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Kildare Ministries Newsletter

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Editorial

In this issue of the newsletter, we join each other in celebrating the focus on First Nations healing in our ministries for National Reconciliation Week.

Naidoc Week

... And next month, National NAIDOC week celebrations will be held across Australia from 7-14 July, 2024 to further celebrate and recognize the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



The theme honours the enduring strength and vitality of First Nations culture – with fire a symbol of connection to Country, to each other, and to the rich tapestry of traditions

that define Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Kildare Ministries First Nations Forum

Just over a week later, on **July 22**, representatives from all of Kildare Ministries Community works and schools will gather for the first **Kildare Ministries First Nations Forum** which seeks to create a network for learning and listening with wonder, leading with courage, and living in compassionate relationship for healing.

Representatives will be comprised of First Nations Staff, community members and passionate supporters of Living Justice and Peace in relationship with First Nations. At this meeting, we will be joined by Professor Anne Pattel-Gray as our companion, and we will begin to discern the way forward for Kildare Ministries.

Where do we begin?

The context within which we work for First Nations justice in Australia can't be summarized in just this editorial, but the following statistics start to paint the picture of what our nation is dealing with.

According to the most recent review of the landmark agreement, 'Closing the Gap,' these are some of the following findings;

- *Only around 34% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are assessed as being on track in all areas of development.*
- *Although Governments aimed to decrease the rate of imprisonment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders by 15%, the number of those incarcerated has risen.*

- *The number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in out of home care has also risen*
- *The rate of suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has increased.*

And from where are we, as Kildare Ministries, beginning?

What are our most current responses to this national situation?

The feedback provided at our conference through the dedicated app yielded a very high number of responses to help us learn from each other.

What did we say in the survey?

When delegates were asked to respond to Anne-Pattel-Gray's address on First Nations Justice, all responses were energized and positive, and they fell roughly into two main categories:

Just over half of the respondents were warm expressions of thanks and/or contained questions and wonderings about our best future directions in the space

of First Nations justice and peace

The rest of the responses fell into a second category – curriculum and learning. They were varied in detail and abounded in creativity, but generally we spoke about needing to learn and know more about First Nations in order to positively impact our curriculum and pedagogy.

Many of us felt deeply that teaching and learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture, practises, language and spirituality would enrich all of our students, us, and perhaps our nationhood, in terms of justice and peace.

Listening carefully and gently to each other.

In addition, a small sample of informal feedback expressed important thoughts. It indicated that some of us felt that our heartfelt efforts for First Nations justice were not given recognition. These feelings are also part of the conversation and journey for us all. It has been a long road toward justice and healing so far, and hearing that there is a long way to go

naturally made some feel disheartened.

The tragedy is that this long walk has been a painful and personal daily reality for generations of First Nations people in Australia, but we can all be inspired by their ongoing invitation, resilience and achievements and walk in solidarity with them as we join in their effort toward justice.

All of our thoughts, feelings and dreams are part of our genuine response as Kildare Ministries – and we can learn from the gaps in our nation's response, in our energy, knowledge, understanding and compassion. Altogether the feedback demonstrates that Kildare Ministries has a very heartfelt and strong opportunity to authentically support each other in listening, learning and growing together on this journey toward justice.

Lila Watson, a Gangulu woman, gives us a place to begin;

'If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time; but if you have come because your liberation is bound

*up with mine, then let us
work together.'*

With these few words, she teaches us of the interconnectedness and sacredness of our shared humanity; that the chains that bind the few, bind us all, and are a threat to freedom everywhere. She shows us that being bound together in love, solidarity, accompaniment and listening are the only ways forward for healing and for an enriched future for Australians. And she reminds us that we need to work together.

*'We leave base camp
and start our trek across
this vast country. We
invite you to walk with
us in a movement of the
Australian people for a
better future.'
(Uluru Statement from
the Heart)*

Let's walk.

**We are people of listening
hearts**

We hear the invitation

**We cannot cease from
journeying**

Always one pace beyond

**May we like Brigid, Daniel and
Nano**

**May we know the fire within
Trust the opening path**

**May we hear the ancient
blessings**

**Breathed into the ear of our
hearts**

**As we create the path
To journey by a new and
different way**

*Note: For helpful curriculum
and learning resources visit
ABC Education and download
the file found at [this link](#).*



**Renee
Oberin**
Mission
Leader
Kildare

Ministries



A word from Executive Director, Erica Pegorer

19 June 2024

Dear friends and colleagues

As you may well know, I am about to enter an extended period of Long Service Leave that will take me away from Kildare Ministries for 12 months. I am so very grateful for this opportunity. After ten very fulfilling years of service to Kildare Ministries, I will cherish the time to step back, evaluate, refresh and renew. I look forward to the space that such a long break affords, to reconnect to the most important people in my life, to explore new areas of personal growth and to recharge creatively and spiritually. Who knows I might even turn my attention to some artistic exploration (never was a strength of mine).

