



UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

AN ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY OF NAZARETH VOL. 1, NO. 11; DECEMBER, 2011



SR GRAZYNA ROCLAWSKA

**"I know the plans
I have for you,
declares the Lord,
plans to prosper you
and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope
and a future."**

JEREMIAH 29:11

THE ABOVE WORDS OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH ARE ONE OF the most consoling, positive and moving quotations I found in the Old Testament. There were times and days in my life when I had to say them aloud to myself. There were times when I quoted them to the people who needed the consolation and faith in God's presence in their lives because of hardship and tribulation. I am sure that they will be times when others will need to remind me about them in the future.

When I look back at 2011 I think about God's plans in a very special way. For Holy Spirit Province the year started with the visit of the Superior General, Mother Jana Zawieja, when she came for consultation before the nomination of the new Provincial Administration. The year concluded with the General Visitation of Mother Jana and her Councillor, Sr Angela Marie Mazzeo. You can read about these significant events in this issue of the *Under the Southern Cross* presented to you. But the biggest events were happening "in meantime" – in the hard, daily work of every sister of the Holy Spirit Province. Some of these events are written in this newsletter and shared with you. Other events are only known to God through our humble ministry and quiet prayer – in every community around the whole Australia, wherever there was a Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth.

I would like to extend my deep gratitude to everyone who contributed towards the articles in this issue of the *Under the Southern Cross*. I would like also to take this opportunity to thank Sr Josita Paczkowska, former Provincial Superior, for her wonderful leadership and example of the spirit of love and support to all the sisters, associates and friends of the Congregation. May God bless us all in 2012. He has good plans for us – the future of hope. May the blessed John Paul II – the saint given to us by the Church in 2011 – intercede for us.

Prayerfully and lovingly,

SR GRACE (GRAZYNA ROCLAWSKA)
OF GOD'S COUNTENANCE,
PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR



CELEBRATING THE BEATIFICATION OF BLESSED POPE JOHN PAUL II AROUND THE PROVINCE

Sunday 1 May Thanksgiving Mass for the Beatification of Pope John Paul II (Sydney NSW) The Beatification of Pope John Paul II caused great celebration of the Church, and this was reflected in the special services held in St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney. Sister Grażyna Rocławska, Sister Julia Deptula, Sister Alicja Drabik and Sister Emilia Smolak from Our Lady Queen of Poland convent attended. Also in attendance to celebrate this historic event were Sister Lucyna Frączek from Holy Family Convent and Sisters Joanna Zarzyczna and Małgorzata Kozub from St Joseph's Convent, Quakers Hill. At three o'clock, the congregation sang and then prayed the Mercy of God Chaplet in several languages. Then Cardinal George Pell celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving for the great honour bestowed on Blessed Pope John Paul II. Sisters Barbara Majcher and Ludwika Pliszka made arrangements with friends to watch the Beatification Mass broadcast from Rome. Sister Jean Wojcik and Sister Flawia watched the broadcast from the internet at home.



SISTERS ATTENDING CELEBRATION IN ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL - SYDNEY NSW

Celebrations at the War Memorial Chapel

Sunday 8 May, 2011 (Marayong NSW) A double celebration at the War Memorial Chapel: The Feast of Our Lady Queen of Poland and Constitution Day (held annually on 3 May) and the local thanksgiving Mass for the Beatification of Pope John Paul II. After the Thanksgiving Mass the congregation processed around the grounds with the Blessed Sacrament and the decorated icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa. Sister Grażyna Rocławska and several Sisters from Our Lady Queen of Poland Convent participated in this happy event.

Our Lady Queen of Apostles (Stafford Queensland)

SISTERS Maureen Stempko, Rita Apura and Josita Paczkowska of Queen of Apostles Convent, Stafford, Queensland included the beatification intention in the Liturgy in which they attended and as prescribed by Archbishop John Bathersby, Archbishop of Brisbane. They spent the day in private and communal prayer that came deep from the heart as they continued to pray for Bishop William Morris and the Church of Toowoomba, Queensland.

BY SR JOSITA PACZKOWSKA

Queen of Poland Convent (Marayong NSW)

THE Sisters gathered as a community to share their memories of Blessed John Paul II. After an opening prayer, some of the Sisters displayed treasured photos of their meetings the Pope. Stories were recounted about their experiences as well. It is difficult to convey the feelings of warmth, love and happiness these reminiscences created amongst us. This exercise demonstrated how much impact Blessed Pope John Paul II had on our lives.



SRS JOSEPH MAZUR AND IRENE KUBACKI CELEBRATING IN PERTH, WA

Beatification of John Paul II Infant Jesus Convent (North Beach WA)

THE Community in North Beach, Perth, officially started celebrations of the Beatification of Pope John Paul II (Karol Wojtyła) with the Vigil Prayers broadcasted by the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) till the late hours of the night.

Sister Irene Kubacki and Sister Joseph Mazur joined in the Rosary Prayer recited in different parts of the world. For Sister Joseph there was a moment of unbelievable surprise to recognise former Archbishop of Baghdad Most Rev Paul Dahdah, praying the Rosary with the assembly of the faithful present at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Lebanon in Harissa. Sister Joseph worked in His Grace Diocese while on a mission in Baghdad. Through EWTN Media they also listened to songs, poems, and interviews about Karol Wojtyła, the Great Pope of our time.

The next day, 1st May 2011, Sister Irene Kubacki and Sister Joseph Mazur attended the Mass of Thanksgiving for Blessed John Paul II at the Queen of Poland Church in Maylands. The Mass celebrated by the Archbishop of Perth, Most Rev Barry J. Hickey and the Polish Priests, was moving and beautiful.

The Polish Community from the Queen of Poland Church put on a superb "cuppa" and "Polish doughnuts" at the Parish Hall and the majority of the church Assembly including both of the Holy Family of Nazareth Sisters enjoyed the food and the time of sharing some memoirs about the Supreme Pontiff JP II whom they had the privilege to meet in their lives.

