



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

The Witness

Catholic Schools of Evangelisation National Newsletter

December 2007

The Australian Church is focused on World Youth Day and the countdown to July 2008 is being marked by hundreds of national, diocesan, parish and school events, such as the journey of the Cross and Icon of Our Lady. The organisers of WYD are well aware of the need to prepare the pilgrims for the events in Sydney so that they can make the most of the spiritual opportunities the week will offer. They are also aware of the need to follow up and support the young people on their return. The success of WYD 2008 will be measured in 2009 and beyond.

With this in mind a religious education academic, Dr Richard Rymarz, has conducted a study of Under 18 participants in WYD 05 in Cologne. This study is published in the latest Australasian Catholic Record (ACR). The question Dr Rymarz asked was "what impact does attending WYD have on pilgrims, given the high commitment to it by diocesan and educational authorities?"

The answer is very encouraging as the pilgrims spoke of a greater personal commitment to their religion. However the study also found that a number of participants had trouble making the leap from the WYD experience to an active faith life.

YOUTH 2009 ? ? ?



Dr Rymarz concluded that "the study has revealed some strong indications that WYD does have an impact on pilgrims who attend. A critical question, however, is will this impact still be evident over a longer period of time?"

The School of Evangelisation, especially in Adelaide and Mill Park, has been helping in whatever way in can to make WYD a success. However perhaps the greatest way the SOE can help is by committing ourselves anew to parish renewal. The young pilgrims need to come back to parishes that are alive in the spirit, parishes where they will be welcomed, their gifts used and their opinions and culture respected. We need creative evangelising parishes that are open to the new while remaining completely focused on Jesus and the unchanging Gospel message. It is parishes like this that will be able to help the pilgrims to convert their WYD experience to an active faith commitment to Jesus and his Church.

The formation offered to parishes through our Parish Evangelisation Formation Programme does make a difference to parish life. What we need are parishes that are open to give the PEFP a try.

Pat Kelly

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS!

As this is the last Witness for the year I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Blessed and Joyful Christmas.

The Christmas Nativity scene pictured took place at the Celebrate Emmanuel concert held at the Rundle Mall in Adelaide at the end of last month. Scenes like this will be repeated at Carols by Candlelight events throughout the country over the next few

weeks. Let's pray that as people gather at schools, town halls, parks and shopping centres to sing



Christmas carols and look at Nativity scenes that the true message of Christmas will touch the heart. Let us pray that people throughout Australia will join the angels in singing,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace for those he favours." Lk 2:14

Pat Kelly

The Witness

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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
31st March 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.

"JOY TO THE WORLD"

By Pat Kelly

A few weeks ago I rode my motorbike up to Bendigo. It is a four hour ride and it poured with rain and blew a gale the whole way. By the time I arrived my knees and arms were aching and I was completely saturated. I commented to the friend I was visiting, "*It's a good thing I enjoy this or it would be hard work!*"

Whatever we do in life, whether it's a hobby, family, work or church activities, there will be some aspects that we like and others aspects which we dread. The same applies to evangelisation. There is the joy of helping someone to come to know Jesus better and seeing them become part of the family of God. And there is the downside; the pain of rejection, the frustration at lack of opportunity, the stress of organizing courses and outreaches, and the discouragement at the wall of indifference from non-believers and apathy from believers.

These hardships can rob us of the joy of evangelisation. This is something that I have certainly experienced over the years and maybe more so at this hectic time of the year when we can become very drained. The problem is that if we lose our joy, we lose our strength because "*The joy of the Lord is our strength.*" (Neh 8:10) If we are going to persevere in the work of evangelisation we need this gift of joy. As Pope Paul VI put it, the world needs to receive the Good News from evangelisers "*whose lives glow with fervour, who have first received the joy of Christ.*" (EN #80)

That is the problem but what is the solution? We know from St Paul's letter to the Galatians that joy is a fruit of the Spirit, if the Holy Spirit is present then love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control are present (Gal 5:22). So we need to continually ask the Holy Spirit to make his presence more manifest in our life, ask Jesus to pour out his Spirit on us (Acts 2:17,18) so we can have a new Pentecost every day. Then in our work of evangelisation we will be sowing in the Spirit and we will reap eternal life (Gal 6:8) not just for ourselves but for others. So even though at times we sow in tears we shall reap with shouts of joy (Ps 126:5)

I was hoping to finish with a motorcycle scripture but I couldn't find Suzuki in the bible. I'll have to be satisfied with 2Cor 2:14.

