

Serving Faithfully

Newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services
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Christ is Alive



On 25 March, the Solemn Feast of the Annunciation, the Holy Father gave his response to the Synod on Youth in a document entitled *Christus Vivit*, which means *Christ is Alive*. We may well remember the Synod because it had a wide and penetrating preparation that included consultation with young people throughout the world, and, using the marvels of modern technology, thousands of young people had an input into the actual meeting.

that way, it puts us off. Christianity is a person who loved me immensely, who demands and asks my love. Christianity is Christ.'

Pope Francis encourages young people, and all of us, to 'See Jesus as happy, overflowing with joy. Rejoice with him as with a friend who has triumphed. They killed him, the holy one, the just one, the innocent one, but he triumphed in the end. Evil does not have the last word. Nor will it have the last word in your life, for you have a friend who loves you and wants to triumph in you. Your Saviour lives.'

The Holy Father sets down many remarks to clearly outline



Pope Francis with young people at the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, 3-28 October 2018

Participation in the Synod included not only Bishops, but also many young people were physically present and had the opportunity to be heard. Additionally, the proceedings of that meeting were readily and instantly available to the world and many took advantage of 'remote participation' through the technology. The plea for prayerful accompaniment was a solid foundation for all this valuable work and obviously bore much fruit – a good example for our own Plenary Council.

We are becoming familiar with the style of Pope Francis who has the ability to say deeply meaningful things with great simplicity and directness. While *Christ is Alive* is mainly directed at young people, he points out frequently that it is really for 'the entire People of God', because the elements are really fundamental to the whole community.

I am particularly grateful for his reminder that **Christ IS alive** - totally and really present to us in each moment of each day. Pope Francis traces the context of the historical facts of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection as all being connected with the history of the Church and with our own daily experience. He reminds us that these historical elements are really present in the person of Jesus on a continuing basis. He quotes Sacred Scripture (both Old and New Testament), the 2000-year history of the Church, and the example of many of the Saints to demonstrate that the presence of the Lord Jesus is not only seen to be something of academic, historical or social interest or concern, but also that it is a real, personal, and very intimate communion that we share with Jesus. Quoting Saint Oscar Romero, Pope Francis reminds us that: 'Christianity is not a collection of truths to be believed, rules to be followed, or prohibitions. Seen

the particular circumstances of the Church in our present times. He pulls no punches. He identifies many challenges that we have to face up to including, but not only, the abuse suffered by many in the community. The Pope is particularly condemnatory of those who perpetrated that abuse. He has some very specific words to say about 'clericalism' and identifies some of the causes of that scourge in the Church. He encourages young people to realise that through them

Christ can, and must, combat these issues. He invites and almost directs young people to look for and identify a risk and to personally remind those involved of their commitment to God and His People. 'This dark cloud also challenges all young people who love Jesus Christ and his Church: they can be a source of great healing if they employ their great capacity to bring about

renewal, to urge and demand constant witness, to keep dreaming and coming up with new ideas.'

This exhortation is really a call that we should all hear! Christ has died, Christ rose again, and Christ is alive in and with us.

Easter is both a reminder and an opportunity to renew our awareness of the presence of Jesus and to walk, talk and think with Him in all we do.

I encourage everyone to read the Holy Father's document.



*Bishop Max Davis
AM, DD
Military Ordinary*

**'Evil does not have the last word ...
you have a friend who loves you and
wants to triumph in you.
Your Saviour lives.'**

Pope Francis

Safeguarding Our Children and Vulnerable People

Members of the ADF and their families can interact with ADF Catholic Chaplains with full confidence. When it comes to ensuring the safety of children and the vulnerable, those Chaplains meet the highest standards set by government, Defence, and the Church.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse uncovered shocking behaviour by many institutions across Australia, including within the Catholic Church. No doubt all members of our faith community have been alarmed and hurt by the behaviours within the Catholic Church that were unearthed by the Royal Commission.

Although the crimes and behaviours disclosed were historic, the Royal Commission highlights that there can be no room for complacency when it comes to protecting children and the vulnerable.

Australian Catholic Church leaders are working with governments to implement the findings of the Royal Commission. This includes the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services.

The values underpinning our approach to safeguarding children and the vulnerable include the inherent dignity of each person. This is at the heart of Gospel teachings. All people, especially children and the vulnerable, have an absolute right to be safe and free from all forms of harm, including physical, sexual and psychological harm, neglect and exploitation.

In late 2016 the Church leaders established an independent body, led by lay-people, to develop, audit, and report on compliance with professional standards to protect children. This body has developed the 10 National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, which are taken directly from the Royal Commission Report, Vol 6. The standards are designed to ensure the Catholic Church implements a child-safe culture, and practices that accord with legislative requirements,

community expectations and Gospel values. These standards will apply to ADF Catholic Chaplains in addition to the Defence Youth Safety Framework.

As members of our faith community and Defence would expect, the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services has been forward-leaning in adopting policies and practices that emphasise child safety. It has:

- implemented a policy for including children, youth and vulnerable people in the life of our catholic community;
- revised professional standards for working with children and vulnerable people;
- adopted a Child Safety Code of Conduct making all Chaplains, volunteers, and visiting clergy responsible for supporting the safety of children;
- ensured all Chaplains are credentialed in accordance with various jurisdictions' legislation for working with children and vulnerable people;
- appointed an independent Director of Safeguarding to handle any reports or concerns about the safety of children, monitor the implementation of policies and procedures, and coordinate the external audit of the Ordinariate's application of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards; and
- arranged internal and external training which focuses on governance, and for staff working in safeguarding and related areas.

The Catholic Military Diocese is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all people in the ADF, our communities, and our society.

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Abuse of any person tears at the fabric of family and community alike and has far-reaching consequences. All members of our faith community are called upon to help build and maintain a child-safe environment everywhere.

Papal Honours conferred on two Members of our Diocese



(L to R) John Andrew, Bishop Max Davis, Alan Hodges

On 29 March this year Bishop Max presented two members associated with the Military Ordinariate with Papal Knighthoods. These were bestowed on them by Pope Francis, recognising their outstanding services to the Military Ordinariate and the wider Church over many years.