On the way home from the Polish Church, Sister Irene Kubacki and Sister Joseph Mazur stopped at the St Mary's Cathedral in Perth City to thank God for the Gift of the Blessed Pope at the foot of the pope's sculpture which was wrapped in white and red flowers and exposed next to the altar for visitors.

Some hours later, towards evening, Mrs Hannah Spencer, a mother of a former Our Lady of Grace student, joined the Community in watching the central Ceremony of the Beatification of John Paul II. They were joyfully surprised to see on the screen Mother General Jana Zawieja receiving Holy Communion from the hands of Pope Benedict XVI during the Holy Mass from The Vatican City. They also noticed other Sisters from the Congregation participating in the Mass and later paying homage to the Blessed John Paul II inside of St Peter's Basilica. Grateful to God for Blessed John Paul II, they finished the day of Beatification Celebrations with prayers in the convent chapel and with a lovely supper.

BY SR JOSEPH MAZUR



INSTALLATION OF THE NEW PROVINCIAL TEAM

ON Saturday 12 February (Marayong NSW), the newly appointed Provincial Team was installed in a liturgical ceremony at Queen of Poland Convent in Marayong. During the ceremony the leader, Sister Josita Paczkowska, former Provincial Superior, in Jesus' Name, called Sister Grażyna Rocławska, Provincial Superior, Sr. Joanna Zarzyczna, Assistant Provincial, Sr. Jean Wojcik, Provincial Secretary, Sr. Lucyna Frączek, Provincial Treasurer and Sr. Anita Litwin, Provincial Councillor and gave each member of the new administration a lantern. All of the Sisters present prayed for the graces the Provincial team would need as they carry out their service to the Province. After the Installation ceremony, Father Albert Wasniowski concelebrated Mass with Fathers Tadeusz Lizinczyk from the USA and Father Pawel Binkowski from Germany. In his homily, Father Albert emphasized that this was a very historic moment in the life of Holy Spirit Province.

After Mass, a scrumptious dinner was served. After the repast, Sister Grażyna Rocławska delivered a speech thanking Sister Josita Paczkowska for her service to the Province as its Provincial for the second time. Sister Joanna Zarzyczna extended gratitude on behalf of the Sisters to Sister Alicja Drabik, for her service as Assistant Provincial Superior and Councillor for the past six years. Then bouquets of flowers were presented to Sisters Josita Paczkowska and Alicja Drabik.

A yellow rose was presented by Sister Julia Deptula to each member of the current provincial team. The yellow rose symbolizes warmth, joy and friendship.



THE NEW PROVINCIAL TEAM: SR ANITA LITWIN, SR GRAZYNA ROCLAWSKA, SR JEAN WOJCIK, SR JOANNA ZARYCZNA AND SR LUCYNA FRACZEK

ARCHBISHOP SZCZEPAN WESOŁY'S VISIT TO MARAYONG

YEARS ago, before Holy Family Services was built, Brother Albert's Home preceded it. Archbishop Szczepan Wesoly, the Bishop for Immigrant Poles, came to Australia to turn the soil for the building which would be built as Brother Albert's Home. Now retired, Archbishop Wesoly has recently made another visit to Australia and Marayong was a key stop because he wanted to see the growth of the Holy Family Services facility for himself. Archbishop Wesoly and his travelling companion, Father Weslaw Słowik SJ, rector of the Polish Jesu-



it Pastoral Centre in Melbourne, arrived in Sydney on Tuesday evening. They were greeted by Sister Grażyna Rocławska. The guests toured the convent and were introduced to some of the Sisters. The Archbishop was house guest of the Sisters and Father Wieslaw Słowik SJ resided in the presbytery.

On Wednesday (13 October, 2011) morning the Sisters welcomed Archbishop Wesoly, Father Wieslaw Słowik SJ, Father Antoni Dudek, TChr, and Father Zbigniew Pajdak TChr as guests in the convent for breakfast.

After breakfast and a brief tour around the Holy Family Services and the grounds, the Archbishop concelebrated Mass in the Holy Family Chapel with the Rector of the Polish Catholic Polish Mission, Father Weslaw Słownik SJ his travelling companion, Father Antoni Dudek, TChr, Father Zbigniew Pajdak TChr, Father Kazimierz Bojda TChr, and the residents Father Franciszek Faruga TChr, and Father David Scott. The Mass was offered to implore blessings for the residents, staff and their families and for the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. After Mass, the Arch Bishop met with Mr Kevin Rocks, CEO of Holy Family Services and the executive staff.

When lunch was served the numbers grew to include two



extra guests, Father Kazimierz Bojda TChr from New Castle, and Sister Joanna Zarzyczna. After a brief farewell Archbishop Wesoly and Father Słowik left Marayong shortly after lunch for the airport. Their next stop was Melbourne.

BY SR JEAN WOJCIK

CELEBRATION OF THE HOLY FAMILY ASSOCIATION JUBILEE

SUNDAY 6 November 2011 was a special celebration of the Holy Family Association Anniversary (20 years for the Group in Sydney and 25 years for the Canberra group) was special because both groups and their families gathered in Marayong with Mother Jana Zawieja and Sister Angela Mazzeo from Rome. Travellers from Canberra were invited to have refreshments at Queen of Poland Convent if they arrived early. About twenty associates took up the offer.

All of the guests joined others in Holy Family Services Chapel for the Mass. The main celebrant was Father Robert Doohan, pastor of St. Finbar's Parish in San Souci. Father David Scott, resident of Holy Family Services concelebrated the Mass with Father Doohan.

Before the Mass began, Mrs Maria De Carlo, the Master of Ceremonies, introduced Sister Grażyna Rocławska, Provincial Leader of Holy Spirit Province. Sister Grażyna welcomed the group to the occasion. Sister Jean Wojcik read Sister Josita Paczkowska's greetings to the Associates. The new Associates: Frances Perem, Steven and Tess Doulas and Danuta Lysien made their dedication to the Association. This commitment was received by Mother Jana Zawieja. They received their Holy Family Association pins from Sister Alicja Drabik, the Associate's Director. Mary Murray and Helen and Phil Carberry accompanied the singing on their ukuleles. Sister Christine Ramada cantored the responsorial psalm. After the Mass the congregation moved to John Paul II Hall for the formal proceedings and lunch.