"But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere."



A WITNESS FOR JESUS by Bishop Joe Grech

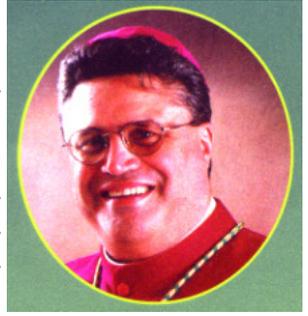
At this time of the year, during Advent, the figure of John the Baptist looms large and I was particularly struck by his tremendous affirmation "*I am here as a witness for the light*". What he really was saying was: "*I am a witness for Jesus*". Those words have really struck me because after all that is what this time of preparation for Christmas entails. Advent is the time when we think about whether we are really witnesses of Jesus in order to celebrate in such a powerful way, the Feast of Christmas. The same thought has been expressed by Pope Paul VI. In 1975 he issued a tremendous Apostolic Letter called "*Evangelii Nuntiandi*" – How to announce the Gospel. And he said that what the Church needs today and what the world needs today are witnesses. Witnesses whose lives glow with the joy of knowing Jesus Christ and today the Church is reminding us to be witnesses of Jesus.

Of course there are different ways in which we can be witnesses of Jesus Christ, and I am sure that many of us have already been and are, and with God's help, will continue to be witnesses of Jesus. Only God knows the sacrifices that many of you parents make to rear up your family, to bring up your family according to the values and principles of Jesus Christ, and that is not easy. Only God knows what you do in order to keep your marriage together, to be faithful to one another. This is witnessing to Jesus. Only God knows the amazing thousands of ways in which many in our own lives have touched others through a word of kindness, through a word of encouragement, through a word of help.

This reminds me of a little story that I have read this last week. It happened in China during the time of the cultural revolution where China was really sent into a political spin that brought so much hardship to so many people. It is the story of a man and woman who got married. The lady was a Catholic, the man was not brought up in any kind of religion and the woman kept saying to her husband – look, we have committed ourselves to one another, God willing we will have a child, (because in China still today a couple can have only one child), and therefore to maintain our unity and to maintain this closeness together, why don't you consider joining the Catholic community, and to be part of the Church. And the husband always resisted, because the husband was in a high position and of course, if he belonged to any kind of religion, that would have ended his career. The woman was a doctor, and so she worked in the hospital and she was passed over so many times for promotions because of her own faith.

This man, during the time of the cultural revolution, did something that displeased the Government,

so he was sent to an education camp to be re-educated. During this time he was treated very badly and indoctrinated with the kind of principles of the communist regime, and he stayed in this camp for a number of years. The woman was put under pressure, not only to stop believing, but also to leave her husband, to divorce her husband, to seek another life because they told her there is not much hope that you will ever see your husband again. But she persisted, she persisted in hoping that he will be coming back home, because after all, he is her husband.



After some years a letter arrived from the Government officials saying that her husband was going to be released and he would be arriving in town on the train at this particular time and this particular day. When the day arrived she went over to the station to meet him. She was the only family there and she had her son with her. She was the only family because all the other ladies had given up on their husbands. They got tired of waiting and they got not only tired of waiting but because of the uncertainty of the future, they wanted to secure their future with another marriage. So nobody else was waiting for their husband coming back home except this woman with her child.

When the man arrived home he said to her – I always remembered what you told me before I was sent to the re-education camp about joining the Catholic community, about believing in this God, about faithfulness, about fidelity. At first I thought they were mere words, now that you have waited for me after such a long time, I know that you don't only speak these words but you live them and you believe them deep down in your heart. And he joined the Catholic community.

