



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

The Witness

Catholic School of Evangelisation Australia Newsletter
August 2009

Parish on Fire! Conference: 2nd—4th October 09

St Scholastica's Parish, Bennettswood in Melbourne's Eastern suburbs – the Bible Belt – will host an exciting conference on Parish Evangelisation. This will be the second conference of its type, since Mill Park parish hosted 'Receive the Fire!' in 2008. The aim is to reach as many parishioners as possible by equipping and motivating parishioners to reach out. It will be mission BY parishioners, TO parishioners. A full program of activities will enable evangelisation by parishioners to occur.

The morning sessions will be filled with teaching, sharing, testimony and liturgy, whilst the afternoons and evening will be devoted to actual evangelisation. Keynote speakers will include Fr Gerard Kelly, President of Sion Evangelising Community in UK and priest of the Liverpool Archdiocese. Fr Kelly has ministered in the area of

parish evangelisation in the UK and Europe, and has the reputation of being an inspirational speaker. Fr Kelly is of the same community as Michelle Moran, International President of ICCRS. Monica McArdle, also from the Sion Community, will bring her extensive experience in creative evangelisation in parishes and schools.

Bishop Tim Costelloe will open the conference on Friday 2nd October with an address on the *Church's Teaching on Evangelisation* and celebrate the Eucharist, which we hope will feature local children participating. Events are planned for all groups in the parish, women, men, seniors, children, and conference participants are welcome at all of them. Maria Feleppa, coordinator of the conference is assembling a great team to provide hospitality and food for all. The conference is the climax of six months of formation of evangelis-

ing parishioners, equipped to give testimony to their faith in Jesus.

It is hoped that every person in the geographical area of the parish will be touched in some way by the conference activities. Local leaders are expected to conduct the men's breakfast and family and youth concerts. They will all feature kerygmatic evangelisation, inviting people to surrender their lives to Jesus.

You have to be part of it so that you too can add your efforts at evangelising Bennettswood. We need all hands on deck. Jesus is calling you to give a weekend of exciting evangelising.

Registration forms are available from Maria Feleppa, Bennettswood Prayer Group, ph. 03 9808 8483 or Adrian Commadeur, 03 93372051.

Registration Form also on page 11 and more information p. 4.

Bishop Tim Costelloe.
Keynote speaker at
Parish on Fire Conference.



The Priest and the Evangelising Parish

All priests are invited to a special day to be addressed by Archbishop Denis Hart, Fr Gerard Kelly (UK) and Fr Brendan Lane (Rector of Seminary)

Wednesday 7th October 2009

St Scholastica's Hall, Bennettswood

The day begins with a cuppa at 10.30 am and will finish at 4 pm. Monica McArdle will make a presentation on creative ways of evangelising in the parish.

A similar day for Pastoral Associates, Youth Ministers and

Teachers on **Thursday 8th October** with special emphasis on creative means of evangelising various groups of parishioners, such as children and youth.

The Witness

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

National Executive Committee:

Bishop Joe Grech — Spiritual Director
Patrick Kelly — Director

And all School Coordinators in Australia.

Committee of Management:

Patrick Kelly
Adrian Commadeur
Maria Luff
Len Forster — Treasurer
Julianne Hoffard — Editor

Please direct all correspondence to:

**S.O.E.,
P.O. Box 168,
Wonthaggi 3995
Ph. 5672 2772**

email: pakell@bigpond.net.au

*Check out information about the
School of Evangelisation
on our web page:*

www.schoolofevangelisation.org.au

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
20th November 2009**

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 EVANGELISATION TEAMS.

SUCCESSFUL NEW COURSES

One of the benefits of my study trip to the Czech Republic last year was the new courses I was able to bring back from the Koinonia of John the Baptist community. These short courses slot in perfectly between the New Life course and our other basic courses; Emmaus, Formation of Disciples and Formation of Evangelisers.

The new courses are **Personal Prayer, John the Baptist (Testimony)** and **Good News (Kerygma)**. There are other courses as well but these are the ones we have now incorporated into our revamped Parish Formation Evangelisation Programme. Earlier this year we workshopped these courses in Brisbane and Sydney with the School teams. Then we presented them in St Scholastica's parish as part of the parish formation in the lead up to the "Parish on Fire" conference. Each month a course was presented beginning with New Life and to our delight the number of participants has increased with each course. We are now planning to run these courses in Traralgon Vic and Noarlunga SA.



Personal Prayer

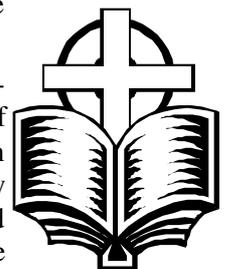
The Personal Prayer course is based on the fact that prayer is at the absolute heart of evangelisation, after people experience an encounter with the Risen Lord Jesus in the New Life course they need to be established into a firm habit of daily prayer. This course gives participants practical help in doing this, teaching them a method of prayer which is founded on scripture and which has an underlying outward going evangelistic style.



John the Baptist

The John the Baptist and Good News course are centred on the Kerygma and the proclamation of the Kerygma as part of your personal testimony.

The focus of the School of Evangelisation is to train people to evangelise as part of the parish community and all the formation courses in the world are useless unless they lead to the proclamation of Jesus, died and risen, our Lord and Saviour. We would love to present them in your parish.



Good News

Fr Brendan Lane - Rector of Seminary

Fr Lane has been appointed by the bishops of Victoria, to be rector of the Corpus Christi Seminary in Carlton. He is the former parish priest of Mill Park. There he promoted the work of the School of Evangelisation with great enthusiasm.