Once everyone was seated, Sister Lois Ann Richardi gave a brief historical account of the Holy Family Association. This was followed by brief testimonies delivered by Emma Ayrout Lyn Griffiths and Helen and Phil Carberry. Emma Ayrout told the group how her father, Joseph Kandalajt came to the Association; Lyn Griffiths shared her mother's experiences and Helen and Phil Carberry shared their experiences with the Sisters who lived in Canberra. Sister Ludwika Pliszka and her team prepared a delicious meal for the group. After the main course, Mother Jana Zawieja addressed the group. The entertainment provided by the Marie, Peter and Joseph Yeo was exquisite. Each of the teenagers play both piano and violin. They performed three pieces: A trio, the Ave Maria by Schubert and an Etude by Chopin.

The Associates were encouraged to view the display of pictures that were placed on tables in the front of the hall. It was hoped that they could assist by identifying some of the people in the photos. On the table were two Books of Remembrance. Each book contained a brief necrology of the twelve Associates .

BY SR JEAN WOJCIK



TESTIMONIES OF ASSOCIATES

Winifred Fagan LYN gave me the Holy Family Novena Prayer and the medal of Blessed Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd near the end of January, 1990. I prayed the Novena and wore the medal and said the prayer each night.

The night of the 16th January 1991, I went to bed at 9:30 pm was listening to the radio and a short while after I closed my eyes and a face appeared about 8 inches away and about 4 by 4. She seemed to smile and her skin was so noticeably pink, it stayed for about a minute then disappeared.

I did not recognise the face then but a week later while cleaning my medals because I was going for a holiday and as I looked at her medal I knew immediately the face I had seen was that of Blessed Mary (of Jesus the Good Shepherd). I have read about her life and the story of the miracle. I pray to her each night and truly this happened to me.

Emma Kandalajt – Ayrout IN the year 1992 after attending Holy Mass at St. Michael's Church, I stood outside speaking with our assistant parish priest Father Mirek Kowalczyk who gave me a medal of a saint. I was very happy to receive this beautiful gift and felt as though it was a gift from heaven as a sign of God's love for me. I thanked Father Mirek and then went home.

I took my rosary beads in my hand and decided to place this holy medal on my rosary which I did. Then I began to pray. As I was praying I kissed this holy medal of this nun and with all my heart thanked her for coming to me and spoke to her. As I was going through a time of hardship, I said: I don't know who you are or anything about you, but please won't you help me?

Tears started running down my face as I began to pray to her and asking her intercession for me. While I was praying, I felt her presence with me in my home. Later at night while I was asleep, that same holy nun whom I prayed to came to me in my dream looking at me and crying and crying. She did not speak only cried and looked at me with sadness. I realized she heard my prayer and was crying for me. But, as for me, I still didn't know anything about her.

Some time after Brother Joseph Byrne, a Patrician Brother invited us (Prayer Group of Our Lady) to go with him to the chapel of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth as we were all invited by the sisters to pray there. I had never met the sisters before or have never been to their chapel or convent.

On arrival that day, the sisters welcomed us and invited us into the chapel to pray with them. I sat somewhere in the back and whilst we were praying, I noticed a beautiful statue of St. Joseph and also big silver medallion on a stand near the tabernacle. After we finished prayers, as everyone was leav-

ing the chapel, I stepped closer to the front to see the beautiful statue of St Joseph.

I also saw the medallion and on it was the same nun I had seen on my medal and the same holy nun that came to me in my dream. I just stood still in front of her and felt numb. I did not understand what was happening to me.

Later, on my way out of chapel, two sisters (Sister Carol Jez and Sister Irene Kubacki) were standing at the door of the chapel and showed me the way into the dining room. Before we made our way in, I said to the sisters: "Excuse me could you please tell me who is this nun on the medallion you have there?" Sister Carol quickly answered: "Oh, this is our Mother Foundress, dear, Blessed Frances Siedliski." I said to them it's because I saw her in my dream and she was crying and crying so much. On hearing this both sisters were touched and began to cry themselves.

From that day on I kept my friendship with the sisters and my father did the same. The sisters invited us to prayer meetings and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every month and visited us. Two years later, I was so blessed and became an associate member of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth and later my father, too, became an associate, We both thanked God for blessing us with this gift from heaven and in getting to know the sisters and being closer to them because they are truly images of God and the saints where we found peace, love and joy.

Frances Pegem THIS was shared at 25th Anniversary of the Associates of the Holy Family 06 November, 2011. The following is sent to you from Frances via Lyn Griffiths via me, Sybil Senbruns (Lyn's Sister) in Queensland — isn't email a wonderful invention?

Back in 1961 I had the pleasure of meeting the Late Mary Ryan from Holder & Garran, ACT. Then in later years, Mary's eldest daughter Colleen moved to Holder with her husband Kevin and two sons. Later two girls arrived so of course they went to Holder School — that's when I had the pleasure of meeting the Holy Family Sisters as I used to go from Campsie to ACT each weekend for soccer and netball.

I used to help with the fetes and all things to do with the Church. As the years went by I received word the Order was moving to Marayong to help the poorer families with breakfast before school. As I lived in Campsie I could not help in person but did so in other ways. Then my Mother and I moved to the Hills area to live with my late Brother and Sister-in-law.

By this time Sr. Lois Ann had started a Rosary Group which many people from Kellyville attended. Over time, people seem to have stopped coming except for Lyn who brings me along.

A few months ago Sr. Alicja discovered I was not an Associate Member — so here I am today.

WORLD YOUTH DAY IN MADRID 2011

Sister Joseph Mazur has been supporting the Youth Group of Holy Spirit Parish in City Beach Parish for the past four years. Sister attended World Youth Day with this vibrant group of young people. World Youth Day focuses on assisting Catholic youth to learn to be CHURCH.

