

Ad Clerum

February 2023

Newsletter of the
Archbishop of Sydney
Circular No. 1/2023

A Short Message From Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP

***Dear Fellow Priests and Deacons
My Fraternal greetings to you all!***

We began the new year with the sad news of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI's passing and then ten days later, the sudden death of Cardinal George Pell. It's difficult to overstate the influence that both of these loyal servants of Christ had, and continue to have, on the Church in Australia and especially here in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

The overwhelming presence of so many of you at St Mary's Cathedral for Cardinal Pell's funeral offered a powerful witness to his legacy. The fruits of his contributions to the Church in Sydney were on full display at the Good Shepherd Seminary Year Opening Mass where I had the pleasure of welcoming seventeen new admissions, the largest intake in Good Shepherd's history. I ask for your continued prayers for all of our new seminarians as they embark on their journey towards the priesthood.

As we look forward to the beginning of Lent later this month, may we be inspired by the courage and faithfulness of Benedict XVI and Cardinal Pell.

I thank you for your unwavering support and prayers over the past few weeks. As always, please be assured of my continued prayers for all of you!

With my thanks and prayers.

+ Archbishop Anthony

2023

dates to remember

CAS Afternoon Retreat (with dinner)

17 February 2023

Hunters Hill Parish

Led by Fr Edmond Travers MSC

Clergy Conference

16 March 2023

Le Montage

**Interdiocesan Clergy Conference on
the Spirituality of Aging for Retired and
Thinking of Retiring Clergy (+65)**

13 April 2023

Seminary of the Good Shepherd

Intercultural Clergy Programme for 2023

1–3 May 2023-S1

21–23 August 2023-S2

6– 8 November 2023-S3

Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville

inside

Ongoing Formation

- ◆ 2023 Sabbaticals – PNAC
- ◆ 2023 – Tantur Ecumenical Institute

PLEASE PRAY...

For the repose of the souls of all our deceased clergy, and friends, especially for...

Mr Sandor Toth - RIP

9 February 2023

Former seminarian at Springwood and Manly, and long time caretaker at the Catholic Institute, Strathfield.

Fr John De Luca - RIP

18 January 2023

Former Parish priest of Maroubra Bay/Beach, Parish of St Mary & St Joseph.

Cardinal George Pell AC - RIP

10 January 2023

Former Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy, Council of Cardinal Advisers and Archbishop to the Archdiocese of Sydney and previously Archbishop of Melbourne.

Mr Mushtaq Barkat - RIP

3 January 2023

Brother of Fr Yacub Barkat, Parish Priest of Rockdale and Administrator of Bexley Parishes.

Pope Benedict XVI

(Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger) - RIP

31 December 2022

Pope Emeritus.

Mr Kevin Sullivan - RIP




19 December 2022

Brother of Fr John Sullivan (*retired*).

For those that are sick in our community...

Mgr Anthony Doherty, Mgr Vince Redden, Mgr John Usher, Fr Thanh Nguyen, Fr Joseph Aikkaramattam, Fr Peter Christie, Mgr Frank Coorey, Fr John Alt, Fr Don Willoughby, Fr Noel Short, Fr David Coffey and Fr Michael Kelly who are currently unwell.

For special anniversaries occurring in December, January, February and March

I ask that you download the attached lists:  (*February*)  (*March*),  (*April*) and pray for our brother priests who have gone before us and for those who are celebrating their Anniversary of Ordination.

I RECENTLY MADE THE FOLLOWING APPOINTMENTS

CLERICAL APPOINTMENTS:

Rev Simon Apablaza

Appointed Administrator of the Parish of Christ the King, Bass Hill from 21 April 2023 pro tem.

Rev Anthony Bernard

Appointed Administrator of the Parish of St Patrick, Kogarah from 6 January to 9 April 2023.

Rev Vijaykumar Boilla MSFS

Appointed Assistant Priest of the Parishes of St Christopher, Panania and St Patrick, Revesby Heights from 22 January 2023.

Rev Robert Borg

Reappointed a Member of the Archdiocesan Motor Vehicle Plan Committee from 1 January 2023 for a term of three years.

Rev Lawrence Cauchi

Appointed Parish Priest of the Parish of St Anthony of Padua, Clovelly from 1 March 2023 for a term of six years.