Fr Brendan became convinced of the value of the School when his own parishioners gave testimony in Church to their conversion to Jesus, and the experience of the Holy Spirit. There are many groups, including two youth groups, that have benefitted from the work of the School over the last six years in Mill Park.

We thank God that he has chosen Fr Brendan to form and equip future priests with the same zeal and pastoral care that he has shown.

Come Holy Spirit, fall afresh on us.



Each year at Pentecost we celebrate the sending of the Holy Spirit on the apostles. What happened as a result of this was marvellous. They were dramatically changed. From being fearful and unsure about where their future lay, they became powerful and bold witnesses of Jesus Christ. The coming down of the Holy Spirit on the people who were together in the upper room marked the birth date of the church. That event gave the people present the courage to continue the mission of Jesus and gradually, the small Christian community grew.

Today we are all enjoying the fruit of that amazing experience. **Who is the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to have the power of the Holy Spirit?** During the celebration of World Youth Day held in Sydney just over one year ago Pope Benedict XVI gave a very powerful teaching on the Holy Spirit. Among other things he said that to have the power of **the Holy Spirit means to have the power of the very life of God. This is awesome. The Holy Spirit helps us to experience and to put into practice the very life of our God.** We are very powerful people indeed.

What does this power entail? In the Old Testament the spirit of God was present at the first moment of creation. It brought order in the midst of chaos and darkness (Gen 1:2). When God created Adam he breathed his spirit upon him and it was only then that he became alive (Gen 2:7). The Holy Spirit of God helped people like Gideon who thought that they were weak to assume leadership positions (Judges 6). Again Isaiah was helped to accomplish his mission as a prophet through the Holy Spirit of God (Is 6:1) However the people of the Old Testament gradually realised that this power is not only

given to some people but rather to all.

Everybody who follows the ways of God becomes empowered and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. The new agreement that God desired to make with his people entailed being completely filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. Ezekiel had a clear vision of this "I will pour my Spirit within you". This is precisely what Jesus did. In the gospel of St Matthew we read John the Baptist saying, "I baptise you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire" (Mt 3:11). So what does all of this mean for us today? We have been baptised and confirmed. These moments are not simply nice ceremonies or mere words pronounced by the priest. Our faith teaches us that at baptism and confirmation we receive the same powerful Holy Spirit. We become totally filled with the presence of the living God. Moreover the presence of God within us remains with us throughout our lives.

What does it mean to have the power of Jesus alive in us? What does it do to us? St Paul in his letter to the Christian community living in Rome speaks very clearly about the effects of the Holy Spirit of God. He says that at least these three things happen to us: We become part and parcel of the family of God. We are graced with an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ our God. We are given a spirit of boldness and courage. We are given everything that God has. Whatever God possesses is given to us (Rom 8:14-17). In addition, we are also given special gifts to be enabled to continue the mission and the work of Jesus. These gifts are amazing; gifts of healing, miracles, wisdom, knowledge and being able to discern what is of God and what is not (1 Cor 12:4-11). We are powerful people indeed. In practice, this helps us to live a life full

of meaning and purpose.

Sadly, some people think that they are going to find fulfilment in life by being

macho or by asserting their authority through violence. Others think that fulfilment comes as a result of the so called freedom, to do whatever they desire to do whenever they desire to do it. Others base their security on achievement, possessions or in being involved with drugs, alcohol or with sexual activity that does not respect the dignity of the other person. However in reality, this kind of life leads to depression, emptiness, anger, violence, always on the alert in case someone might usurp our authority and very often also to suicide. We have been created for a very different lifestyle. **We are called to make a difference respecting the dignity of each other, helping others to recognize and nurture their dignity.**

This necessitates a decision from us. We cannot live this type of life without the help of the presence of the Holy Spirit within us. We are called to be God's signs of hope to the world. We can achieve this because the presence of Jesus within us continues to nurture us with the necessary help to achieve this end. And so we pray:

"Lord Jesus thank you for my life. Thank you for being alive within me through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Pour out upon me a fresh anointing of your Holy Spirit. Make me a powerful witness of your resurrection so that I can help others to experience their dignity and your presence.

Amen".

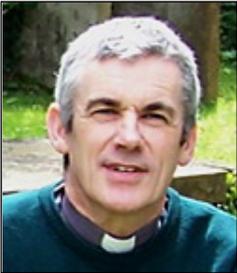


Bishop Joe Grech, Spiritual Director of the School.

Guest Speakers - Parish on Fire! Conference - 2nd—4th October 09

Keynote speakers at the evangelisation conference in **St. Scholastica's Parish, Bennettswood** include the following two outstanding speakers from the United Kingdom, members of the Sion Community which specialises in evangelising activities in parishes and schools.

Fr Gerard Kelly:



Ordnained priest of the Archdiocese of Liverpool in 1994, he was released from diocesan tasks to work with the Sion Community.

Parish Mission Team Leader before being elected President of the Community in 2000, his ministry includes working with Diocesan Pastoral Teams and Departments of Education across the UK in developing a more missionary mentality

in parishes. He has led days on evangelisation in seminaries and retreats to deacons and priests in the UK and the Netherlands. He is an inspirational and motivating speaker. His topic will be "The Modern Evangelising Parish".

Monica McArdle:



With a background in specialises in creative evangelisation. Monica's passion and charism lie in her ability to draw forth a willingness and joy in stepping out into the world of mission. She has worked in parishes and schools in England to train and enable parishioners to become active Gospel missionaries. She passes on skills in mime, drama, song, dance, sign language and use of modern media. Monica will cover "Practical Methods of Evangelisation Today".

Bishop Tim Costelloe:



Bishop of the Northern Region of the Melbourne Archdiocese, Bishop Tim is a noted Salesian theologian. He will speak on "The Church's Teaching on Evangelisation".