WORKING with youth is both a gift and a task that requires a lot of preparation and patience. I have learned from experience, that the best way to support young adults is to love them as they are and to be honest with them.

Before 2008, our group from the Holy Spirit Parish, City Beach, W.A., met at least once a week throughout 2007-8 to deepen our faith through prayers, Advent and Easter Programs, and Wednesdays adorations of the Blessed Sacrament run by the Parish Priest Reverend Don Kettle and also games and quizzes that cemented our team as one.

We hosted two groups for WYD, from West Virginia, USA and Ghana, Africa. It was a great opportunity for young adults to make new friendships and to learn a lot about each other cultural backgrounds.

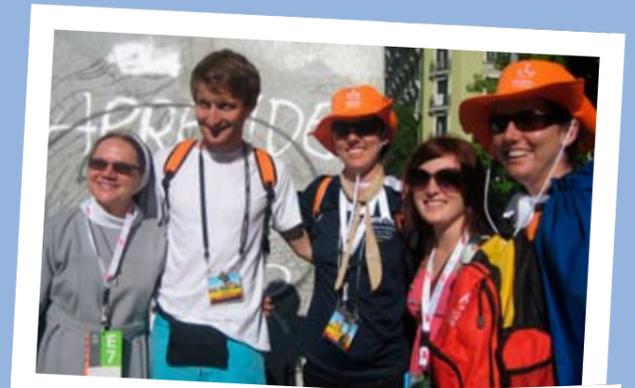
Before Madrid 2011 our group changed a bit. Not many of the young people could afford the trip to Europe, despite the fact that we ran quite a number of fundraising activities during the year.

WYD in Madrid happened to fall during my home visit in Poland so, some of that time I dedicated to my apostolic work. It was a great privilege for me to be part of World Youth Day, Madrid 2011 and its strong public proclamation of Catholic Faith. It was amazing to see millions of young participants from around the globe expressing their faith as a matter of choice, not just inheritance, and trying to make it stronger.

Our group, together with hundreds of other groups, were exposed to various catechesis given by eminent people, especially the teaching given by the head of the U.S. Bishops Conference, Archbishop Timothy Dolan. From among his messages we learned that the most effective way to maintain Faith in today's world is to acknowledge that it is weak and shaky. Archbishop Dolan taught us that by admitting that our faith is not what it should be, we actually already do exercise it and believe it or not, we make it firm.

When the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI arrived to Madrid, he also taught us about faith. He said that faith gives young people the strength to look with hope and confidence at the world and its problems. The Pope also said that World Youth Day reminds youths that they are not alone in their journey with God and allows them to share their hopes, dreams and cultures and to "motivate each other along a journey of faith" in their daily lives.

BY SR JOSEPH MAZUR



SYDNEY

PASTORAL CARE TEAM

DURING the past year the Mission and Pastoral Care Team of Holy Family Services was able to provide many positive activities across all our facilities. This year we are celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Nursing Home and fourteen staff members who dedicated their life-to give twenty years of service.

Sister Joanna Zarzyczna, Director of Mission and Pastoral Care instituted a new Induction Handbook for staff to help them to understand the Facility's mission of Hospitality, Love and Acceptance, and how they put them into practice, according to Christian values in the Catholic Tradition.

During March, Sister Jean Wojcik, was employed as member of the Pastoral Care team especially to visit the English

speaking residents as well as provide some English courses for staff in the facility.

On 30 October, the annual Memorial Mass was held in the Holy Family Chapel for all deceased Residents who died during the past year. Many families, staff and residents came to pray for their loved ones. After the Mass, the group gathered in the Recreation Hall for refreshments and a time to share stories, memories and history about their loved ones.

On December 9th the Staff celebrated an early Christmas together in the John Paul II Hall. The theme for this year was the 'Orient Express'. The Staff celebrating the Years of Service were honoured at the party. Each member received a gift and a laminated commemorative bookmark bearing their photo and years of service as a token of appreciation for their dedicated service.

BY SR MARIA (JOANNA) ZARZYCZNA



SCENES OF THE MEMORIAL MASS COMMEMORATION

ENGLISH CLASSES AT HOLY FAMILY SERVICES

SINCE July, Sister Jean Wojcik has been teaching English to six hospitality staff members Holy Family Services. The group meet during their lunch time on Tuesday and Thursday of most weeks. They use the Australian Migrant Education Scheme's material Certificate in Spoken and Written English I. So far the group has learned how to give others personal details; fill in a basic form; and to make an appointment with a doctor. They have also enjoyed the practical classes held in the Coffee Shop, where the group ordered lunch and the trip to the Services Beauty Salon where each student learned to express how to ask for the style of haircut she wanted.

Mr Edward Flak, the IT specialist has expanded the Services network to include five monitors and keyboards so that the group can learn touch typing and have access to other English materials for private study on the intranet section called the Education Corner. In time, they hope to expand the network and the programmes to meet educational needs of different groups: residents who would like to learn computer, the catering and nursing staffs. They are grateful to Mr. Kevin Rocks, CEO for his support of the project and to Mr. Edward Flak who constructed network.

BY SR JEAN WOJCIK

UNIVERSITY CHOIR FROM LUBLIN PERFORMS IN MARAYONG

On Thursday, October 6, the residents and staff at Holy Family Services experienced a performance of exquisite Polish music by the choir from Pope John the II University in Lublin. The brown-robed young men and women, about twenty in number, filled the hall with music that held the audience spellbound.

The first half of their program comprised sacred music sung in both Latin and Polish. During the second half, the group sang several folk songs.

The residents were appreciative of the choir's ability to sing without instrumental accompaniment with perfect pitch and in beautiful harmony. The choir was deeply passionate about their music, and the audience felt the love poured out from their hearts and souls.

