



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

# The Witness

Catholic School of Evangelisation Australia Inc.

December 2019 Newsletter

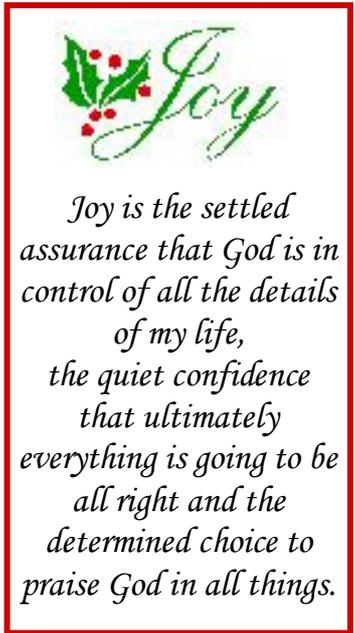
## “BUT YOU - WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?” Matthew 16 ; 15

The above quote was one of the late Bishop Joe Grech’s favourites. He would preach on it regularly, walking around the room booming it out loudly and pointing at each of us so as to engender our personal reply. Then with a softer gentler tone he would quote Peter’s Spirit inspired response. He so wanted us to experience the fullness of Christ’s true reality in our hearts, minds and our whole beings. He brought the Catholic School of Evangelisation to Australia in 1994 in the hope that more Catholics would experience a personal encounter with Jesus, through participation in the various programs of the School and in turn enable them to evangelise others.

I have been praying recently for a family whose mother died suddenly just three months ago. Naturally her adult children and her grandchildren are heartbroken at their loss. Their grief is all consuming and has led to a constant feeling of hopelessness. Two of her daughters,

despite being Catholic, are visiting a clairvoyant in order to try and feel better. How sad that makes me feel – they do not know that Jesus is their Saviour and He is the only one who can bring true and lasting comfort to their broken hearts. Perhaps they do know this but have just forgotten.

My challenge is to keep praying for them, but also to speak words of love and comfort and introduce them to Jesus who yearns to gift us all with The Holy Spirit, the true Comforter, thus saving us from a life without hope.



### HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR US AND THE SCHOOL TO CONTINUE TO GROW!!

We come quickly to the end of 2019 and prepare for the joyful season of Our Saviour’s birth. **GRATEFUL THANKS** is extended to all who have worked so hard during each of our programs held this year whether in Adelaide, Melbourne, the Philippines or

P.N.G. So much prayer, hospitality and action delivered by so many. Special thanks to our retiring Treasurer, Beata for an excellent job so well done and to Fiona our retiring Deputy Director for her gentleness and compassion.

Please keep praying for The School and supporting us financially by donating to Gideon’s Army.

May Jesus shine His light and love on you and your families during this precious Christmas season and protect you throughout the holiday period.

Ann Serong



Photo left: Sr Nelia Llanto (seated 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) presented ‘Luke, His Gospel and His Jesus’ to a group of teachers and lay leaders while in the Philippines September 2019.

# The Witness

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

## Catholic 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 EVANGELISATION TEAMS

## 'EMMAUS' goes to Papua New Guinea



The first evangelising course for P.N.G., 'Emmaus', took place in the Diocesan Pastoral Centre in Goroka. It started on Monday evening (25<sup>th</sup> November 2019) with a short introduction and finished on Thursday (28<sup>th</sup> November 2019) with the Emmaus Eucharist.

Sixteen people participated, among them four priests, eight religious sisters, two seminarians and two nuns from Kundiawa Hospital. They represented six dioceses: Kerema, Madang, Kundiawa, Hagen, Mendi and Goroka.

On our journey from Jerusalem to Emmaus we had the opportunity to listen to Jesus speaking to us and explaining Scriptures. We learned and experienced what the Word of God is, what kind of fruit it bears and what should our response be to the Word of God. With each session of the course we felt more and more how our hearts were burning and our joy was increasing and we found out that the source of it could only be the Word of God – Jesus himself!

During testimonies at the end of the course participants shared their experiences and expressed their desire to participate in future courses.

We would like to express our gratitude to the School of Evangelisation in Melbourne, Australia. Thanks to the School we were able to run and participate in the course in Goroka, PNG. Hopefully the first course was not the last and we will continue our co-operation. Our dream is to form a School of Evangelisation in Goroka diocese and we believe that, if it is the Will of God, our dream will become reality.