My brothers and sisters, witnessing for Jesus is our call, our fundamental call. We witness to Jesus Christ not because it's the right thing to do, or in order to appear good, but because Jesus Christ is the answer for the world's problems. He is the answer for the problems that our society is experiencing. So let us take every opportunity to sow the good seed, to say the good word, to encourage, to support, to reach out, to help. The growth and the harvest, we'll leave it to God, but there has to be somebody to sow the seed and that's our duty and that's our call. And I am positive, and I am sure that whenever we sow the seed in God's name, He will bless it, and you and I have not even started to dream how God can use us powerfully when we are faithful to Him.

God bless.

CELEBRATE EMMANUEL By Carmen Sylvester

It will be right on the day ...That is when it is God's work at hand. So as our MC Geoff Wallace puts it, all glory goes to God for another successful Celebrate Emmanuel. God's hand on this yearly event was just so awesome.

Something we can never have any control over is the weather and so the predicted 34 degree day left us with some trepidation. But if the power of prayer can change events then our prayer was answered because the 29 degrees that we got was just perfect. The concert in a mall flanked on both sides by shops and high buildings and being under the only canopy of shade in the Mall made the day not just bearable but extremely pleasant. All groups participating were enchanting and inspiring.

Highlights of the day:

* Opening band Basic (brothers and sisters in Christ) drew the crowd with their high powered praise and worship songs and a magnificent rendition of "Mary did you know".

* An interdenominational group called SHINE who were just like a star shining in the darkness of a busy commercial world. They were received with great enthusiasm by the crowd.

* Two very willing clowns Joanna and Andre who handed out Christmas show bags to the children. Joanna managed to not just clown around but to draw the crowd into participating. It was fun. She will be back next year with a bigger task of teaching others what she has learnt herself in the art of clowning. Now, does that not sound like the motto of



the school?

Children are always a draw card and so we invited the Tynedale Christian Choir to sing again this year and the crowd grew dramatically as the angelic voices floated through the Rundle Mall. All credit goes to their music teacher Joanna Patrick who must work so tirelessly to present such a flawless

performance. They were followed by the children's nativity procession which drew a lot of "Oh how cute" or "How sweet they look" from the crowd as well as several people snapping photos even with their mobile phones.

The Holy Cross Choir brought our concert to a magnificent end with the our favourite Christmas



Carols, finishing off with an incredible rendition of God Bless Australia. Thanks to choir leader Arthur Siow. This year we had the pleasure of hearing a solo by his lovely wife Archie and baby (in the womb).

A special thanks to the Society for Christian Doctrine who provided us with a beautiful banner with the Christmas message and to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Last but not least a special thank you to Geoff Wallace who not only looks after the smooth running of the event on the day but who gathers around him a team of faithful people who support this event by donating money, time and effort in making Christmas bags full of Christian goodies to be handed out during the course of the concert.



It was a great day in the Rundle Mall. Praise be to God!

Testimony of a Vision of an Evangelising Parish

My local parish pastoral council has a formation session at each meeting. This is apart from the times of opening and closing prayer.

For the March 2006 meeting, the formation session was based on an American article headed "An evangelising parish". The two page article covered home hospitality, greeting at the church door, being nice to people, praying, etc. Nowhere did it give a mention of the Holy Spirit. As I read it for the first time at home, I saw a vision of a ladder. The rungs represented the points made of an evangelising parish. Unfortunately the bottom rung was missing. There was no foundation. Hence the article was fundamentally flawed.

I saw that there were three elements making up the foundational bottom rung:

Element 1 was the need to call on the Holy Spirit to lead one into the gift of evangelisation. This would be achieved by daily asking the Holy Spirit to fully release within, the full power that had been given in the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Remember that the apostles received the

same Holy Spirit. Look at the change in their lives. The same is available for us if we truly seek it.

Element 2 was to remember all the times in one's past life that God's blessings had been received.

Element 3 was then to be prepared to share these blessings with other people for evangelisation purposes. One must then wait until the Holy Spirit sets up the opportunity to share one or more of the experiences. You work on the principal that you are sowing seeds, and that other people hopefully will one day water them.

