

# Serving Faithfully

Newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services  
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## Advent - a time for reflecting



The past year has presented many difficulties with events in Ukraine having a world-wide effect and causing untold misery to people surviving without electricity and water supplies and constantly under threat of missiles.

We have become much more complacent about COVID, notwithstanding increased infection rates, and more than 50 percent of the population are still to receive a fourth vaccination dose. Since January 2020 there have been 16,000 deaths either due to COVID or related to a COVID infection.

The third straight year of *La Nina* weather has caused major flooding (and repeated events for some communities) in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

As we prepare for the Christmas celebration of the birth of Christ, it is a time for reflecting and reviewing these world, national and personal events. We pray for those suffering and grieving. At the same time it is also a period for revitalising ourselves.

*It is a time to bring God into our lives.*

**Joy-filled Giver of Life,  
let the anticipation of your birth  
fill us with overflowing joy.  
May our excitement and  
anticipation  
be a sign to the world  
that you are always near.**

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Apostolic Administrator, his delegates Mgr Peter O'Keefe and Fr Richard Thompson, all the chaplains and chancery staff thank you for the continuing support of the Military Ordinariate and wish you all the blessings of this holy season

Please remember our chaplains in your prayers.

Father,  
as each year comes round anew,  
we look forward  
to the coming of your Son  
and recall his first coming  
in the stable at Bethlehem.  
Bless each of us and make us  
more Christ-like.  
Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



*Church of St Mary,  
Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk.  
An archangel in a suit of  
feathers carrying a wand  
and a scroll*

Federico Barrocci, *The Nativity*, 1597, Prado Museum, Madrid, Spain.

## Chaplains' Retreat



*Father Richard Thompson, Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Mother Hilda Scott, Mgr Peter O'Keefe (holding his Papal Blessing for his 50 years of ministry) with assembled chaplains*

The Annual Catholic Chaplains' Retreat held at the Marist Hermitage, Mittagong 30 October – 4 November this year was of special significance. It was the first physical gathering of our full-time Chaplains in three years due to COVID disruptions in recent times.

Some 22 Chaplains gathered representing Catholic Chaplaincy across the three services. Archbishop Prowse, the Apostolic Administrator of the Military Diocese at present, appointed since the retirement of Bishop Max Davis in May 2021, was present at the retreat for the week.

Having Archbishop Christopher and his delegates Mons Peter O'Keefe and Fr Richard Thompson present was beneficial to all. It was a real, not symbolic, gathering of fraternity, collegiality and the Ordinariate presbyterate. It was, as Pope Francis says: 'Synodality in action – walking together'.

The retreat week enabled newly-recruited Chaplains to meet longer-term Chaplains for the first time in many instances. The physical gathering in itself was a significant boost to renewed fraternity and the building of unity and identity as Military Chaplains.

The spirit of fraternity was warmly evidenced and celebrated on the last day with the special blessing of Deacon-elect Clinton McGoldrick (ordained in Brisbane 26 November).

When Mons Peter was presented with a Papal Blessing for his 50 years of priesthood he said, 'Thank God for my life, God's love in my life, my health and

particularly for our chaplains who keep me young at heart. Truly, the Ordinariate does bring out from the storeroom new things and old.'

The retreat director was the well-known and much respected Mother Hilda Scott, Abbess of the Benedictine Community at Jamberoo NSW. Her down-to-earth, humorous and shared human experiences of God's presence in daily life, whether good or bad, resonated with many.

A deeply appreciated theme was the time given over to reconciliation and healing of past hurts, symbolically celebrated throughout the retreat. Mother Hilda's contribution to the retreat week was highly significant, both spiritually and humanly, in creating friendships, renewing relationships, building identity as a Military Diocese and in the renewal of personal confidence and hope.

Before the chaplains departed Mittagong, Archbishop Christopher remarked, 'The Catholic Church in Australia is well served by priests and deacons, and lay chaplains who do a marvellous job so I thank them particularly and their families who support them so well.'

From feedback, all were departing significantly enriched by the week together.