We invite you to encourage some leading parishioners to attend this conference with the aim of bringing back the message of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II that 'the Church exists to evangelise'.

Host of the Conference is Fr Brian Bainbridge PP.

Registration brochures available.

Contacts: Adrian Commadeur,
email: acommade@bigpond.net.au
Ph. 03 93372051

Or: Maria Feleppa
email: mfpax7@hotmail.com
ph. 03 9808 8483

MILL PARK FESTIVAL

In conjunction with the visit of Fr Gerard Kelly and Monica McArdle, for the Bennettswood "Parish on Fire" conference, and the annual St Francis of Assisi festival a number of special events will be held at Mill Park.

Friday October 9th: Parish Cells of Evangelisation. For those involved in Parish evangelisation cells or who would like to learn more about this community focused style of evangelisation this would be a great opportunity to meet with those active and experienced in parish cells. Fr Kelly and Monica McArdle are part of the Sion Community in England and so will be able to bring out the importance of community in evangelisation.

Saturday Oct 10th: Creative Evangelisation Day with Monica McArdle. This will be of special interest to those who completed the Creative Evangelisation course with Monica a few years ago. However the day is open to ALL who would like to learn more about being creative in our evangelisation outreach whether it is in community, parish or school.

Sunday October 10th: St Francis of Assisi Festival Day. This is always a great family day with a beautiful mass followed by an afternoon of good food, music, dance and friendship. A great parish celebration. It is hoped that the creative evangelisation people will add a special flavour to the day.

To find out more information about these events, such as times and venues please contact:

Trish Spiteri, ph 03 9436 1834 or
Adrian Commadeur, ph 03 9337 2051

Encountering The Holy Spirit

Extracts from presentation given by Lucy Grasso, Sydney SOE Coordinator at SCENE (See P.7).

"We all need to come into a relationship with the Holy Spirit and to deepen that relationship within us. The Holy Spirit wants to give us new life and stir us into activity. He is the one who transforms us and helps to change our hearts... The Holy Spirit guides us to the truth and can shape our lives... While we receive the Holy Spirit at Baptism we can grow in the Holy Spirit by receiving the Sacraments... We need to pray again and again for an infilling of the Holy Spirit and to receive all the different gifts of the Holy Spirit."

Lucy recommended we read Pope Paul VI *Evangelii Nuntiandi* - Evangelisation in the Modern World No.75, "It must be said that the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of evangelization: it is He who impels each individual to proclaim the Gospel, and it is He who in the depths of consciences causes the word of salvation to be accepted and understood," and to the Catechism of the Catholic Church No.683 "I Believe in the Holy Spirit."

Those attending the workshop warmly appreciated Lucy's talk and had the opportunity at the conclusion to be prayed over and to receive the Holy Spirit.

Pat Clegg, N.Z.

Healing in the Eucharist By Mike Dooley (Brisbane Graduate)

With the advent of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in 1967, healing in the Eucharist has been more in focus than ever before. Catholics believe that the Eucharist (Mass) is a healing sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ at the Last Supper. Names such as Father Michael Scanlan, Father Emilien Tardif, Father Robert de Grandis and Francis McNutt became well known around the world. They have been gifted by God in this area to a much deeper level than most others. All priests have this gift at some level through their ordination.

I had been a lifetime depressive with suicidal tendencies up to the age of 38. School was punctuated by bullying at all grades. Many thrashings came from my father at home, so that whether at home or at school, I was terrified all the time of physical abuse. I felt that all people hated me and were out to "get me". Self esteem was not just low it was underground! At one time I went to jump in front of a train as it pulled into my local railway station, but I chickened out. Psychiatric treatment did not help. Although I never prayed, nevertheless much parish work was done. I guess it could be called "Attempted Salvation by Committee".

In late 1973, something drove me to do a Renewal of Faith course in the parish with seven other men. Now I know it was a leading of the Holy Spirit.

Week four of the course dealt with the Holy Spirit. The leader, Carmelite priest, Father Des Williamson, challenged all to become like the apostles on the first Pentecost when they received the Spirit of God in the form of tongues of fire. The challenge was to pray to have the Holy Spirit, received in the Sacraments of baptism and confirmation, fully released within us. In other words, the apostles were immediately and dramatically changed. Why then were we not changed likewise?

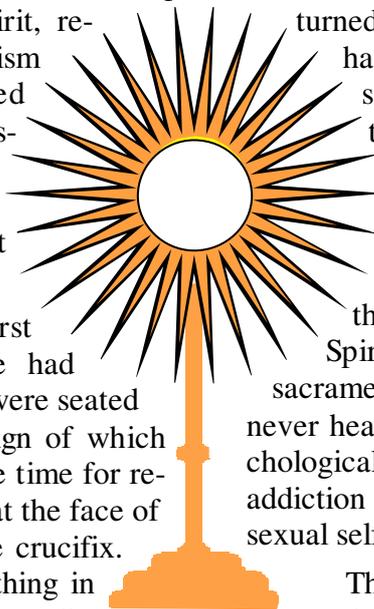
December 16th 1973 was the first Sunday after the above challenge had been issued. My wife Mollie and I were seated at the back of the church, the design of which included a long aisle. When it came time for reception of communion, I looked up at the face of the almost adult sized figure on the crucifix. I said, "Look God, if there is anything in this Holy Spirit business Father Des is talking about, then I want it, and I want exactly the

same that the apostles received at Pentecost." When I realized what I was saying, I added, "Look God, that was 2000 years ago. If there is any Holy Spirit left, I will have it". I did not know what I was saying but it was probably the most sincere prayer of my lifetime. The face on the figure then smiled at me. I was aghast because plaster of paris, or whatever the figure was made of, just cannot smile. I used to go around jokingly telling people that I was insane, but now I thought that I really was. I spent the time moving up the aisle towards the altar in a mixture of shock and disbelief. As the host was taken in my mouth, my body instantly became like a burning coal. A cooling breeze then seemed to envelop me in the shape of a rectangular tube that I could visualise as coming from a high window. I wanted to jump up and shout "Alleluia", but I restrained myself. Imagine the consternation this would have caused in a church where the 450 seats were filled and there were parishioners standing.