We remember you in our prayers,

Fr. Adam Samsel msf

Fr Adam Samsel, after participating in 'Emmaus' in March at Melbourne, presented the above course bringing to fruition the 2Tim.2:2 principle - ***"What you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well."***

# CELEBRATE EMMANUEL 2019

UNBELIEVABLE is a good way to describe our 19<sup>th</sup> Yearly outreach Celebrate Emmanuel held on the Feast of Christ The King. Perfect weather, perfect setting and perhaps not a perfect start with the sound system, but God worked His miracle. With some help from Steve Lawless laying hands on the microphones and praying earnestly!!!



It seemed to me so poignant to Celebrate Emmanuel (God with us) on the Feast of Christ Our Crucified

King. Our faith perfectly packaged. 'Monastery Folk' opened the concert with songs that we oldies truly appreciated as we could easily sing along.

Following them was a burst of vibrancy with 'Jesus Youth' that had us all singing, clapping and yearning for more. So beautiful to see young people openly and unashamedly evangelising the passing crowd!!!



Following them was a bunch of young children and young adults from the choir 'Closer Way' which opened their segment with that beautiful song 'Mary Did You Know'. A solo of 'Oh Holy Night' was the cue for our cutest Nativity representation to process to centre stage and sit on the edge of the stage. Mary, Joseph, two angels and a



shepherd got the cameras flashing as the choir sang the carols. Under the direction of Tony McAllister they held a captive audience and even had people up dancing for the last upbeat song 'Felix Navida.'

Tyndale Christian College year 4/5 choir joined us again for the 13<sup>th</sup> year and as always they were a great hit. The thirty-two strong choir is selected by auditions only and their music director Joanna Patricks prepares these children to perfection for this yearly concert. And as she says, "We will be back next year."



To close off the concert we welcomed back 'Monastery Folk' who opened this segment with a beautiful song by request, 'What a Wonderful World' and closed the concert with 'God Bless Australia' to the tune of Waltzing Matilda. Indeed at the Tea Tree Plaza today it was a wonderful world of joy, peace, love and fun.

A picture is worth a thousand words so I will let the snaps tell you the rest of the story.

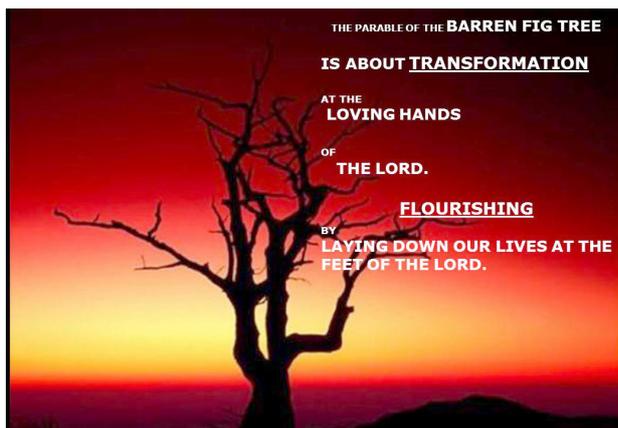
**Have a Blessed Advent and Christmas Season.**

By Carmen Sylvester



**Team at Celebrate Emmanuel**

# The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree . . . . By Mark Power



*“And he answered him, ‘Sir, leave the tree alone this year, until I have a chance to dig around it and manure it. <sup>9</sup> Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.’”*

Father emphasised the patience of God and how He is always ready to forgive us and give us another chance to turn back to him. By turning back to Jesus, we restore and repair our lives.

In the context of turning back, Father talked about the vine and the branches from the Gospel of John, (Jn.15:1-8,) to explain that just making a decision to turn back was not enough as **“we can only bear fruit if we are attached to Christ”**.

The day was full of hope and new beginnings. It was wonderful and I hope that Fr. Santiago will join us again to share from his wisdom, which appears to be massive when it comes to planting and sowing and all to do with the land! He made the Parable come alive for us as it must have been for the people of the land listening to Jesus.

To give more power to the day we celebrated the Eucharist and had a time of healing prayer.

On the 19th of October 2019, the Adelaide Branch of the Catholic School Evangelisation, (CSOE), had Father Santiago for a Faith on Fire Seminar. It was a wonderful day of prayer and reflection on the Parable of the Barren Fig Tree, as well as a good time of fellowship with like - minded people.

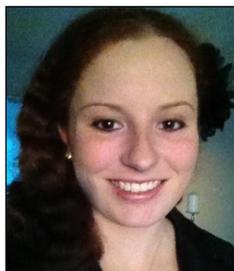
Father Santiago used the parable of the Barren Fig Tree as spoken by Jesus in the Gospel of Luke, (Lk.13:6 - 9) to give us hope and direction in our lives.

