is the objective of "Evangelisation for Beginners"

1. That participant will learn what to talk about. To share the heart of the Good News, that is the Kerygma, using a simple illustration, the Celtic cross, to stimulate discussion. If you can hold a conversation with someone, listening and responding, you can evangelise.

2. That participants will proclaim the Kerygma as something they are actually living. Their lived experience of faith, that is their testimony of what Jesus has done and is doing in their life. If you are living within a loving, personal relationship with God and his Church you can evangelise.

3. That participants will be able to pray with people to help them make a commitment of faith in Jesus so that they will be filled with the Holy Spirit and experience the power of God in physical, emotion and spiritual healing. **If you can pray with someone you can evangelise.**

This simple approach to evangelisation:

Kerygma—Testimony—Healing is something that can be grasped by any Catholic.

We often have a tendency to over complicate evangelisation, to make it the realm of experts rather than ordinary people. Yet all Jesus asked the disciples to do was proclaim the Good News and heal the sick. So evangelisation is simply sharing the Good News in a way that invites people to open their mind and heart to respond to the grace of the Holy Spirit so that through the Holy Spirit they might encounter Jesus and be brought by Jesus into relationship with God the Father. People are hungry to meet God and our job as evangelisers is to introduce them to him. It is not easy but it is simple and what's more it is possible if we work together as the Church – the people of God.

If you are interested in finding out more about "Evangelisation for Beginners" or if you would like to have one presented in your parish then please contact me: Pat Kelly 03 5672 2772,

EVANGELICAL PREACHING

Report by Adrian Commadeur

Over 100 people turned up for a colloquium on Evangelical Preaching, organised by Bishop Julian Porteous of Sydney. The Catholic Renewal and Evangelisation Diocesan Office (CREDO) sponsored the meeting, which proved both successful and inspirational. Speakers included Bishop Porteous, Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Canberra-Goulburn, Fr Ken Barker, Moderator of the Missionaries of God's Love, and Shayne and Shanelle Bennett. Drawing on the document of Pope Paul VI of 1974, on *Evangelisation in the Modern World* all speakers highlighted the role of the church that in evangelising it is seeking to convert people by an encounter with Jesus.

Bishop Julian highlighted the fact that we cannot presume faith even in those who come to church, because many have secularised hearts and minds. Those who preach must do from listening to the word of God and openness to the Holy Spirit. Several speakers emphasised that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelisation.

Many of the wonderful initiatives of evangelisation around Australia have charismatic beginnings, such as the National Evangelisation Teams, which over 20 years have reached half a million young Catholics. Another initiative are the Schools of Evangelisation, some are summer courses, others are parish oriented. *Impact Community Church* in Perth, has a focus on a live liturgy, combined with mission and retreat work. *Men Alive* founder Robert Falzon spoke about the need for parish based retreats for men to develop their spirituality.

Archbishop Coleridge powerfully presented the fact that evangelical preaching must be based



Above: Pat Kelly, Lucy Grasso & Adrian Commadeur at the SOE stall at the Colloquium in Sydney

on the Word of God, the scriptures, which have the power to convert. Shayne Bennett spoke about the ministry of lay preaching in the new ecclesial movements. He pointed out that 90% of young people had lost



Above: Lucy Grasso, Bishop Porteous, Libby Peoples (both CREDO) Pat Kelly and Adrian Commadeur

contact with the Church so the preaching must take place in the market place. Previously Archbishop Mark had emphasised that this present age is one in which the laity are called to minister.

Fr Ken spoke powerfully, and illustrated his own point, that when the preacher is on fire, things happen, and people are converted. He said that the New Pentecost is given for the New Evangelisation, called for by Pope John Paul II. He used the memory phrase to help evangelisers on how to do it: Prayer, Care, Dare and Share. Everyone had some good laughs at the examples he gave of his own experience of evangelising, such as when hitchhiking he was picked up by a young man in a psychedelic painted Charger. On being asked what his occupation was, he said he was a Catholic priest. "Well," the young man said, "then you should be able to help me." It was the perfect way in to sharing the Kerygma: the love of God, revealed in Jesus who died for our sins. By our faith and conversion, we will experience this love, which is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us!

Patrick Kelly and Adrian Commadeur, and Lucy Grasso represented the School of Evangelisation at the meeting and manned the expo tables encouraging people to take advantage of the Parish Evangelisation Formation Program run by the School.

The significance of this event surely is found in the fact that the main stream Catholic Church is now talking seriously about evangelisation seeking conversion. Could it be that a new era evangelical preaching in the Church is dawning in Australia?

Christmas in the Melbourne City Square

By Adrian Commaduer

This Nativity Scene took place on Sunday 16th December 2007 in Melbourne City Square. It was organised by the Archbishop Office for Evangelisation in association with the Melbourne City Council.

A special attraction for children was the lamb, but many Japanese tourists also took pictures of this scene.

Those who took part are parishioners from St Francis of Assisi Parish Mill Park or participants in the courses for the School of Evangelisation, organised by Trish Spiteri of the Parish School of Evangelisation.

The scene was on display on Friday 14th December as well. Thousands of special Christmas cards were handed out by about twenty members of the Legion of Mary, Catholic Charismatic Prayer Groups and graduates of the School of Evangelisa-



tion. Most of the 'evangelisers' were able to explain to people the reason for the focus on Jesus at Christmas. One lady reported that a man away from the Catholic Church for 18 years was coming back for Christmas with Reconciliation and Christmas Mass.

All had good experiences

with a few negative ones.