I was so overcome by this sudden infilling of the Holy Spirit, that I could not walk normally to my pew at the back of the church. I staggered and zig-zagged my way, balancing my hands on the pews either side of the aisle. In addition I had a huge grin on my face, an action that is not normal for depressives. Mollie was quite surprised. She asked: "What's up with you?". My response, "I don't know, but Jesus is real and He loves me"

I had entered the church as a depressive, but walked out on fire both for life and for Jesus. With such a sudden and dramatic change in my life, I went out trying to evangelise everyone. I probably turned off several people. Perhaps I should have been locked up for a while until I had settled down. Upon hearing the news, Father Des loaned me a book titled: "Baptised in the Spirit and Spiritual Gifts" by Steve Clark. This was highly exciting. Father Des agreed that I had been Baptised in the Spirit. Basically this was the fuller releasing of the Holy Spirit, which I had already received in the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. I had never heard of such a thing. In addition, my psychological problem received major healing. An addiction to television and problems with chronic sexual self abuse were also healed.

That Eucharist will never be forgotten. It was the beginning of a whole new way of life. Praise God!



'NEW LIFE' St Luke's Parish, Noarlunga, S.A.

By John Mahoney, Participant



I was at 6:00 p.m. Mass Sunday 12th July and there was a Baptism happening during the mass. At the start of mass the priest asked us to be silent and go to that special place inside that only “you and God know”. I couldn't find one.

During the latter part of the Baptism, at the lighting of the candle, the priest once again challenged us to keep the light of faith shining inside. This time I did find the light but it was a sad little flame, flickering and threatening to expire.

At the end of Mass, Frank Austin was invited to the lectern and he told us about the upcoming “New Life Retreat” being run by the “Catholic School of Evangelisa-

tion”. Was this a personal invitation by God or what? What ever, it looked like something I had been looking for, for some time now. That is to get to know my faith better.

This weekend I have experienced a reawakening of my faith. With the help of Patrick and Carmen in particular, we have managed to drag out, dust off and give my faith a bit of a spring clean. I know the others in my group felt the same. The special time of community prayer gave witness to that. During the retreat we talked of the central theme to our Christian faith, that is, of Love. We all know that Christianity is based on Love, but what I had missed was that God's love for each of us is so personal.

God's love for me is personal. God loves me personally, now that's scary but nice.

We had a great session on Faith. Our Faith means a trusting relationship with Jesus. I won't go into the detail of the interactive session but it was a great demonstration of faith and trust.

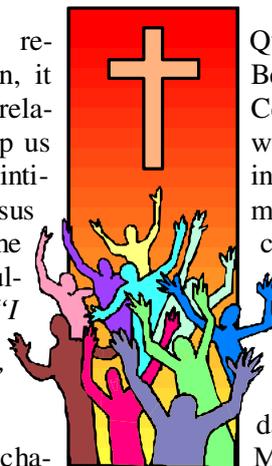
Overall it was a very rewarding experience participating in the New Life retreat and I look forward to the retreat on “Personal Prayer” in the future. I thank the Holy Spirit for guiding me to it and being present for all of us. I thank the Catholic School of Evangelisation for their generous gift of the retreat. Finally and above all I thank God for my faith.

Eucharistic Evangelisation

The Parish Evangelisation Team at Our Lady of the Rosary, St Marys, in Sydney, has taken the initiative to host a **Twilight Retreat** which takes place once a month in the parish, commencing at 7.30pm to 9.00pm. It consists of Eucharistic Adoration, Eucharistic Formation, presented by Fr Bob Bossini, SDB, PP, on various topics that relate to the Eucharist. The Twilight Retreat helps us to come to a better understanding and deeper appreciation of the Real Presence, Jesus in the Eucharist, and to discover what the Eucharist means to each one of us. The Team sees this as Eucharistic Evangelisation, telling everybody where Jesus is today, truly Present in the Most

Blessed Sacrament. In responding to the invitation, it brings us into a personal relationship with Jesus to help us grow with Him in a most intimate way. The Risen Jesus is present with us in the Blessed Sacrament in fulfillment of His promise: *“I am always with you, until the end of the world.”* Matt 28:20.

During this time of Eucharistic Adoration we are invited to come and remain in the presence of Jesus in this Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, to adore Him and allow Him to shower us with His graces. The evening includes Praise Songs,



.....By Lucy Grasso

Quiet time and Reflection, Benediction, followed by Celebration of Holy Mass where we can receive Jesus in our hearts in Holy Communion. The evening concludes with supper and fellowship.

Eucharistic Adoration is also offered at our parish on Wednesday and Friday mornings followed by Mass. The Twilight Retreat gives parishioners, who are unable to attend these times because of work commitments during the day, an opportunity to participate in Eucharistic Adoration and Celebration of Mass in the evening.

SYDNEY CONGRESS EMBRACING THE NEW EVANGELISATION

19th—26th July 2009

Evangelisation is in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity; she exists in order to evangelise. Pope Paul VI

SETTING THE SCENE OF MY LIFE

..... By Dianna Morris

On the week of July 20th—25th I journeyed to St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney to be a part of 'SCENE' (Sydney Congress Embracing the New Evangelisation). This event attracted hundreds of people not only from Sydney but also from interstate and overseas. The Catholic School of Evangelisation took part in giving workshops, holding a stall at the Vocations Expo and meeting people who were interested in what the School had to offer.