Brigadier Alan Hodges AM (Ret'd), currently the Chair of the Military Ordinariate Finance Council and Editor of our newsletter *Serving Faithfully*, was conferred Knight Commander in the Order of Saint Gregory the Great for conspicuous service to the Catholic Church. Alan's recognition extends well beyond the positions he currently holds at the Chancery of the Military Diocese. As a long-time serving member of the ADF and since retired, he has given extraordinary personal service to the Church in many areas. This service is exemplified through his active Christian life, enduring lay leadership within the Church at many levels and in his encouragement and support of ADF Chaplains.

Mr John Andrew is currently the Diocesan Finance Officer of the Military Ordinariate, a position that he has held almost fifteen years. He has been appointed Knight Commander of the Order of St Sylvester by The Holy Father Pope Francis. This Papal Knighthood is in recognition of his conspicuous service to the Catholic Church through his skills and abilities in the area of financial administration over many decades. In the past, he has been the Business Manager of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference, a financial advisor to the Sisters of Mercy and the Carmelite Sisters, and played a pivotal role in the area of fundraising for the building of a new church complex in his home parish. His current service and financial expertise in support of the Military Diocese have been instrumental in the Military Ordinariate's ability to provide services to our ADF members and families.

At a time when lay leadership and the collaboration of lay men and women is urgently required in the Church, both Alan and John, along with the many others actively involved in the wider Church, exemplify this importance. Through their faith commitment and a willingness to generously give of their considerable skills and abilities they contribute significantly to the building up of the Body of Christ and witness to the vitality and relevance of the Church in the world.

The Military Diocese congratulates both John and Alan on their papal recognitions, thanks them for their ongoing contributions and, most of all, recognises that faithful service brings glory to God and builds up His Church.

St Joan of Arc Chapel Enoggera – A Place of Living Water within a Military Environment

As a Military Diocese, we have taken great pride down the years in the significance of our Catholic Chapels as places where past and present Catholic communities gathered with our chaplains. These have been places where not only the spiritual and pastoral lives of our people have been nourished, but also these have contributed significantly to the vocations and ministries of our chaplains. In these chapels, the Holy Eucharist is celebrated and scores of baptisms, confirmations and marriage and funeral rites have taken place. The chapel communities, in the past and today, tangibly



St Joan of Arc Chapel

demonstrate the 'sacred' for our people in the midst of an intense military environment.

These chapels can be likened in some little way to the significance of Jesus meeting the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's well where physical thirst in that instance gives way to the quest for Living Water. (John 4, 5-42)

One such chapel has been St Joan of Arc, situated in the midst of Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera QLD.

There are three military chapels currently owned by the Military Diocese situated on Commonwealth land. These include Our Lady Star of the Sea, HMAS *Cerberus* in Victoria, St Joan of Arc at Enoggera and St. Ignatius Chapel, Canungra QLD.

Most of our Catholic communities on various ADF Bases use chapels built with Commonwealth funds. St Joan of Arc (SJOA) chapel was, however, constructed well before the establishments of the Military Vicariate in the 1950s and, subsequently, the Military Ordinariate in 1968. It was voluntarily constructed by the Catholic United Services Association on behalf of the Church on military land at Enoggera. This organisation is long defunct. Ownership of SJOA was vested with the Archdiocese of Brisbane at the time. Ownership of the building was then transferred to the Military Ordinariate (our military Diocese) when it was established.



Fr Brendan Quirk, Chaplain 2/14 Light Horse Regiment celebrating Mass at St Joan of Arc Chapel

With the passage of time, even with the excellent ongoing maintenance provided by Enoggera Barracks, it is now considered that SJOA has reached its use-by date.



Chapel of All Saints

The Bishop, with advice from the Diocesan Finance Council, has decided that the Diocese needs to consider alternatives for a Catholic worship space at Gallipoli Barracks. The Military Diocese has reached an agreement with local 7th Brigade, along with Chaplains at Enoggera, for the local Catholic community to move into the present Ecumenical Chapel of All Saints at Gallipoli Barracks. The Diocese is prepared to hand the SJOA building over to the local authorities for demolition at Commonwealth expense.

While it is with deep regret that we leave SJOA, the relocation of the Catholic Community to All Saints offers the potential for the rich history of Catholic worship at Enoggera Barracks to continue into the future.



Altar in Chapel of All Saints

The Military Diocese wants to recognise the wonderful and powerful contribution of SJOA over approximately 65 years to Enoggera Barracks. This contribution is certainly appreciated by the local military command. We pay tribute to the myriad of Catholic members and families who have celebrated significant faith events in this little wooden chapel.

We thank the many who have dedicated their time and effort in maintaining the chapel fabric, recognising it as a sacred space of faith and genuine hospitality over the years. This little chapel, now in the midst of a newly-developed and contemporary military barracks, will be sorely missed but fondly remembered as significant in the life of the Military Diocese and its people. A commemorative plaque recognising the significance of SJOA is planned to be placed in the All Saints complex.

The final celebration of Mass at SJOA will take place in April around the Easter celebrations.

Obituaries

Father Thomas Shanahan OAM

From his 18th birthday, Thomas Shanahan knew that he wanted to be a priest and in 1956, before his proud parents Vincent and Barbara Shanahan, his brother and sister and their families, he was ordained at Tamworth. He served in parishes around the Armidale Diocese for 10 years before he was appointed an Army chaplain.

His four and a half years of chaplaincy service included 391 days with 5 RAR in Vietnam. On missions with the troops, where he never carried a weapon, Fr Tom's response to questions from his young diggers as to why he was there was always 'You're here, that's why I'm here.' He was a regular and welcome visitor to the local orphanage where he assisted the Sisters with their English language studies.

As a chaplain he was ever conscious of the realities that wars leave behind, particularly as they affect those involved. On resuming his priestly life in his Diocese in 1970, Fr Tom was active with chaplaincy work with the RSL and the War Widows Guild. He was subsequently honoured with life membership of the Returned and Services League of Australia for his counselling of veterans returning from war service. He continued his RSL chaplaincy at many of their nursing homes.

Forty years after his war service Fr Tom returned to

Vietnam and later accompanied war veterans who, he said 'Often started to heal when they saw the chaos of war replaced by peace'. In the 2013 Australia Day Honours he received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his 'service to veterans and their families and the community'.



