



The Witness

Catholic School of Evangelisation Australia Inc.

May 2014 Newsletter

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL

In November last year Pope Francis published his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). In a cry from the heart Pope Francis proclaims “How I long to find the right words to stir up enthusiasm for a new chapter of evangelisation full of fervour, joy, generosity, courage, boundless love and attraction!” Then he goes on to say “Yet I realise that no words of encouragement will be enough unless the fire of the Holy Spirit burns in our hearts.” (EG 261)

Does the fire of the Holy Spirit burn in your heart? How long since you shared with someone about your life with Jesus? How long since you invited someone along to an outreach event where they would have to opportunity to meet Jesus? Has your desire to evangelise gone cold?

The Holy Father is speaking to us, “We cannot be held back by our weaknesses or our sins, nor the many obstacles to the witness and proclamation of the Gospel. It is the experience of the encounter with the Lord Jesus that motivates us and gives us the joy of proclaiming Him to all nations.” (Address to Pontifical Mission Societies, Rome: May 9th: Zenit)

Now, like the Apostles in Acts, we need to cry out to the Holy Spirit, “Allow us, your servants, to speak your message with all boldness.” (Acts 4:29) The prayer of the early Church was answered and “They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God’s message with boldness.” (Acts 4:31) We too need to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As Pope Francis explains, “Spirit-filled evangelisers means evangelisers fearlessly open to the working of the Holy Spirit.” (EG 259)

We can be sure that the Holy Spirit wants to see Jesus proclaimed and we can be sure that the Holy

Spirit will use us to bring Jesus to the people who inhabit our little world, if we are really prepared to let the Holy Spirit take charge of our life. Pope Francis talks about a Church transformed by a “missionary impulse...so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channelled for the evangelisation to today’s world...(EG 27) Everything that the Pope says about the Church as a whole can be applied to us as individuals, as people who in fact make up the Church. We need to be transformed by the missionary impulse of the Holy Spirit so that our customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and the structures of our life can be focused on evangelisation.

Evangelisation is the work of the Holy Spirit, he is just asking for our whole-hearted co-operation. As Pope Francis says, (quoting Pope Benedict) “It is important always to know that the first word, the true initiative, the true activity comes from God and only by inserting ourselves into the divine initiative, only begging for this divine initiative, shall we too be able to become – with him and in him – evangelisers.” (EG 112)

Let’s get on our knees right now and beg that this “divine initiative” might become a reality in the life of each one of us and in the life of the



Catholic School of Evangelisation.

“COME HOLY SPIRIT ALLOW ME TO SPEAK YOUR MESSAGE WITH ALL BOLDNESS. I WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL, THE JOY OF THE RISEN LORD, AND I WANT TO WALK WITH MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS AS WE BRING THE JOY OF KNOWING JESUS TO OTHERS.”

Pat Kelly

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May God bless you!

School of Evangelisation MISSION STATEMENT

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

- ▶ FORM DISCIPLES
- ▶ TRAIN EVANGELISERS
- ▶ ESTABLISH PARISH EVANGELISATION TEAMS.

CHRIST IS RISEN!

In Chapter 16 of Mark's Gospel the story is told of three women, Mary Magdalene, Salome and Mary the mother of James, going to the tomb of Jesus on the Sunday after his death. They had brought spices to anoint the body of Jesus but on their way the question uppermost in their mind was, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" The scripture says "It was a very large stone," so it must have been too large for even the three of them to move.

However when they got there they found that the stone had already been rolled back, the tomb was empty and an angel was there who told them that Jesus had been raised! Sin and death could not hold Jesus in chains, as he had promised on the third day he rose from the dead and the stone, which the women had thought to be an insurmountable problem, had been rolled back. The women had been wasting their time worrying about a problem that was already dealt with.

I think there is certainly a lesson for us today from this incident. The problem for the women wasn't that the stone was too big for them to move, the problem was that they did not believe the promise of Jesus that he would rise from the dead. Even though Jesus had told them that he had to suffer and then rise they had not been able to comprehend what he was talking about. Because of their lack of faith in the resurrection they were worrying about something that had already been dealt with. Why seek someone who is alive among the dead?

Not only is Christ risen but the wonderful truth is that we are risen with him. When we repent and die to our sins, when we turn away from our old way of life, we then become a new creation and we are raised to new life in Christ. So not only can we say Christ is Risen but we can say that truly we are risen with him. Do we believe this? If we do why do we spend so much time worrying about the stones blocking our path? Why are we so anxious about the obstacles and difficulties that present themselves in our day to day life?