For me SCENE could stand for many things. The very first acronym I came up with was Spirit Coming Enveloping the Numbing Emptiness that is essentially what I found happening to me this past week while I was attending SCENE. I wasn't really sure what to expect when I was invited to come to this Congress but I knew it would be a good experience. As per usual, I underestimated the impact this event would have on me. The Holy Spirit works in the most unexpected ways!

The Vocations Expo held at Martin Place, exhibiting the many different representatives which showed the diversity abounding in our Church was a witness of our faith in the 'marketplace'. At the

Cathedral, the day started with Morning Prayer followed by a Testimony, Catechesis by Bishops and Mass. In the afternoon there were Street Evangelisation, Singers and Bands to set the scene alive for passers by, several workshops on Evangelisation to choose from, Holy Hour from 5.00pm—6.00pm. In the evenings Pub Talks took place at three different Pub locations in the City. The closing Mass at the Cathedral on Sunday was the ending highlight of the Congress.

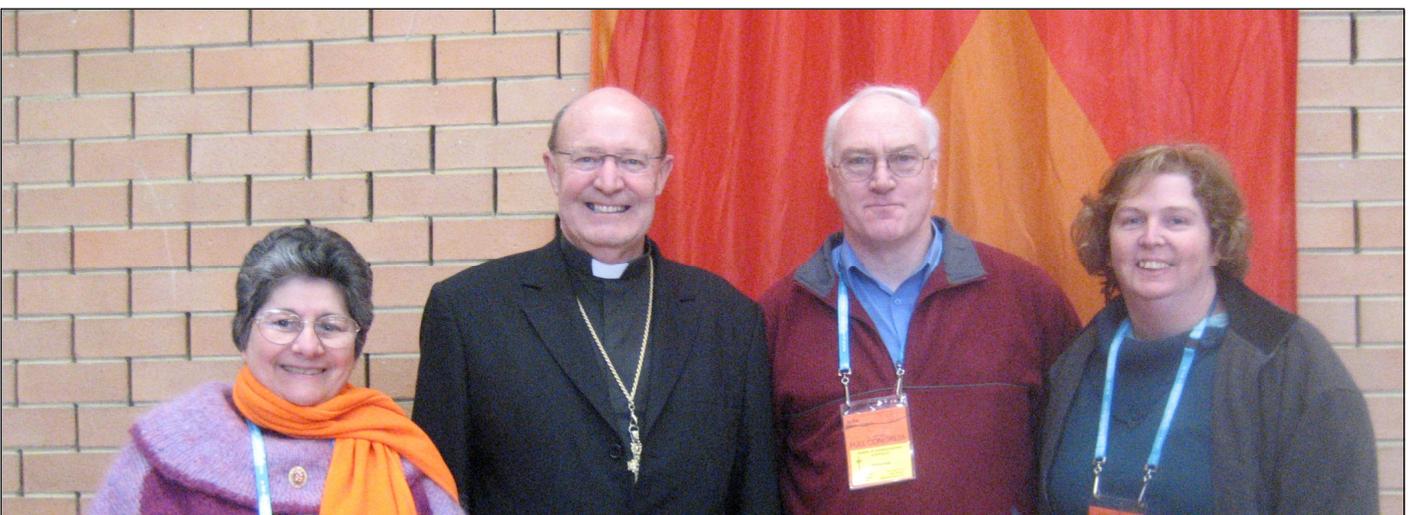
When I first heard the word evangelisation I thought automatically of Protestants going door to door or spouting the wonders of the Lord which is something that is great but not my style. I soon learnt that the New Evangelisation is actually about opening oneself to God as well as following the calling that we were given at Baptism. The calling to share the truth of God's unconditional love for everyone. The New Evangelisation is about proposing not imposing. For me, the way I had seen evangelisation was more of an imposition and not proposing because the Lord gave us free will.

Growing up in the United States, I had been exposed to the imposing side of evangelisation which made me very uncomfort-

able. I always thought it was better to live the example of Christ but now I realize I have to do more than just that. I have to actually witness to others who are in need and bring the Good News to all. I cannot do this without asking the Holy Spirit to come and fill me with the words He wants me to use. What is impossible for me is not impossible if it is God's Will but our God is not imposing. He wants us to have a relationship with Him. He is not a far away God who watches from afar. The Lord is very personal. He loved us so much He made us in his own image. He even became a man to build a bridge back to Him because we are so important to Him.

So I am going to take this week and reflect more on it praying that I may be the instrument to draw others who have not known this great love, or strayed from this great love, to come back to the embrace of our most loving and gracious God.

This week set the scene of my life. I was called to testify to the wonders of our mighty, loving Lord. To live by His example not just by what I do but by how I speak and love others.



From left to right: Lucy Grasso, Sydney Coordinator, Bishop Porteous, Pat Kelly & Dianna Morris, Sydney SOE Team

On The New Road To Discipleship

By Helena Tanti, graduate, Sydney School of Evangelisation

When I first read in the Parish bulletin about the Formation of Disciples Course, I thought to myself, God must really listen when we ask for help. I made up my mind that I will attend the full course as this couldn't have come at a better time in my life. I have been struggling with a couple of major issues in the last 12 months, one being that my daughter has not baptised her children. Coming from a very strict Catholic upbringing I found this very distressing. This situation created a barrier between us and many arguments as I was always in her ear telling her what to do. She started to avoid me, this upset me very much.

I attended the Formation of Disciple Course that the Parish was

conducting, just listening to the presenters talking about the love God has for us and the gifts he is willing to give us if we only pray and ask and trust in him.