I am also stepping away with such a sense of deep satisfaction after the success of the 10th Anniversary Conference. Your contributions to the Kildare Ministries Voice have revitalized our resolve to keep the connection alive and to continue our work toward making the world a better place for all we serve. I feel very proud of what Kildare Ministries has achieved in its 10 short years. So while I am away, I have every confidence that Kildare Ministries will continue to deepen its commitment to its Vision, Mission and Values.

As you are also aware, Nicole Mangelsdorf will help navigate, steer and lead this new and evolving agenda. Nicole, as the Principal of Kilbreda College comes with many years of educational and faith leadership and a shared passion and commitment to and for Kildare Ministries. Nicole will bring broad and deep

experience to the role, great enthusiasm and as a woman of deep faith and commitment, she will bring heart and energy to our mission and to the work of the Office.



I wish you all well as the year unfolds and I do look forward to returning with renewed energy, creative ideas and some fresh perspectives but ready to continue our important work together. Finally, I would like to express my thanks to the Trustees for allowing me the privilege of precious personal time.

Warmest Regards



Erica Pegorer

Executive Director



Trustees at Work

Term 2

The Trustees have had a very busy schedule in term 2 visiting some schools and attending the AGMs for all the incorporations. In addition, the Governance Meetings held with each Board Chair and the Principal/CEO of CW were conducted on sight. There will be a celebratory finish to the term when the Trustees host the *Conference Thank You Luncheon* for the Committees and their helpers on Saturday 22 June. It has been a busy and productive term.

Trustees Diary:

23 April	Wellsprings for Women – Governance Meeting
23 April	BASP – Governance Meeting
7-8 May	Trustees meeting and Ministerial visit to Star of the Sea College
15 May	BCI – Governance Meeting BCI – AGM and dinner
20 May	Star of the Sea – Governance Meeting Star of the Sea - Annual Meeting and Dinner
24 May	Board Chairs Network
27 May	BCSI – Governance Meeting BCSI – AGM and Dinner
4 June	Governance and Trustees meeting with SACCS (Adelaide)
13 June	KEM- Governance Meeting KEM- Annual Meeting and Dinner
15 June	St. Ives' Unveiling of the Statue of the Original Students - 70th Anniversary
19 June	Trustees Meeting
20 June	Wellsprings for Women 30th Anniversary Lunch at Parliament House

22 June Conference Thank You Luncheon

Kildare Education Ministries Board AGM





Brigidine College Indooroopilly AGM



Brigidine College St. Ives AGM



Trustee Visit to Star of the Sea College







National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is a time for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.

The dates for NRW remain the same each year; 27 May to 3 June. These dates commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey— the successful 1967 referendum, and the High Court Mabo decision respectively.

Reconciliation must live in the hearts, minds and actions of all Australians as we move forward, creating a nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australian community, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Here is a look at how some of our ministries marked this significant event in our Australian calendar.

Kildare College

To celebrate National Reconciliation Week, Kildare College launched two videos during their Assembly, a student discussion panel on NRW and a powerful Acknowledgement of Country.

Acknowledgement of Country

We launched our new Acknowledgement of Country video and are so proud of the result. It features our Nunga students, a Smoking Ceremony, Didgeridoo, and our Dance students.

National Reconciliation Week - Student Discussion

Interviewing our Nunga Group students and Student Leaders, we asked them questions about Reconciliation - why is it important, what does it mean, how do we achieve it?

Clonard College



This year during National Reconciliation Week, in a first for Clonard a Year 8 student welcomed us all to country in language having just been approved by the local Waddawurrung people to conduct welcome to country. After over 12 months of develop the College is about to submit its Reconciliation Action Plan to Narragunnawali. The voices of our students, families and staff in the formation of this document bring the Living Justice Living Peace to life.

Star of the Sea College

The theme of National Reconciliation Week this year is 'Now more than ever', which encourages all Australians to be a voice for Reconciliation. In mentor and Religious Education classes students had the opportunity to reflect on this theme and to express what actions they could take towards reconciliation

Our Reconciliation Week program included bracelet making, a screening of the documentary *Off Country*, and a workshop from the Gerib Sik Torres Strait Islander Dance troupe. This is the second year in a row that we have had a visit from Gerib Sik who provided a dance, storytelling, and song workshop to our Year 7 students. Isabel (Year 11) has strong connections with Gerib Sik, with one of her Aunts a dancer in the group.



Killester College

On the 30th of May this year, the Year 7-10 Social Justice and Sustainability Leaders and the Year 11 and 12 VM students from Killester College, Springvale, attended a *Now More than Ever* Reconciliation Week event at the Springvale Hub. The day was filled with a variety of engaging and purposeful activities and students were left feeling uplifted and motivated to further spread important messages of reconciliation within Killester College. It was a worthwhile experience for all who attended and Killester College is very appreciative of the efforts that were made to bring the students in local schools such an incredible opportunity to learn and to celebrate our First Nations people and culture.