Surely the answer to every 'stone' blocking our path isChrist is Risen! As Paul says in chapter two of his letter to the Ephesians, "This power working in us is the same as the mighty strength which he used when he raised Christ from death.." This power is the Holy Spirit which the Father gives to us. **In the reality of the resurrection we can face every difficulty with great confidence and hope.**

As evangelisers this is our fundamental message. Christ is Risen! This is something I have experienced in my life and it is something you can truly experience in your life.

Pat Kelly



I RECALL BISHOP JOE SAYING

Since I handed my Evangelising Avon business to a friend so I would be able to focus on the School of Evangelisation, I have been running into former customers and they ask, “Are you having a restful retirement?” “Restful retirement?!” I exclaim. I am burning the midnight oil most nights. My laptop is literally running hot, I’ve even worn the letters off many of the keys – thankfully I am able to touch type. There is just so much to be done.

You may well ask: what have I been doing? Where to start? ‘Moses - Beyond the Desert’, ‘John the Beloved – Formation of Disciples’ and ‘Joshua’ are all prepared for PowerPoint presentations.’ Two new courses: ‘James’ and ‘Abraham’ are in the process of translation tweaking. A new website is being designed for the CSOE. So far three courses are planned for Melbourne this year, one of which will be ‘Abraham’ in October. We have approval from the Melbourne Archdiocese for the international presenters, Carlos Macias de Lara and Fr. Luke Paitoni.

In April I had a quick trip to Adelaide to assist Carmen Sylvester in presenting a ‘Joshua’ weekend. Trainee presenters have been workshopping talks for ‘John the Beloved – Formation of Disciples’ course to be held in May. We presented a teenage ‘Philip – New Life’ course in May – and on it goes.

Plans are in hand for a gathering of National Coordinators of the CSOE in Sydney Fri 30th May and following that a ‘Joshua’ weekend Sat 31st May & Sun 1st June. Also in Sydney in August we hope to be involved in the Proclaim 2014 Conference.

My desk is a mess, but I am consoled by an Albert Einstein quote: ‘If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what, then, is an empty desk a sign?’ I figure it is an opportunity of the Holy Spirit to hover over the chaos.....

A two day course has been prepared in response to Pope Francis’ *Evangelii Gaudium*. I would not be surprised if he attended a ‘Paul – Formation of Evangelists’ course in South America. Maybe Bishop Joe

told the then Cardinal Bergoglio about the ‘Paul’ course when Bishop Joe Grech, went to Buenos Aires to lead some charismatic retreats. He reported back how impressed he was with Cardinal Bergoglio, little did he know that he was talking with the future Pope. During a recent day of intercession we had a brainstorm session to come up with a name for the course: ‘God’s Presence, Our Present – Pope Francis Unwraps God’s Gift of Joy’.

I recall Bishop Joe saying something along the lines of - we move forward and if that doesn’t work you pray and change direction a bit and off you go again. Life is a call for discernment from beginning to end. Praying, listening and doing. This is what has been happening this year. The course in response to *Evangelii Gaudium* came about following contact from Bishop Michael Putney inviting the CSOE to run a weekend in March at Townsville. They had to cancel the weekend and as it turned out, Bishop Michael died the day I would have arrived, so you can feel God’s hand active there. Now we have a new 2 day course and still await the venue that God has on His agenda. We had planned to present it to a group of teens and then following further discernment we did the Bishop Joe thing and changed direction and now we will present a ‘Philip – New Life for Teens’ instead. A course planned for March at Mt Waverley was clashing with the parish fete and so more prayer and discernment and now it is on in May. It has been an exercise in docility to the Holy Spirit’s prompts.

In all the activity and listening and discerning I have stopped hearing Bishop Joe’s ‘Do something San’ that I told you about in the previous issue, so I guess he is either happy with the progress or not game to say anything now he sees all the efforts of so many people working in the CSOE. Please



Pictured are the Couples for Christ members who gathered for the Joshua course in Adedaide, S.A. See page 8.

ST. ANDREW'S DAY REUNION

It is 20 years since the School of St. Andrew (Mexico) came to Australia to present courses to the Italian community in 1993 and 2014 marks the 20th Anniversary of the course held at Burwood, the first English speaking course held worldwide

Our day at Fr. Wahid's parish at Bulleen began with Mass to celebrate the feast of St Andrew - the evangeliser of St Peter.