Fr Tom Shanahan on the occasion of the announcement of the award of the Medal of the Order of Australia

Northern Daily News Photo : Robert Chappel

In 2016 on the Diamond Jubilee of Fr Tom's ordination to the priesthood, Bishop Michael Kennedy of the Armidale Diocese presented him with a Papal Medal. Fr Tom retired in 1998 to Tamworth where he died on 22 December 2018 at the age of 86 years. He was farewelled at St Nicholas' Church in his hometown of Tamworth. There, the congregation overflowed into the church grounds during the Mass concelebrated by Bishop Kennedy and his fellow diocesan clergy last January. Fr Richard Gleeson, a fellow priest and good friend, said in tribute that Fr Shanahan 'had a great love and true dedication to returned service persons and their families, especially in times of sickness, need and death. He was a man and a priest of the people.'

The RSL formed a guard of honour as the much-loved Chaplain Fr Tom Shanahan was carried to his final resting place in the Lincoln Grove Memorial Gardens in Tamworth. A memorial Mass was celebrated at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Chapel in Gunnedah on 13 February 2019.

Commodore David Patrick York AM, KCSG, RAN (Ret'd)

David York was born in Canberra on 2 September 1939, the eldest son of Albert and Stella York, both teachers. His initial schooling was at Ainslie Public School before joining the Royal Australian Naval College in January 1953 at the age of thirteen. This was the start of a 42-year career in the Royal Australian Navy, training as an officer in both Australia (at the Royal Australian Naval College at HMAS *Cerberus*) and England (at the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, and the Royal Naval Engineering College, Plymouth). He had multiple sea and shore postings, at sea in HMS *Vigilant* and HMA Ships *Melbourne*, *Sydney*, *Duchess*, *Parramatta* and *Vampire*.

He saw active service in HMAS *Duchess* during the Borneo Confrontation in the 1960s. He was promoted to Commodore in 1986 and his final appointment was Chief of Logistics, Naval Support Command, retiring in 1994. He returned briefly as a Reservist in 1998 and continued to serve the Navy as a civilian until finally retiring in 2015.

In Paris in 1962 on a blind date, David met and fell in love with Peta Audas, a teacher from South Africa and they both

became converts to the Catholic Faith and married in the Catholic Church of St Léon in Paris the next year. They raised their twelve children – six boys and six girls – while juggling sea postings, numerous removals, some interstate, and many newborns. He was much loved by his children and his 37 grandchildren. He was immensely proud of all of them, and a

number of them, inspired by his life of military service, followed him into the Navy, Army and Air Force. Throughout his service, he bore strong and open witness to his Catholic faith, so much so that he became regarded, incorrectly, as a representative of the Catholic Church in the Navy!

David died on Sunday 3 March 2019 and was farewelled with Requiem Mass at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney on Monday 11 March 2019. Celebrants were the Very Rev Richardson, Dean of St Mary's Cathedral, Mgr O'Keefe, Vicar General of the Catholic Military Ordinariate, and Mgr Raynor, Parish Priest of Gympie, and former Navy Chaplain and Principal Catholic Chaplain.

David was made a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 1994. That year he also received a Papal Knighthood in the Order of St Gregory the Great, the first to receive such a knighthood within the Military Ordinariate.



Commodore David York

We Will Remember Them

Whatever else we may pray for or about we have constantly prayed that those who have proceeded us into eternal life may enjoy the unhindered and boundless love promised by the Father. It is a homecoming from the pilgrimage of life that energises our hope.

Some years ago I noticed in a Jewish cemetery that most of the gravestones had little rocks placed on them and when I asked about that I was told of the Jewish tradition that anyone who visited the grave would offer a prayer and, as a sign of that visitation to others, would place a little rock on the grave. Often – particularly at the time of significant

anniversaries – we visit the graves of family or friends and sometimes 'tidy things up a bit' and perhaps leave some flowers. It is good for us to do that and it is good to revisit our memories of those who have gone before us. We do remember them.

The prayer 'Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace' is made each day by many as part of their daily routine. For those who adopt the Liturgy of the Hours (used to be called the Divine Office) as part of that routine, this petition is made five times each day. Each Mass also includes a remembrance of those who have died.

In our Catholic tradition, each month is devoted to a prayerful intention that is shared internationally, and November is the month of prayer 'for the Holy Souls'.

What I find extraordinary is that this tradition, custom and practice has been, from time to time, pushed aside and even ridiculed and condemned. It seems to me that often this has happened during times of significant change when we want to make 'all things new' often at the expense of

dismissing the past in the name of 'progress'. But our real progress should be directed by focussing on what our goal might be; and for us that is eternal happiness, which can only be found in the presence of our heavenly Father – anything less than that is only a 'way point'.

This pilgrimage is both a personal (individual) and a community one. Communities express this in different ways: we gather for particular observances (like our response to ghastly tragedies, whether natural or man-made); we erect memorials and set aside spaces; we unite in common activities; and we set aside special days of celebration. These are but some examples. Individuals reflect on memories, make private prayers, and keep objects of significance and photographs. These also are examples.

I recently came across an unassuming but very dignified and impressive Anzac memorial at a parish church in Canberra that draws these elements together quite effectively. This memorial (as pictured) is located at one of the churches in the Tuggeranong Parish located at Gowrie and dedicated to the Holy Family. The plaque indicates it was erected 20 years ago this year. It is well tended and cared for and its location ensures that it is a constant reminder. Its clear association with the church building draws together the association of memory and honour with our eternal life and purpose, and that inspires us.



The tradition continues and will continue as long as we remain focussed on moving towards the purpose for which we are made. This remains an important contribution to the spiritual health and development of those who have gone before us, ourselves, and those who will follow us in this pilgrimage towards the Father's House.

Bishop Max

Warm welcome to Fr Stephen Varney

Fr Stephen Varney of the Archdiocese of Wollongong is our newest Chaplain. Bishop Brian Mascord of Wollongong gave permission for Fr Stephen to undertake an initial six-year period of loan with the Military Diocese and we gratefully accepted him as a priest for the Royal Australian Navy.

Currently, Fr Stephen is successfully undertaking his Initial Officers Course (NEOC) at the Naval College HMAS Creswell, Jervis Bay. He is due to graduate in June this year.