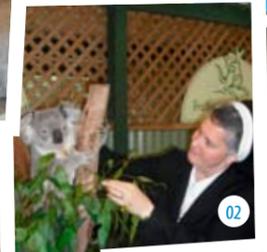
The Choir returned to Marayong on Sunday 9 October. They lead the congregation in singing during the 11:00 Mass in the Polish War Memorial Chapel. After this, they entertained about two hundred people with their magnificent singing in the John Paul II Hall.

These were just two of their concerts in their tour of Australia.

Long Day Care Centre Nominated for Local Business Award



EACH year the City of Blacktown NSW holds its Local Business Awards presentation at Blacktown Workers' Club. This year, Holy Family Children's Services was nominated by the parents for an award in the Category of Outstanding Child Care Services and they were deemed to be in the group of finalists. The actual award was given to another centre however it was a great success for our staff, especially Sister Małgorzata Kozub who ministers in this facility. Sister Małgorzata and Sister Grażyna Rocławska represented the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth on the Gala Award Night. Also in attendance were Mr Kevin Rocks, CEO of Holy Family Services and the Director and Staff of the Child Care.



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

SACRAMENTAL RETREAT AT OUR INFANT JESUS CONVENT, PERTH

THIS year was the second time when Our Lady Grace School proposed a One Day Retreat for each of the First Holy Communion Classes. Our little community opened widely our arms to this project and was well prepared to run it.

The class teachers together with the students' parents prepared the children morning tea and lunch.

The retreat day began at the Convent Chapel where Sister Joseph introduced to the participants the retreat theme: "My First Holy Communion" and explained the schedule of the day.

The particular class was divided into four groups and rotated throughout the day.

One group worked on their art display in the church with a parent from the school. Another group spent time with their class teacher on a quiz game relating to the general knowledge about the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The next group watched the First Holy Communion video with Sister Irene

and had a discussion on that topic. Finally, the last group gathered in the Convent Chapel with Sister Joseph where the children focussed more deeply on parts of the Mass and symbols of the Eucharist.

The Retreat Day finished in the Chapel with songs, prayers prepared by the participants and a short summary of what they had learned during the day.

Each participant received a Rosary Booklet as a remembrance of the day. As they worded it, "The day was tiring but beautiful."

It gave the students opportunity to deepen their preparation for the celebration of the most important event in their lives – Jesus coming to their hearts in Holy Communion.

2011 Confirmation Classes at Our Lady of Grace, Perth

FOR the first time since Sister Joseph taught Confirmation Classes at both, OLG P/Sch and at OLG Parish, some of the students considered Blessed Mary of Good Shepherd as their Confirmation Hero Saint to follow in their lives.



At the Parish, two students, Matthew and Josh in her class asked her to be their sponsor because of their family situation. During the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, Sister Joseph stood behind the sponsored children, assuring them of her spiritual support on their sacramental journey.

BY SR JOSEPH MAZUR

THANKSGIVING

NOVEMBER 24th, 2011 was a day of Thanksgiving for those who were born in the USA and it also happened that the Our Lady of Good Counsel School Community invited Sister Irene and Sister Joseph to the Thanksgiving Mass for the Feast of Blessed Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd and her spiritual daughters who started the OLG School in Karrinyup.

Mrs. Mary Bizzaca, the school principal, welcomed the two Sisters to the celebration underlying the importance of their presence among them.

During the Mass, Sister Irene was invited to give Holy Communion to the children and a blessing to the little ones.

Sister Joseph presented on power point the life of Blessed Mother Foundress and the work the Sisters do today.

The school choir and band were outstanding. Although Mass went longer than usual and the outside heat reached inside the OLG Church, the entire assembly of children behaved respectfully.

The Principal and Staff thanked Sisters for their spiritual support and presence from time to time.

BY SR IRENE KUBACKI



LEARNING ABOUT THE MASS WITH SISTER JOSEPH MAZUR

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION'S AUSSIE JOURNEY (See centrefold for photos)

Mother Jana Zawieja, Superior General and Sr Angela Marie Mazzeo conducted the General Visitation in the Holy Spirit Province from the 31 October to 23 November 2011. During that time they had an opportunity to meet with every Sister of the Province as well as the Hierarchy of the Australian Church and the lay people collaborating with the Sisters in the states of New South Wales (NSW), Queensland (QLD) and Western Australia (WA).

In the centrefold of this newsletter you can find some photos describing some of the events of their Aussie Journey.