Probably the most significant part of his teaching, was Father’s explanation of v.8-9. That being;

## Phillip New Life - Greensborough Nth, Vic. . . . Sam Emslie

The experience I had during the Phillip New Life course was amazing. I love the music that was played each session. It was so very uplifting and motivational. I love how they got us to do daily reflections on some bible readings. I love how they got us to think outside the box and answer the way we saw/connected with each reading. It was nice to answer them honestly because whatever we wrote wasn’t wrong, it was between yourself and God. God won’t reject or abandon us.

I love the letter we picked for ourselves. The one I chose really was for me. Felt like it was meant to be. I love how the readings reminded you that God, Our Almighty Father, loves and is with us always. We are never



alone, even though it may feel like we are. Even when God calls us to go and be home with Him, He will welcome us with open arms. God does not force anything on us of course. He gives us choice and free will. It’s up to us to have faith.

There were so many activities to get your mind thinking. This helped me see things from God’s point of view. The readings and activities helped me to see and interpret things from a new perspective.

It was really lovely the way the course was guided by the leaders who ran it. They were so very supportive and helpful. It was really nice the way they prayed over others and myself. I would do the course again in a heartbeat and encourage others to do so as well.

## Philip New Life course at Keilor Downs

Where do I begin to thank you sufficiently???

The course was wonderful. Of the faithful few that attended most of the course, I have had great feedback. The course is very cleverly put together, and it built up to a finale of great proportions!!!

I really enjoyed how it all came together this evening, beautifully presented!!!

Thank you. thank you. thank you for all the hard work, love, faithfulness and effort you put into it!!!

Christina Santalucia



all

# AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

By Carmen Sylvester



The team decided to survey our data base to find out which of our courses people would like us to present. The verdict came back and it was the 'Joshua'. Rather a surprise seeing that we have presented this course in little old Adelaide at least eight times since we were introduced to it by the community of "Koinonia John the Baptist" from Rome. So we scheduled it for 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> August.

Another surprise!! We had just three registrations when the day came but true to our decision to still go ahead, regardless of numbers, produced the miracle we were hoping for. Twenty-two people walked through the door to participate in this course. Praise be to our faithful God!

One of our own team members had not experienced this course and he judged it to be the best. Fr Selva also came to celebrate Mass for us on Saturday and he was impressed with the content of the course. In his words: "Wow powerful teachings."

Following the life of Joshua with his weaknesses and strength as we draw parallels to our own lives can be challenging for both participants and team.

The opening talk when we make a decision to cross over the Jordan into the Promised Land and find there the abundance of the fruit of the land can give you a sense that this is going to be fun

weekend. The table of plenty was certainly enjoyed by everyone but then we moved into more serious stuff to discover how to develop a Winning Mentality and the challenges we need to overcome just as Joshua did to stay steadfast in our journey of faith.

Identifying the strongholds that we built up in our minds was a bit of a wakeup call for all of us there. We realised how they can lead us to a defeatist attitude both in our everyday lives and in our spiritual life.

For me one of the most powerful and moving teachings is when the participants and team write their Impossible Problems on a piece of paper and we attach them to the Jericho Wall. As we walk around the wall Joshua style and pray into what appears to be insurmountable problems we get a sense of unburdening on the hearts of the participants. **AND THE WALLS COME TUMBLING DOWN.**

On the Sunday we joined the parish for the Mass which was celebrated by a long-time friend. To our surprise he gave the School a good plug which encouraged us no end.

Praise be to God that we were obedient to God and still went ahead even when we had just three participants registered. God came to the party and blessed us abundantly at the Joshua Weekend.

## URGENTLY NEEDED...

Not BLOOD  
But,  
An ELECTRICIAN  
to restore the joyful current  
between people  
who do not speak to each  
other anymore . . .

An OPTICIAN,  
to change the outlook of  
people . . .

An ARTIST,  
to draw a smile on every-  
one's face . . .

A CONSTRUCTION  
WORKER,  
to build a bridge between  
neighbours . . .

A GARDENER,  
to cultivate good thoughts . .

A PLUMBER,  
to clear the choked and  
blocked mindsets . . .

A SCIENTIST,  
to rediscover compassion . .

A LANGUAGE TEACHER,  
for better communication  
with each other . . .

And last but not least,

A MATHS TEACHER,  
For all of us to relearn how  
to count on each other . . .

