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# Kildare Ministries Newsletter

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# Editorial

Editorial – Compassion : Not what we see but **how** we see... until we can no longer look away

For better or worse, it's been impossible to 'look away' from the unfolding episodes after the death of Queen Elizabeth II, or to avoid looking back at her life. We are held in a kind of thrall when it comes to wealth, fame, and power. Some consider how it has been used, and for others, the glamour is enough, but none of us have been able to avoid gazing toward this event, at least not without difficulty. The media capitalise upon it, and we are distracted from the *real* connections in our lives for a time.

This concentrated gaze upon wealth and power made me reflect on one of the key

thoughts that has repeatedly occurred to me through this year of reflection on compassion - reading about it, witnessing it, hearing others describe it – compassion is a *different* kind of connection, so that when we truly encounter it - once we see it, feel it, live in it - we can't look away, we can't turn away, we are captivated, not because it's a distraction from the 'real' things in our lives, but because in that moment, it is the only real thing there is.

—  
When we teach, we illustrate, we demonstrate, we model the very thing that is to be learned – we mirror it. When Jesus teaches about compassion, the very process of learning about it seems to require the same thing as the process of doing it – first, an undoing.

When Jesus used the parable of the Good Samaritan to show us the meaning of compassion, he used the lowly and despised Samaritan as the hero of the moment and up-ended his listener's expectations on the identity of the 'worthy' people. When he used the parable of the prodigal son, he up-ended his listeners' expectations on which character was returning the highest 'life-score'- he rewarded the apparently irresponsible and hopeless son in comparison to the good and dutiful son. And when poor pharisee, Nicodemus, at great personal risk, crept in under cover of darkness to ask about the secrets of the kingdom, he was told he needed to be 'born again' in order to understand the spirit.

In every example, Jesus turns his listeners upside down and

shakes out their previous expectations about how we are connected to each other - who is queen and who is not, who is worthy and who is not, who is hopeless and who is winning, who is wise and who is as naïve as a newborn.

To hear Jesus teach on compassion, we need to be prepared to be completely emptied and to make new connections with those around us; not based on monochrome distinctions, rich/poor, fit/unhealthy, hopeless/successful, male/female or us/them but drawing on the most colourful palette of creation, a richer and more colourful connection with one another. In each of his parables, the 'kingdom of God' is given to all, is a part of all, and thus, from all, we hear God's voice, the voice of all.

A few weeks ago, Reverend Garry Deverell of the University of Divinity, a trawloolway pairrebeenener man from lutruwita/trouwerna (Tasmania) came to speak with the Kildare Ministries Principals and Leaders about Country and Wisdom. In his talk, he drew upon three texts; Uluru Statement from the

Heart, Wisdom 7:25-8:1 and Matthew 13:31-32. Garry pointed to the innumerable connections between humans, plants, animals, sky, stars, earth, water and trees. He said that all these connections speak in the voice of Country.

*This matrix of inter-relatedness creates a sense of moral reciprocity between all the parts of the whole. Country cares for us. Country provides everything we need to sustain life for ourselves, our human communities, both now and for countless generations to come...In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander society, if you want to know who you are, to whom you belong, and what you are called to become, you listen to country.*

Garry then went on to explain the pluri-vocal nature of country interpreted through the Elders

*'And the voice of country is interpreted by Elders who have lived within this eco-social imagery all their lives and know its voice intimately. We do well to listen to our Elders, if we truly want to hear what country is saying. But we should not expect Elders to speak with*

*one Voice. For the Voice of country is pluri-vocal. Only by listening to the many and discerning its larger themes will you hear the One across and through the many.'*

Garry asked, 'To what end does country speak through Elders and prophets?' He offered the parable of the mustard seed as one way of answering this question:

*Jesus put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'*

The mustard seed, small but not the smallest of all seeds, grows into a large bush, but not the largest of all bushes and it shelters 'the birds of the air that neither sow nor reap or gather food into barns.' Garry said:

*'So, whatever the size and greatness of the seed or the tree given by God, wherever it sits in the economies of colonial empire or the common*

*wisdom, it is given simply to feed and to clothe those whom empire forgets. The lowly, the least, the communities who live close to the humus of the earth and depend upon her gratuity.'*

No matter where the compassion of God is found

and nurtured, it is free of the restrictive binary distinctions made by empire, commercialism, 'religion' or politics. We are all called by God, to find God, in all of creation and in each other.



Renee Oberin  
Mission Leader



## Welcome to new Trustee - Liz Maguire



We welcome a new Trustee, Liz Maguire. Liz brings to the Trustees of Kildare Ministries her experience and expertise in school leadership, university work, Board directorship and system authority. Liz attended Star of the Sea College and taught at both Star and Presentation College Windsor.