1. 31 OCTOBER – ARRIVAL AT THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. WELCOME FROM SR GRACE AND JOANNA.
2. 1 NOVEMBER – DAY FOR REST, VISIT TO THE FEATHERDALE ANIMAL PARK, DOONSIDE, NSW. SR ANGELA MARIE WITH KOALA.
3. 1 NOVEMBER – DAY FOR REST, VISIT TO THE FEATHERDALE ANIMAL PARK, DOONSIDE, NSW. M. JANA FEEDING WALLABY.
4. 5 NOVEMBER – MEETING WITH PARENTS, CHILDREN AND TEACHER FROM POLISH SATURDAY SCHOOL, MARAYONG NSW.
5. 7 NOVEMBER – MEETING WITH BISHOP ANTHONY FISHER, PARRAMATTA, NSW.
6. 8 NOVEMBER – WITH SR JOSITA AND PARISHIONERS AT OUR LADY QUEEN OF APOSTLES PARISH, BRISBANE, QLD.
7. 8 NOVEMBER – WITH PARISHIONERS AT OUR LADY QUEEN OF APOSTLES PARISH, BRISBANE, QLD.
8. 8 NOVEMBER – MEETING WITH ARCHBISHOP JOHN BATHERSBY, BRISBANE, QLD.
9. 9 NOVEMBER – WITH SR MAUREEN WHILE TOURING ANNERLEY – EKIBIN PARISH, BRISBANE, QLD.
10. 11 NOVEMBER – AT OLQP WITH FR WIESLAW WASNIEWSKI OPPE, MARAYONG
11. 11 NOVEMBER – AT OLQP – SR ANGELA "CHECKING BOOKS" IN THE OFFICE, MARAYONG, NSW.
12. 12 NOVEMBER – WITH SR LOIS ANN DURING THE TRIP TO CANBERRA, ACT.
13. 13 NOVEMBER – WITH SR GRACE, FR ROBERT RIEDLING AND PARISHIONERS AT ST MICHAEL'S, BLACKTOWN SOUTH, NSW.
14. 15 NOVEMBER – WITH CHILDREN FROM LONG DAY CARE AT HOLY FAMILY SERVICES, MARAYONG, NSW.
15. 15 NOVEMBER – IN THE AGED CARE AT HOLY FAMILY SERVICES, MARAYONG, NSW.
16. 16 NOVEMBER – WITH SR CHRISTINE VISITING ST PATRICK'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, MAITLAND, NSW.
17. 16 NOVEMBER – WITH SR ANITA VISITING AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PRIMARY SCHOOL, MAITLAND, NSW.
18. 18 NOVEMBER - MOTHER FOUNDRESS CELEBRATION AT OUR LADY OF GRACE SCHOOL, PERTH, WA.
19. 18 NOVEMBER – MEETING WITH ARCHBISHOP JOHN HICKEY, PERTH, WA.
20. 18 NOVEMBER – SR ANGELA WITH STUDENTS FROM OUR LADY OF GRACE SCHOOL, PERTH, WA.
21. 20. 19 NOVEMBER – WALK BY THE INDIAN OCEAN WITH SRS JOSEPH AND IRENE, PERTH, WA.
22. 19 NOVEMBER – AT THE PINAROO CEMETERY WHERE KANGAROOS FEEL AT HOME, PERTH, WA.
23. 21 NOVEMBER – BACK IN MARAYONG – FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THANKSGIVING AND FAREWELL ON 23 NOVEMBER BEFORE THE DEPARTURE TO THE PHILIPPINES.

Once more – THANK YOU to our visitors from Rome for coming to Australia and to all the Sisters for their hospitality extended so graciously and generously.

BRISBANE

Special Religious Character

THE Sisters of the Holy Spirit Province engage in variety of activities in their ministry to the family. Their association with Queen of Apostles School Community has had much to do with the development of the special Religious Character spoken about in the article below.

Queen of Apostles School is a Catholic school in the Archdiocese of Brisbane embracing the Vision of Jesus Communion Mission and engaging in the educational ministry of the church to teach, challenge and transform.

Our school was founded by Our Lady, Queen of Apostles Parish as part of its responsibility expressed in the Sacrament of Baptism to “help parents in their duty as Christian mothers and fathers”. Our parents, having already undertaken to “accept the responsibility in training (their child(ren)) in the practice of the faith”, remain always “the first (and best) teachers in the ways of faith.” – (Quotes adapted from the “Rite of Baptism for Children”).

The founding staff of the school, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, brought their charism to the school which is manifest whenever people are welcomed. Hospitality is extended and care for families is paramount.

The school community values the essential importance of parents and staff working together in partnership, to nurture in themselves and their children a strong and growing faith as disciples of Jesus Christ. They strive to imitate the perfect example given by their patron Mary, Queen of Apostles.

They continue to build on the strong faith of the people of our Parish and school who have gone before them and they accept the responsibility to pass this faith, manifest in prayer and life-choices, to those who will follow in their footsteps.

With Mary as the model of discipleship, school life is immersed in prayer which has its apex and source in our Parish Community’s weekly Eucharist.

With Parents and Staff in mutual support and fulfilling their respective responsibilities in faith, they strive to lead their children to live in faith, reach out in love and grow through learning.

BY SR JOSITA PACZKOWSKA



Living Cursillo Discovering and Experiencing Christ

TO live Cursillo is to discover and experience Jesus Christ.

I first came to know the Cursillo movement when I lived in Altoona, Pennsylvania, USA. A friend and co-worker, Rita Kibler, at the then Mercy Hospital, invited me to come to the weekend.

I always admired the deep prayerful attitude of Rita, along with her delightful sense of humour, her dedication to her parish community and her family. Rita used to tell me that anywhere she travelled, she would always meet other Cursillistas. She became my sponsor for the weekend. Afterwards, I met regularly with three other women in the Altoona area.



RITA KIBLER ALTOONA

When I moved to Brisbane, Australia, I had the good fortune to meet Alison Golden who was a member of our parish, Our Lady, Queen of Apostles, in Stafford. She invited me to join the Cursillo Group in Brisbane. Our small group of three women have been meeting every week for the last several years. It is not only a source of support and inspiration, but a challenge to be accountable for living the way of Christ in the everyday happenings of life. It compliments my own journey in striving to live our community’s charism of the Holy Family.

I have had the privilege to be on team for the three day weekend several times, most recently in 2011. What a wonderful experience to be present as people open themselves to the workings of God’s grace.



2011 CURSILLO RETREAT ST. TERESA

This world-wide Cursillo movement is present in the Catholic and other Church denominations.

Their message is simple: “Be a friend, make a friend, bring a friend to Christ.”

BY SR MAUREEN JOSEPH STEMPO

The Ministry of Mentoring

FOR almost two years now I have been mentoring students from 2 Universities the: Australian Catholic University and University of Queensland.

Student Ranjit is studying Certificate 3 in Aged care from Care International College, while Jane is doing Certificate 1V in Community Welfare from Southbank Institute of Technology. Its been a pleasure to supervise students on their placement. Four training agencies: Bridgeworks Employment & training, Navitas Business Development, Apex Employment Training Institute, Job Training Institute based in Victoria. TAFE, Care International College, Southbank Institute of Technology and Charlton Brown, It has been a great blessing to journey with students, and for the opportunity to expand my own learning.

BY SR RITA APURA



PICTURES ABOVE: SR RITA APURA AND MENTEES

MAY I WALK WITH YOU?

THERE are so many things in our lives to be grateful for, and in order to acknowledge all these blessings it is important to stop, ponder, reflect and pray in thanksgiving to the Provider.