\* Spread lots of love,  
positivity, smiles, and hugs  
today . . . \*  
Tomorrow might be too late.

"Let us renew our  
confidence  
in preaching,  
based on the conviction  
that it is God who seeks  
to reach out to others  
through the preacher  
and that He displays  
His power through  
human words."

*Evangelii Gaudium*

# BEYOND THE DESERT – THE LIFE OF MOSES

By Jennifer Micheli

I thought I knew all there was to know about Moses! I've read the Bible! I knew he led the Hebrews to freedom, to the Promised Land and of course, I've seen the movie! What a surprise when I attended 'Moses', a course held over Cup weekend, 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019. I hadn't intended to go, I had other 'stuff' to do and told Sandra that on the phone a few days earlier and also when I helped set up on Friday afternoon in St. Clare's Hall, Box Hill North!

But apparently, Sandra and a few others prayed for rain and of course it rained on Friday night, so I gave up gardening plans (not unreluctantly to be honest) and duly fronted up on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November for four days of Moses. Four days of Moses, surely there was not that much to talk about for four days. How wrong I was, and little did I know that I was going back to school!

At the SCHOOL OF PHARAOH, we learnt about Pharaoh's forced slavery of the Hebrews and how the Hebrew midwives outwitted his methods of keeping the population under control. The Hebrews valued life, but their prayers were not being answered, and we were asked, where is God when we are suffering? Does He answer our prayers?

Of course, everything God makes is good, but no-one can serve or value others if they do not recognise the dignity and value of their own self. Do we see this in others was the question?

We all know Moses led a charmed life in Pharaoh's palace, he received an education, lived in palatial surroundings, ate good food, but all was not milk and honey for him. He was despised and feared by the Egyptians and in turn, the Hebrews regarded him as a traitor. Why does God write straight on crooked lines?

Moses made mistakes when he responded to injustice and these mistakes were his undoing with the result that he fled to the desert. He was misunderstood and rejected by both sides of his family. It was easier to leave Egypt than attempt to change it and he chose solitude rather than face further rejection. Why didn't God use a brave and violent Moses we were asked?

At the SCHOOL OF MIDIAN, we found Moses content to sit at a well for forty years minding Jethro's sheep and focusing on the simple things of life and during those forty years, contemplating the rejection he experienced in Egypt.

He called his sons Gershom (stranger in a foreign land) and Eliezer (my father's God is my helper) a reflection on his life, rejection and protection. We were asked if Gershom experiences were necessary in our life!

Then Moses found God in the Burning Bush. He was accepted by God; his past was behind him. God demanded respect and obedience and we were asked to hand in our timetable and move beyond our comfort zone!

God revealed Himself to Moses at the Burning Bush! *"I am who I am"* God replied to Moses, *"but don't come too near and take off those shoes"*! During the time Moses spent at the Burning Bush he was inflamed, he received his Mission, but not before giving excuse after excuse as to his inability to carry out the mission until finally admitting that he just didn't want to go. But God does not give up, on anybody. He told Moses that his brother Aaron would be with him and finally, the Hebrews had a liberator. We were asked which of Moses excuses we relate to and told to identify our gift.

Moses was changed by the burning bush experience; he now had a friend. A friend with whom he could share his pain and doubts. A friend who would listen to him and he was not the man who ran away from rejection forty years earlier. He **would** lead the Hebrews to freedom. We were asked who is winning the battle within us, Pharaoh or Moses?



Continued . . . from p.6 **BEYOND THE DESERT – THE LIFE OF MOSES**

In the SCHOOL OF THE DESERT we were introduced to the Passover. While I knew a little about the Passover, it was interesting to hear it all again and just wonder at the significance of each and every action and symbol. Lighting candles and drinking wine to washing of hands. Eating unleavened bread and hiding part in a cloth for children to find later. We had our greens, parsley dipped in salted water (yum!), a lamb shank bone and also a roasted egg. The Passover meal finishes with horse radish and a mixture of apples, cinnamon, nuts and wine. Everything, including the way the food was consumed and why, had a reason, all of which was set out in the Haggadah. We were asked if we realise that the best way for us to reach our destination is not necessarily the shortest and quickest?

The Exodus, either fight to the death or drown, not much of a choice, well perhaps return to slavery, another bad choice. But Moses had all the answers. ***“Do not fear and today God will intervene in our favour, he will fight for you.”*** And so, it happened, with the Egyptians in pursuit, Moses stretched out his hand over the Red Sea and the waters parted for the Hebrews who crossed in safety while the water came back upon the Egyptians who were drowned.