Several very good choirs, including the special World Youth Day Choir, the Samoan Choir, the Choir from the Neo Catechumenate and the choir from St Raphael's in West Preston sang carols. Florence and Christine and later Trish made a sign language presentation of the 'Mary did you know' song. They are graduates of the recent creative evangelisation course conducted by the School of Evangelisation.

SOLDIERS FOR GOD – GIDEON'S ARMY

"Yahweh then said to Gideon, With the three hundred who lapped the water, I shall rescue you." Judges 7:7

At the moment everyone in the Catholic Church is looking forward to World Youth Day in Sydney. I know many of you are involved in World Youth Day in your own parish, with the Cross & Icon and in supporting your young pilgrims. The School is also going to be involved as we will be having an exhibit at the WYD Vocations Expo. **We will be presenting the young people with the challenge of the call on their life to be evangelisers.**



As you would expect there are going to be significant costs involved in this outreach, not only is

there the cost of the stall itself but we also want to have plenty of brochures and other materials to hand out to the visitors. We are going to be relying more than ever on the soldiers of Gideon's Army to help us to make the most of this opportunity. If you haven't renewed your support this year please this would be a great time to do so. If you would like to come on board and enlist in Gideon's Army you can be sure we will put your donation to good use in God's service.

Enquiries: Pat Kelly, 03 5672 2772

GIDEON'S ARMY

Please enrol me/us in Gideon's Army:

NAME (or NAME OF GROUP).....

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TELEPHONE:

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RENEWAL

Please find my annual contribution of \$100 enclosed

OR Please forward National Bank deposit slip for one off annual contribution

OR I wish to contribute by _____ deposits of \$ _____ each, please forward deposit slips.

Thank you for filling out this form!

Please make cheques payable to: School of Evangelisation, and return them to:

**GIDEON'S ARMY
School of Evangelisation
P.O. Box 168
Wonthaggi, Vic. 3995**

Enquiries: Pat Kelly
ph. (03) 5672 2772

SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2008

DATE	COURSE	LOCATION	CONTACT
May 24 th —25 th	Emmaus	Modbury, S.A.	Camen: 08 8339 2573
August 2 nd —3 rd & 30 th —31 st	Formation of Disciples	Modbury, S.A.	Camen: 08 8339 2573
August 16 th —17 th & 23 rd —24 th	Formation of Disciples	Traralgon, Vic.	Cathy: 03 5174 3001
August 23 rd — 24 th	Emmaus	Keilor Downs, Vic	Adrian: 03 9337 2051
August 9 th , 12 th , 19 th & 26 th	Secret of Paul	East Brunswick, Vic.	Adrian: 03 9337 2051
Sept. 20 th & 21 st	Youth New Life	Cranbourne, Vic	Cathy: 03 5174 3001
Oct. 4 th —5 th 11 th —12 th	Formation of Disciples	Keilor Downs, Vic.	Adrian: 03 9337 2051
Oct. 18 th —19 th	New Life	Wodonga, Vic.	Gerri: 02 6056 2442
Nov. 22 nd & 23 rd	Intercession	St. John's Pk. N.S.W.	Lucy: 02 9670 4440

You're Invited to the ... **EMMAUS COURSE** ... A journey with Jesus

John XXIII Catholic Church, Modbury S.A.

May 24th—25th 08

Enquiries: Carmen 08 8339 2573

Sacramental Process Outreach after Parish Visitation ...

On 30th March and 1st April the School was invited to reach out to Parents of children undergoing the Sacramental Process in the Parish of Our Lady of the Rosary, St Marys. This outreach was a follow-up of the visitation at their homes in January 2008 by the participants of the Formation of Evangelisers Course, being part of their evangelisation training. Fr Bob Bossini, SDB, PP and Pam Kelly, Sacramental Co-ordinator, welcomed the parents and introduced the SSOE Team.

The evening started with the presenter encouraging parents to participate in a drama depicting the Kerygma, being the basic message of our faith. Six parents became involved in the build up of the 'Bridge Illustration.' This gave them the opportunity to understand that God did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves, by building a bridge back to himself - Jesus who died on the cross as our substitute.



The presentation included 3 aspects of the Sacrament of the Eucharist:

The Eucharist as Sacrifice - makes present Christ's sacrifice of Calvary;

The Eucharist as Presence - Jesus Himself under the appearance of bread and wine;

The Eucharist as Food - nourishment for our souls - share in God's own life.

In conclusion a drama was presented by the SSOE team to emphasise the unconditional love of God for his children.

Parents expressed their appreciation in helping them to understand further the meaning of the Eucharist and being strengthened in believing the promise of Jesus:

"Know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time." - Mt 28:20

Lucy Grasso, Sydney Co-Ordinator

School of Catholic Evangelisation
P.O. Box 168
Wonthaggi 3995
Phone 03 5672 2772

THE WITNESS

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POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

Christ has died, Christ is Risen,
Christ will come again!

He paid a debt He did not owe,
I owed a debt I could not pay.

FORMATION IN CREATIVE EVANGELISATION

Pictured is a group of people who have been attending the Formation in Creative Evangelisation course that was held at St Peter's, Clayton (Vic) on Wednesday evenings throughout April.

They obviously had a good time learning different creative evangelisation techniques, such as mime and action songs,

which we first brought to Melbourne by Monica McArdle several years ago.



Melbourne team members, Christine McQuillan, Florence D'Costa and Versie Tamblyn are to be congratulated for their initiative in developing and presenting this course.

Pat Kelly

Photo by Victor Augusteo