Rev Cassius Correya SDB

Appointed Assistant Priest of the Parish of St John Bosco, Engadine from 15 January 2023.

Rev Paul Durkin

Appointed Vice-Rector of the Seminary of the Good Shepherd from 15 January 2023 for a term of three years.

Rev Agustinus Handoko MSC

Appointed Chaplain to the Indonesian speaking Catholic Community within the Archdiocese of Sydney from 16 December 2022 for a term of three years.

Rev Luca Infantino

Appointed Assistant Priest of the Parishes of St Patrick, Summer Hill and St Thomas of Canterbury, Lewisham from 1 February 2023.

Rev Peter Krigovsky

Appointed Assistant Priest of St Mary's Cathedral Parish from 11 January 2023.

Rev Chrisantha Kumara

Appointed Assistant Priest of the Parishes of All Saints, Liverpool and St Therese, Sadleir-Miller from 9 January 2023.

Rev Michael Lanzon

Reappointed a Member of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Advisory Committee from 1 January 2023 for a term of three years.

Rev Mr Matthew Lukaszewicz

Appointed Deacon at the Parish of the Sacred Heart, Mosman, as well as the surrounding Parishes of Neutral Bay, Beauty Point and Clifton Gardens from 10 December 2022.

Very Rev Roland Maurer

Reappointed Chaplain to the German speaking Catholic Community and Episcopal Vicar for Immigration from 31 March 2023 for a term of three years.

Rev Joshua Miechels

Appointed Assistant Priest of the Parish of Sydney City South from 1 February 2023.

Rev Benjamin Saliba

Appointed Chaplain to the Legion of Mary, Sydney Senatus from 1 February 2023 for a term of three years.

Rev Peter Strohmeyer OSPPE

Appointed Parish Priest of the Parish of St Gertrude's, Smithfield from 18 February 2023 for a term of six years.

Very Rev Maurice Thompson

Appointed Administrator of the Parish of St Therese, Lakemba from 27 December 2022 pro tem.

Rev Moses Tamale

Appointed Administrator of the Parish of St Mary and St Joseph, Maroubra Bay/Beach from 15 January 2023.

Rev Jonathan Vala

Appointed Part-Time Assistant Priest of the Parish of St Ambrose, Concord West and Part-Time Lecturer at the Catholic Institute of Sydney from 19 January 2023.

NON-CLERICAL APPOINTMENTS:

Mr Marco Blanco


Appointed a Director of the Board of Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic Early Childhood Services Ltd (Company) from 24 August 2022 for a term of three years.

Mrs Ceinwen Kirk-Lennox

Reappointed a Member of the Archdiocesan Property Committee from 3 March 2023 for a term of three years.


ONGOING FORMATION OF CLERGY


ONGOING FORMATION CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2023

In 2023 Ongoing Formation of Clergy are proud to present a Calendar of Events which includes both Clergy Conferences and formation opportunities for all clergy. (*Download here*): 

Formation opportunities include afternoon retreats, workshops in Finance, People Management and Marriage Preparation.

The Worklogic courses on Conversations that Matter, and Professional Conduct in the Workplace will be offered again for those that were unable to attend last year. The Intercultural Clergy Programme will be rolled out in three separate stages and there is also an Interdiocesan Clergy Conference for Retired Clergy, and those aged 65 and above still in active ministry, being held at the Seminary of the Good Shepherd.

We understand that it would be difficult to attend all the workshops offered during the year and therefore ask that you express an interest in the workshops you would like to attend by right clicking *HERE*: 

The first clergy event for the year will be an afternoon retreat led by Fr Edmond Travers MSC who is well known to you all. The afternoon will be held on 17 February 2023 at the Parish of the Holy Name of Mary (Villa Maria), Hunters Hill commencing at 2pm including exposition, confession, evening prayer and finishing with drinks and dinner. You can still register for this event by clicking *HERE*: 

We hope to see you during the year.

OVERSEAS CLERGY INDUCTION PROGRAM

As you may be aware, the Ongoing Formation of Clergy Committee (OFCC) have been designing a program for Clergy who arrive from overseas to feel welcomed into the Archdiocese of Sydney. 2023 will see the first program given. The program runs for the entire year and will be given on the following dates:

1st to 3rd May


21st to 23rd August

6th to 8th November

All priests who have arrived in the Archdiocese from overseas are welcome to come. We are particularly inviting those who have recently arrived. The program will cover topics such as our rich Indigenous Culture, General

Information about the Chancery and who to contact in the Archdiocese, the Diocesan Structure, the Spirituality and History of the Church in Australia, the Pastoral Practice of Sacraments in Australia, Cultural Competency and understanding the richness of the culture each one brings to the Archdiocese.