The Song of Deliverance which was sung by Moses and the Hebrews had three main points. ***“The Lord is my strength, my song and who is like thee, O Lord, among the gods.”*** We were asked what was our ‘Red Sea’ and when has the Lord delivered us from a hopeless situation?

Then the Hebrews were in the desert, no water for days and then finally undrinkable water. The people began to complain and find fault with Moses who spoke to the Lord who gave him a solution. The people had very quickly lost their faith in God, and it happened time and time again. They asked Moses why had he brought them into the wilderness to die! We were asked, when has God asked us to do something difficult, impossible and ridiculous?

The Hebrews had forgotten the sorrow and suffering they endured in Egypt preferring Pharaoh’s food, garlic and onions and enslavement, to faith in God. Not happy with the Manna which God provided they demanded Moses provide meat. Moses was perhaps desperate after putting up with constant complaining when he spoke to God and said he would prefer to be put to death because the burden of the people was too heavy! God acknowledged Moses limitations and organised for seventy elders to share the load with Moses and also provided meat, but at a cost. We were asked

what enslaves us? And do we feel anxious and desperate about a problem, thinking we have exhausted all the solutions?

While Moses encountered God up the mountain, down below, the people were making their own god in the image of man which brought the wrath of God upon them. Moses intervened on behalf of the people again and pleaded with God to change his mind, reminding Him of His promise to Abraham. Moses, the diplomat persuaded God to not bring disaster upon his people. And we were asked if we try to push God around or are we ready for Him to carry us like an eagle carries it’s young on its wings.

More complaints to God about Moses, this time from Aaron and Miriam and God’s anger turned on Miriam who becomes leprous. Through all this, God defended Moses but Moses has to continually confront rebellious men who tell him and Aaron that they have gone too far, they question their motives, but their own motives are not so pure either. They are envious, they seek the priesthood for themselves and some, Dathan and Abiram, are downright rebellious towards Moses. Moses seeks comfort with his friend, the Lord and we were asked what our solution for community building was.

Still in the desert and now the people face another challenge. Do they enter the Land of Canaan which flows with milk and honey, or do they listen to negativity? Caleb and Joshua are ready to conquer the land and they have a proposal. Joshua tells them, ***“The land is good, if God will be with us, the enemy are like bread and God loves the truth that lies in the depth of the heart and finally, everything works for the good.”***

God is not happy with the people and threatens to destroy them. Again, Moses intervenes, and God’s wrath is lessened. God tells Moses he will not enter the Promised Land and even shows him where he will be buried. We pondered **our** dream and vision for the future.

Again, the people speak out against God and Moses saying, ***“Why have you brought us out of Egypt to die in the wilderness and to eat miserable food”*** to which God replies by sending poisonous serpents among the people and again, Moses intervenes. God demands a bronze serpent be made and the people when bitten were instructed to look at the

serpent and would live. Eventually the serpent became an idol which had to be destroyed. Which bronze serpent did we have to destroy we were asked?



Pierre Lengo ailas ‘Pharaoh’

P.7 continued . . . **BEYOND THE DESERT**

Moses had FIVE REQUESTS OF GOD. He was not afraid to speak with God, his friend, even to the extent of negotiating with him regarding whether God should accompany the people when they left Mt. Sinai. Moses told Him, *“the people are yours.”* Moses still cannot persuade God to show himself, only allowing him to see His back and no amount of persuading or asking will change God’s mind and allow Moses to enter the Promised Land, referring back to when Moses struck the rock at Meribah and brought forth water, when in fact God asked him to command the rock to bring forth water (not strike it), thereby undermining God. Moses successes in the past were the result of God’s graciousness and mercy, not his own doing. We were asked what five important requests would we seek from God?

Apart from the assistance of God, Moses had a Great team of Collaborators with him during the forty years in the desert. Aaron, his elder brother was his spokesperson and who he later entrusted with the priesthood. Hobab, a relation of his wife was the eyes of the caravan and his local knowledge was an asset. His sister’s husband Hur who with Aaron supported Moses on the mountain as he held his arms aloft with his staff when the Amalekites attacked. Jethro, his father-in-law and adviser who challenged Moses to accept responsibilities and instructed him how to delegate and manage his time. Joshua who grew up with Moses and who Moses trained as his successor, a decision which was confirmed by God. With this trustworthy group of people around him, Moses had plenty of support, but he did not have time to foster friendships, apart from God, and we were asked if we had friends as well as collaborators?