Fr Stephen joins Fathers Paul Stuart RAN and Kevin Atherton RAN as a full-time RAN chaplains.

Fr Stephen Varney, on his ordination in May 2015, being greeted by Bishop Peter Ingram



*Photo: Daniel Hopper
Catholic Diocese of
Wollongong*

I think God might be asking me to become a Deacon

Service is at the very heart of the Gospel and so it follows that it is exemplified for Catholics within ADF service. This call to Christian service is substantially lived out for most in family life, but it is an essential element of military service. Those engaged in the military should consider themselves as 'custodians of peoples' security and freedom' for when they properly exercise this office they truly contribute to the maintenance of peace (Vat 11 'Gaudium Spes', no 79).

Invitation

As a Catholic, currently in Defence, have you ever considered giving something further to Christ and His Church by following an alternative path in Defence as a Permanent Deacon of the Church?

As a deacon, serving in a civilian Diocese, have you ever thought about expanding your diaconal ministry by joining the ADF, either full-time or part-time, as a Navy, Army or Air Force Chaplain?

You are encouraged to think about this invitation for the harvest is ripe in the ADF, but the labourers are few!

Diakonia

The vocation of a Permanent Deacon in the Church is primarily a ministry of service (diakonia). While the office of deacon has its origins in the early Church, it was the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council that reintroduced it, taking up the message of St Paul the Apostle to his Christian communities when he spoke of the vital service of the Diaconate. The deacon is described as the 'bishop's ear, mouth, heart and soul' (Didascalia Apostolorum II, 44).

The deacon is at the disposal of the Bishop in order that he may serve the whole people of God and take care of the sick and the poor. He rightly serves the orphaned, the widowed and the needy on behalf of the Bishop; he is fervent in spirit and love, mirroring the example of Jesus. The deacon administers Baptism, he is the custodian of and distributor of

the Holy Eucharist, he assists at and blesses marriage, he brings the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and dying, he has a liturgical function of service at the altar, he presides over worship and he officiates at funerals and burial services. Within the military context, as an ordained chaplain in this Diocese, he exercises these similar ministries as described above.

Rich history of the Diaconate within the Military Ordinariate

The Military Diocese has a very rich history of the Permanent Diaconate within the ADF.

Our first deacon, formerly **MAJ Graeme Ramsden**, was ordained in November 1992 after a long Service career including deployment to Vietnam. He served full-time as a Chaplain for a further 11 years, then transferred to the Army Reserve. He retired in September 2011 after 45 years of service.

In fact, the 1990s were golden years for the establishment of the Permanent Diaconate within the Military Diocese. In addition to Graeme, three men were ordained in this decade: **LTCOL Garry Stone** (1994), **FLTLT Jim Curtain** (1995) and **MAJ Mick Lappin** (1995). These deacons forwent their former military ranks and occupations to exercise very rich ministries over quite a few years as military Chaplains.

Unfortunately, Mick Lappin died in 2010. The other three have now retired from the ADF, but continue to provide diaconal ministry within the various dioceses where they now geographically live.

With the new century, another five serving ADF men have been ordained to the Diaconate: **Deacon Brenton Fry** (Army) in 2005, **Deacon Leo Orreal** (Army) in 2009, **Deacon Garth Mayger** (Army) and **Deacon Mick Flew** (Army) in 2012, and our most recent ordain **Deacon Kevin O'Sullivan** (RAAF) in 2017. All these men continue today in full-time service.



Deacon Brenton Fry (3rd from left back row) and wife Genyese (front left) at the 2018 Lourdes Military Pilgrimage with cadets and officers of the Australian Defence Force Academy

The Military Diocese has two Reserve Chaplains who are deacons, namely, **Chaplain Peter Devenish-Mearnes** (Army, Brisbane) and **Deacon Paul Russell** (Air Force, Perth) who combine various ministries, one of which is military.

The Diocese has several men preparing for ministry over the next few years through a military sponsored In-Service Training Scheme for ADF Chaplains. This is a five-year formation program whereby ADF members, considered suitable by their denominations, typically complete three years of theological formation followed by two years of pastoral formation normally in various parish-based ministries.

Our currently serving deacons are all married with families. Married life is their primary vocation and therefore the deacon's family comes first. Being ordained as a married man involves the free commitment of his spouse to his ordination. While this does not normally include her involvement in his day-to-day ministry, her commitment to his being ordained is crucial as a partner in his ministry.

What remains clear to our Military Diocese is that these men, who have served and are serving as deacons, have been a wonderful blessing and rich gift to us. Their contributions have been very significant and they have been, and are, tremendously appreciated.

A Challenge

What remains constant is that God's work in us is never complete while we are here on this planet! He continues to work in mysterious ways! As this pathway in the Church becomes more common and better known, the Military Diocese invites men to consider if God may be calling them to follow Him in this particular way. If you wish to enquire further about the role of the military deacon, you may wish to speak to your local Catholic ADF Chaplain in the first instance. Feel free to contact our Military Diocesan Vocation Director, Fr Damian Styles (damian.styles@defence.gov.au) or the Chancery Office of the Military Diocese in Canberra on (02) 6248 0511.



Deacon Kevin O'Sullivan and wife Denise



Deacon Mick Flew and wife Kerry. In between is son Aaron with wife Christine and their sons Ethan and Daniel, then son Kieran and on the right Stephen and wife Jess



Deacon Peter Devenish-Mearnes and wife Jo, Georgina (at rear), Emily (at front) and Charlotte

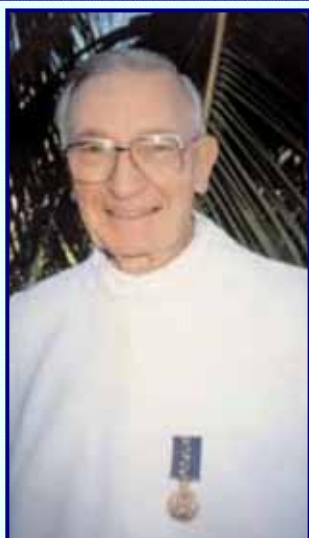


Deacon Paul Russell and wife Sue



Deacon Leo Orreal and wife Paula

Father Sanz MBE, OAM, OFM



Fr Father Seraphim Sanz de Galdeano

Father Seraphim Sanz de Galdeano was born in Villatuerta, Navarre (Spain) in October 1913 – the eighth of ten children. Two older sisters became nuns, one of whom nursed lepers in Venezuela. An older brother, Ramón, became a Benedictine monk in the monastery of El Pueyo in northern Spain. While visiting his brother, Seraphim became inspired to become a monk and in 1924 was admitted as an aspirant and commenced secondary studies.