The Parish Priest had been informed the day prior to the meeting. He was keen for me to share it. You could imagine the gasps when councillors heard the word "vision". My Parish Priest told fellow councillors that I was spot on. Thanks Holy Spirit for your guidance.

May the Holy Spirit implant the vision deeply into the hearts of all parish councillors, together with all Christians.

Mike Dooley

Children's Courses Trialed by Sydney S.O.E.

The Sydney School of Evangelisation was invited to present 'New Life' to the Croatian Community at St John's Park on 23rd—24th June this year and they were presented with a challenge. They were asked could they provide a course for the children as well so that more people would be able to attend. Lucy Grasso called for helpers and I agreed to 'have a go'.

The course was based on the adult course and the children responded well to the presentations. We followed the same segments but obviously at a more appropriate level for the children. There was a lot of music and craft included and some drama, but not enough active, outside games. Eleven children attended between the ages of 6 and 13. They did the pool of Siloam activity, but for obvious reasons we substituted an activity for the burning boats. There were four helpers that rotated between the adults' course and the children's course (2 from Sydney School and 2 from Wollongong School) and their help was indispensable.

At the end of the course the children were very honest with me about what they liked and what they didn't like. They wanted more drama, more outside activities and games and less craft. Anyone doing a course for children must remember that they have come from five days of sitting in classrooms, they

want some relief from classroom type teachings.

The community must have been satisfied for the SSOE were again asked to provide a children's course for 'Emmaus' to be held 27th—28th October. For the 'Emmaus' Course I took note of what I had learned from 'New Life'. The content was kept to a minimum with the most essential messages kept in. There was more of a balance between 'sit and talk' and outside activity. It was pleasing to see that 6 of the children who had been there for 'New Life', came back and four of them said that they did have a choice. There were 19 children over the weekend but never more than 15 at any one time.

Again all the main activities of the adults were covered but not in great depth. The children enjoyed the outdoor games and on the whole seemed more interactive over the weekend. While the parents were at the Synagogue we also dressed up and the same development of characters from the Bible was given to the children in a slightly different way and then they too, went to the Synagogue for the last section. The help of Helena Greedy, Sydney School, and Mary Ann Farugia, Wollongong School, was essential for its smooth progression.

The feedback given by the children was very positive.

Deidre Herring



St. Francis Feast Day Celebrations in Mill Park.

St Francis Church Mill Park has again held its annual St Francis Feast day which celebrates not only the great Saint's feast day, but a festive gathering of its Parishioners and Groups to showcase and celebrate a vibrant Parish community.



Following on from last year's celebrations that featured VIP visitor the Holy See's new Apostolic Nuncio to Australia, Archbishop Ambrose De Paoli, the feast day again saw the great procession into the Church and Parish Expo.

This year newly ordained Bishop Tim Costelloe was guest celebrating Mass with Parish Priest Fr Brendan Lane and Assistant Parish Priest Fr Eugene Ashkar, a first timer to the Feast day celebrations. Fr Brendan Lane said "this is a great opportunity to gather as a community and celebrate who we are and what we do together as a Parish Family. It also gives a great impetus to showcase our Parish Groups who do so much for our Parish. By having our new Bishop here, it also gave him an insight on what we are doing as a Parish and what we plan to do". A great insight to the Bishop was St. Francis Evangelisation Programs and the work they are doing with the Youth in the area - from Godstart with the newly born to World Youth Day programs where they hope to send 300 plus of their youth and support many more from Zambia in a cooperative venture with a Parish there to the WYD in Sydney in 2008". "It was wonderful seeing the active groups that are working within the Parish of St Francis all very keen to support each other and the vision for the Parish that Fr Brendan has set before them. The celebrations

By Trish Spiteri were great and everyone seemed to be enjoying themselves with enthusiasm" said Bishop Costelloe. "It was also wonderful to see how the Italian and Umbrian communities support St Francis with support including donating the beautiful new statute of St Francis made in Rome, which was highlighted by Fr Brendan at the celebrations today".