Currently I am working at the Centacare Enoggera Respite Centre. An organisation that provides various services mostly for the elderly that requires support. Enoggera Respite works under the umbrella of the Centacare, Archdiocese of Brisbane. The biggest challenge for us who works at the Enoggera Respite is to alleviate the pressures among carers. It may be the daughters and sons who look after their parents, and wife or husband looking after their spouses. Above all, Enoggera Respite Centre endeavoured to support our clients living alone in their own homes to remain active and independent.

In day to day experience, I am faced with the reality of how fragile life can be. Things we've seen on the television reflect the chaos nature of our busy life. Sometimes we lose track of the importance in our lives. Is there any space for me, for us to reflect what can I do to help the elderly? At this time we don't even have to open the television to know what is happening behind closed doors to those living alone and the vulnerable elders of our society. Sad for me to say that most of the time elderly suffered abuse and neglect before even they move out of "their own homes". When I was growing up respect towards the elderly is regarded as priority. Now a days, it is very disappointing to see that respect towards the elderly are beginning to disappear. An example I would like to share happened to me on my way to work. I caught a full bus going to work. No more seats left except for one. It was occupied by a teenager, a university student with an ear phones. I stood closer to the side door so that I could get off right away without trying to squeeze into other passengers. Then an elderly person with a walker caught the same bus. The bus driver should have just signalled that bus was full. However, there must be a reason, it was hard enough for the elderly man to find a space for his walker and no one offered him a seat. I didn't know where

this elderly man was going, but I knew in a couple of minutes I will reach my bus stop. I was so distracted and my focus was with the elderly man and the university student. This student didn't even bother to offer his seat for the elderly man, besides he was sitting on the seat provided for people with priority. I didn't wait any longer I was furious; I moved myself towards the university student and said 'Excuse me, would you please offer a seat for our elder'? The student responded 'who are you'? By that time I lost it, I said to him 'He is my grand father, any problem with that'? He said, "Oh I'm sorry, sure"! Sometimes it is hard to say maybe 'we need more awareness'. I am sure with the experience I had with the student he was aware – An elderly person standing beside him on a walker, pretty shaky, isn't that obvious?

In our changing world more and more the new generations forget the importance of the vulnerable elderly, who have shaped this nation. They have much to offer in our society and are integral to the fabric of family life through their relationships with the other person, their families and their community.

Reflecting on the reality of growing old, somehow gives me the opportunity to be grateful, to look forward with so much hope and joy. As we sometimes come across with this saying but let me say it again – As we aged, we should age gracefully! Every day in my work I am always reminded that we cannot only appreciate what we have now but for the blessings that yet to come. For me 'Aged' is our last Career – our last role, and it is a vocation! A vocation not just focuses on the meaning of the word but the meaning behind the word. A vocation where it will invite us to reflect the years that has been an amazing journey, making sense of our whole life, to relate freely and constructively with others, not to let the 'disabilities and loses affects the current life, accepting the past and facing the future with hope.

'May I walk with you' is my favourite line that I often use when I have the opportunity to be with our clients at Enoggera and it is my tribute to those who walk with me and before me in many ways, shape or form in this life.

BY SR RITA MARIE APURA



Find more about the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Australia:
www.csfm.org.au

Read our International Website:
www.nazarethfamily.org

MAITLAND

Feeling Like a New Kid in a Big New School

ON the 28th of January 2011, I started my ministry as a Pastoral Support Worker at St. Joseph's Primary School and St. Patrick's Primary School. During my first few days in each schools, I went around the classrooms to introduce myself to the children and to remind them of how they could find me if they needed to see me. I felt like a new kid in a big new school, a little bit nervous. Everything and everyone were new to me. Remembering each of their names was particularly challenging. After a few days I began receiving notes from children who wanted to see me. Some of them were also quite anxious about having someone new to talk to, but most of them were pretty relaxed and curious. Thanks to the good foundation which Sr. Helen had established in both schools!

Working with children is never boring. Every day is a real new day with challenging and inspiring moments. They never stopped to surprise me with their innocent questions like whether I am a saint to which I answered.... "no... well, not yet!" One of the children also once asked me whether I am her sister since she called me Sister, to which I replied "I am a sister to everyone, so yes I am your sister too" as I explained to her what it meant. The welcoming spirit and friendly attitude of the staff and students made me feel at home and welcomed. I felt so blessed to have very supportive people around me. Now, the school year is almost over and I would like to say that it has been a rewarding year for me and I'm looking forward for more years of working with them.

BY SR CHRISTINE RAMADA

Newcastle/Maitland Diocese Welcome New Bishop



BISHOP BILL WRIGHT

ON June 15th 2011 Sisters Christine Ramada and Anita Litwin were part of a large congregation celebrating the ordination of Father Bill Wright as the eighth Bishop of Newcastle/Maitland.

Well over 1,000 people including some twenty five Bishops and seventy priests, participated in the celebration Mass for the Ordination of the new Bishop.

The ceremony was rich with symbolism, from the laying on of hands

by Cardinal Pell, and the other Bishops present; to the holding up of the book of gospels over the new Bishop's head; to the presenting of the ring, the mitre and the pastoral staff. The cathedral bells rang out joyfully at the conclusion of the ordination of the Bishop.

Bishop Bill's first communication with his people was an article in the Aurora (a monthly publication for the diocese). His concluding words were 'My first column, a stranger writing to strangers. Thankfully that will change, and in time I'll be writing about 'our' concerns, 'our' joys and 'our' problems. I look forward to really becoming part of this diocese ... and getting to know its communities, its priests and its unfolding story.'

BY SISTER ANITA LITWIN



SR CHRISTINE RAMADA AND STUDENTS

ENCOUNTERING THE SPIRIT

3RD INTER-CONGREGATIONAL SPIRITUAL RENEWAL (SULEJÓWEK POLAND)

SATURDAY 2nd – Sunday 31st of July 2011 July 2011 was a special month for Sister Lucyna Fraczek. Sister chose to participate in the 3rd Inter-Congregational Spiritual Renewal for her Silver Jubilee in religious life.