*Deacon elect Clinton McGoldrick and Archbishop Christopher with some of our deacons*



*Mother Hilda Scott, Abbess of the Benedictine Community at Jamberoo NSW*



# Chaplains' Retreat



Left: Archbishop Prowse and Deacon Mick Flew



Right: Gathering of chaplains



Left: Chaplain Owen Geddes, Mgr Peter O'Keefe



Right: Liturgy of Reconciliation



Deacon Brenton Fry, Fr Thomas Zaranski, Fr Brendan Quirk



Fr Damian Styles, Fr Giles Atherton, Pastoral Associate Joseph Moloney



Chaplain Stephen Varney and Fr Brendan Quirk



Deacon Kevin O'Sullivan (L) and (R) with Fr Thomas Zaranski



# Catholic Military Ordinariate Finance Council

Canon Law 492 states that in every diocese a Finance council is to be established, over which the diocesan bishop, himself or his delegate, presides and which consists of at least three members of the Christian faithful truly expert in financial affairs and civil law, outstanding in integrity, and appointed by the bishop.

While the Military Ordinariate has a Finance Council, the term used in the Latin text is literally translated as 'council for economic matters'. This is much broader than the establishment of a budget and the receiving of reports. Its role is to assist the bishop with a goal of keeping with the spirit of the gospel, the teaching of the church and the provision of canon law.



**Chair: BRIG Alan Hodges AM KCSG (Ret'd)** graduated from the Royal Military College into the Royal Australian Engineers. During a lengthy military career he had a variety of regimental, staff, command and training appointments in a number of Australian states, in South East Asia, in Papua New Guinea and in Pakistan.

Following his retirement from the Army, Alan was Director General Emergency Management Australia for six years.

Subsequently, he undertook consultancy tasks and board memberships with a focus on the community sector.

He was appointed as a member of the Finance Council in 2009 and in 2016 assumed the position of the Council Chair.



**Financial Administrator: John Andrew KCSS** attended CBC East St Kilda and graduated with a Bachelor of Science from Melbourne University as well as a formal accounting qualification. For 10 years he worked for BHP and a number of its subsidiaries in Port Kembla, Newcastle and Melbourne. On moving to Canberra in 1972 he was involved

with Government policy connected with industry development. Subsequently, he implemented much-needed changes to accounting, payroll and reporting systems.

In 1994 John commenced work with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference as Business Manager and became involved with the Military Ordinariate. Since 1972, he has been an active member of local Parish Church finance and building committees and has provided assistance to the Archdiocesan Clergy Retirement Foundation and the Mercy and Carmelite Sisters. He received the Ministry of Acolyte in 1976.

In 2018, John was appointed a Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Sylvester by Pope Francis.



**LTCOL Steve Blair** joined the Finance Council in 2012. He took leave of absence from 2014 to 2016 when he was the Assistant Defence Advisor to PNG.

LTCOL Blair joined the Army in 1989 and has served in a wide variety of positions across Australia and overseas. Along with his extensive military career, Steve is also a member of his local RFS Brigade, recently fighting the fires in the Braidwood – Nerriga areas during the 2019-20 bushfire season, earning a NSW Premier's

Citation along with the National Emergency Medal with clasp 'BUSHFIRES 19-20'.

A graduate of the University of New England, the University of NSW and the Australian Command and Staff College, Steve holds qualifications in Political Science, Strategic Planning and Management, and Master's degrees in Islamic Studies and Strategy and Policy.

Along with being a member of the Diocesan Finance Council, Steve assists Monsignor Peter with the overseeing of the Chancery and residence maintenance.



**Maria Hicks** was a Defence Force wife of 32 years. Her husband, Scott, retired on returning from a 15 month deployment to Afghanistan. Having raised three children in three states and the ACT and USA and having volunteered as the NSW state delegate for Defence Families Australia, Maria understands the anxiety, sadness, joys and pride in living a defence force life.

Maria commenced working with the Catholic Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn in 2014 and is currently Manager of the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding.

Previously, Maria worked in the Australian Public Service and became Director of Community Programs in the Department of Social Services.



**GPCAPT John Pratt KCHS (Ret'd)** was educated by Dominican nuns and Marist brothers in Adelaide. Following secondary schooling he joined the RAAF in 1950 on the 5th (post WW II) Aircrew Training Course. He underwent navigator training, graduating as Sergeant in 1951 and was posted to No 82 Wing, Amberley, QLD.

Service included training exercises at Manus Island PNG, an operational tour on Lincoln bomber aircraft with No 1 Squadron at Tengah, Singapore

in 1952, thus qualifying for the General Service Medal of King George VI. He was appointed to a commission mid-tour.