There will be a mixture of information sessions balanced with free time and getting to know others.

If you would like to join us, please register here: 

We encourage you to come to all three sessions throughout the year as they make up a complete program.

One of the priests who attended our pilot program in November 2022 said:

"I had the best time this weekend. Not only was it enriching for myself, but I had so many questions answered... questions that I have had for years. This program has been a long time coming and I am so glad that we have this now in Sydney."

If you have any questions before registering, please contact: **Kylie Cullen** on **0403 453 620** or **Maria Cavallaro** on **0421 879 963**.

Fr Paul Monkerud
Chair, Ongoing Formation of Clergy Committee
For any enquiries please contact
Maria Cavallaro: 9390 5888
maria.cavallaro@sydneycatholic.org

RECOMMENDED ONLINE RETREAT

Options for clergy who are interested can be accessed here:  and 

THE BOLLETTINO FROM THE VATICAN

Stay up to date with the latest news from the Vatican: 

CENACLES OF PRAYER FOR CLERGY

You are invited to the Cenacles of Prayer for Clergy. It takes about 40 minutes and is followed by fellowship with tea, coffee and snacks.

The cenacle is held on the second Wednesday of the month at St. Bernadette's, Carlton at 1.30 pm and is hosted by Fr Gabriel Ballawig. **All are welcome.**

IMPORTANT MATTERS

Anniversary of the National Apology

The 13th of February 2023 is the 15th Anniversary of the National Apology. In 2008, the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd apologised to the Stolen Generations – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were forcibly removed from their families, their communities, and their Country by laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments.

"Through hearing the resilient stories of the Stolen Generation survivors there is now a willingness for Australians to join in the healing journey" (Healing Foundation). This is the spirit of the anniversary.

Dr Lisa Buxton
Executive Officer
Aboriginal Catholic Ministry

FROM SYDNEY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Back to parish initiative

Last year, Sydney Catholic Schools began a 'Back to Parish' initiative. This initiative aims to strengthen the relationship between our school and parish communities by increasing the regular Mass attendance of students and parents. Through this, it is also hoped to strengthen our sense of community and people's participation in and contribution to our Catholic faith community.

Traditionally, Catholic primary schools have supported their local parish by encouraging parent attendance at Sunday Mass. Normally, this has been achieved through the planning and conduct of 'family Masses'. In many instances however these have been 'ad hoc' and have had no real impact on people's regular attendance. The back to parish initiative aims to address this.

Primary schools are being asked to work with their local parishes so as to develop a more systematic approach. In addition to the year groups involved in 'sacramental preparation', it is hoped that each class group will have specific occasions throughout the year when all families attend Mass together. This will look very different from community to community and will be determined by local circumstances.

While Sydney Catholic Schools actively promotes family Masses for particular Year Groups, it encourages all families to attend Mass each and every Sunday.

While the working details of the initiative should be planned at the local level, broader questions can be directed to the Director of Mission and Identity, Mr Anthony Cleary

anthony.cleary@syd.catholic.edu.au or **0477 373 411** or a member of the Mission and Identity Directorate. Deaneries may wish to invite Anthony to one of their meetings to discuss the initiative and to look at models of implementation.


Survey of religious attitudes and practices

In 2022, Sydney Catholic Schools conducted a survey of Religious Attitudes and Practices with students in Years 5, 7, 9 and 11. The survey was developed to gain a deeper understanding of the religiosity of young people in the Archdiocese of Sydney and to inform approaches to, and models of, youth ministry.

The Director of Mission and Identity, Mr Anthony Cleary (anthony.cleary@syd.catholic.edu.au) has offered to present the findings of the survey to parishes and/or deaneries. You may wish to invite Anthony to an upcoming meeting to discuss the results of the 2022 survey, and the relevance of the longitudinal data 2014-2022.)

From the Liturgy Office

The Liturgy Office has a number of courses on offer, please see attached the list for the first part of 2023.