Every time the session ended, it left me hungry for more and I found myself looking forward to the next one, I started to pray more and even asked God to handle my difficult situation. After a couple of weeks I found myself at peace and called my daughter without bringing up the subject. She spoke to me in a very loving manner. She announced to me that she made arrangements with her church to have all her children baptised. I thanked God for his blessings. I also learned that we need to trust God and ask him for guidance.

I pray and talk to God every day. I talk to him about little things and big things, this brings joy in my life. Most importantly I pray for people like Eddie & Lucy and Fr Bob, the presenters of the Course who dedicate their time to spread the Word of the Lord. Sometimes we struggle with our thoughts then out of the blue a kind person says the right thing and our whole life changes for the better. Next time there is one of these courses in your community go and listen with an open mind and a joyful heart, as God wants to reach us through these wonderful people. God will lead us to a place of peace and contentment and nothing can satisfy our longing for God except fellowship with Him. God bless you!

St. Paul is seen in a New Light

..... By Kay Judd, Wagga Wagga

The Wagga Wagga School of Evangelisation recently held a 'Secret of Paul Course'. The course commenced the week following Easter until Pentecost Sunday. The course was held for one evening each week over six weeks and concluded with the annual SOE Pentecost Sunday Celebration Prayer and Healing Ceremony.

The teachers for the course found the structure and content of the course booklet a great aid to their teachings. It was so well set out but also made it easy for teachers to include additional information and add their own personal witness to the teaching.

Thank you to Pat and also Adrian Commadeur for their support in preparation for the course and also Adrian's graphic image of Paul which we used for posters and in advertising material.

The course was received with enthusiasm by the participants and we maintained the level of course attendance throughout the course. Some of the participant's comments:

* 'The course was full of informa-



Fr. Ryan giving one of his presentations.

tion about Paul that I didn't know. It was also very challenging for those giving the talks.'

* 'It was great to learn about the life of Paul and to hear of his human traits. Thanks to all those who presented the course. It was excellent and well presented'.

* 'It showed Paul in a different light than people often thought him to be. Paul always provided for his own needs by his own hands'.

* 'Well done to those who ran the course. It was a great course'.

* 'I found the course very relaxed and informal it was great to attend'.

* 'The course was great and I also enjoyed being able to be of some assistance'.

Others indicated that they were now keen to read more about Paul and also now have a greater understanding of Paul's journeys and work in the scriptures. Some thought more highly of Paul and his mission after the completion of the course. Thought the course really showed the human side of Paul and many of the trials and hardships he suffered on his race to the finish.

MINISTRY

Ministry is

Giving when you feel like weeping.

Praying for others when you need to be prayed for.

Feeding others,

When your own soul is hungry.

Living truth before people

When you can't see results.

Hurting with other people, when your own heart is hurting.

Keeping your word when it's not convenient.

It is being faithful when you want to run away.

FAITH AND CONVERSION

..... By Jenny Rydzewski, graduate.

I had come to a time in my life where I felt lost, lonely and guilty, even though I am part of a large family. My husband and I have been blessed with 4 children and 6 grandchildren. As a wife, mother, daughter and sister I tried to be everything for everyone, but didn't have time for myself and my needs and for this I have my regrets as I did not have enough time for Jesus and my spiritual life. As a consequence I did not attend Mass or receive the Sacraments, basically I was a Christmas and Easter person. There had been many trying and stressful times in my life but throughout all the ordeals I always felt blessed and felt that the good Lord was looking out for me.

The change in my life came about when my third grand daughter, Elysia Bernadette, was born prematurely at 26 weeks and weighing 650gm. Family prayer was a rare thing in my household even when I was growing up. I don't recall that we ever prayed as a family together at home, as it was deemed to be a private thing. Sadly in many cases it is in times of crisis or if we want something that we seriously think about God and start to pray. I made a commitment to go to confession and attend Mass. We also started to pray the Rosary weekly to Our Lady of Fatima as a family. I prayed the Rosary daily for the Holy Spirit and through the intercession of Our Lady to protect our little baby as she struggled to survive. I was fortunate enough to attend a Day of Prayer when the statue of Our Lady of Fatima visited Australia. After some time had passed I began to feel an inner peace take over me and I believe that this was the beginning of my conversion.

Last year in our Parish we were about to commence the six weeks Parish Lenten Program 'New Life'. During that very special time I believe I got to know, love and reacquaint myself with Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Prior to this program I never would have had the confi-

dence to discuss my faith or religion as I always felt inadequate and unsure that I would say the wrong thing. Through the 'New Life' course and the encouragement given by Fr Bob, Lucy and Eddie Grasso, the presenters, I started to read the Bible daily. I prayed to the Holy Spirit to help me understand the readings so I could love Jesus more and apply the Gospel to my daily life. I finally felt that the Holy Spirit and Mother Mary had led me back home and Jesus was reborn in my heart. I have still a long way to go but have gained a little more confidence to share my faith with others, at home, in the workplace and wherever. The dy-



namics used in the 'New Life' course to explain faith had made such an impact on me. I still to this day relate the experience of using the blindfold and running water to others and helping them come to faith in Jesus.

The turning point in my life came when I no longer felt lonely or lost. Now I have a real love for the Eucharist and look forward to attending Mass and listening attentively to the homily. I would like to share with you an experience I had recently. I had been praying a long time for a reconciliation to take place in my husband's family and was getting disheartened. After one of the homilies at Mass I came home with a new understanding and a renewed faith that God is listening to me and that I must be patient and keep praying.