Finally, the GRADUATION OF MOSES. At the threshold of the Promised Land God kept His promise to Moses, to bring the people to the Promised Land and it is here that God commissions Joshua and tells Moses his time is near. Moses advises Joshua to remain faithful to his commission. God then took Moses up to Mount Nebo and even at 120 Moses was full of vigour. Then Moses, the servant of the Lord, died in the land of Moab and there he was buried. We were asked to name three important decisions in our life.

No one knows where Moses is buried, however, we only need to read Sacred Scripture, see the EPITAPH TO MOSES. A humble man and a faithful servant of God. Jewish mentality sees the Suffering Servant of Isaiah as Moses, whereas Christian mentality sees the Suffering Servant of Isaiah as Jesus. Most importantly, Moses had a unique relationship with God who understood him and accepted him as he was. God was a friend to whom he was able to express his innermost thoughts and a friend who inflamed him with a passion. What would we write for our own tombstone we were asked?

When I left the course, I had that feeling you have when you have experienced something wonderful and you don’t want it to finish. That is how I felt, and it remained with me as I wrote this article, remembering things that we were asked to join in such as surrendering our jewellery to be made into a golden

## TESTIMONY - Pierre Lengo

I was born in the Democratic Republic of Congo in a Catholic family. Dad was very strict with religious affairs, which meant Sunday Mass was compulsory and we had to be involved in church activities. Like many kids my age I was an altar boy till I turned 13 years old at which age I decided that I will start reading in church (because I thought it was much cooler). All this was routine while growing up, but I still hadn’t had that personal encounter with GOD. I still believe that the seed was planted, and foundations laid came in handy when I finished school.

My first and conscious engagement with GOD started when I turned 18. My Parents decided that it would be best for me to do my university studies in South Africa. This was the first time I was away from my parents and in a foreign country. Things did not start well because I had some complications with my applications at the University. This I believe was the way GOD used to reveal Himself to me. I grew up relying entirely on my parents, and with that factor removed from the equation I was lost and in an unfamiliar territory. GOD removed me from my comfort zone so that I may know Him better. I turned to GOD. I was no longer doing just the routine things like praying before a meal or attending Masses every Sunday. I started reading the bible every morning and meditating. I would always write down what I understood and what GOD was telling me. Ten minutes read turned to thirty and then an hour. And doors started opening in my life. I got a miraculous place at university.

While doing all that I still felt like something was missing, it felt like I wasn't doing enough. Once I finished my studies and started my professional life, I moved houses to be closer to work, and joined a new parish (Our Lady of Lourdes City Deep). I joined the Charismatic group but still had that burning sensation that I needed to do more. I kept asking GOD to show me what to do. Then one day Father Blaise who is the parish priest at our Lady of Lourdes (City Deep) in Johannesburg called me to his office and told me that GOD asked him to speak to me. He didn't know me at the time. He asked me to join the men’s group. This was a newly formed group whose mission included inspiring men to encourage each other into living a life of faith; making men realise their spiritual responsibilities towards their families, etc. The Motto was, “That man is you” (2 Samuel 12 7). Throughout my time at the parish, GOD helped me serve Him in different ministries and groups such as catechism (confirmation classes), Special minister of the Eucharist.

Since moving to Australia, GOD has blessed me by helping me join the choir and Charismatic Renewal group. Few months ago, we started a group of devotion to the DIVINE MERCY. I’m looking forward to what GOD has in store for me.

calf. Meeting up with old friends is always a pleasure at these courses and I am truly in awe of the talent and gifts of Sandra Bishop who is the thread that draws it all together.

# ENCOURAGING HEARTS

... By Carmen Sylvester

Fr Selva Raj was our guest speaker for our Seminar called Encouraging Hearts on July 27<sup>th</sup>. The theme was focused on how we can be encouraged in our lives and in turn encourage others to come into a relationship with our awesome God.

Father Selva gave us the analogy of **'In whose hands'** which for me was thought provoking as often I forget to let myself be in **'His Hands'** the **Master Craftsman** to achieve my God given directions.

## In whose hand are we??

Everything depends on in whose hand it is.

A tennis racket in my hand . . . Well??

In Serena Williams' hands . . . Nothing short of miraculous.

A rod in my hands . . . ?? A rod in Moses's hand . . . Miraculous.

A sling shot in my hand . . . ??

A sling shot in David's hand defeats the enemy.