Liz's most recent experience has involved the collaboration with a range of primary and secondary schools' principals and senior leaders to support school initiatives e.g. Middle and Senior Leaders' review and coaching; leadership team alignment and growth; review of processes; school survey

data planning; development of role descriptions; supporting the development, implementation and evaluation of Primary Principal Transitional Appraisal with Melbourne Archdiocese of Catholic Schools (MACS)

In Liz's own words, 'I have a long and strong connection to the Presentation congregation. The work of Kildare Ministries excites me in that it has diversified the work of the congregations whilst maintaining their values.'

We look forward to Liz's contribution to the thinking and discernment of the Trustees of Kildare Ministries and thank her for her commitment to this role.



# Official Opening of the Tullow Centre

On Monday 12th September, the Kildare College and wider KM community gathered to officially open and bless the new Innovation Hub, the Tullow Centre. The event began with a Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country followed by speeches, performances, blessings and a video presentation of the Tullow Centre journey. The Tullow Centre begins the next chapter for Kildare College with a point of difference for an all girls' education.

The Tullow Centre includes state of the art facilities such as a large Construction Area, Media Studio, Auditorium, STEM / Science / Digital Technology Labs, and General Learning Classrooms. These spaces enhance our extensive curriculum, with further subject offerings for students including Material Solutions - Woodwork, Metalwork, Jewellery, Digital Communications - Photography, Video Gaming and Entertainment Design.

This wonderful new Innovation Hub is a result of hard work, dedication and creative minds. Congratulations to all involved, this will prove to be a fantastic resource where our students will be able to continue to learn and grow into creative, innovative and inspiring women of great Strength and Gentleness.





# Compassion at Clonard College

## *Connecting with Compassion at Clonard College*

This year we took the theme of Compassion and joined it with '*connection*' following two years of feeling really disconnected. These are some of the ways we have connected to show empathy for all.

### **Connecting the generations**



The Year 8 students have been undertaking an intergenerational project with a local aged care facility. Their regular visits have brought great joy to the residents, many of whom have experienced great loneliness over the past couple of years. Sharing

information, interests and experiences supported the development of understanding, compassion and kindness across generations. It has also brought out gifts and qualities within the students that they perhaps hadn't realized through the opportunity to appreciate.

### **Connecting with First Nations People**

Clonard continues to support our First Nations students and build partnerships with the local Wadawurrung community especially with the guidance of Aunty Sue Collins. Our FIRE Carrier Leaders led us through a powerful liturgy during National Reconciliation Week and created an artwork using the painted hands of so many students and staff. This has now



been hung in the upstairs section of the Brigidine Centre. The artwork represents the joining and overlaying of hands in support of Reconciliation. Our indigenous garden continues to flourish under the care of our Lab Technician Craig Billows with many students learning the importance of this space through their annual reflection days. With Aunty Sue's assistance we have begun the process of creating a Reconciliation Action Plan for the College.



### Connecting through Reading



Prior to the pandemic our students were regular volunteers at a breakfast club at St. Thomas Aquinas Primary School in Norlane. This has been reimaged into a weekly reading program where our students show outreach and connection by reading to young students who may not have anyone else in their lives who are able to do this with them. Five of our Year 9 – 12 students visit for pre-school reading and listening to students from Grades Prep – 2 with their readers. Knowing the power of literacy as a transformative force,

this program has been strongly supported by students and staff volunteers. Each week up to 30 primary students gather in the library, keen to meet our Clonard volunteers.

### Connecting for Timor Leste

A team of student leaders has been working for 12 months to host a music festival with the combined Catholic secondary Colleges of Geelong. The TriUMPH festival aims to raise awareness and funds to train teachers in Timor Leste. Due to ongoing concerns around the spread of COVID19 the festival was changed into a TriUMPH Lite and held on individual school sites. These amazing leaders were focused on ensuring the people of Timor were not let down and worked to raise \$4000 to go to the cause.





### Connecting with Saltbush Balnarring

Ensuring we were connecting with compassion to our own community works through Kildare Ministries, we reached out to Saltbush Balnarring. Our VCAL class is now in partnership to create projects to enhance the facilities and a staff group will head across the bay for the weekend to take part in a working bee prior to the busy summer period.

### Celebrations – Farewell to the Brigidine Sisters from Geelong

Our Mass of Celebration and Thanksgiving for the Ministry of the Brigidine Sisters in Geelong was a wonderful occasion in the story of the Brigidines and the College. With a number of the sisters, past Principals and community members present, the Mass and liturgy of farewell wove together both Celtic and First Nations music, symbols and rituals. Following a smoking ceremony, Sr Louise Cleary handed over stewardship of a perpetual flame for safekeeping by the College, the choir sang a blessing over the sisters and Jo Ryan presented a poem titled Women of Spirit and Fire, a copy was then gifted to the sisters. It was with deep gratitude that we reflected on the selfless giving of the sisters who called Geelong home at some point in their vocation. Following the Mass, staff and guests gathered for refreshments and the opportunity to share memories. It was a wonderful team effort and the feedback from those who gathered reflected that the core values of the Brigidines and in turn Kildare Ministries were clearly evident in the way the community gathered and marked this moment in time.