Above: L to R Deacon Malcolm Lock and Fr Wahid Riad during the feast of St Andrew's Mass.

It was great to see some of the 'originals' from the 1994 three week course and also those of subsequent courses over the years. People travelled from near and far - Traralgon, Wonthaggi, Bendigo and in between.

We spent time in Praise and Worship, we prayed and discerned, Deacon Malcolm presented a session and in general we enjoyed good fellowship.

I received many apologies from people unable to be present, several of whom have made commitments to assist the Melbourne School. And some present who were not included in the photo below have also agreed to use their particular gifts to help the CSOE which is absolutely fantastic as this was never to be a 'One Woman Band'.

It's not too late to offer your gifts to assist the Melbourne CSOE. One of the greatest ways of supporting the work is by your prayers. If you are not on the E-prayer list please contact me to receive a monthly Email for you to take to prayer.

Sandra E. Bishop

Quote from St. Francis de Sales:

*"Do everything calmly
and peacefully.
Do as much as you can
as well as you can.
Strive to see God in all
things without exception,
and consent to His will
joyously.
Do everything for God,
uniting yourself to him
in word and deed.
Walk very simply with the
Cross of the Lord and be
at peace with yourself."*



Those who made a commitment to form a Melbourne CSOE team - apologies to the ones who had to leave before the photo.

A Day of Discernment and Team Building

Many years ago I heard a talk about the Church being built on the firm foundation of the Apostles. As the audience was mostly children undertaking preparation for Confirmation and their parents, the speaker had a cardboard cut-out to demonstrate how important that foundation has been over the centuries. God builds with very weak individuals but when we are joined together, standing side by side and in agreement, the structure becomes strong.

Some members of the Melbourne Catholic School of Evangelisation gathered for a day of prayer and discussion in March. This was a time to build God's church with a real sense of fellowship. With the generous hospitality of Pat Frisbee and the parish of St Peter's Hurstbridge, we had a lovely setting to meet, introduce ourselves and take the time to share our hopes and dreams. Anne also made it a celebration with her preparations and delicious scones.

Emilia led us in a worship session, when several words of prophecy were received. Some words and images which called us to trust more in Jesus were:

- Bride and Groom dancing in a circle (representing the love God has for His church / His people).
- "You are mine from conception till you join the Father in heaven."
- "I will never forsake you."
- "Place your trust in Me. Come follow me!"
- His grace has been given to each of us in our heart; we don't have to do it on our own.
- The image of a boat on a lake, the person in the boat steps out, it's OK to move beyond the comfort of the church / parish we know and feel safe in.
- Jesus' arms are outstretched ... surrendered to the Father's will.
- We are invited to place all at Jesus' feet.

The theme of building on a firm foundation featured in the words of prophecy. There was an image of scaffolding – this is His work, to enable the church to be built up. We are like the tradespeople, interconnected, not working in isolation. We may look upon the Church as being in a state of disrepair, needing a lot of reconstruction. The scaffolding keeps us safe and protected. Our work for God, especially through the Catholic School of Evangelisation must be built on a firm foundation. Behold how good it is when brethren dwell in unity.

- There will be a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit.
- For the ones who believe in me streams of

living water will flow from them.

- You are the remnant left behind.
- Rejoice, Rejoice the Lord is in your midst.

Sandra Bishop gave an overview of the upcoming courses for the School. Sandra also spoke of the new course based on Apostolic Exhortation written by Pope Francis and published late last year, *Evangelii Gaudium*, The Joy of the gospel. Then through prayer and discernment we discussed these. The name of the new course is "*God's Presence, Our Present*" - *Pope Francis Unwraps God's Gift of Joy*.

We also prayed for each person in turn and that was a time of grace and awareness of God's love and concern for the small details of our lives. This was a day to re-connect and be open to what the LORD was showing us as His will for the Catholic School of Evangelisation in Melbourne.

Maryann Street

Teacher Training & Technology Trauma

Following the recruitment of teachers and allocation of teachings for the '*John the Beloved – Formation of Disciples*' course, the business of teacher-training began in earnest. Sandra eased the burden, however, for each of the teachers by providing them with an electronic package containing everything needed for the teachings, including timetable, PowerPoint slideshow, course notes and outlines. The fun was about to begin.....