Parishioner Oscar Altavilla welcomed the Bishop to the event with a speech in Italian translated into English and projected onto the wall of the Church. "It was a great honour to have the Bishop here today and celebrate with us. It was also great to see his enthusiasm for the work our Parish Groups are doing here and his words of support for our work here" said Mr Altavilla.

Over 700 attended the Mass and 350 stayed on for the lunch and entertainment. Tony and his one man band provided a lot of the entertainment. However the youth and School of Evangelisation put on additional entertainment including performances of a Modern Parable - the Good Punk Rocker, Colours of Salvation and a brilliant performance by Trish Spiteri - Bread of Life.

Of course it wouldn't be St Francis Feast Day without the annual blessing of Parish Animals. From little pet mice to rather enthusiastic cats and dogs they were all there for Fr Brendan to bless.

Next year sees an even larger program with the opening of a new Parish Hall and the return of all the participants from the World Youth Day. "An even bigger celebration is planned next year with the Archbishop attending, some very special celebrity guests.



‘MATTHEW’ in WAGGA by Kay Judd

In September the Wagga Wagga School of Evangelisation held a Formation of Catholic Faith Course. We named the course ‘Matthew’ and based the teachings of the Gospel of Matthew. This was run from 9am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

The course was a great success and we had 31 participants and seven teachers. Three of the young people who had attended our ‘Life in the Spirit’ Course also attended for the two days. A Monsignor, five priests and one deacon did the teachings. Three of the younger priests had been ordained within the last few years and only two of the priests had done any teaching for the school before so it was a good introduction for the priests to SOE and for participants who had not met the priests before.

We felt we had really stepped out into the deep on this course and there was some apprehension the week prior to the course as to how it would run. But the Holy Spirit was in control and everything flowed from one teaching to the next. We have had so much feed back on how good the course was and even received comments about the course

from those who could not attend but had heard reports from other participants.

The team were enthused about the course after the weekend and were already talking about running a similar course again. I would recommend the course as a good basic introduction to the Catholic Faith. It was a great learning experience even for those who had attended many courses but simple enough for those who were beginning to learn about the faith. We took seven of the many teachings for the course from the book ‘At Home with God’s People’. (Catholic Adult Education, Archdiocese of Brisbane).

Some of the participants comments from the course were:

“I was lucky enough to attend the ‘Matthew’ Course at Wagga Wagga and found it absolutely wonderful and I learnt so much. We had seven priests who gave us a such great talks”.

“The Matthew Course was the best course I have ever attended, words can’t express my feelings. I am so pleased I was able to attend. It touched on every aspect of our faith and we were so blessed to have seven of our priests to minister to us”.

Doors Opening for the S. O. E. Melbourne

In Melbourne the Mill Park parish has completed its Parish Evangelisation Program and the parish team is actively engaged in parish evangelisation, and in particular preparing its 300 young people for World Youth Day.



Participants at the Bayswater Emmaus Course

The Bayswater and Keilor Downs parishes are progressing through the four courses; Bayswater has completed ‘New Life’ and ‘Emmaus’ and Keilor Downs has done the ‘New Life’ course. This training will continue in 2008 with ‘Formation of Disciples’ and ‘Formation of Evangelisers’ courses already planned. Of the 13 graduates of the last course, we received favourable comments such as: “The explanation of the connection between the Old and New Testament was very enlightening, informative and educational for me”. “This course has helped me understand better and piece together the fulfillment of the Scriptures”. Also “a better appreciation will, no doubt ensue in forthcoming study and meditation

of the Word.”

Fr Arnold (PP Bayswater) saw the dynamics of the ‘Emmaus’ course as a good way to experience the relationship of Old and New Testament. Fr Dom Flores (Divine Word Missionary) thoroughly enjoyed the teachings of Maria Luff, Nan Deakin and Adrian Commadeur. Quite a number of participant came from neighbouring prayer groups or parishes. Maybe they will open doors for the expansion of the Parish Evangelisation Formation Programme (PEFP) to new parishes.

As part of the Melbourne School’s commitment to youth in the lead up to World Youth Day a **‘Young People in the Gospel’ course is planned for a Western Suburbs youth group for January 19th—20th**. This is a very good course aimed specifically at young people and would be a great way for a parish to prepare its young people for Sydney next year.