Please remember that your parishioners need to register in advance and so that we can keep the number of participants at a reasonable level 

All the best. The Liturgy Office team.

*(Dr) Mariusz Biliniewicz
Director, Liturgy Office*

Safeguarding Newsletter

Parish Safeguarding

I would draw your attention especially to the attached newsletter  from the Safeguarding Office, which explains the importance of verifying the Working With Children Checks for your volunteers. Currently some parishes are in breach of the law, and may well be fined. The purpose of the verification process is so that the Office of the Children's Guardian is able to notify you if one of your volunteers is the subject of a Reportable Conduct notification (which has already happened in several parishes). If you have any questions about how to ensure your volunteers are verified, please contact **Anna Sammut** as soon as possible on **02 9390 5811**.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

As we enter into a new year, it's well worth taking the opportunity to re-examine our records and archives in order

to ensure that we are caring for them appropriately. As summer can mean outbreaks of pests and changes in atmospheric conditions, listed below are some simple tips you may wish to take into consideration.

To keep your records safe, ensure that:

- Your building (not necessarily the records themselves) is sprayed regularly for insects.
- Food is not left out in the same place as the records.
- Major fluctuations in temperature and/or humidity are avoided.
- Storage areas are opened regularly to check whether conditions have changed.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact the Archives on **9390 5430**.

*Lienntje Cornelissen
Digital and Archival Information Services Manager*

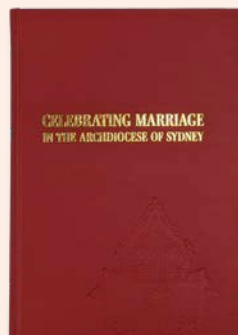
Marriage Forms – updated versions available on Sydney Clergy Intranet and Parish Intranet

Please note there have been updates made to the following editable marriage forms:

- Permission for Mixed Marriage/Disparity of Cult
- Prenuptial Enquiry Form

Please delete all previous versions of these forms and download the updated version. Please contact Lynelle if you require further information – lynelle.lembrink@sydneytribunal.org.au

Red Book Pastoral Tip No. 17



"Sometimes a PP is asked if a non-Catholic Priest or Minister could use the Catholic Church building for a wedding. The reasons for this can be many and varied. In general Catholic Churches are reserved to celebrate Catholic ceremonies only. Any exception would require

careful discernment but sometimes permission is given. If such a request is made to a PP and he supports the request, he should consult further with the Chancery before a final decision is made."

Fr Julian B Wellspring EV JV


Mental Might 19

When we find ourselves being impatient, even cranky, because the world isn't moving in the way we want, we can stop and reflect that this could be an opportunity to take a breath and slow down for a mental health moment.

Dr Robbie Lloyd

Research & Project Officer, Justice and Peace Office

Plenary Council Website

What are we called to do?
Who are we called to be?
How do we need to change?
For all your Plenary Council needs and resources, please go to this website: 





SYDNEY CENTRE FOR EVANGELISATION

The Lenten Companion

Our Parish Renewal Team has created a Lenten Companion to support the faithful of Sydney as they meditate upon the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ.

Printed copies of ***SPIRIT AND TRUTH: The Power of Christ Revealed*** have been distributed to priests and par-

ishes of the Archdiocese, and the resource is also available for download on the GMD website  It contains Gospel readings for the Sundays of Lent until Easter Sunday, and spiritual reflections on the Gospels by Bishop Richard Umbers, Sr Joanna Marie Collins OP, Fr Lewi Barakat, and Elizabeth Flynn MC.

Our Team will once again provide online training on **How to Lead a Lenten Group** for parishioners who would like to use the resource to lead others in prayer. This simple initiative could serve to build up new leaders within your parish, and to strengthen community life, so feel free to invite or encourage your parishioners to lead a group. Those who would like to attend the training may register at: 



Rite of Election




This year's **Rite of Election** will be held at Saint Mary's Cathedral on **Sunday, 26 February**. Please confirm the

attending number of catechumens and candidates, their respective godparents/sponsors, and the expected number of clergy as soon as possible. If you have already submitted the form and your parish details you received in early January and need to make adjustments, or need to be sent this form again, please contact **Simon Yeak** via **0427 536 356** or simon.yeak@sydneycatholic.org.