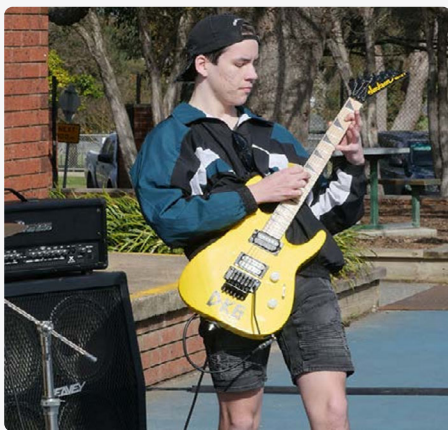


# Compassion at Marian College Ararat

## The Year of Compassion at Marian College Ararat.

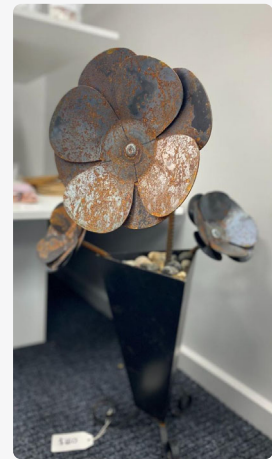
At times over the last two years, I must admit that there have been moments of compassion fatigue, when either exhaustion or the roller-coaster ride of lockdowns has drained the energy a little. But last Friday at Marian was another perfect reminder of how the moments of care and compassion in our communities are food for the soul.

The annual Fred Hyde Day at Marian College is something very special. Each year, for the last ten years, the staff and students have raised funds to support a kindergarten located in the remote Bhola Islands in southern Bangladesh. This island is plagued by devastating flooding, which hit again this year. There is no-job keeper or social security payments, and often the roads to school are washed away. Just when you think life has been difficult, you meet someone who helps you gain perspective.



The highlight of our Fred Hyde Day is the Marian's Got Talent show in the afternoon. Every year a group of courageous students from every age level put their trust in the audience and provide us all with laughter and joy. The support for every student performer from highly talented to just brave is amazing. Once again, this year the staff and students did not disappoint and easily raised the funds to support Fred Hyde's kindergarten for another year. I am most grateful to our Year 12 students for their organization for this wonderful event. Thanks also to local businesses and staff for their generous donations. Today, Fred Hyde's team has helped to educate more than 100,000 children in local schools, built through hard work and grit by one very generous man and his team. Fred passed away some years back but his legacy continues.

The Year of Compassion for our Applied Learning students focused on the impact of WW 1 and WW 11, and the impact of this on our nation and local region. Students in Year 11 and 12 considered the loss of lives, the effect on women and work, rationing, and the shame of the 'White Feather'. This study culminated in the students creating their own poppy to commemorate the sacrifice of our people who served. The Poppy Project was donated to the local RSL.



Throughout Term 2 and 3, the Year 11's completed a unit working on Youth Homelessness - in particular exploring our local community. Students are required to raise awareness of this issue as well as making connections with a local organisation to offer ways to help. This year, they have formed a relationship with St Vincent de Paul's and will raise funds through a school BBQ and a staff High Tea to then create much needed 'Brekky Packs' for St Vincent de Paul's.

I am very proud of the work we do together for the students in our care. The Sisters and others who have walked before us left a lasting legacy of how we should welcome and support, with a compassionate heart. At the centre of conversations there is real empathy, compassion and care for the many students who walk through our doors, with different personalities, needs, talents, and dreams. I know our staff are compassionate and generous in their care of students, families and each other.

Mrs Carmel Barker

### **My First Year as a Teacher at Marian College**

*Compassion has forever been a core value in which I uphold, enact and facilitate in others, and this year's focus on its purpose and importance has been truly inspiring. Through a lens of compassion, I have been fortunate enough to engage in meaningful conversations with a variety of people about ways in which we can help others, and why it is integral to embody an empathetic response to those whom we encounter that need our help. I have witnessed compassion within our school community, within our wider community and increased my personal awareness of the ways in which I demonstrate and contribute towards making other's lives better, in as great of a capacity as I can.*

Ms Emma Rusden



# CONGRATS ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

## SJC WINS SCHOOLS THAT EXCEL 2022 AWARD

Last month, St Joseph's College was announced as the winner of *The Age's 2022 Schools that Excel* category for non-government schools in rural and regional Victoria.