Well, a few weeks ago I believe that God brought about a situation involving my sick father-in-law and the answer to my prayers. Dad has

passed away now but I thank God every day that He gave the family the time and opportunity to reconcile themselves where there were differences before he died and the bitterness and resentfulness died as well. It also gave me the opportunity to introduce family prayer and saying the Rosary which has been sadly amiss for many years. I will continue to pray for more conversions.

Now I can witness with absolute conviction that by going to Mass and receiving the Sacraments it makes it easier to follow the Gospel teachings and to make better choices and decisions in our lives.

*Your ways, O Lord, make known to me;
Teach me your paths.
Guide me in your truth and teach me,
For you are God my saviour,
And for you I wait all the day.*

Psalm 25:4-5

I would like to make this prayer in thanksgiving to God for all that He has done for me.

I love and thank you God the Father for sending Your Son for our salvation.

I love and thank you Jesus for your suffering and death on the Cross and for teaching us how we should live our lives according to your Word.

I love and thank you Holy Spirit for all your graces and blessings you have bestowed on me and my family. Please help us to understand the meaning of the Gospels so we can love Jesus more and help us to know and follow your will.

I love and thank you Mother Mary. You were there for your Son Jesus always. Please be there for me and my family. Intercede for us to have the courage to carry our cross daily in the footsteps of your Son, Jesus.

I've learned . . .

- * **That being kind is more important than being right.**
- * **That sometimes all a person needs is a hand to hold and a heart to understand.**

SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2009

DATE	COURSE	LOCATION	CONTACT
August 14 th —15 th	PERSONAL PRAYER	Mill Park, Vic.	Trish: 02 9436 1834
October 2 nd —3 rd	PERSONAL PRAYER	Traralgon, Vic.	Julianne: 03 51165105 email: jshoffard@gmail.com
November 6 th —7 th	JOHN THE BAPTIST	Traralgon, Vic.	Julianne: 03 51165105 email: jshoffard@gmail.com
November 27 th —28 th	PERSONAL PRAYER	Noarlunga, S.A.	Carmen: 08 8339 2573
December 4 th —5 th	GOOD NEWS	Traralgon, Vic.	Julianne: 03 51165105 email: jshoffard@gmail.com

A Timorese Experience By Donna Furler (SOE graduate S.A.)

Donna Furler is a young lady who was a participant at Modbury for the Sharing Your Faith Seminar. She is now doing a 2 year stint in East Timor with Palms as a Dental Assistant helping to teach the East Timorese about dental hygiene and also using her skills in dentistry as her commitment to evangelisation .

I woke bright and early this morning, with plenty of time to prepare for an 8:30am departure for a special mass in a village called Letefoho. After a freezing cold wash, which woke me in a flash, two cups of coffee and bread rolls with peanut butter, we slowly rolled down the hill and out the gate of Bakhita at 9:30am. The Rodeo ute was packed, people riding inside and sitting in the back, stopping along the way we collected more and more passengers. It was very slow going to Letefoho, the roads are so bad. After about an hour we arrived in Letefoho, it was a relief to jump out of the Rodeo and onto solid ground.

Letefoho is a small village about 15km from Eraulo (Bakhita Centre), it is high on top of a hill. The village is situated on a ridge, so looking out on either side of the village, you can see amazing views with Mount Ramelau in the distance (Timor's highest mountain). The church is on the highest point of the village, it is a specky structure with two hands clasped in prayer on top. Leading up from the church are three crosses, and further along, a huge crucifix. It really is an amazing sight.

Last month a priest was ordained and today was his first mass. The crowd was huge, walking

along the road leading to the church they were singing with drums and music in the background. The mass was held outside, with people sitting all around, young timorese children dressed in tais, playing drums and dancing. Older timorese men, traditional leaders, also dressed in traditional tais. They were involved in the animist section of the mass, carrying a chicken and goat to the altar in a procession as a sacrificial offering. No, this time they were saved from the slaughter....I don't think I could have handled watching another ritual killing.

The mass was beautiful, very long but well worth it. So after four hours....luckily we found a space under a tree and in close proximity to the loos. We all joined the after party in a marquee, where there were speeches, singing, dancing, and soooo much food. By this time, 3pm, we hadn't eaten since our peanut butter rolls at breakfast so we were starving, hot and dehydrated. We were invited to stand up and take our food first, this is quite usual being a foreigner. Often it feels quite awkward and embarrassing, the Timorese being very hospitable, they insist we go first. Secretly I was so glad, as my mouth was watering just looking at the huge, long table in the middle

of the room with so many delicious timorese dishes, my stomach was screaming and my head was aching from lack of water, that I couldn't wait to get up and fill my plate, very selfish I know. It was delicious! Sitting close by were about ten little kids, they had plates piled with rice and meat, nearly double the serving that I had. I couldn't believe my eyes, they all sat there in silence for about half an hour until their meal was finished. At home often we nearly have to force the kids to eat, but not here, they will eat until their little tummies are content! A great day!

Fifteenth Anniversary Reunion

On 23rd May 2009, the Melbourne School of Evangelisation, the Mother School for all those which sprung up across Australia and overseas, celebrated its 15th Anniversary with a reunion. Some 60 people attended. Pat Kelly gave a visionary talk, and Adrian Commaeur one on the state of the Church in Melbourne. There was a spirit of joy around the shared meal and memories.

Let us thank God for His blessings on the SOE and always ...

Sing His Praises

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

There are many different ways to evangelise and each person has to develop, usually by trial and error, the style of evangelisation that works for them. One method of evangelising is through events, both large and small.

I was part of such an event last month at the SCENE Congress in Sydney. A Vocation Expo was set up right in the heart of the business district in the city at Martin Place. Various stalls presented the gospel message and the call to discipleship in all sorts of different ways highlighting the great diversity within the Catholic Church.