Dom Anselm Catalan, who was Abbot of New Norcia monastery in Western Australia from 1916 to 1951, visited El Pueyo to see residents who were to join the New Norcia community. Seraphim was taken with the thought of being a missionary-monk. On finishing his time in El Pueyo, he went with three others to the monastery of Belloc in the south of France where he did his novitiate for New Norcia. He was received as a novice in October 1929, and was told by the Abbot of Belloc to keep his baptismal name of Seraphim.

In April 1931, Dom Seraphim arrived in Fremantle with Abbot Catalan and seven others, including two young Spanish women who were coming to join the Benedictine Sisters in New Norcia. They travelled to New Norcia the same day on the back of the truck. Seraphim soon settled into the routine of study, prayer and work of the student-monks, doing the standard three years of philosophy and four of theology, the last of these being spent at St Patrick's College, Manly, where several New Norcia monks had their first real and sustained exposure to Australian life and language away from the Spanish surrounds of New Norcia. He was ordained to the presbyterate by Archbishop Gilroy, Coadjutor Archbishop of Sydney, in November 1938.

In the following March Fr Seraphim commenced his missionary work at the Benedictine Mission at the Drysdale River Mission at Kalumburu, the northernmost settlement in Western Australia.

In the book *North of the 26th*, Fr Seraphim records his recollections on several WW2 events. When war broke out Fr Seraphim wrote to Abbot Catalan asking permission to enlist as an Army Chaplain. The response was unequivocal, 'Your duty to God and man is at the Mission'.



MV Koolama

The Western Australian Shipping Service ran the MV *Koolama* for passenger and freight service along the Western Australian coastline. The ship could carry about 200 passengers and 90 crew. It had a freezer that could be used for meat and

could also take 500 live cattle. Armaments were a 50mm gun on the rear poop deck for anti-submarine use and a Vickers 0.303 inch machine gun on each side of the bridge.

At 11.30am on 20 February 1942, one day after the first Japanese air raids on Darwin, Koolama was bombed while off the coast of Cape Londonderry, the northern tip of mainland Western Australia. The ship was undamaged and reported the attack to Darwin and continued towards that city. Then at 1.30pm the ship was attacked again and severely damaged, including a bomb penetrating the wooden deck to the engine room. The severe damage resulted in the water entering the stern and so the ship was beached and evacuees left by lifeboat to nearby mangroves at Rulhieres Bay (later known as Koolama Bay).

On 22 February Fr Thomas, the Superior at Kalumburu, received a telegram from Naval Office, Darwin: 'Ship beached approximately fifty miles E.N.E. of mission. Request you send party to contact survivors, report condition of ship.'

Fr Seraphim, who was at Pago, 16 miles from the Mission, walked to Kalumburu where he was ordered to do his best to help those in the 'Koolama' misfortune. Fr Seraphim recorded, 'I walked back to Pago, loaded a horse-cart with peanuts and flour, and, having no horses, five boys and myself pulled the cart over to the front shore, over half a mile distant ... we heaved anchor, and the breeze from the land took us by nightfall as far as Graham Moore Island, where we anchored. Early on the following morning, we crossed the dreaded Cape, and, twenty-four hours after leaving the mission, we found the 'Koolama' ... When I went aboard the 'Koolama', the Captain hailed me as an angel. The boat was a stinking, awful mess, resting on its bottom with the level of the water inside changing according to the tide.'

When Fr Seraphim went ashore he found 120 passengers with the crew and provisions. Although the group had tried to find a route out of the difficult country, they were unsuccessful. The rescue crew knew the country and guided the able-bodied men to the mission in Pago, a journey of 50 miles, which required crossing of the flooded Drysdale River with the use of ropes. Some of the crew used the mission lugger *Teresita Moa*, to take provisions, a wounded man, a woman and small boy and the ship stewardess to the mission cove. It then returned to collect remaining men. Fr Seraphim said, 'I remained on the beach for twelve days and lost 12 lb in weight.' He then left in a lifeboat with nine officers, who had to row most of the way because of a head wind.



Lugger Teresita Moa

As a result of repairs to the ship, it was refloated and on 1 March sailed to Wyndham. By the evening of the following day the ship's cargo, including army vehicles, was unloaded. At the end of the next day, 3 March, Koolama, down on its stern and listing to starboard, rolled onto its side and became a wreck.

The survivors stayed at the mission until an evacuation was organised a month later when they were sent to Adelaide via Alice Springs. One man hurt during the bombing was treated at Kalumburu and flown to hospital in Wyndham. The only death that occurred was Radio Officer F C Stansfield who died on 13 March from a haemorrhage of the brain while walking with Fr Seraphim between Kalumburu and Pago missions. Burial took place at Kalumburu cemetery.

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On 27 September 1943 the Kalumburu Mission and nearby RAAF airfield were attacked by 25 Japanese bombers. The Superior, Fr Thomas Gil, four Aboriginal children and the mother of one of these died as a result of a direct hit on a slit trench. Fr Seraphim was also involved in the rescue of aircrew. While unloading fuel drums at Mission Cove, a Kittyhawk circled over and crash landed several miles away. With a mission Brother he walked to where the plane was thought to be located. They came across the US Army Air Force (USAAF) pilot who had lost his bearings during a dog fight over Darwin. The following day, Fr Seraphim and others dug the plane out of the salt pan and with planks and ropes manoeuvred it hundreds of yards onto higher ground. It was subsequently fitted with a new nose and flown to Kalumburu airfield.