Over the following weeks, Sandra made herself available to each of the teachers at different times in order to assist them in their presentations. This involved countless hours of trying to coax an Apple computer to talk to a Windows computer (without success!), searching for elusive sound tracks which appeared and disappeared at whim, making friends with a tiny projector remote and its sensitive little buttons, not to mention waking up a computer screen after it decided to call it quits during a practice run! Oh, technology! Oh, thank God for Sandra!

Her abundant patience as she passionately and gently encouraged us teachers-in-training never ceased to amaze me. These sessions provided invaluable opportunities to develop our skills, identify areas for improvement, tweak and prepare for what I believe will be a wonderful '*John*' course.

Emilia Sacchetta.

Sacrament of Holy Orders and Evangelisation

By Adrian Commadeur

“A good priest can be recognised by the way his people are anointed: this is a clear proof. When our people are anointed with the oil of gladness, it is obvious: for example, when they leave Mass looking as if they have heard good news. Our people like to hear the Gospel preached with “unction”, they like it when the Gospel we preach touches their daily lives...”. This is how Pope Francis encouraged priests worldwide in his first Holy Thursday Chrism Mass in 2013. The Pope was saying that the ministry of Holy Orders should have a positive, joyful effect on the people. This requires of those in Holy Orders, Deacons, Priests and Bishops that their lives and words proclaim the joy of salvation in Jesus.

Those in Holy Orders are consecrated in Christ's name to feed the Church by the word and grace of God. (CCC1535) It is the sacrament by which the mission from Jesus to his apostles continues until the end of time. This mission is to proclaim the gospel of salvation to those who are far and those who are near to God. To the clergy falls the privilege, the vocation and the responsibility with all their might to share Jesus with their community. Pope Francis has a colourful description for the clergy who do not take their vocation seriously. He said at the same Chrism Mass: *The priest who seldom goes out of himself, who anoints little – misses out on the best of our people, on what can stir the depths of his priestly heart. Those who do not go out of themselves, instead of being mediators, gradually become intermediaries, managers..... This is precisely the reason for the dissatisfaction of some, who end up sad – sad priests - in some sense becoming collectors of antiques or novelties, instead of being shepherds living with “the odour of the sheep”. This I ask you: be shepherds, with the “odour of the sheep”, make it real, as shepherds among your flock, fishers of men....*

The Church teaches that ordination confers an indelible mark on the man so ordained, never to be extinguished. In some ways I have found this to be true in my own life. Many will know that I was ordained a deacon in the Redemptorist Monastery Church in Ballarat. This took place in 1967, though I was later dispensed. At that time my mother indicated that I was not a very good speaker. In fact when I did my earliest practice sermon in front of the other students, I was told by one senior student that it was the worst sermon he had ever heard! But over time in Charismatic prayer groups and the School of Evangelisation courses, I have always felt that I was under an anointing of the Holy Spirit when I gave my talks. The Scripture based material that we had to share was also inspired, but I had to make it my own, which I always did with prayerful preparation. At the same time the Holy Spirit gave me a big thirst for ‘souls’, for people to be saved. This thirst has never been quenched, though the

opportunities are now more rare.

The role of the priest and bishop accords with the role of Jesus who is Priest, Prophet and King. So their roles relate to worship, to proclamation and to governing and administration. The danger for many priests is to settle back into the presbytery office and look after the financial and administrative side of parish life. As Pope Francis wrote in *‘The Joy of the Gospel’*, proclamation through the homily is very important, but both the preacher and the listeners suffer: *the laity from having to listen to the (homilies), and the clergy from having to preach them.* (EG 135). Yet the homily is perhaps the most effective means of evangelisation.

Bishop Joe Grech, who died in 2010, is the founder of the School of Evangelisation in Australia. His memorial card describes him as *travelling as a powerful preacher of the Gospel all around the world.* Those who knew and loved him, as I did, realised that as soon as he opened his mouth, there was a special unction about his words. They came from his heart with a great love for the people he spoke to. They were not theological theses, but words coming from a shepherd's mouth, who made it his vocation to draw all people to Jesus, and bring them to conversion. When he became a bishop I had the audacity to write to him and express to him what a lay person expected of a bishop. One of the thoughts I shared with him was that a bishop should, like Jesus, spend 10% of his time daily, in evangelising. He told me later that I was expecting too much from a bishop. I suspect that he actually did evangelise 10% of his ministry in evangelising, visiting schools, parishes, rallies, courses, seminars, conferences and preaching on Sundays in his Sacred Heart Cathedral in Bendigo.