At No 82 Wing, he flew on Operation Totem with British Atomic Tests at Emu Field, SA in 1954 and in 1987 he was posted to the Air Trials Unit Woomera, SA.

John completed the RAAF Staff Course in 1967 at RAAF Base Fairbairn. Subsequently, he was with USAF at Tan Son Nhut, South Vietnam. This was followed by service as Staff Officer to two successive RAAF Chiefs. A posting followed to ANZUK HQ in Singapore where he was promoted to Group Captain. Retirement followed an appointment to Defence HQ in Canberra.

*Continued p5*

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**CAPT Gerard Savvakis RAN** joined the RAN in June 1981 and has served at sea in a variety of fleet units including HMA Ships *Tobruk*, *Stalwart*, *Jervis Bay*, *Darwin*, *Parramatta*, *Gladstone*, *Sydney*, *Newcastle*, *Sirius* and *Success*.

He is a Principal Warfare Officer and Navigation specialist. CAPT Savvakis was instrumental in the introduction of Digital Charts into the RAN and has held sea command as the Commanding Officer of *HMAS Maryborough*.

Gerry has performed duties as the Port Services Manager and Naval Pilot Fleet Base East and OIC of the RAN's Bridge Simulator. He was also Executive Officer *HMAS Success* and commander of *HMAS Moreton*.

He is a graduate of the Australian Command and Staff Course and holds a Masters of Military and Defence Studies through the ANU,

He is currently the Chief of Staff Afghanistan Inquiry Response Task Force.

CAPT Savvakis recently joined the Finance Council. We look forward to your contribution Gerry.



**WGCNDR (Dr) Mary Anne Whiting** joined the WRAAF in 1970, and rose to Sergeant before being commissioned. Career highlights include being appointed ADC to Air Commander Australia, Staff Officer ADFA and Deputy Director Community Engagement History and Branch.

She graduated from the Australian Command and Staff Course in 2001 with a Masters Degree in Management (Defence Studies) and in 2014 from UNSW (ADFA) with a PhD (The Contribution of Australian Squadron in Bomber Command during the strategic bombing campaign 1942-45). After 39 years' service she transferred to the Reserves.

During the RAAF Centenary Year in 2021, Mary Anne was selected as one of 100 people in Our Air Force, Our People Series, which highlighted the contribution of Air Force personnel to the ADF.

She is currently enrolled at University of Canberra in a Bachelor of Law degree with the aim of becoming a veteran's

advocate. In 2021 she accepted a Continuous Full Time contract as Deputy Chief of Staff Afghanistan Inquiry Response Task Force.



**WGCNDR Peter Wythes** joined the Finance Council in 2012. He commenced his current service with the RAAF Active Reserve in 2011 upon retiring from a second career with the Australian Government where he had worked in two central policy agencies, and a Commonwealth law enforcement agency.

WGCNDR Wythes' first career with the RAAF started as an Administrative Officer in 1975. Over the following 26 years he enjoyed a variety of administrative and instructional positions at flying

and ground units in Australia, as well as a number of staff appointments in Canberra.

In 2018 Peter was appointed as the Ordinate's Director of Safeguarding to assist the Ordinate meet its obligations under the National Safeguarding Standards.

#### WORLD YOUTH DAY 2023

Archbishop Christopher Prowse, Archbishop of Canberra-Goulburn and Apostolic Administrator of the Military Ordinariate, will be leading a pilgrimage to the 16th International World Youth Day, which is to be hosted by Pope Francis in Lisbon, Portugal next August.

The group will visit cities to connect with the lives of Saints, including Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. It will then go to Fatima. After a WYD Week of celebration in Lisbon the group has a post-WYD Retreat in Dubai.

This pilgrimage is aimed at post-school young adults between the ages of 18-35 at time of travel.