On 1 May 1943 three Wirraways, carrying 250-pound bombs from Darwin to Kalumburu, were stranded in bushland after overshooting the airfield. Fr Seraphim took a group of officers by boat to the planes. They then walked through hundreds of yards of mud to transfer the bombs to the boat for transfer to Pago. Fr Seraphim reported, 'The three stranded planes, with lots of skill and nerve on the part of the pilots, took off from the improvised short strip and landed in Kalumburu.'

On Friday 13 August 1943, eleven B-24 Liberators from the USAAF flew from Darwin to Borneo to bomb the Japanese-occupied oil port at Balikpapan. At that time it was the longest bombing raid undertaken. Following the bombing, one of the aircraft, *Shady Lane*, was pushed off course because of weather and ended up over the Japanese air base in Koepang in Dutch Timor. The bomber, although low on fuel, successfully defended against attacks from two Zero fighters as it went to the WA coast. The B-24 then force-landed on a saltpan on the

Anjo Peninsula, about 40 km NW of the Drysdale Mission. During the landing the nose wheel broke off and the nose of the aircraft was damaged. The aircraft was discovered by a RAAF bomber later in the day. Fr Seraphim records, 'I took aboard the mission lugger, some American officers, and at least one Australian sergeant, Mr McCloud of WA. We took all valuable equipment and heavy gear from the Liberator, which then flew away and landed in Kalumburu.'

Throughout the time that RAAF and USAAF units were in Pago, Kalumburu, Truscott and Graham Moore Island, Fr Seraphim and a fellow priest provided valuable chaplaincy support to the deployed forces.

Fr Seraphim served at the Kalumburu Mission until 1949 and returned as Superior in May 1955. He retired to New Norcia in 1981, yet in 2004 he returned to Kalumburu with the intention to publish his work on the Pela language. Ill health led to his return in New Norcia in 2007 and he died in June 2008. He was awarded the MBE in 1970 and the OAM in 1995 for his outstanding services to the Aborigines of Kalumburu. With this article we remember also that, despite being prevented from enlisting as a chaplain, Fr Seraphim showed compassion and physical determination in valuably assisting the war effort in northern Australia.

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Eileen O'Connor—Servant of God



Eileen O'Connor

A year ago Archbishop Anthony Fisher of Sydney announced the beginning of the formal process for the canonisation of the founder of the Brown Nurses, Eileen O'Connor. She has been proclaimed as a Servant of God, which is the first of the four steps towards sainthood. Eileen, who was born in 1892, was badly injured at age three when she fell from her pram and suffered a debilitating spinal fracture. Despite a number of operations, the curvature of her spine was unable to be corrected. Although only living until age 28 and in constant pain, she found a religious order in Sydney with the help of Fr Edward (Ted) McGrath, who was a priest at

the Church of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart at Randwick in Sydney's eastern suburbs.

These two people shared a deep devotion to the Virgin Mary and, in her honour, decided to establish a compassionate ministry for the care of sick-poor people in their own homes. And so was formed the Society of Our Lady's Nurses of the Poor, commonly known as The Brown Nurses.

As the first superior of the order, and although limited in her physical abilities, Eileen supervised the congregation and provided guidance to the sisters as they visited the sick in their homes and provided nursing care for the aged and frail.

Eileen and Fr Ted faced many difficulties:

Eileen, the nurses and their benefactors were criticised by church authorities; and Fr Ted was instructed by his order, Missionaries of the Sacred Heart (MSC), to cease any involvement with the society. He went to Rome and met up with Eileen and they were successful in

challenging his expulsion from the Order. He was reinstated in 1915, but was not welcomed back to Australia. He subsequently enlisted as a chaplain in the British Army later in WW1 and served with the 1st Cheshire Regiment.

During the counter-offensive to the German massive 'spring push' of 1918, the Cheshire's were deployed to capture part of the Paris to Amiens railway. They came under withering machine gun fire and lacked artillery support. Fr Ted repeatedly went onto the battlefield to carry or drag casualties to a dressing station. For his heroic actions he was awarded the Military Cross. Five weeks later he rescued a seriously-wounded officer, carrying him 300 yards back to the trenches. As a result of his outstanding bravery, he was recommended for the Victoria Cross by three officers. With the end of the war coming weeks afterwards, it appears that the paperwork was not processed and no action was taken on the recommendation.

Fr Ted returned to Australia in 1941 and was based at the MSCs in East Melbourne until he returned in 1969 to the MSC Headquarters in Coogee. He died in May 1977, aged 96 years. He has been quoted of saying about Eileen, "I was face to face with an exceptionally saintly soul, encased within a pure and precious body wracked with pain. From that moment, I realised better that there were big things to be done for God and souls and that I had found my helper."

The Brown Nurses newsletter of June 2018 recalls Eileen's practical approach to providing care: *Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what food is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action is dead.* James 2:15-17

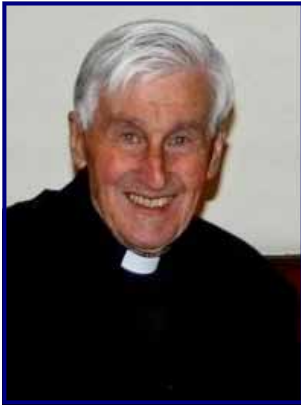


Fr Ted McGrath MC msc



Fr Ted McGrath and Coogee Sisters - at the Order's diamond jubilee 1973

War Memoirs of an Amateur – Father H S Thwaites SJ



Fr Hugh Thwaites SJ

War *Memoirs of an amateur* is a small 75-page book that would fit in the palm of your hand. It is a personal account written in 1997 by Hugh Thwaites of his experiences in WW2, especially as a prisoner-of-war in Changi and Thailand for three and a half years. In it he recounts the story of the Changi Chapel, which is now at the Royal Military College (RMC), Duntroon, where it was dedicated by Sir Edward Dunlop as a national memorial to all Australian Prisoners of War.

Serving Faithfully has had previous articles about the chapel and its origins. This article draws on the recollections of Fr Hugh Thwaites.

In the first week after the UK declared that it was at war with Germany, Hugh joined up at Victoria Station in London. He wanted to be in the Navy, but heard that there was a six-month wait. Then the man in the queue in front of him said he wanted to join the Royal Army Service Corps. Hugh had no idea what this meant, but he decided to ask for the same enlistment. This was successful and he was given two shillings and told to report back at 8pm. Within a fortnight he was sent to France with a rifle that he had not been taught how to use. However, as he could speak French he was posted to a new section arranging the purchase of French goods for the British Expeditionary Force.