Interested? Contact: Adrian on 03 9337 2051

CROATIANS ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

By Marija Sulentic

Praised be Jesus & Mary!

The Emmaus course was presented by the Sydney S.O.E. on 27th—28th October, 2007, at the invitation by Fr Marijan, Priest-in-charge of the Croatian Catholic Community, St Nikola Tavelic, and the Evangelisation Committee of St John's Park. The course was attended by 36 participants, including 2 from Newcastle and 18 children. The presenters of the course were Eddie and Lucy Grasso joined by Fr Bob Bossini, SDB, P. P. of Our Lady of the Rosary, St Marys. Other team members included Helena Greedy (Sydney) and the Wollongong School of Evangelisation team members, Paul & Maryann Farrugia and Deidre Herring.

This Emmaus Course was one with a difference because it also offered a simultaneous program for children. Deidre Herring from the Wollongong S.O.E. adapted the Emmaus Course for children with the result that 18 children, between the age of 5 and 13 yrs, joined their parents for the week-end and were able to experience the course at their level. We thank Deidre and her helpers for bringing these children into a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Word of God through the sessions and activities. (see article p.5)

It was great to see the smiles on those present and their gratitude for being able to participate in such a course, to reflect on the journey of the two disciples walking with Jesus on the Road to Emmaus, healing their hopelessness and bringing them into a deeper understanding of the Old Testament Scriptures pointing to the Messiah. Those present also experienced the healing that Jesus was offering them as they came in touch with the Word, their eyes were also opened at the 'breaking of the bread.'

Many wonderful stories and testimonies were shared by the participants, young and old. It was a

great joy for me to see everyone participating so willingly in the role-play at the Synagogue with all the Old Testament characters and events pointing to the Messiah. All expressed how wonderful and what a surprising experience the Synagogue was for them. This session was translated into Croatian which enabled everyone to participate completely and gain full benefit from it. After their own enactment of the synagogue the children joined us in our Sacred Space. I was greatly touched when I saw the children, still dressed in their Synagogue costumes, kneeling down joining in the hymns of adoration to our Lord present in the Eucharist. Many were emotionally touched and shed tears of joy.

The dynamics throughout the course were also very helpful for everyone to understand the meaning of the seven images to show what the Word is, the seven effects of what the Word does, and the seven attitudes we ought to have to show our response towards the Word. These dynamics brought life and a deep meaning to the talks as they were presented.

At the conclusion Fr Marijan joined us to hear everyone's testimony and present the certificates. He was most impressed especially with the children who spent their week-end learning about Jesus and the Scriptures rather than playing sport or socialising. He expressed his sincere thanks to Lucy and Eddie, Fr Bob and the whole team, for being instruments in our Lord's hands and for their hard work.

As for me, I planted my mustard seeds. The shoots have come up already and I intend to plant them across my property. I pray that the seeds, which were planted in the hearts of the participants will sprout and bring an abundance of good fruit.

May our Lord Jesus be glorified in the lives of all who attended this memorable course -

'THE EMMAUS JOURNEY.'



EMMAUS COURSE - Newcastle

By Christine Gay

The week-end of Nov.17-18th was a specially blessed one in my Parish of Wallsend / Shortland, as 30 participants came together to participate in the Emmaus Course presented by the Sydney School of Evangelisation. No one came away disappointed from the week-end. This course was a follow up from the New Life Course which we did last year and again was conducted over 6 weekly sessions last July-August by the newly formed local Parish School of Evangelisation Team.

The Course immersed us in the Emmaus story as we followed the two disciples' progress from disappointment, disillusionment and grief, to hope, joy and the presence of Jesus journeying with them. We were not only immersed in that journey event but it became our own Emmaus experience. The disciples felt their hearts burning within them as He explained the Scriptures to them on the way. Their eyes were opened to the reality of His Risen Presence, in the Breaking of the Bread. We entered into our life disappointments, disillusionments, grief, in the evening of our lives, and in our relationship with God and with others.