The annual awards recognise schools that have shown sustained improvement and the most impressive gains in VCE results over the past 10 years. It means the College has recorded the best improvement in VCE results in the past decade of any non-government school in regional Victoria. Schools' raw results are ranked in order to show improvement over a long period of time, using a variety of data including median study scores, the percentage of students obtaining a study score of more than 40, student pathways and VCE completion rates. The awards recognise the 10 highest-gain schools that The Age has judged as having shown the best improvement in their results.

St Joseph's College Principal Anne Marie Cairns said the news was a giant accolade for the school and had been received with great excitement and pride. She said the award spoke volumes about the excellent quality of teaching and leadership at St Joseph's, as well as the high level of support for students in their personal development and growth.



*"To be judged as having the most outstanding growth and improvement in VCE results over the past 10 years of any other non-government school in rural and regional Victoria is an enormous thrill for our school, and the wider Echuca Moama community. It is an achievement that we can all be very proud of and is testament to the hard-working teachers, leadership team, students and families involved with St Joseph's over many years."*

St Joseph's College Leader - Staff & Governance, Rachel McAsey said the improvement in results at the College had been largely driven by a culture of high expectations and a school-wide improvement agenda. Ms McAsey said there was also a strong focus on the professional learning of all teachers, and close monitoring to ensure the learning needs of every student were addressed.

*"We have deliberately employed quality teachers who are passionate about their work, and we have enabled them with targeted, quality improvement strategies, alongside expert, external coaching and pedagogy coaching. In 2018 we committed to a school improvement project led by Melbourne University and that led to us introducing a range of school improvement measures."*

Ms McAsey said those measures included targeting reading growth through a Year 7 to 9 Reading Room program and supporting Year 12 teachers to undertake VCE assessor training and exam marking to inform and enhance their teaching and learning practice.

St Joseph's College Leader - Teaching & Learning, Lisa Saillard said the University of Melbourne also provided regular analysis of their VCE data which had been instrumental in driving growth. Ms Saillard said student pathways were also taken into consideration by the Schools That Excel awards, not just academic results.

*Well done to all involved at St. Joseph's College, we are very proud of you!*



# 2024 Kildare Ministries Conference

Kildare Ministries will celebrate its tenth anniversary in 2024!

The Trustees of Kildare Ministries will host a conference from the afternoon of Monday 25 March to the afternoon of Wednesday 27 March 2024. After ten remarkable years, this will be a time for celebration, learning, collaboration and reflection.

The theme of the Conference is: **Crossing New Seas**: Encounter, Dream, Do



We aim for all staff members in the ten schools and three community works to participate. The conference will be simultaneously hosted in five 'hubs'. Most will attend their closest hub, travelling to the venue each day and staying at home each night.

<b>Hubs</b>	<b>Schools</b>
Brisbane	BC Indooroopilly
Sydney	BC St Ives
Adelaide	Kildare College
Geelong	Clonard, Marian Ararat, St Joseph's
Brighton	Star, Marian Sunshine, Killester, Kilbreda

It is planned that schools will also send 4 delegates to the hubs in other States. This means each hub will have attendees from all 10 schools and one (or more) of our community works.

The mixing and sharing of experiences will strengthen the connectedness and sense of unity across the extended Kildare Ministries community. The expenses associated with this conference, particularly travel and accommodation for those attending distant hubs, will be an important investment in the future of Kildare Ministries.

**Please save the date: 10 Years Conference for Kildare Ministries: 25 to 27 March, 2024.**

The members of the Conference Committee (listed below) will be seeking your feedback in the months ahead. We are grateful for their generous work, past and future.

#### **Program and Liturgy Sub-Committee**

- Renee Oberin (Chair)
- Andrew Beiers
- Steven East
- Peter Houlahan
- Brian Loughland
- Donna Rampova
- Rosemary Copeland (Trustee)
- Catherine Jackson (Trustee)
- Kathy McEvoy (Trustee)

#### **Logistics, Communication and Hospitality Sub-Committee**

- Dean Williams (Chair)
- Michelle Camillieri

- Loreto Cannon
- Raechel O'Shea
- Erica Pegorer/Jeff Burn
- Jenni Tucker

#### **Finance and Risk Sub-Committee**

- Chris Shelley (Chair)
- Niluka Perera
- Richard Luxford
- Lil Mader



# 2022 Term 4 Calendar Dates

## **KM Principals and Leaders Meeting**

25th November

## **TKM Business Managers**

11th November

## **KM Chairs of the Board Network**

7th October

## **Board Chairs, Directors and Stewardship Councillors**

### **Seminar**

8th October

## **Faith Leaders**

7th November

## **Student Leadership Retreat**

6-8th December

## **Founding Grace Retreat**

19th-21st October



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