Throughout Reconciliation Week every homeroom participated in Indigenous meditation through Dadirri, Music and song through the words and music of Gurrumul, prayers that reflected the theme for RW as well as different Acknowledgements of Country written by Year 9 students to start each day. To culminate the week every class member participated in the art activity that incorporated the theme for this week 'Now More Than Ever'. Students coloured the chevron pattern, added symbols and words that reflected on how we can move forward and support the reconciliation movement for a just more equitable Australia. The Social Justice students then created three installations in various areas of the school using the chevron pattern.

Acknowledgement of Country by Year 9 Students

Killester College sits on the lands of the Boon Wurrung People. The site has been a gathering place for storytelling, community and culture for First Nations people for millennia.

We recognize the profound cultural heritage that the First Nations peoples hold in music, dance, and storytelling. These art forms are not just expressions of culture but are essential threads in the fabric of their identities and histories.

The music of the First Nations peoples tells stories of creation, the land, and the ancestors. It carries the wisdom and experiences of countless generations and connects us to the heartbeat of this land. We gather with understanding and respect.

Kilbreda College

The Kilbreda College community gathered on Thursday 30 May for a very special Reconciliation Week Liturgy where we paused to acknowledge and reflect on the injustices

of the past, and to commit ourselves to continuing to advocate for Reconciliation through Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling.



During the liturgy we listened to the beautiful reflection of Dr Miriam Rose Ungunmerr Baumann AM, who is a proud Ngan'giwumirri woman and Elder from Nauiyu in the Daly River region of the Northern Territory, on 'dadirri'. The word, concept and spiritual practice that is dadirri is from the Ngan'gikurunggurr and Ngen'giwumirri languages and means inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness.

Miriam-Rose's words resonated deeply, "The time for rebirth is now. If our culture is alive and strong and respected, it will grow, it will not die and our spirit will not die." As a college community, we will continue to walk alongside Australia's First Peoples on the journey of healing to create a just and equitable future.

Another highlight of the week was the presentation of our draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to staff by the RAP Working Party which is made up of students and staff. The Working Party has been developing our RAP over the last 12 months and sought feedback from staff on the Vision for Reconciliation, which is centred upon our six core values. We look forward to finalising and sharing our RAP with the wider school community soon.



St. Joseph's College

St. Joseph's College gathered as a whole school for a very special Reconciliation Week Liturgy and assembly hosted by Nicholls House. The theme of our event reflected the Reconciliation Week 2024 theme of 'Now more than ever'. Now more than ever the work continues. In treaty making, in truth-telling, in understanding our history, in education, and in

“

*St Joseph's College
Reconciliation
Liturgy & Assembly*

WE ARE ON A JOURNEY THAT HOPES TO MAKE THE MISTAKES WE HAVE MADE IN THE PAST, MISTAKES WE WILL NEVER MAKE IN THE FUTURE. WE HOPE TO BRING HARMONY AND UNDERSTANDING, BUT WE RECOGNISE THAT IS A DIFFICULT TASK WHEN SO MANY ABORIGINAL PEOPLE STILL DIRECTLY SUFFER, BECAUSE OF THE PAST MISTAKES WE HAVE MADE AS A NATION. WE HOPE THAT AS WE CONTINUE THIS JOURNEY, THAT WE ARE ABLE TO BRING OUR HEARTS AND SPIRITS TOGETHER. THAT WE CAN MOVE FORWARD. THAT WE WILL NEVER FORGET WHAT HAS BEEN DONE BEFORE; BUT INSTEAD WE WILL USE THE PAST AS THE BENCHMARK FOR WHAT WE NEVER WANT TO BE AGAIN.

www.sje.vic.edu.au

RECONCILIATION WEEK 2024



tackling racism. We need connection. We need respect. We need action. And we need change. We must share and listen to the stories of hope that have flowed from the First Nations communities and through their daily lives, and the acts of courage that have brought us to this time in our history.

www.reconciliation.org.au

As part of Reconciliation Week, all at St. Joseph's are delighted to

share and celebrate the story of their new football jumpers. The jumpers were designed by Year 10 student Isla, who is a proud Barapa Barapa / Yorta Yorta young woman, and an exceptionally talented artist. Isla designed and created the mural on the Delany building (pictured) when she was in Year 9 and was an obvious choice to design the jumpers. The jumpers are proudly worn by both our boys and girls football teams and highlight our school's commitment to reconciliation. Isla's design was created with pride and respect for Indigenous traditions and embodies the spirit of unity and celebration in art and sport. The symbolism strongly interweaves our Brigidine charism with Indigenous culture.

This will be the first in an ongoing initiative to commission Indigenous designs.

The photograph is of artist Isla (centre), St Joseph's College football team captains Solly (left) and Abbey (right) in front of the mural that Isla painted in 2023.



Brigidine College, St. Ives

To acknowledge National Reconciliation Week, the students took part in Reconciliation focused activities in their Mentor groups each morning. The students created an Indigenous installation of paper hands on the Chapel lawn. Susan Moylan-Coombs was welcomed to the

College. Thanks to Susan for providing such a thought-provoking reflection in assembly for the whole College community.