His unit moved to Paris and he enjoyed the opera and concerts.

After going to a Sunday chapel service he felt very dissatisfied and had a period of spiritual disquiet. As the Germans advanced on Paris he was evacuated to England where he applied for a commission in the Royal Artillery. At the Officer Cadet Training Unit he entered a Catholic Church for the first time. Hugh was commissioned as Second Lieutenant and joined the Bedfordshire Yeomanry in East Anglia. While

there he spoke about religion to the Catholic chaplain and he became convinced that the Catholic Church was the true Church. His thoughts at that time were: 'It seemed obvious to me that if God had wanted me to be a Catholic, I'd have been born a Catholic. And anyway, if I became a Catholic, who would look after all the Anglicans?' Hugh subsequently went into a Catholic church where he knelt down and was overcome with a fit of weeping. He saw this '... as a sort of green light from God, a "come on" signal.'

Shortly before deployment to Singapore with General Percival's 18th Division, Hugh decided to become a Catholic. He recalled that he went to the local parish priest, who he described as an old man with snuff stains all down the front of his cassock. The instruction given by the priest was on the shortcomings of the 16th century Queen Elizabeth! While embarked he received more appropriate instruction from the ship's Catholic chaplain and was received into the Church just before Christmas in 1941, a month before arriving in Singapore. The day after the surrender of the forces in Singapore by General Percival on 14 February, Hugh's unit was marched to Changi on the north-east corner of Singapore Island.

Catholic chaplains offered daily Mass, which Hugh attended. Altar wine was made by soaking raisins in water and fermenting them after they were crushed and swollen. Towards the end of captivity black market flour was unobtainable. Holy Communion was given in tiny fragments until it ran out.

Hugh never hated the Japanese but did not fraternize with them. He admits, however, that prisoners took much pleasure in stealing from the captors and he recognised the Australians particularly in this regard.

In early 1943 he was to join a party of 300 sent to Thailand to assist with railway construction requiring 20 cuttings to be excavated. Travel was by train followed by a long jungle march, mostly done at night because of the heat of the day. He commented, '...the Aussies really showed what they could do ... I think they had their tents up and their dinner cooking while we were still debating where to pitch our tents.' In commenting on the book *Bridge over the River Kwai*, he said, 'It seemed to make the Japanese out to be stupid. Well one thing they're not, they're not stupid. I used to compare them in my mind to the ancient Romans. The same discipline, the same engineering ability, the same courage and resourcefulness.'

Hugh suffered all the deprivations, that are well known, of those who worked on the railway. He also was operated on for a large jungle sore on his leg. His faith was a strong source of comfort during this time. He recalled that Australian chaplain Fr Lionel Marsden arrived at his camp to say Mass. He described him as '... always cheerful, never complaining, always ready to help anyone, always a priest. He was indeed as



The POW Chapel of Our Lady Help of Christians, Changi, Singapore.
Original by Lieutenant Cameron-Smith.

fine a priest as ever you could hope to meet.' As darkness fell and the altar was lit by two thin candles, Hugh thought, 'St Peter's in Rome must be very fine, but surely this is what keeps the Church going.' In reflecting further on the chaplain, he said, 'Fr Marsden was really like a living miracle. No one knew where he slept. No one knew, at a time when almost every spoonful was counted, how he ate. We heard that he received many bashings from the Japanese. I cannot look back on his memory

without emotion, as I recall his smiling heroism and utter forgetfulness of self ... If one of our men was dying and been away from religion for half a lifetime Fr Marsden, in two minutes, would have got him safely into the arms of God and ready to meet him.'

Back in Changi after the ordeal in Thailand, activity commenced to ensure that there were chapels in the various POW camps. Hugh assisted Hamish Cameron-Smith, an architecture student from Glasgow, the designer, works manager and builder, of what is now known as the Changi Chapel. Ingenuity was used to obtain the materials, for instance: timber from temporary stretchers, tiles carried back under shirts from working parties in Singapore and white timber sheets from ceilings in barracks. Hugh's job was to straighten nails (which were all used by Hamish), saw along pencil lines and do odd jobs.

Hugh told Fr Marsden that there was a need for drains and that he intended to take them from the guardhouse while the Japanese were having dinner. He was given a scornful look from Fr Marsden who said, 'You ought to be a Jesuit.'

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In the camp Hugh obtained a book that gave the story of St Ignatius and he decided that he wanted to be a Jesuit as he felt that St Ignatius was a leader he could follow – a man who had an enthusiastic military life and a similar approach to following Christ after recovering from battle wounds.

Development of a garden each side of the chapel was taken on by Hugh. He grew red and white canna lilies. To enable them to survive in the leached sand he placed a four-gallon petrol tin outside his sleeping hut and first thing in the morning collected the can and urine from fellow prisoners, which he diluted and then watered the flowers. Working parties were asked to collect hard red and black berries found on bushes. Hugh stripped down electrical wire and threaded it through the berries. A carpenter made wooden crosses and, using a plaster mould with plaster of paris provided by the camp dentist, the figure of Christ was made from metal. Hamish contracted TB while in captivity. After the war he went to Zambia where he practiced as an architect.

Post-war Max Lee of the Australian War Graves Unit was in charge of burning the prison camp. He was, however, inspired by one of the four Christian chapels with its simple sturdy structure, its well-tended garden and dedication to: 'Our Lady Help of Christians and in memory of deceased comrades who died in Malaya, the Netherland East Indies, Thailand and Burma, over whose remains there was no Christian symbol.' He obtained permission to dismantle the chapel and send it to the Australian War Memorial where it was placed in a storehouse in the grounds of RMC. The chapel was re-erected and rededicated at 2.30pm on 15 August 1988.

This was the same time and date that news reached Changi that the war was over. Hugh recounts, 'Hamish and I could not be there, but the following year we flew out and I offered Mass in the chapel – the first Mass that had been offered in it since the days of our captivity.'

Following repatriation to England, Hugh wasted no time in seeing the Jesuit Provincial in the Jesuit Centre in the heart of London. In January 1946, he entered the novitiate, which he describes as, '... worse than the Japanese POW camps. Thanks to God that I survived both and drew great profit from both.'