The point remains that those in Holy Orders should put much more effort, as Pope Francis asks, into preaching of the gospel in a manner that touches the hearts of the hearers and brings them to conversion, and to experience the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives, so they can be *more than conquerors, through Christ Jesus who loved us.* (Rom 8, 37)

What can we do, readers of this article, who are mostly lay people? We can avoid too much criticism and judgmental attitudes towards our priests. We can appreciate the gift of the priesthood, so enormously important and so sublime, bringing the Eucharistic presence of Jesus, the Holy One, among the people. As Pope Francis said, *“Dear lay faithful, be close to your priests with affection and with your prayers, that they may always be shepherds according to God's heart.* (Holy Thursday 2013) May our bishops, priests and deacons smell like sheep.

PS. Adrian has written a manual for evangelistic preaching and teaching, *Memorable Talks and Popular Preaching.* This is available for \$10 plus \$2 postage.

God's Presence - Our Present.



Pope Francis unwraps God's gift of joy.

This course acknowledges Pope Francis' tremendous gift to the church – *Evangelii Gaudium*. It also identifies the greatest gift we can personally receive – the knowledge and experience of God's love. Participants, through a kerygmatic experience have the opportunity of deepening their relationship with God.

In response to *Evangelii Gaudium*, participants are given tools to assist their attentive listening skills so as to improve their *art of accompaniment* EG169. when listening to God and to others.

Again drawing on *Evangelii Gaudium* and School of Evangelisation techniques, participants learn how to present the kerygma and *bring the love of Jesus to others* EG127.

The Gift Wrapping or Creative Evangelisation details the many ways in which the kerygma may be presented in a variety of locations and for a variety of audiences. Practical methods to take *the church out into the streets* EG 49.

Pope Francis *calls for attention to the bigger picture, openness to suitable processes and concern for the long run* EG 225, details are given of the way in which the Catholic School of Evangelisation is able to train and equip parishes to become self-sufficient Parish Evangelising Communities.

The course concludes with Pope Francis prayer seeking the intercession of Mary ~ Star of the New Evangelisation.

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Prayer to Mary from *Evangelii Gaudium*

Mary, Virgin and Mother

You who, moved by the Holy Spirit, welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One, help us to say our own 'yes' to the urgent call, as pressing as ever, to proclaim the good news of Jesus.

Filled with Christ's presence, you brought joy to John the Baptist, making him exult in the womb of his mother. Brimming over with joy, you sang of the great things done by God. Standing at the foot of the cross with unyielding faith, you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection, and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit so that the evangelising Church might be born.

Obtain for us now a new ardour born of the resurrection, that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death. Give us a holy courage to seek new paths, that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman.

Virgin of listening and contemplation, Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast, pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are, that she may never be closed in on herself or lose her passion for establishing God's kingdom.

Star of the new evangelisation, help us to bear radiant witness to communion, service, ardent and generous faith, justice and love of the poor, that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth, illuminating even the fringes of our world.

Mother of the living Gospel, wellspring of happiness for God's little ones, pray for us.

Amen. Alleluia!



JOSHUA COURSE — ADELAIDE

By: Lucy Grasso—Co-ordinator—CSOE Sydney

On the week-end of 22nd—23rd March the Joshua Course was presented to 40 members from Couples of Christ at a retreat centre in the Adelaide Hills. Eddie and I travelled from Sydney to Adelaide to participate in the Course before it is presented in Sydney for the first time on 31st May—1st June at St Josephs' Parish Hall in Rozelle. We made the journey to experience a 'Living with a Victorious Mentality' because we found it impacted our life. The presenters of the Course were Carmen Sylvester, Sandra Bishop, and Fr Bernard Morawski, assisted by the Adelaide CSOE Service Team who are to be commended for an inspiring week-end experience.

The objective of the Joshua Course is to look at a 'winning mentality' (believing that God can and will act in my life according to His Word and to my faith) in a biblical model of Joshua.



The Course benefited us:

- * By being ready to explore the promises God has made, leaving fear aside and setting off in faith;
- * By discovering how God prepares his servants for spiritual leadership;
- * By leading each to a radical acceptance of Jesus, the real Joshua.

The Lord said to Joshua: "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:6-9).