World Youth Day, Lisbon 2023

A reminder that WYD23 registrations and submission of deposits are still open; however, places are filling up quickly. Young adults are encouraged to place their deposit as soon as possible to secure their spot on their chosen pilgrimage.

Pilgrims will need to register via the below links for their chosen route. They also need to ensure they indicate the diocese/parish/group they belong to for group and accommodation planning.

1. Archdiocese of Sydney 'Footsteps of Jesus' World Youth Day Lisbon 2023 (SYD01) 
2. Archdiocese of Sydney 'Italian Roadtrip' World Youth Day Lisbon 2023 (SYD02) 
3. Archdiocese of Sydney 'WYD Direct' World Youth Day Lisbon 2023 (SYD03) 


Theology of the Body Institute Courses to commence

During Christopher West's tour in Sydney this past month, our Sydney Centre for Evangelisation announced our partnership with the Theology of the Body Institute (TOBI), meaning Catholics in Sydney and beyond now have more access to online and in-person courses on the theology of the body.




The first TOBI online course will introduce students to the key themes of John Paul II's 129 addresses on 'Theology of the Body'. Particular attention will be paid to the imago Dei, fall and redemption, Christian ethics and ethos, freedom and person, gender and vocation. Our Sydney Centre for Evangelisation will provide local support to all Australian students.

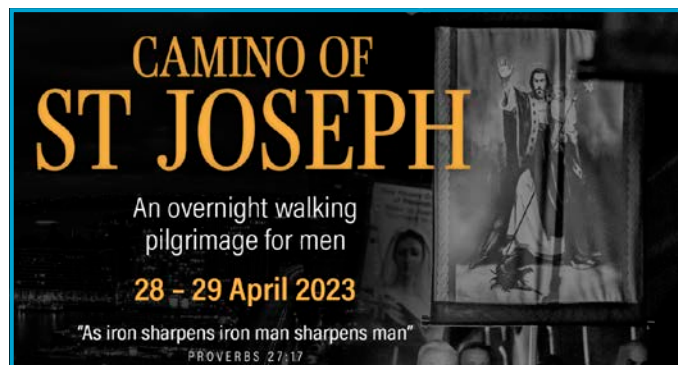
Course date: 17-28 April 2023

For more details including the course fees, registration and future TOBI courses in Sydney and online, visit: 



The Camino of St Joseph

The annual overnight walking pilgrimage for men in honour of St Joseph the Worker is on this year again starting on Friday evening April 28 finishing on Saturday morning April 29.

Further information regarding the route and detailed to be released soon. Priests can share the promotional video in their parishes in preparation at  (flyer also attached).



'MAXIMUS' Men's Ministry Network

The Sydney Centre for Evangelisation continues to offer the 'Maximus' network which brings together various men's groups within the Archdiocese, whose upcoming events and formation opportunities can be found at:  or on Facebook at  This is a centralised way for priests and parishes to connect with men's groups or ministries in their deanery or region.

Yours in Christ,

Daniel Ang

Director, Sydney Centre for Evangelisation


CLERGY REMUNERATION SYSTEM AND CLERICAL FUND INVITATION

Thank you to all clergy for your ongoing support of the System throughout 2022. It seems that 2023 will be another challenging year for many, and we continue to pray for peace throughout the world.

A few reminders from last year:

- Ensure collections are now being taken up (don't just leave a basket at the door etc).
- Recurring credit card/direct payments givers are encouraged to give to the first (and second) collection (ensure all new planned giving application forms include a space for a first collection donation amount (as well as second).
- Tap facilities should be setup with a split for first and second collections (split should reflect the loose collections being received).
- Baptism envelopes are to be distributed (eg attach the Baptism envelope to the enrolment form or the baptism preparation notes).
- Donations for weddings are processed as per the rules of the System.

Manly Union notice

The Manly Union invites all clergy to the St Patrick's Day Celebration at the Seminary on 15 March 2023 from 12 pm. Please read the letter from the new President, Fr Ian McGinnity, about the ongoing works of Manly Union. Please click on the link  for more information: *Letter from the new Manly Union President.*

With blessings and hope for 2023.

*Board of Management
Clergy Remuneration System*

Clerical Fund Management Committee notices

We were shocked and saddened to hear of the death of our brother, John de Luca, who departed this life on 18 January, so soon after the death of our former Secretary, Peter Maher. John's wisdom and intellect were integral to the Committee's deliberations and he, along with Peter, will be truly missed. May they both rest in peace.