Fr Thwaites died in August 2012 at the age of 95. Fr Tim Finigan, parish priest of Our Lady of the Rosary, Blackfen, in the Archdiocese of Southwark, wrote in a blog post: 'I had the privilege of meeting Fr Thwaites when I was a young student and from time to time since then. He converted to the Catholic faith as a result of his experience as a prisoner of the Japanese during the Second World War. He never bore resentment for his treatment, reasoning that the Japanese guards did not have the benefit of the Christian faith. His approach to evangelisation was direct and simple because he understood the truth and beauty of the Christian faith and wished others to benefit from it.'

'Fr Thwaites always spoke in a kindly and gentle manner while firing off spiritual advice that could blow you off your feet; he was a priest who made many converts almost instantly by his sincerity and holiness, and converted countless lukewarm Catholics to a deeper following of Christ. He was passionately devoted to the rosary, loved the older form of the Mass and remained faithful to the traditional Jesuit daily spiritual exercises.'

Gratitude to Fr Patrick Woods



A number of Air Force Chaplains gathered at RAAF Base Edinburgh on Wednesday 3 April to farewell a number of local reserve chaplains who were retiring from service. One of these was Fr Pat Woods (pictured).

Fr Pat is part of the furniture at RAAF Edinburgh, having spent the majority of his 34 years of service there. Ordained priest for the Archdiocese of Adelaide in March 1976, his connection with Air Force commenced in May 1983 when he was asked to attend the RAAF Base as a Civilian Clergy Person caring for the pastoral needs of Catholic members.

In late 1984, he was appointed a RAAF Specialist Reserve (RAAFSR) Chaplain at the Air Base.

In 1999 he put up his hand to become full-time as a Permanent Air Force Chaplain (PAF) and continued in this capacity until 2012. On completion of his full-time service, he was a Division Three Wing Commander Chaplain. During this period, he served twice at RAAF Base Amberley and twice as chaplain at RAAF Base Edinburgh.

As a PAF Chaplain, he was deployed to the Middle East Area of Operations on two occasions and also served as a chaplain with the humanitarian support of Operation Bali Assist. In 2012, he concluded his full-time service and returned to the RAAFSR at Edinburgh when he was appointed Parish Priest of Edinburgh. He will continue to support our Catholic members at Edinburgh as an Authorised Civilian Clergy Person into the future. The wheel has turned full circle for Fr Pat in regards to his military service.

Fr Pat is a member of the Military Ordinariate's Council of Priests. For us, his service is on-going and greatly appreciated.

Well done Pat, warm congratulations. *Ad multos annos.*

The Prayer of St Francis de Sales

Be at Peace

Do not look forward in fear to the changes of life;
rather look to them with full hope as they arise.

God, whose very own you are,
will deliver you from out of them.
He has kept you hitherto,
and He will lead you safely through all things;
and when you cannot stand it,
God will bury you in his arms.



Do not fear what may happen tomorrow;
the same everlasting Father who cares for you today
will take care of you then and everyday.
He will either shield you from suffering,
or will give you unfailing strength to bear it.
Be at peace, then,
and put aside all anxious thoughts and imagination. Amen.

On the Camino

In issue #19 (Nov 14) of *Serving Faithfully* an article was published of a conversation between former chaplain Fr Richard Thompson CSM, RAN (Ret'd) and the editor. Among Fr Richard's postings, he served at HMAS *Nirimba*, the former apprentice school in Sydney, HMAS *Darwin* during the first Gulf War, the Fleet Air Arm at HMAS *Albatross* and the Australian Defence Force Academy, as well as postings in UK and USA. He was awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal for support of relief efforts in Bali following the 2002 bombing in which 88 Australians died.

After 17 years as a navy chaplain, Fr Richard returned to his Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn in 2005, where he was appointed administrator and subsequently parish priest at Young. He is currently parish priest of Mary Help of Christians Parish in South Woden, Canberra and Dean of the Archdiocese's Central Deanery.

To mark his 33 years of priesthood, Fr Richard undertook last August a pilgrimage to the remains of Christ's Apostle St James (Spain's patron saint) at the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in northern Spain. He commenced his journey at St Jean Pied de Port on the French border and crossed the Pyrenees to Spain, walking almost 1,000 km in 33 days. His pilgrimage commenced with difficulty as the airline lost his luggage and the next he saw it was when he returned to his parish. Fortunately, he was wearing his broken-in walking boots and had an emergency kit from the airline with some essentials such as toothpaste and toothbrush.

You can listen to a podcast of an engaging interview of Fr Richard by Dan Mullins, who broadcasts weekly conversations with Camino pilgrims: tinyurl.com/CAMINO-FR-RICHARD

If any reader has walked all or part of the Camino, we would welcome your story.



Fr Richard Thompson on the Camino de Santiago

Financial Support to the Catholic Military Diocese

Income to enable the Diocese to operate comes from a number of sources. By far the largest area is from donations from chaplains: priests donate 10 percent of their pay, while married deacons and pastoral associates provide lower amounts because of their family-support responsibilities. The annual *Chaplain Cathedralicum* provides two-thirds of the annual income for the diocese.

Other sources of income are from interest, share dividends (resulting from a bequest from Fr Peter Quilty), chapel collections and donations from other dioceses and the general public.

You can now easily make an online tax-deductable donation by contacting the Chancery or by clicking the **Donate Online** button on the Donations tab at military.catholic.org.au

A Gift in Your Will

Making a gift to the Catholic Military Ordinariate is a meaningful way to fund the education of future priests and deacons and to support our clergy in providing spiritual guidance to our service men and women and their families.

To make a bequest, you should consult your solicitor or trustee company. It may be sufficient to make an addition or amendment to an existing will by adding a codicil.

A useful website for more information is: includeacharity.com.au

Serving Faithfully

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It is published quarterly by the Catholic Military Ordinariate of Australia.

The Diocese comprises members of the Australian Defence Force and their families, wherever they may be serving.

Its people are scattered widely across Australia and overseas.

Serving Faithfully aims to be a means of sharing events and experiences from across the whole Diocese.

Articles are welcome to be submitted for publication to

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