Two fish and five loaves in my hand . . . Pitiful.

Two fish and five loaves in Jesus's hand . . . Feeds multitudes.



Having God in your boat does not mean that you will not face any storm.

It means .... No storm can sink your boat.

Placing ourselves in God's hands is when miracles flow in our lives. Miracles were meant to lead to conversion. To change our outlook and our life-style. A turning away from selfishness and showing new concern for the poor and the needy, for those suffering and hurting. This is the call that has been echoing from the heart of Pope Francis during this pontificate. Any miracle or wonder in our life must lead us to this understanding of life. Every event that happens in our life however small or insignificant holds the potential to change your life and those around you.

Father Selva reminded us about the reality that our irritations, annoyances, temptations have the potential to have a positive impact in our life.

Terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre at New York Sep 11, 2001.

Many people escaped death simply because of a little problem, mishap or sudden change in their schedule.

There is a reason why we go through mere inconveniences or serious pain and suffering. Remember the potential of their purpose. The size of the problem is nothing compared with God's ability to solve them. Don't over estimate your problem and under estimate your power to overcome all things with God. Whenever you are in trouble surrender everything in God's hand. Watch the amazing transformation that will take place in your life.

God is our perfect guide in life. In Whose hands are we??

His strength overcomes our weakness, His grace fills our emptiness.

His presence overcomes our loneliness.

Walk with God every day and never underestimate the power of your cry for help from a Higher Power.



As always in our retreats we are blessed with the opportunity to share in the Eucharist, in fellowship and healing prayer.

Father also generously offers confession to those who would like to receive the grace of the Sacrament.

Fr Selva left us with some scripture readings for our private reflections to 'Encourage Our Hearts'.

And so I share them with you.

When in sorrow – John 14

When you worry – Mt 6/19-34

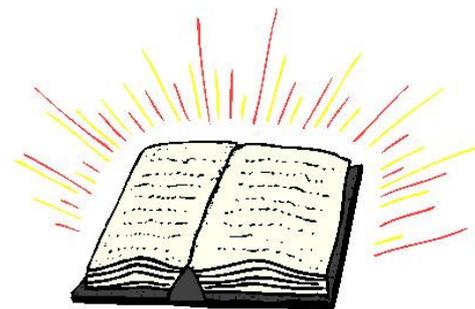
When you are lonely and fearful – Psalm 23

When you feel down and out – Roman 8/31

When you want peace and rest – Mt 11/25-30

When you are depressed – Psalm 27

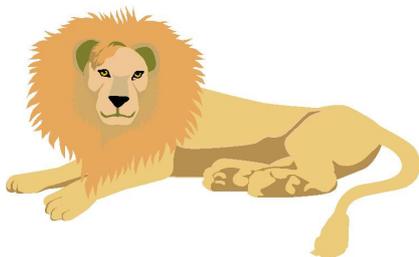
When you need security – Psalm 121/3



## Testimonies from the Philippines - 7 Young People in the gospel

### 'Lions in Jesus' Name'

*Dr. Jose Rizal, Philippine's national hero, once said that the "youth is the hope of our future". We are a spark that can soon turn into a flame and as the course likes to put it, a small lion cub that someday will conquer mountains. However, we are still young and in need of proper guidance. The 7YPG course, presented earlier this year, profusely helped us in life. There were struggles in which we also find similar to what we experience. The course empowered us emotionally and spiritually because, as it turned out, all the seven young people in the Gospel can be all of us at certain times.*



*As someone who is young and is still learning, there are countless moments where I feel lost and confused. The course taught me how to go through times of hardships by asking myself, "What would Jesus do?" All the young people in the Gospels encountered mishaps which they managed to overcome through the help of Jesus. Similar to what the young people have encountered, we, who partook in the course, also have 'mountains' to trek,*

*battles to win and a life to pursue ahead of us. Through this course we were able to know each other more and most importantly, it brought us closer to Jesus.*

*We took the course at a time when most of us were distressed because of school activities. Instead of going home, we spent a few more hours at school for the said course. Nonetheless, I had no regrets. No matter how busy my schedule was at that time, it was all worth it. It was something I really needed. I was tired and on the verge of giving up but the course empowered me. It gave me a sense of hope, as if Jesus reassured me that everything will be fine and it did because in the end, I was able to gain something priceless—wisdom.*