Brigidine College, Indooroopilly

This year Brigidine College Indooroopilly commemorated Sorry Day with a Liturgy on Tuesday with the 2024 theme, "Now More Than Ever". In this year of Hope at Brigidine Indooroopilly, we invite each generation to continue to engage in ways of walking together in reconciliation whilst celebrating our deeper Australian culture.

Our hands set out on the Holy Lawn reminded us of the common threads that intertwine within all cultures and bond our community in unity, offering a hand of welcome, a hand of support, a hand of creativity and a hand of action in solidarity together.



During National Reconciliation Week, we have reflected on the important role of reconciliation in our journey and we recognise the need for healing and restoration. The theme 'Now More Than Ever' reminded us that, it is a time to reflect and continue building momentum towards reconciliation in our schools and communities.

We presented the Colleges' Reconciliation and Action Plan (RAP) which outlines our Vision for Reconciliation – *to grow a College community that embraces the cultural diversity and inclusion and has a deep respect for our Traditional Custodians, on the Country on which Brigidine College is located, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.*



Wellsprings for Women



To commemorate National Reconciliation Week (27th May -3rd June), staff, volunteers, and participants at Wellsprings for Women were honoured to host a flag raising ceremony that began with a powerful smoking ceremony led by Jillian West from the Bunurong Land Council. This week is a time for reflection, learning, and commitment to the journey of reconciliation.

Commemorating Reconciliation Week holds deep meaning for us, as we stand in solidarity with Indigenous Australians, acknowledging their enduring connection to the land and their

invaluable contributions to our community. Together, we strive to foster a future built on mutual respect, understanding, and unity.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and supported this important event. Let's continue to walk this path of reconciliation, hand in hand. #ReconciliationWeek
#WellspringsForWomen #UnityInDiversity
#IndigenousAustralia
#Nowmorethanever



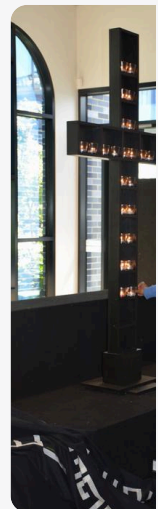


Hope at Killester College

Richard Rohr says *"Hope is a participation in the very life of God. This hope has nothing to do with circumstances or things going well. It can even thrive in adversity and trial. True faith, which always includes hope and love, is a predisposition to yes."*

And so, at Killester we continue to say in the face of adversity with so many issues of violence and struggle around the world. *'In this light we set out to explore **Hope**'*.

Our exploration of the KM theme Hope, started in the last week of 2023 when we presented to staff a number of stimuli.



We began with Scripture and explored the Magnificat and Mary's song of Praise for the child she would bear who would be the Hope of Israel. Through the practice of Lectio Divina we

pondered and followed this process.

- Reflecting on the words or phrases we chose from the listening
- Allow your words to sink in more deeply.
- Is there one word or phrase that shouts out to you?
- Savour these words - repeat them
- What do these words mean for your life today?
- Speak to God your personal response to what you have heard
- Tell God how it makes you feel, what comforts you and what challenges you
- Listen to the still small voice of the Holy Spirit within you
- What conversion of mind, heart and life is being asked of me?

We then had a myriad of phrases and images to look at and followed in paired discussions, beginning with the Hope of Advent from Isaiah 9:2

*"The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned."*

Paired discussions included :

- *What do you think hope means?*
- *What are your hopes for this week?*
- *What are your hopes for the holidays?*
- *Our students?*
- *For Christmas?*
- *Next year?*
- *Who gives you hope?*
- *What gives you hope?*
- *Who do you give hope to?*
- *Have your hopes ever been dashed?*

We finished with an exploration of the Hope offered in the Prodigal Son story of Luke. We continued with stories from our Patrons, Brigid and Nano. The discussions were animated and helped us flesh out the idea of our 2024 school theme finally arriving with our phrase for 2024 :

- Hope: Patience, Faith, Possibility.



Our Year Level Hope banners are adorned by the butterfly symbols of hope capturing the hopes for the year of every community member. These banners have been displayed at our three major liturgies so far this year.

This exploration was furthered on our Leadership Retreat in January thanks to our two wonderful staff members, Josie Dilettoso and Gavin Brown. It has continued on in our staff meetings and our celebrations.

We highlight are our actions for Justice. Nano's mantra was "Deeds Not Words." We have continued to find avenues for student action. Caritas and Project Compassion was a key focus for term one and this was launched on Ash Wednesday and followed through until part way through term two.

Complementing this was our Easter Liturgy which explored the theme of "Hope Rising." We dramatised the many injustices of our world and symbolically placed a black length of cloth on the cross bearing the various injustices of homelessness, domestic violence, poverty or refugees.

The climax of the drama was the resurrection. Examples of our community service and awareness raising were read out and each set of phrases saw a black sheet removed from the cross. Finally, 30 students slowly lay a candle on the bare cross, as the words of resurrection appeared on the screens. It was a beautiful liturgy using three drama classes, a college band, choir, celebrations leaders and thirty volunteers. The Hope of the Resurrection was displayed in our images of service, action and awareness.