We are pleased to announce that Fr Danai Penollar has agreed to join the Committee for the remainder of the term of the current Committee. We will seek to appoint another of our brothers to fill the position recently left vacant by John's passing.

Finally, the first meeting of the Clerical Fund Management Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, 14 March 2023. We appreciate receiving your claims (via the Claim Form) - by soft copy if possible - two weeks prior to the meeting date. Our new email address is: clericalfund@sydneycrs.org

Clerical Fund Management Committee

Jesus Light of the World Communities

HEALING RECOLLECTION

Fr REY SENTILLAS, MI

11 March 2023 (SATURDAY)

9:00 am – 5:00 pm (including Mass)

St Joseph's Parish Hall

Walz St, Rockdale, NSW (Parking Entry at Parker St.)

BOOKING ESSENTIAL: 

Enquiries: Helen - 0433455114 or Ida - 0424 267 500

Supply

To help cover our priests in parishes and to allow them to plan sabbaticals we are in search of men who are able to help out in the parish with supply. We are also looking for priests who are able to celebrate weddings on weekends all over the Archdiocese.

If you are able to help please fill in the form: 

Can you celebrate Mass in another language?


We often have calls asking for priests who can say Mass or minister to people in a foreign language outside those languages that are supplied by our foreign chaplains. This may be Mass but it also includes visiting the sick, the Last Rites, Marriage Preparation, and general pastoral care. We are currently working on a register of clergy who can say Mass in a language other than English.

If you are able to help please send an email with your name and the language you can say Mass in or fill in the form below.

Google form here: 

Sabbatical/Formation considerations

Engaging Your Faith

Engaging Your Faith is a series of online short sessions offering an opportunity to explore your faith through a variety of topics presented by lecturers of Catholic Theological College, including: Theology, Spirituality, Biblical Studies, Vatican II, Pastoral Studies, *Laudato Si'*, Christian Meditation, *Lectio Divina*, Interfaith Relations, and Science and Religion: 

Institute for Continuing Theological Education

Pontifical North American College – Rome

Please click on the link:  to find out what the PNAC is offering for Sabbaticals and formation in 2022/23.


Tantur Ecumenical Institute

Please click on the link:  to find out what Tantur is offering for Sabbaticals in 2023.


Important News about WWCC renewal

Please note this important information from the Office of the Children's Guardian:

PERSONAL DETAILS MUST BE UPDATED

Everyone who holds a Check is now legally required to update their contact details, including any name or address changes, within three months – just like your driver licence. And like your licence, penalties will apply for people who don't update. Updating your details is simple – go to  and follow the directions. You can even find your Check number here if you don't have it to hand.

Office of the Children's Guardian

For information and to renew your WWCC number click here: 

Please advise the Chancery when you have updated your WWCC number.

With my best wishes.
Yours fraternally in Christ



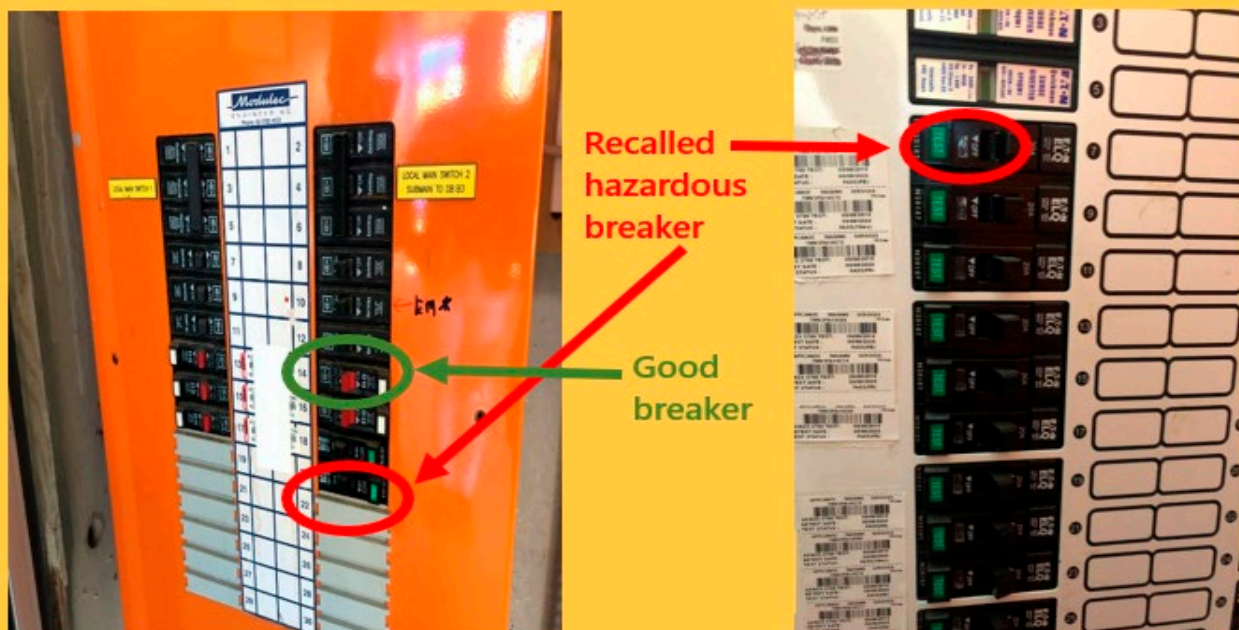
Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP
ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY

THE LAST WORD: WORK HEALTH & SAFETY



Electrical Safety

Product Recalls & the
importance of regular testing



Have RCDs tested bi-annually by your electrician

See the Parish Intranet Site
for all your WHS needs:
sydarch.org.au/parish



AGENCY NEWS

For February 2023

From CatholicCare

A shining light in Sydney's prisons

By Peter Carrol MSC,
Institutional Chaplaincy Manager,
CatholicCare Sydney

Operating in a place of punishment and despair, the role of prison chaplains is critical in our community. While a single bad choice, or a cascade of ever-increasing foolish choices, can lead to incarceration it is worth remembering a listening ear and genuine care can bring hope despite the lack of freedom.

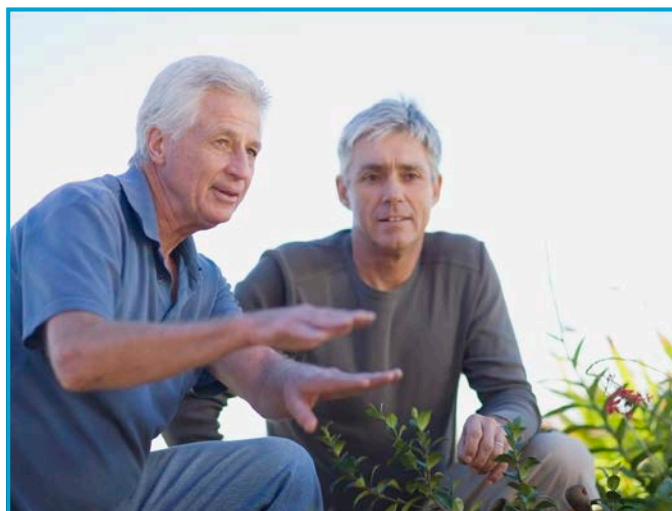
Many prisoners, or inmates, carry burdens of poor self-image, mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and lower socio-economic backgrounds, leading to a damaged sense of vulnerability and that of being an outsider. From the moment they enter the prison system, they are virtually and literally stripped bare and have nowhere to hide. Time spent in prison is a period without privacy, controlled access to family, and restricted movement.

Providing a non-judgemental ear and an open heart, prison chaplains have a role to play in addressing people in prison experiencing vulnerability and assisting them on their path to rehabilitation. Not only to support and serve but also to care and help with healing. This also provides chaplains with an opportunity to share the Gospel with those in need, bringing to life the Scripture from the Book of Ruth: 'Wherever you go, I shall go'.

Time spent in prison is a period of fear, facing challenges,

self-reflection, understanding, and hopefully peace. Not only for those incarcerated but also for those visiting, including prison chaplains.

There is a genuine and understandable fear when confronted with the reality of good and evil. However, the importance of presenting oneself as open-minded and unprejudiced cannot be denied. It is this attitude, along with compassion, that encourages those in prison to speak honestly and feel safe in expressing their feelings and concerns.