*The stories intersect at one point, Jesus, the mediator. One significant lesson the course imparted to me is to never stop pursuing Jesus because after all, He is and will always be bigger than the mountains and uphill slopes in life. Through Jesus, we will be able to come out of the shadows and into the light. We may still be young lions but we shouldn't forget that we are 'growing' lions and in Jesus' name, we will conquer any*

*mountains that will come our way.*

**— Maria Stella N. Diolata**  
(Completed Year 10 with Honours, Outstanding Performance in Different Disciplines, Service Awardee and Leadership)



*"The 7YPG helped me in a lot of aspects. I was able to cope with my studies. It also helped me to stabilise my connection to God because this program helped me realise what God has given us, the freedom and will to choose what we want to happen with our lives. But God doesn't leave our side even though He gives us freedom, He guides us back on the path. I was able to handle my emotions and relationships with other people, it eased my communication with my inner emotions and with the people that surround me."*

**—Jethro M. De Guzman** (JGSS Year 12-STEM Student, commenced Year 11 with Honors and Best in Athletics)



**During Sr. Neilia's recent visit to the Philippines in September she also found time to present '7 Young People in the Gospels' to a group of youth leaders, pictured left.**

## CATHOLIC SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2020

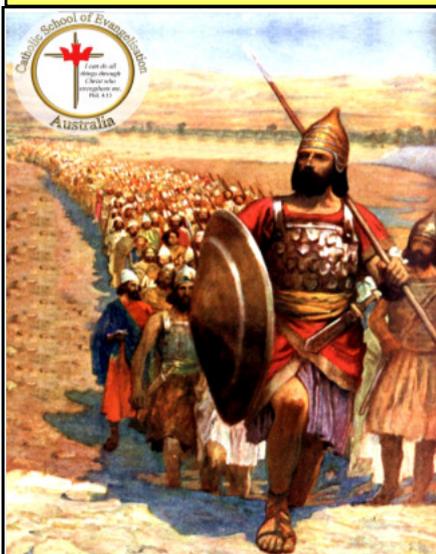
25 <sup>th</sup> January 15 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Ignatius Spirituality: Discernment	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 10.00am — 3.00pm	Carmen 83392573 0419144872
29 <sup>th</sup> Feb (Lent)	Faith on Fire Seminar - The Parables of Jesus	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 10.00am — 3.00pm	
18 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> March	'Philip New Life'	Loyola College, Watsonia, Vic	Rose 0411 650 339
21 <sup>st</sup> March	One Day 'New Life' or 'James'	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 9.00am—5.45pm	Carmen  83392573 0419144872
4 <sup>th</sup> April	Easter Preparation	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 10.00am — 3.00pm	
25 <sup>th</sup> April	One Day Course Eucharist?	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 9.00am—5.45pm Mass 6.00pm	
16 <sup>th</sup> May	Faith on Fire - Parables of Jesus	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 10.00am — 3.00pm	
30 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup> May	Pentecost Weekend	1A Stuart Road, Dulwich, SA 10.00am — 3.00pm Sat. 11am—3pm Sun.	
6 <sup>th</sup> —14 <sup>th</sup> June	International Intensive Courses	Greensborough North, Vic	Sandra 03 9434 7553

Changes to Adelaide courses can also be found on their website link: [www.csoe-adelaide.com](http://www.csoe-adelaide.com)

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A big THANK YOU to the generous people who have made a financial commitment to assist the ongoing running of the CSOE. Without you we would not be able to continue our mission which is our response to the last 4 Popes' call for a New Evangelisation.

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THE WITNESS

### *Joy to the World . . . . A Child is Born*



## **POWER OF EVANGELISATION**

A few months ago in our prayer group we were participating in the Phillip New Life course conducted by the Catholic School of Evangelisation. On one of the evenings during Praise and Worship, we sang a song about building community. At the time, my sister Dani and I said that our niece Arianna may enjoy the song, as the song had actions to it.

Not long after that I told Ari about the song and began to sing it to her. Ari loved the song and we both really got into it. I could only remember a few verses, so we just repeated those verses.

A few weeks ago my sister Marey invited my family to a Mass at Arianna's school parish for all

the grade prep students. At the end of the Mass the students were invited to come forward and stand in front of the altar. While the children waited, Arianna looked at me and loudly whispered something to me. A few moments later, the music started. A smile came to my face as I realized what Ari had been trying to communicate to me. It was the 'Community' song we had sung together.

This experience taught me the power of evangelisation. That we can all play a part in spreading the love of Christ. How sowing a seed, can be so simple and how a song from our prayer group, had an impact on a little 5 year old girl.

Claire Abouied