Our LJLP action of Walking in Solidarity has been extended in our Community Service Program. We have been able to connect our LJLP value of Solidarity by serving AMES and their community garden at year eight. We hope to embed material from Laudato Si into the RE program. At Year 10 we make weekly visits to Wellsprings assisting with language, computer classes, bicycle lessons, cooking and creche. At Year 11 we serve at the local Vinnies and at Year 12 we serve Aged Care in Springvale and St Joseph's Primary School. These acts of service are practical ways to live out being people of Hope. More recently we raised goods from the local Vinnies for our Solidarity Mass and our liturgy focused on the meaning of Solidarity - to stand with the most vulnerable. Our closing action after the mass was to stand arm in arm and read out a series of commitment statements from signed petitions on climate change and domestic violence.

As people of Hope we also know that the work of justice is ongoing. So we continue to highlight Refugee Week and Reconciliation Week most recently. We continue to unpack the meaning of Hope through our Mission Team and challenge our community to be people of Hope and action.

Peter O'Neill

AP Faith and Mission



Hope at Saltbush Beach Balnarring

From little things, big things grow.

In the face of climate change and its daunting challenges, Saltbush together with community partners, cultivates hope through an environmental commitment and stewardship, demonstrating how positive action can inspire a brighter future for our planet.



Saltbush has recently been working in partnership with local schools Padua College and Star of the Sea College to undertake community service projects, involving teams of enthusiastic young people lending their hands to initiatives aimed at nurturing the local environment and fostering sustainability.

The scope of these diverse projects includes:

- establishing a communal vegetable garden at Saltbush to educate and promote sustainable food production and enabling Saltbush guests to harvest their own food.
- re-planting the Saltbush property with native species to enhance biodiversity, creating habitat for local wildlife.

Recently, the school community service project has extended to supporting Presentation Sisters Victoria and Merricks Coolart Catchment Landcare Group in their efforts to regenerate 30 acres of the Presentation Sisters Land adjacent to Saltbush that has previously been used for agricultural purposes over the past 50 years. Through the planting

of trees, shrubs, grasses, and ground covers, with seeds collected and propagated locally the aim is to restore the land to its original ecological vegetation class, Swampy Woodland.



This significant regeneration project is part of a Mornington Peninsula wide bio-link project that will have tangible benefits for both wildlife and the community. By creating wildlife corridors, the regeneration project enhances habitat for koalas and other wildlife, fostering biodiversity. Furthermore, it contributes to local climate mitigation efforts by reducing regional temperatures by an estimated 1-2 degrees Celsius over time and sequestering carbon from the atmosphere.

The collective effort of volunteers from local Landcare group, schools, and community organisations underscores the power of collaboration in effecting positive change. Chiara Forti, Captain of Ave House at Star of the Sea College, explains how regeneration and initiatives that re-creates ecosystems, instils hope for the future. Through community partnerships we are not just envisioning a better future but actively creating it.



For the young people engaged in the regeneration project, the impact is palpable. Witnessing the progress made by trees planted 14 years ago by students from Star of the Sea College, also fuels their optimism, driving today's students to be agents of positive change. Students' participation in the project represents a tangible step toward rejuvenating previously exploited land and leaving a legacy for future generations.

Sister Joan Power of Presentation Sisters Victoria describes the regeneration project as a gift—a testament to the community's dedication to caring for the land. Through such concerted efforts, we can sow the seeds of hope for a more sustainable and resilient future.

Saltbush is currently seeking new members for its "Green Team", a working group that meets quarterly to plan and monitor its environmental sustainability activities and performance. For

more information about becoming a Green Team member, please contact CEO Maree Feutrill at maree@saltbush.org.au and visit their [website](#).



Hope at Clonard College

Promise, Purpose and Possibilities has been lens that Clonard has taken to exploring our theme of Hope in 2024.

The staff commenced the year exploring the virtue of hope, a 'Christian habit' in a whole staff professional learning session. This session concluded with the challenge to see hope, hear hope, speak hope, practice hope and spread hope. At staff meetings and briefings we have explicitly paused to share stories of the students and colleagues who have been our sources of hope throughout the year.



In introducing the theme of Hope to our students we asked our students what hope means to them and looked at hope through our faith tradition and within scripture such as the resurrection. Students engaged in a 'dadirri' meditation as a means of fostering a spirituality of hope.

In the spirit of looking outward and having a sense of purpose our Year 8 students have ensured that their Growth Projects for the year have all had a focus on 'the other'. Whilst they have 6 months to further develop their projects some of the work has included active volunteering, teaching others how to garden.

Community Connection Days have featured a focus on hope including racism and reconciliation at Year 7 and developing an understanding of integral ecology with Year 9. The Year 11 Community Connection Day, themed "Stepping Stones," was designed to help students navigate the critical transition period in their



educational and personal lives. The theme "Stepping Stones" symbolized the various stages and milestones that students will encounter on their journey to adulthood. In the spirituality session we looked at 'stepping stones' being the 'rocks', the hard things we encounter on our journey. Rather than letting these challenges weigh us down we need to look on them as a means to step forward, to be resilient. Key phrases from the day encouraged students to look forward with hope. The session concluded with students practising one way of managing the 'stepping stones' in life by participating in a meditation on hope. They responded to the meditation by creating personal 'stepping stones' to keep with them as reminder that through living with hope, challenges can be overcome.