**Military pilgrims are especially welcome to join the Canberra-Goulburn Archdiocesan group.**  
**Our readers are invited to mention this opportunity to younger relatives and friends.**

For further information and to be updated about the latest information about the pilgrimage this QR code can be used for submitting an expression of interest:



#### 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](http://includeacharity.com.au)

#### Donations

The sources of income for the Military Diocese are very limited, and have reduced significantly during the past year:

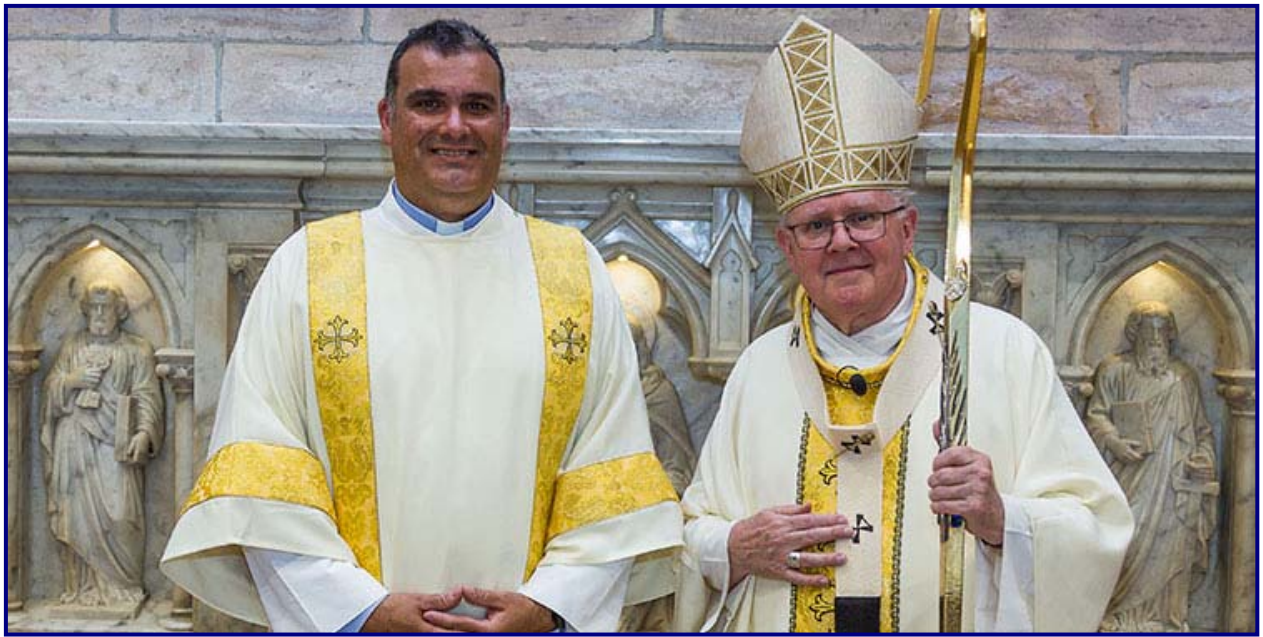
- ♦ All dioceses and parishes have been affected by the closure of churches as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, some generous donations previously received from other dioceses have not been possible.
- ♦ The Knights of the Southern Cross undertake annual fundraising to support the education and continuing development of Chaplains and Deacons at their annual conference, but that was cancelled last year.
- ♦ Our chaplains continue to donate selflessly a proportion of their salary.
- ♦ We have received continuing donations from supporters, but these are about half of normal expectations.

If you would like to support the Military Diocese with tax-deductable donations you can make a direct bank transfer to the Armed Services Catholic Diocese BSB: 062 786 ACCOUNT No: 18662.

Would you please contact the Chancery on 02 6248 0511 or email [sec@cmoa.org.au](mailto:sec@cmoa.org.au) so that a receipt can be provided.



## Ordination: Deacon Clinton McGoldrick



*Deacon Clinton McGoldrick with Archbishop Coleridge at the ordination*

On Saturday 26 November 2022, Clinton McGoldrick was ordained to the Diaconate by Archbishop Coleridge at St Stephen's Cathedral, Brisbane. In the congregation were Clinton's wife Karley and children and friends with support of priests and fellow deacons.

Clinton, who previously served with the Royal Australian Engineers and then taught at St Patrick's College, Shorncliffe, Brisbane will now fill a new role in full-time Chaplaincy in the Australian Army. From January he will be based at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera. He is the Military Ordinariate's first Indigenous Chaplain.

The *Catholic Leader* reported that Clinton found his ordination to be an amazing day. In his homily, Archbishop Coleridge said, 'We are a church in search of a new engagement with our First Nations people.' He also said, 'It might just be that through Deacon Clint, Aboriginal man that he is, God might teach the rest of us, the Church and others, what it means to befriend and love the Indigenous peoples, the First Nations of this land.'

The Archbishop acknowledged that the Church is searching for new engagement with First Nations people.