The 'Word' was opened to us as we were led to reflect seven images of what the Word of God is, what effect it has, and what our attitude should be towards it. The presentation on the Scriptures exposed us to many relevant quotes from both the Old and New Testaments. We were indeed richly fed on the Word; **'and did not our hearts burn within us as the truth of God's love for us and His desire to be our dearest companion on our life's journey was brought home to us?'**

One of the highlights of the course was the Synagogue scene. It was a lot of fun preparing for the Synagogue, helping each other dress for the part and having a good laugh at the artistic talent, or should I say license, of some of our group. Participating in the Synagogue helped me understand it and also gave me a sense of Jesus in his own experience as a faithful Jew. Especially when He stood up and read from Isaiah and applied the Scripture to Himself; what an impact that must have made!

As with the disciples on the way to Emmaus, my eyes of faith were opened and there was some deep inner recognition and awareness that I cannot express in words, I believe it was truly a moment of grace. To move from there to the Mass and yet again to be immersed in the richness of that experience of being fed by the 'Word' and being present at the table of the Lord's Supper, nourished by his Body and Blood was truly the culmination of the day. Yet it doesn't end there. At the end of Mass, as the disciples did when they rushed back to join the Community and share what had happened to them, we also shared the Scripture that made our hearts burn and the way our eyes were opened to recognize the Lord.

It was a wonderful weekend of belonging to a community, getting to know other parishioners we may not have known as well or not at all. It was a great feeling getting to know them at the level of such faith and sharing with our companion in the 'journey'. We were blessed to be ably led on the weekend by Lucy and Eddie Grasso, and we are grateful to God for calling them to this ministry and pray He richly bless them in every way.

BECOMING A CONTAGIOUS CHRISTIAN

A two day 'Becoming a Contagious Christian' seminar was held in October at East Brunswick.

As an experimental course it proved helpful to the fifteen people who attended, in particular, finding one's own evangelising style, and establishing the readiness of those being evangelised and how to move them to a greater acceptance of the message of Jesus.

This seminar is a great way to introduce people to practical evangelisation among their circle of family and friends.

Pat Kelly



NATIONAL MEETING of CO-ORDINATORS

Leaders from four States gathered at Mill Park at the end of September for our two day annual retreat and meeting. Fr Brendan Lane (PP Mill Pk) provided spiritual input with the aid of a powerpoint presentation of his recent return visit to Zambia where he taught in a secondary school for nearly 3 years. The co-ordinators met for business and shared their reports, which showed a lot of dynamism and greater openness in the Church at large for training in evangelisation at parish level. Issues put on the table included: adapting courses to time constraints, follow up teachings for graduates, finances for evangelisation activities, DVD use for teaching, the School website, and connecting to World Youth Day preparations.



L. to R. Pat Kelly, Adrian Commadeur, Cathy McLure, Lucy Grasso, Ferdie Sedhoff, Charlie Gatt, Neil Hayter and Bart Potenza.

The co-ordinators were delighted to hear that by the end of this year fifteen Schools will be established, or well on the way to establishment. The challenge now is to double that number by the end of next year.

The National Coordinators then participated in a one day *Andrew* course. This course focuses on the methodology of the School, with its emphasis, not only on information given, but on participation in activities that cement the teachings.

All our courses are built on the teaching principle that people learn in different ways, some learn by seeing, some by hearing and some by doing. The structure of our courses tries to take this into account by presenting the same material in different ways to accommodate the people's different learning styles.

GIDEON'S ARMY

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

Would you consider becoming a new member of the Gideon's Army appeal? \$100 annual subscription. New soldiers urgently needed!

Thank you to all existing members
May God bless you abundantly!

PRAYERS NEEDED



Please pray for:

- ▶ Adrian Commadeur's (Melb. Co-Ordinator) newborn granddaughter, Aida Rosa, who has a heart problem.
- ▶ Also Elmer Guerra's (Brisbane Co-Ordinator) daughter, Melissa, who has been in and out of hospital over the last few months.
- ▶ Finally Fr Joseph Sadie (PP Nerang) who has not been well and is undergoing tests to sort out the problem.