The renewal was held in retreat centre of Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters in Sulejówek, one of the suburbs of Warszawa - capital city of Poland. The entire program was prepared and piloted by Sister Aleksandra Huf SSPS under the subject: "Let us care for living in the Holy Spirit".

Twenty three Sisters from 12 different Religious Congrega-

tions and from various countries including China shared their experience and beauty of religious life.

The daily schedule was well organized and full of activity. The focal point of each day was Eucharist, celebrated by different priests. Midday prayers follow by lunch. After an hour of rest – mostly spent in the beautiful garden - all Sisters gather again in the conference room for the afternoon sessions which included individual sharing in four small groups.

On the first and second Sunday Sisters, divided into smaller groups, also had a chance to visit special tourist places in the capital city. The Sisters visited the Museum of The Warsaw Uprising, Gardens in Wilanow, The Old Town and The National Temple of Divine Providence.

Finally at the end of month - before the retreat- for three days Sisters concentrated and reflected on the religious vows. The retreat finished with the special Mass which included the renewal of religious vows for all Sisters.

To finish the course, the Thanksgiving Mass was followed by lunch with special word of gratitude for Sister Aleksandra and the Sisters in the local community. That was the day that everybody went home to different places in the world.

BY SR LUCYNA FRĄCZEK



BLESSED SISTERS OF NOWOGRODEK INTERCEDE FOR CANCER PATIENT



MARIA LUSBY

MY name is Maria Lusby and in May 2008 at the age of 42 I was diagnosed with an aggressive form of breast cancer. The news was of course devastating. I was a healthy single woman, never sick, leading a busy life and working in legal education. There was no history of cancer in our family. Surely cancer was always something that happened to other people! Within days I was undergoing chem-

otherapy. Three months later I underwent a major operation to remove the tumours. Two months of radiotherapy then followed the operation. So how do the Blessed Sisters of Nowogrodek fit into my story?

Whilst undergoing chemotherapy, I emailed an old friend, Rev. Fr. Mark Withoos (Fr. Mark and I established the Melbourne Catholic Lawyers Association in 2002) asking him to keep me in his prayers. But Fr. Mark did more than that! He sprang into action and immediately organised for a relic from the Blessed Sisters of Nowogrodek to be delivered to me. I asked myself, who were these courageous Sisters? And a relic? This was all new to me. But Fr. Mark explained the situation and gave me instructions and a prayer, and from that day on I felt so happy, so blissfully happy, that I would have 11 voices in heaven helping me, interceding for me, and looking after me.

I feel as though I have come to know the Blessed Sisters of Nowogrodek intimately. I pray to them each morning and each night. I pray to them on my long walks each day. I pray to them when I am sitting in a doctor's surgery or undergoing a scan. I think of them individually, and I often think about their own families in Poland, who must have suffered terribly. I think how scared they must have been when they learnt their fate. A couple of years ago I ordered a DVD on the story of the Blessed Sisters of Nowogrodek. It showed the township and the route the Sisters took each day to The Church of the Transfiguration. It showed the woods where they met their death. Often I picture them walking to the Church, then praying to Our Lord in Church, and I picture them being transported to the woods where they were executed. Perhaps one day I might visit Nowogrodek and pray in The Church of the Transfiguration and see the relics of the Blessed Sisters.

Now three years down the track, I still have ongoing three

weekly treatments (a form of chemotherapy) to keep the cancer at bay. But I am very fit and well, and I work part-time. I lead a much simpler but a fuller life than I did before I was diagnosed. When the doctors' comment at my progress and marvel at modern medicine, I just smile and know that the source of my strength and well being is also down to those amazing nuns who sacrificed so much and who are with me always. I do hope that the Church may recognise their place in heaven very soon!

I am so deeply appreciative of the Sisters of the Holy Family in Australia, in particular, Sr. Josita Paczkowska, and now Sr. Grace Rocławska, for allowing me to keep the relic for these last three years. Most importantly I am indebted to the Sisters of the Holy Family in Australia for continuing to pray for me. Thank you Sisters!

BY MARIA LUSBY

Prayer to the Nowogrodek Martyrs

O most blessed Trinity, we praise and thank you for the example of Blessed Mary Stella and Her Ten Companions, Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, who by imitating Jesus Christ, offered themselves as a sacrifice of love.

God of mercy and compassion, through the merits of their martyrdom and by their intercession, grant us the grace we humbly ask ... (insert intention here) ... so that like them, we may witness with our lives to the presence of the Kingdom of God's love and extend it to the human family throughout the world.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen

Blessed Martyred Sisters of Nowogródek, pray for us.



SATURDAY 30 APRIL, 2011 RENEWAL OF VOWS AND ASSOCIATION MEETING (MARAYONG)

THE Associates and Sisters gathered for the Mass celebrated in Our Lady Queen of Poland Convent chapel by Father Robert Doohan, parish priest of St. Luke the Evangelist Church in Revesby, NSW to witness the profession of temporary Vows by Sister Christine Ramada. Before her vows, Sister Christine was presented with a lighted candle and was reminded to “Hold fast to Christ, her light” by Sister Grażyna Rocławska, Provincial Superior. The Associates expressed their delight to be a part of her special celebration. Celebrations continued with a magnificent lunch in the meeting room of Our Lady Queen of Poland Convent. Sister Christine will make her Final Profession in February 2012.

IGNATIAN SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

ON the 26th of September I started a 30 day journey with God in a more intimate way through Ignatian Spiritual Exercises directed by the Jesuit Fathers in Pymble, Sydney, as part of my preparation for final profession.

Before I started the retreat I reserved some expectations and ideas on what I thought I needed to gain from the retreat. But God did not only give me what I thought I needed but also something more. He not only gave me a chance to spend time with Him but He also led me into a deeper understanding of who I am and who I am really called to be. He enabled me to share in what our Mother Foundress saw in the lives of the Holy Family.

This experience gave me a deeper appreciation of our charism and mission.

BY SR CHRISTINE MARIE RAMADA

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