Clinton found the words of Archbishop Coleridge very moving, both personally and for the many Indigenous supporters at the ordination.

He acknowledged that the journey to becoming a deacon was a 'very rigorous and lengthy process'. He felt that the commitment could not be met by many. However, he hopes that his ordination will provide an example that others can follow and say, 'I can do that as well.'

In talking about the Indigenous community he said that there is much need for providing sacraments, not only for celebrations of marriage and baptism, but also because there are

many deaths among the Indigenous community.

Clinton recognises that the army has a real need for chaplains. He knows that soldiers can be 'poor in spirit'. There are particular challenges of having extended periods of being away from family. He said, 'All soldiers sacrifice their normal life. It's one of service, but it's one of sacrifice' and it can lead to, 'soldiers being broken in service of their country.'

In talking of his call and mission, he said,

**'it would be to use my voice on behalf of the voiceless'**

We offer our warm congratulations to newly-ordained Deacon, Clinton McGoldrick.



*L to R: Karley, Nate (12), Deacon Clinton McGoldrick, Levy (10) and Brisbane Archbishop Mark Coleridge*

*The Catholic Leader, Alan Edgecomb*

*Article drawn from online The Catholic Leader of 28 Nov 22 and Aleteia of 1 Dec 22*

## Bali Bombing 20th Anniversary

Canberra priest Fr Richard Thompson remembers firsthand the horror of the Bali bombings on the 20th anniversary of the bombing of the Sari Club and Paddy's Irish Bar in Kuta that claimed the lives of 202 people, including 88 Australians and 39 Indonesians. A further 209 people were injured.

Fr Thompson was 45 and had just been posted as a senior navy chaplain to *HMAS Albatross*, when Islamic fundamentalists linked to Al-Qaeda detonated three bombs in the Indonesian holiday province: one carried in a rucksack by a suicide bomber and a car bomb which devastated Paddy's Pub, and the Sari Club opposite, followed by a third device outside the US Consulate in Denpasar.

Immediately, Fr Thompson was airlifted to Bali to play a pivotal role supporting Australian bomb survivors, the families of victims and government officials including police and forensic experts working on identifying the dead.

He recalled 'the shock, the trauma' and the confronting work that faced the newly-arrived Australian forensic and disaster identification experts. 'We were working at the makeshift morgue,' he recalled. 'It was terrible, like any first-responder stuff.'

The grisly task at hand was to positively identify badly burned bomb victims, mainly using dental records. 'I was really just supporting the families and getting details from them of their family members who they were looking for,' Fr Thompson said. 'And ... making sure that we were with the families when that notification came through – so they didn't just get a text message.'

The bombings were masterminded and carried out by extremists from Indonesia's main island of Java. Fr Thompson remembers how the attacks caused suffering right across the island of Bali. There were scores of Balinese victims, and the island's tourism industry immediately dried up.

For his service in Bali Fr Thompson was awarded the Conspicuous Service Medal: *For outstanding service in the provision of pastoral and administrative support to the relief effort in support of Operation Bali Assist, directly after the bombings.*

A Prime Ministerial media release of 12 October on the bombing anniversary stated, 'Together, on what will be a difficult day for many in Australia, Indonesia and around the world, we honour the lives of the victims and the courage and resilience shown by the survivors and their families. We also pay tribute to the first responders and volunteers who assisted efforts in the wake of the attack ... Australia's thoughts are with those whose lives were forever changed by the attacks. We recommit to the ongoing work shared by Australia and Indonesia to counter the scourge of violent extremism, and reaffirm the respect and cooperation between our peoples.'

Under Operation Bali Assist, five C-130 Hercules aircraft and associated aeromedical evacuation teams deployed to Bali from 13 to 17 October to treat and repatriate injured Australians, and also transport urgently-needed medical stores and support equipment to Darwin and Denpasar Airports. Additional Defence support provided in Bali included pastoral care, disaster victim identification, and liaison, interpreter and consular support to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Federal Police and local authorities.

The first Hercules brought a small RAAF team who thought they were embarking on a standard aeromedical evacuation to collect five injured patients from Bali. That

mission was to become part of the largest Australian aeromedical evacuation since the Vietnam War.

Two of those members were RAAF medical officers, SQNLDR Steve Cook and WGCDR Michelle Maundrell, who still clearly recall their experience 20 years on.