For International Women's Day, we listened to Sr Adele Howard speaking about 'Listening to the Voices of the Peoples of Oceania' in the quest for ecological justice in the spirit of Laudato Si. With many student leaders and members of the community present we were reminded of the wisdom of the first

peoples and how this can bring possibilities for better stewardship of creation.



First Nations Forum



On the 13-15 May students from Brigidine College (St Ives), Kilbreda College, Killester College, Kildare College, Clonard College, Marian College (Sunshine) and St Joseph's College attended the Kildare Ministries First Nations Immersion at Echuca, Victoria.

It was a super-long day of travel for some, but we all arrived at Billabong Ranch on the evening of the 13th of May and were revived by gathering round the campfire for welcomes, liturgy, dinner and games. After dinner, students settled into the glow of the campfire to watch 'In my Blood It Runs' on the big screen before shuffling off to their

cabins for much needed rest.

The following day we headed out on a bright sunny day to Barmah Forest, Yorta Yorta Country, and were met by Park Rangers, Aunty Greta Morgan and Aunty Hilda Stewart. Their vast passion, knowledge and wisdom amazed everyone. We all felt that there was no end to what they could have kept telling us. They were able to talk about the history of the

landscape drawn from the songlines and stories of their ancestors, and proudly told us of visiting scientists who first debated and then verified these accounts. We learnt about the plants and their uses, what was traded by Yorta Yorta people using the 'superhighway' of the rivers to visit other clans and tribes for trade, and what the Yorta Yorta people valued in return. We learnt all about the marine and land animals and how the hunting of the animals was limited to conserve their numbers – not a thing was wasted in daily life. We learned about weapons and clothing and were shown replicas to better understand their role in daily life. We learned about how sacred knowledge was, how as a young aboriginal person you couldn't forget anything you were taught because the elders would not allow you to forget what was important, the oral traditions were repeated and repeated in dreaming story and song-lines until the young people got it right. Everyone was given their role by the Elders in remembering and was obliged to honour it, but the Elders remembered it all. We talked about the young people 'coming through' to carry on the teaching and witnessed the Aunties' great pride in their families and their achievements. And even above all of this, we felt the wondrous beauty of the place where we sat on the edge of the lakes, and we wondered about the great gift of it to the people it sustained for thousands and thousands of years, and for us, in that tiniest sliver of time.



In the afternoon, we were generously hosted for lunch by St Joseph's College (delicious!). We visited the St. Joseph's Chapel and Ms. Allison O'Brien explained the collaboration between renowned Aboriginal Artist, Troy Firebrace and St Joseph's own resident artist (and former student), Alicia Ryan. Students viewed the icons of Brigid, Daniel and Nano, created by this project and saw first-hand the complementarity and blending of the histories and spirituality of both our founders and First Nations people.

It was such a huge day of learning (and only 3pm) so a meditation lead by Alicia Ryan was welcomed by all. The meditation gave us some time to quietly draw and process the things we had seen and shared so far.

After farewelling St Joseph's College Brigidine Campus, we headed back to Billabong Ranch and learned to weave baskets by the campfire with Aunty Donna Walsh and Aunty Denise Morgan-Bulled in traditional Yorta Yorta ways. As we weaved together round the camp fire, we were mesmerised by the stories of growing up Aboriginal in Echuca that Aunties Donna and Denise told us. The casually accepted racism of the times was gobsmacking for most, and the silent respect for these wise, generous women as they spoke was palpable. We are so grateful for their knowledge and willingness to share both the happy and the sad parts of their growing up years.

Our last activities on the final day were held at the Port of Echuca Wharf. We visited the Discovery Centre which tells the story of the role of steam in the colonisation of the area and then walked the Discovery trail to witness the structure of the wharf and the paddle-steamers first-hand.



Finally, in the morning sunshine, on the mighty wharf with the glittering Murray River below us, we participated in a liturgy which imagined life 'before all this steam-built development' and what it's coming might have meant to the people who originally lived there. We considered the importance of the river to those who were there first, and compared the ways it was important for the ones who settled there later- we considered how important water was for us today, and how we are only now beginning to recapture its sacredness in our lives in the ways First Nations people saw it for thousands of years.

Spending time on country and being taught by First Nations elders and teachers is an irreplaceable learning experience. Both Aunty Greta and Aunty Hilda hinted that there may be things that will be immediately forgotten about the things they learned in those days, but there will come a time when the experience will return to them in the light of a new discovery or by some related new knowledge. Spending time in the gentle company of Aunty Donna and Aunty Denise around the campfire with personal stories of funny times and heart-breaking times created a deep impression that will also return to our students. In all their new learning, it was the experience of being there that set the scene of our interconnectedness, and will make that learning memorable, meaningful and compassionately considered again in the future.