Another event planned for November this year is the Celebrate Emmanuel concert which the School presents

each year in the Rundle Mall in Adelaide. The true message of Christmas is presented, again right in the marketplace.

One thing all these events have in common is that they cost money, in fact the bigger the event the more money required, I might add that this includes Parish Evangelisation conferences. However the effort and the expense is worthwhile because Jesus is being proclaimed.

Gideon's Army is the backbone of our efforts with event evangelisation. The generosity of our Gideon's members supports these events. Please join or renew your Gideon's membership so we can keep being part of these evangelisation outreach efforts.

Pat Kelly.

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!



<p style="text-align: center;">GIDEON'S ARMY</p> <p>Please enrol me/us in Gideon's Army:</p> <p>NAME (or NAME OF GROUP).....</p> <p>ADDRESS:</p> <p>TELEPHONE: <input type="checkbox"/> NEW <input type="checkbox"/> RENEWAL</p> <p>Please find my annual contribution of \$100 enclosed</p> <p>OR Please forward National Bank deposit slip for one off annual contribution</p> <p>OR I wish to contribute by _____ deposits of \$ _____ each, please forward deposit slips.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Thank you for filling out this form!</p> <p>Please make cheques payable to: School of Evangelisation, and return them to:</p> <p>GIDEON'S ARMY School of Evangelisation P.O. Box 168 Wonthaggi, Vic. 3995</p> <p>Enquiries: Pat Kelly ph. (03) 5672 2772</p>
---	--

Credit Card Payment																									
<p><input type="checkbox"/> Cheque <input type="checkbox"/> Master card <input type="checkbox"/> Visa</p> <table border="1" style="width:100%; height: 20px; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 10%;"></td><td style="width: 10%;"></td> </tr> </table> <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 5px;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%;">Date</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Receipt no</td> <td style="width: 25%;">Amount</td> <td style="width: 25%;"></td> </tr> </table>																					Date	Receipt no	Amount		<p>Name on card:</p> <p>Expiry date:/..... Date:</p> <p>Signed:</p>
Date	Receipt no	Amount																							

PARISH ON FIRE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM									
Please print clearly.									
<p>Surname:.....</p> <p>First Name:</p> <p>Address:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>State:..... Postcode</p> <p>Ph: Email:.....</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Registration Costs</p> <table style="width:100%;"> <tr> <td>Full Registration</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$ 70.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donation for meals provided</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Billeting (if required)@ \$15 per night</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total amount enclosed</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> </table> <p>Note: Registration closes 25/9/09.</p> <p>Cheques payable to: Catholic School of Evangelisation Mail to: Conference Secretariat, 42 Finch St., Burwood 3125 Enquiries: Maria Feleppa ph. 03 9808 8483 / 0409 335 704, email: mfpax7@hotmail.com or Adrian Ph/fax: 93372051, email: acommade@bigpond.net.au</p>	Full Registration	\$ 70.00	Donation for meals provided	\$.00	Billeting (if required)@ \$15 per night	\$.00	Total amount enclosed	\$
Full Registration	\$ 70.00								
Donation for meals provided	\$.00								
Billeting (if required)@ \$15 per night	\$.00								
Total amount enclosed	\$								

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

THE WITNESS

PRINT
POST
PP: 331213 / 00006

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

'Parish on Fire' Conference

2nd—4th October 2009

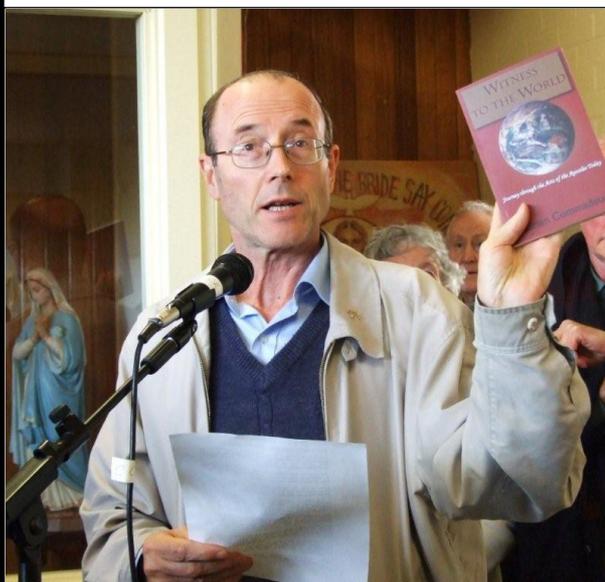
St Scholastica's Parish, Bennettswood, Vic.

Guest Speakers: Fr Gerard Kelly, Monica McArdle, Bishop Tim Costelloe.

Three Days of Formation, Outreach, Testimony, Prayer.

Enquiries: Adrian Commadeur, 03 9337 2051

Witness to the World



On Saturday the 16th May 09 the book "**Witness to the World, Journey through the Acts of the Apostles Today**" was launched by Archbishop Hart at the CCR centre with about two hundred people in attendance. This 200 page commentary on the Acts, was a Year of St Paul initiative.

We thank the Lord for this event. Nearly 100 books were taken on the day. I thank all who attended the launch and made this a special occasion.
Adrian Commadeur

ORDER FORM

Please send me ____ copy/copies of Witness to the World
At \$20 each (plus post & handling \$4 per copy).

Name _____

Street _____

Suburb/Town _____ Code _____

Mob/Phone: _____

I enclose payment by cheque/money order for \$_____

Please send order form to: Comsoda Communications,
(ABN 27 126 716 567) 15 Holly Green Crt, East Keilor, 3033

Enquiries: acommade@bigpond.net.au or ph/fax 61 3 93372051