The secret for the conquest of the Promised Land is taken from Josh.1:6-9 that is: "Be strong and courageous" in Proclaiming the Word, Meditating on the Word and Acting according to the Word. Our journey is very similar to that of Joshua but we fail to see the power in the Word of

God, where the wisdom and knowledge is always opened for us. We are to proclaim what God says about



us, not what the world says.

The Course helped me to understand that, despite our fears, God calls us to fulfil the mission he has for us. He is our strength and courage. We all need a dose of Joshua's courage to be victorious in facing our daily challenges. We need to model ourselves on the qualities of Joshua in being prayerful, faithful, persevering and open to God's way of thinking, being and acting, based on the Word of God. Putting aside his own plans, Joshua always consulted God to show him his plan and was obedient in following it, the result: Walls of Jericho came tumbling down and the city was conquered.

During the Course we were guided in applying the principles of a victorious mentality that Joshua had learned. We understood the importance of a constant cleansing of our mind from negative and polluting thoughts and how positive thoughts centred on the Word of God lead to victory. Jesus, the real Joshua, has already won the victory for us on the cross. May we claim that victory so that we might take possession of all the blessings the Lord has already given us.

The last session of the Course spoke about "Enter in the Rest". The Christian's rest is living in the Lord's will, to rest in His Word. In Jesus, the real Joshua, all the promises become YES but we have to conquer them as Joshua did. The rest comes from a radical acceptance of the Lord:

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (Joshua 24:15)



BE STRONG - GOD IS WITH US

Our Lord has made His presence felt in my life, on more occasions than one, in small ways and in big, just as He does in all our lives.

At the start of 2013, I had a greater urge to journey on a path which is wholly Christ-centred and help my fellow young friends to know and experience that our God is alive and exists amongst us and moreover, we can turn to him for anything and everything. I wanted to be deeply involved in Youth Ministry. I knew, for me to go deeper, I had to get rid of my fears (I'm not good or talented enough, I lack social or interactive skills, I am an introvert), step out of my comfort zone, combat my weaknesses and gain inner strength. I desired more courage; faith and trust in our Lord to get me through the challenges that lay ahead of me in ministering to others. My daily personal prayer and those at Masses was, "Lord, grant me increased courage, faith and trust in you, to do your will and minister to others". To part take more and receive, I started attending the weekly CCR prayer meetings on Wednesday nights at St Agatha's. The prayer meetings unveiled a fresh joyfulness in Christ through singing praises, worship and fellowship with other people gathering for the same reason.

Mid Year, the Wednesday CCR prayer meeting welcomed the 'Joshua Course' put together by the School of Evangelisation. This course helped me identify the obstacles I had constructed in my own life. I connected with the character Joshua and desired to be just like him. I discovered that I had excessive negativity and fears, which stood like a large mountain in front of me, blocking the light of Christ and Him working through me. The course tore open scripture and its treasures, which is - by Faith and Trust in our God, all obstacles can be broken down and we can cross over like Joshua crossed over river Jordon. But where does this Faith and Trust come from? - Joshua and the Israelites proclaimed it several time - It comes from the knowledge and belief that **"God is with us."** **"Be strong, God is with us"** is spoken around 40 times in this book, re-assuring me that, **"I Can Do All Things Through Jesus Christ who strengthens me"**.

The course convinced me that, like Joshua we too could break down the big bad walls of Jericho in our lives, just by listening to God and obeying His Word. Furthermore, just as God had a plan to lead the Israelites on dry land by cutting through

the rivers of Jordon to take them to the Promised Land filled with milk and honey, so also, God has a plan for us. He is leading us in the very same way and his plan is clearly spoken in Jeremiah 29:11.

Shortly after the Joshua Course I was approached by Jesus Youth to see if I would like to go to Papua New Guinea on mission. I was warned its dangerous, but at the same time was given very little information on what I would be doing on mission, what and if I would have food to eat, where and what I would be sleeping on or staying. My family and friends had their doubts if I would return home safe because of the recent violence and killings. But I had no fears or worries, just inner peace. I felt as if I was given an opportunity to be courageous and do His will. I also took this to be a blind leap of Faith; I had been longing to take, leaving everything in His hands. Father Denis commissioned me with his prayers and support.