Congrats to Paul Beltrame - Kildare College

Bringing Laudato Si' to Life Educator Awarded For Driving a Sustainable Future

Inspirational, passionate and innovative educator, Paul Beltrame, is the recipient of the Laudato Si' Award at the 2024 Catholic Education Awards, an annual event celebrating outstanding outcomes through commitment to Catholic Education. Dedicated educator of 24 years at Kildare College, with a commitment to and advocacy for Stewardship of the Earth, Paul ignites students' passion and drive to build a sustainable world for the future.



An exceptional Biology teacher, Paul has consistently exemplified excellence in education, evidenced by his students' outstanding results. Paul's commitment to environmental conservation extends to practical initiatives such as Bird Banding, searching for endangered orchids at Anstey Hill and Kangaroo Island's Revegetation project, helping restore vegetation after devastating bushfires. Paul's leadership and ingenuity was the foundation for discussions about 'what else' for our students, planting the seed for the Kildare College Innovation Hub, the Tullow Centre.

Through his own volunteering, fostering partnerships and progressive drive, Paul not only enriches the educational experience for the students at Kildare but also amplifies the College's outreach and contribution to the broader community, making him a beacon of inspiration for future generations. Huge congratulations for this fantastic accolade Paul, Kildare College is lucky to have you as part of their community.

Hear about Paul's journey from the Kildare College community:

<https://www.kildare.catholic.edu.au/our-college/our-staff/laudato-si>





Volunteering Opportunities at our Community Works

Wellsprings for Women

- Looking for teachers to volunteer for English Language coaching and practise
- Tutoring school- age students

Both can be online if needed.

Website: <https://www.wellspringsforwomen.com/>

Phone: (03) 9701 3740

Email: administration@wellspringsforwomen.com

BASP

- Looking for someone with car and trailer than can help move furniture including fridges
- Volunteers need to be able to lift and carry items
- Volunteers need to be flexible in terms of timing as needs arise at varying times

Website: <http://www.basp.org.au>

Phone: (03) 9696 2107

Email: queries@basp.org.au

Saltbush Balnarring Beach

- Weekly gardening group - Have a green thumb or want to learn? Join this dedicated group who are transforming the old Saltbush gardens into native gardens with local indigenous plants to enhance wildlife habitat. This group are also embarking on an exciting new project to establish a communal vegetable garden at Saltbush following a successful grant from the local council.
- Spring Working Bee – stay tuned for date and more details.

Website: <https://saltbushbalnarringbeach.org.au/>

Phone: (03) 5983 1819

Email: info@saltbushbb.org.au

National 20-26 MAY 2024
Volunteer
Something for Everyone **Week**

**FROM THE TRUSTEES OF
KILDARE MINISTRIES**

**IN APPRECIATION OF OUR
VOLUNTEERS**

The collaboration, generosity and participation by all who lead, serve and contribute as volunteers to Kildare Ministries is cause for celebration and recognition not only in light of National Volunteers Week but also as an additional mark on our 10th anniversary celebrations. As we learnt at the recent conference, the work of the volunteers across all our ministries but especially our three community works, remains vital to our mission.

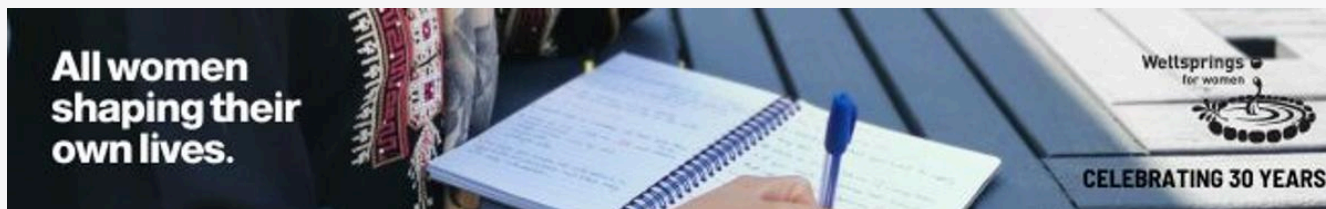
During National Volunteer Week (20-26 May), the Trustees of Kildare Ministries are particularly grateful for all those who volunteer across our community. The theme for this week in 2024 is Something for Everyone, referring both to the myriad opportunities available for volunteers to use their unique skills and interests and to the diversity of volunteers who – in ways big and small – contribute so much to transform and add value to Kildare Ministries.

Our ministries benefit every day from volunteers whose presence, skill and care make a real difference to many. Our community works – Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, Saltbush Balnarring Beach and Wellsprings for Women – would never be able to offer the breadth of programs, support to community and practical assistance without their many volunteers. Our Colleges benefit every day from volunteers who reflect to students a way of making a difference in the world and where would we be without those who donate their time and talents to our seven ministry boards as company directors or committee members?

Jesus taught by word and example that one way to be just and live in peace is through walking in solidarity with others. To all those who volunteer across Kildare Ministries – thank you for bringing hope through your generosity of presence, thank you for walking in solidarity with those in need and thank you for demonstrating so clearly that we can make a difference in this world, one hope-filled step at a time.