SQNLDR Cook, an Air Force Reserve doctor, was on the first flight into Bali. He said, 'I vividly remember being called at 0700 and being told I was off to Denpasar Airport for a very standard mission, due to a gas cylinder explosion. It was the best information we had at the time, but by the time we went from RAAF Base Richmond to RAAF Base Darwin, the situation had evolved to 30 injured people, so we collected additional medical equipment and personnel.'

'Arriving at Denpasar Airport, I saw absolute chaos. It feels like just yesterday – the sight, the smell, the feeling. You don't forget a day like that.'

The Team swiftly established an Aeromedical Staging Facility in the fire hangar and started to organise and triage the patients over the next 48 hours.

He recalled seeing a stream of injured people arriving at the airport, most with untreated burns and shrapnel wounds, and realising the need to conduct combat surgery on the fire station floor, which is usually only done in war zones.

'To ensure the badly-wounded people could fly, my team and I performed combat surgery using ketamine sedation for life and limb saving surgery, which I learnt in East Timor,' he said.

'That opportunity in an exercise environment in East Timor ensured I felt confident I had the proper training to mentally and physically handle such a disaster.'

WGCDR Maundrell deployed on the third C-130 flight into Denpasar on 14 October and was able to call on her experience as an emergency-room nurse to assist victims of the bombings. She was with the victims as they were repatriated to Australia on the C-130s, which allowed doctors and nurses to offer intensive care in the sky. 'While we were on the flight, it was all about managing burns,' WGCDR Maundrell said. 'Our military training does cover off on that, but in that situation my previous hospital experience helped a lot.'

She said it was the victims' selflessness, not their injuries, that made the greatest impression over those hours.

'While there were a lot of patients with significant injuries, they were always pointing for me to help other people first, who they thought were worse off,' she said. 'That sort of attitude really stood out and it was consistent across the board with the patients.'

*Article drawn from The Catholic Leader, author Mark Bowling, 11 Oct 22 and additional sources from story by FLTLT Suellen Heath and CPL Jacob Joseph.*

*Fr Thompson is a delegate to Archbishop Prowse, the Apostolic Administrator of the Catholic Military Ordinariate.*



*Fr Richard Thompson speaks during the 2003 first anniversary in Bali*



*Bali Memorial on the site of the destroyed Paddy's Pub, Denpasar*



## Pope Francis: Prayer revitalises the soul



**V**ATICAN CITY — Prayer is medicine for one's faith and it reinvigorates the soul, Pope Francis said.

'We need the daily water of prayer, we need time dedicated to God, so that he can enter into our time, into our lives,' the pope said Oct. 16 during his Sunday Angelus address.

'We need consistent moments in which we open our hearts to him so that he can daily pour out on us love, peace, joy, strength, hope, thus nourishing our faith,' he said.

So often, people spend their day focused on many 'urgent, but unnecessary things,' neglecting what counts the most in life, he said. 'We allow our love for God to grow cold' bit by bit.

Prayer, he said, is the remedy to rekindle this 'tepid faith.'

'Prayer is the medicine for faith; it is the restorative of the soul,' he said.

Just as a patient must 'faithfully and regularly' take his or her medication, Pope Francis said, prayer, too, needs to be consistent and constant, not practiced in fits and starts.

In the Gospel of Luke's parable of the persistent widow,

Jesus is showing people that they must 'pray always without becoming weary,' he said.

When finding the time to pray is a real difficulty, he said, busy people should turn to an old but 'wise spiritual practice' called 'aspirations.' These are very short prayers in which the mind is directed to God and 'that can be repeated often throughout the day, in the course of various activities, to remain 'in tune' with the Lord' so that 'our hearts remain connected to him.'

For example, he said, as soon as people wake up, we can say, 'Lord, I thank you and I offer this day to you,' or before beginning an activity, we can repeat, 'Come, Holy Spirit,' and throughout the day, people can pray, 'Jesus, I trust in you. Jesus, I love you.'

'And let's not forget to read his responses in the Gospel,' the Pope said.

'The Lord always responds,' he said, so people should open the Gospel 'several times every day, to receive a word of life directed to us.'

*By Carol Glatz, Catholic News Service*

### ***Serving Faithfully***

is a newsletter of the Catholic Diocese of the Australian Military Services.

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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*Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Catholic Ordinariate of the Australian Military Services*