I left for Papua New Guinea with only a bible; no mobile, watch, laptop, internet or training material. We were welcome by hundreds of youth at each station. Unexpectedly, we were asked to give teachings. By Faith and Courage we elevated to the task and also by the strength and guidance from our Holy Spirit. Fearlessly we shared the Word of God, delivered teachings on living better Christian lives and our experiences of God's love. We lived, worked moved around under difficult conditions and ate what was given to us in simplicity. It was a wonderful experience and we saw Gods hands at work. I was surprised at every moment even at myself, for I never knew I could do the things I did there for which we just gave thanks and praise.



Summoning up, I have to say that God had a plan for me and He made a way. He used people to get His Word across to me. He used the Joshua course to make me believe even more, that our God is greater than any obstacle, to be more courageous in Him. He fixed in my mind, the words Father Joseph spoke in my spiritual direction session, "Its not your ability, but your availability that God uses for his greater Glory." God also gave me new friends in Christ, a community. And I can truly say that I feel like a "conqueror through Jesus, who loves us".

Gavin Besterwitch

Formation of Disciples Lenten Retreat at Newton, S. A.

Being a part of Formation of Disciples Lenten Retreat was one of the best opportunities I have had that helped me grow in my faith and find friends who share their commitment to Jesus.

God blessed me with so many graces during this Retreat, some of which I had never experienced before. My heart and my mind were bonded. This retreat certainly drew me closer to Jesus.

This Lenten program enriched my life in many ways. The most important is that I started to see Christ in a way I never had before or even thought

possible.

Formation of Disciples Retreat can heal broken wounds and enrich one’s spiritual, prayer life.

For anyone thinking about attending this Retreat I would encourage you to say – “Speak Lord for your servant is listening.”

Beata

**We don’t change God’s message.
His message changes us.**



Above: Participants in the Formation of Disciples Retreat, Newton SA.

SCHOOL OF EVANGELISATION PROGRAM 2014			
DATE	COURSE	LOCATION	CONTACT
May - June	Philip - New Life	Greensborough North, Vic	Sandra, (03) 9434 7553
May	John - Formation of Disciples	Mt. Waverley, Vic	Sandra, (03) 9434 7553
May 31 st — June 1 st	Joshua	Roselle, NSW	Lucy, 02 9670 4440
June	God’s Presence Our Present	Ringwood Nth, Vic	Sandra, (03) 9434 7553
August 16 th — 17 th	Secret of Paul	Narre Warren, Vic	Pat, 0407 505 232
August	Joshua	Gosford Nth, NSW	Jill, (02) 9449 8098
Oct. 3 rd — 5 th	Abraham	Mt. Waverley, Vic	Rose 0411 650 339

Courses subject to confirmation and may change. Please contact local co-ordinator for further information.

Philip - New Life for Teens - Hadfield, Vic.

Imagine my surprise on the day before the “Philip – New Life for Teens” course was to start

when I discovered it would be on the Feast of St Philip – another of those God-incidences that lets you know God is in charge and blessing the efforts in preparing for a course.



Above - Aoife and Jack: volunteer “sinners” at the “Philip New Life for Teens” course

The teens entered straight into activities with a “balloon slam dunk” competition starting the day. During one break they forgot to eat and instead exercised tremendous creativity in constructing crowns for themselves. In another activity it wasn’t creativity so much as frustration as they attempted to make little origami boats. However there was a sense of community cooperation as they helped each other fold their papers and surprise, surprise, out popped a boat.

A truly blessed time in the very welcoming environment at St Thomas More Parish, Hadfield, thanks to Fr Peter Damien Mckinley and St Philip of course.

Sandra Bishop

GIDEON'S ARMY

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

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



<p 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 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>
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A Pilgrimage of Faith

To be presented by the author of the course,
Carlos Macias de Lara & Fr Luke Paitoni, both from Italy.

Friday 3rd October, 7.30-9.30pm
Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th, 9am-5pm

**Holy Family Parish, 236 Stephensons
Road, Mt Waverley.**

Registration Secretary: Rose Rendina, 3 Gambia Crt.,
Greensborough Vic 3088
phone:0411 650 339

WHAT IS FAITH?

“FAITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the Word of God . . .

By faith Abel offered God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain . . .

By faith Noah . . . prepared an ark . . .

By faith Abraham obeyed . . . By faith Sarah conceived . . .

By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents . . .

By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of the
Pharaoh’s daughter. By faith he forsook Egypt.

By faith the Israelites passed through the Red Sea . . .

By faith the walls of Jericho fell down . . .

And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of . . .

(those) who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises,
stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire,
escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong . . .”

Hebrews: 11