Trustees Kildare Ministries
Rosemary Copeland and Kathy McEvoy (co-chairs), Anne Astin, Audrey Brown, Michael Kearney, Liz Maguire





Events at Wellsprings for Women

Dear friends,

You are cordially invited to join us for a conversation on Reimagining Freedom with Hana Assafiri OAM as we delve into her new book:

Hana: The Audacity to be Free.

This timely event will feature an important conversation on the crisis of violence against women.

Program Highlights:

- Book Launch:** Introduction and discussion with Hana about the book release: *Hana: The Audacity to be Free.*
- Panel Discussion:** A deep dive into the themes of diversity in women's experiences of domestic violence, healing, and the journey to freedom, facilitated by Maria Dimopoulos AM
- Audience Q&A:** An opportunity for attendees to engage with the panel and share their reflections.
- Refreshments:** Enjoy light refreshments in a welcoming and safe environment.

Wellsprings for Women is honoured to host this significant event. We strive to create a supportive and inclusive space for this essential conversation. All are welcome.

To order Hana's book please visit this [link](https://www.moroccansoupbar.com.au/product-page/copy-of-hana-the-audacity-to-be-free).

Please RSVP via the below QR code or this [link](#) by 1st July, 2024.

Join us for a conversation on Reimagining Freedom with Hana Assafiri OAM as we delve into her new book

HANA: THE AUDACITY TO BE FREE

Featuring a panel discussion on women's experiences of domestic violence, healing, and finding freedom facilitated by Maria Dimopoulos AM and followed by an audience Q&A. Light refreshments will be served.

Wednesday 3rd July, 2024
02:30pm - 4:00pm
Wellsprings for Women
79 Langhorne St, Dandenong





Order Hana's book :
<https://www.moroccansoupbar.com.au/product-page/copy-of-hana-the-audacity-to-be-free>

RSVP: QR Code

Wellsprings for women

HANA
the audacity to be free

Wellsprings for Women - 30th Anniversary Invitation to High Tea




INVITATION

**WELLSPRINGS FOR WOMEN'S
30TH ANNIVERSARY HIGH TEA**

All proceeds will go towards Women's Education costs

Saturday 20 July 2024, 2-4pm
Kennedy Hall, Killester College
433 Springvale Road, Springvale 3171

\$65pp - All Welcome
Register via QR code
RSVP by 8th July



SCAN ME



2024 Calendar Dates

KEM Principals Meetings

15 August

KM Leaders Meetings

16 August

21 November

KEM Business Managers

27 August

TKM Business Managers

28 October

KM Chairs of the Board Network

25 October



Board Directors & Stewardship Council Members Seminar Day

26 October

Faith Leaders

3-4 September (with Learning Leaders)

8 November

First Nations Forum

22nd July

Network Zero (Amberly)

31 July-1 August

Register your students [here](#).

Student Leadership Retreat

27-29 November

New Leaders Induction - Day 2

28 August

New Staff Induction - Day 2

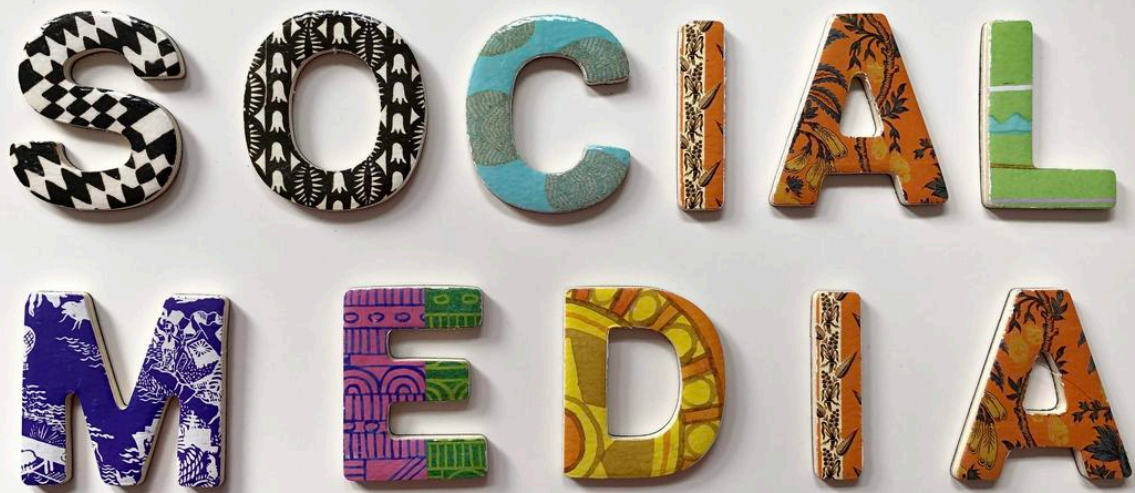
11 September

Staff Integral Ecology Retreat

29-31 October

Senior Leadership Retreat (Students)

27-29 November



Keep updated!

Follow us on our different social media accounts



Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/kildareministries/>

Instagram- <http://www.instagram.com/kildareministries/>