GIDEON'S ARMY

Please enrol me/us in Gideon's Army:

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

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

NEW

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: Jacinta Gunn
ph. (03) 5998 7859

SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2007

DATE	COURSE	LOCATION	CONTACT
Jan. 5 th —13 th	Formation of Evangelisers	St. Mary's, N.S.W.	Lucy: 02 9670 4440
Jan. 19 th —20 th	Young People in the Gospel	Sunshine, Vic.	Adrian: 03 9337 2051
Feb. 23 rd —24 th	New Life	Adelaide, S.A.	Gamen: 08 8339 2573
Feb. 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th , Mar. 7 th , 14 th .	Formation in Catholic Teaching	St. Mary's, N.S.W.	Lucy: 02 9670 4440
Mar. 14 th —16 th , 28 th —29 th	Formation of Disciples	Keilor Downs, Vic	Adrian: 03 9337 2051
May 17 th —18 th , 28 th June 4 th , 11 th , 18 th , 25 th July 5 th —6 th	Formation of Evangelisers	Bayswater, Vic	Adrian: 03 9337 2051

Prayer at St Stephan's Budapest By Adrian Commadeur

The weeklong International Congress on the New Evangelisation, the fifth in the series that has taken the gospel to the cities of Paris, Lisbon, Vienna, Brussels and now Budapest, was a great inspiration. Through the efforts of five cardinals, and the organisation of the French Emmanuele Community, the whole city of Budapest was covered with banners, activities, and events that brought the gospel into the market place. Each parish was invited to tell of their own activities. An AN-ZAC group of 27 was billeted close to the centre of the Congress, held at St Stephan's Cathedral, in the heart of the city.

Anne and I enjoyed the kind hospitality of the former ambassador to Australia! No language troubles. Superbly organised with instant translation, organised travel and meal tickets, scores of workshops and outstanding keynote addresses. The first event each morning was a prayer session in the local parish church, sometimes with the children, sometimes with a focus on the adults. Upon arrival in the Cathedral, morning prayer was led by one of the communities, the photo illustrates the Members of the Beatitude Community. Traditional psalms were recited in the manner specific to each community. The keynote address and testimonies of evangelisation followed on a specific theme. The most interesting and inspiring was on the theme of martyrdom given by three priests of great age, but wonderful spirit, who



had suffered years under communist persecution. The way to survive, they told us, was by only thinking, speaking and acting in a positive way, not allowing negativity to overcome you. Also it was important to support one another. The afternoon workshops were not unlike ones we have experienced but were of international interest. In the end I felt that what the School of Evangelisation is doing by way of courses in the Parish Evangelisation Formation Program, were as directly evangelistic as any that I attended, including the English and French Taize models. Each of course being very valuable for the Church. Let us keep running the race till we win the prize.

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

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A RETREAT With Fr. Jim Nisbet

*Be of good
cheer*

Our Lady Help of Christians Hall,
49 Nicholson St. East Brunswick

Mon.—Fri. 14th—18th January 2008

*I have
conquered
the world!*

Come to this Retreat
with hearts joyfully open
giving thanks and glory
to our loving God, and
be affirmed in God's Peace,
Healing and Love.



The daily programme: 9.30am—5pm.
It includes:

- Two major talks,
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
- Eucharistic Celebration with homily.
B. Y.O. lunch. Full cost \$80 or \$20 daily

Enquiries: C.C.R. Centre, 9629 2544

Sponsored by Catholic Charismatic Renewal

'MARY' AT COWWARR

On the weekend of the 10th & 11th November about 30 people participated in a Mary Course at the Cowwarr Retreat Centre which was conducted by the Sale Diocese S.O.E.

By looking at the scriptures we came to see Mary as a wonderful model of evangelisation.

The sharing and feelings expressed by participants showed that the weekend gave all involved a greater appreciation of Mary's important role in God's plan of salvation; her total surrender and courage giving us an ideal to strive for. The praise and worship sessions as well as fellowship were uplifting and encouraging.

Julianne Hoffard