The challenges faced by **prison chaplains** go beyond spreading the word of the Lord to a hesitant or suspicious audience. The real challenge lies in making a difference and providing sense to people who have lost their freedom and are often struggling with despair, anger, and hopelessness. The environment is a challenging one and providing hope can be difficult, but it is not insurmountable.

Theologian Karl Rahner spoke of self-reflection in his address to prison chaplains when he said, "We are not essentially different from the prisoners whom we visit in prison. It is only circumstances distinguish us and we must be grateful to God for these circumstances".

The realisation that 'there but for the grace of God go I' is an uninvited insight and one that demands a prayer of gratitude, it is a reminder that any of us can stray from the path and the life of freedom we experience is at times only by accident and not necessarily by design.

Become a CatholicCare Companion

CatholicCare is searching for volunteers to be with people as they experience times of change, challenge and uncertainty.

If you are a good listener who is caring, non-judgemental and compassionate, we'd love to hear from you.

To find out more, please call Jacqui Willoughby, Volunteer Co-ordinator on 0426 773 658 or 13 18 19.

To find out more call

131819

[Catholiccare.org](https://catholiccare.org)

✉ connect@catholiccare.org

 **CatholicCare**

Understanding the meaning behind imprisonment, and the demand for punishment and rehabilitation can make the role of the prison chaplain easier. In his sermon at the Jubilee for Prisoners Mass Pope Francis directly addressed those in prison, telling them it was necessary to pay a price for their crimes, however, they must never lose hope for the future.

"Paying for the wrong we have done is one thing, but another thing entirely is the breath of hope, which cannot be stifled by anyone or anything," "By learning from past mistakes, you can open a new chapter of your lives. Let us never yield to the temptation of thinking that we cannot be forgiven" Francis said.

Forgiveness can lead to peace, which then finds its way into the hearts and minds of prison chaplains and those they visit in a variety of ways, particularly through companionship.

This journey is taken further with the CatholicCare Companions program, ensuring not only companionship but also community welcome, connection, and a better sense of belonging.

Assisting individuals upon their release from prison, CatholicCare Companions helps redress the fears held by many upon their release from prison.

"I am very worried that what I know is socially unacceptable... things that kept me alive in the predatory world... what scares me is that I don't know a lot of things Joe Citizen takes for granted... what really worries me is that the things that I don't know about everyday life will lead me back to the things that I do know (how to steal a car in less than a minute, how to cut heroin...)" Long Bay Correctional Centre inmate.

Prison Chaplains offer pastoral care to inmates, their families, and employees at Long Bay Correctional Centre, Silverwater Metropolitan Remand Centre, and Silverwater Women's Correctional Centre. Following release, CatholicCare Companions step in and provide the presence of another person, one who is there to listen and lend support, not as a friend but rather as a connection to a community that cares and can bring positive change into life after prison.

CatholicCare Companions offers companions for people at all stages of life, facing all kinds of challenges, whether it be post-prison release or after a long stay in hospital or a mental health facility, after a diagnosis of a life limiting illness or simply when they need someone to walk beside them.

We are always looking for volunteers to join the CatholicCare Companions Program, so if you know someone who could help, please call **Jacqui Willoughby**, Volunteer Co-ordinator on **0426 773 658** or **CatholicCare's CCareline** on **13 18 19**.


Safeguarding

Upcoming 2023 Mandatory Safeguarding Training for Clergy

Please note:

All sessions will be held in a Training Room at the Polding Centre, 133 Liverpool Street, Sydney unless otherwise stated. **Please attend Level 5 Reception on arrival.**

To register for training, please email:


safeguardingtraining@sydneycatholic.org or phone **9390 5811**. After you have registered for training you will be sent a confirmation email 

Are you verifying Working With Children Checks (WWCC)?

The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) has brought to our attention that some of our Parishes and Chaplaincy Communities are not actually verifying their workers WWCC. Verifying a WWCC is a legal requirement and there is a fine for not verifying.

What is a Verification?

It is important that when a worker provides you with their WWCC number you verify this on the OCG website via the Portal specific to your Parish or Chaplaincy. This informs the OCG that the person is working or volunteering for your organisation and if for any reason there is a problem the OCG can contact you and let you know there is an issue with their WWCC.

The below link takes you to a short 2-minute video that provides you with information from the OCG website about verifying a WWCC 

Is a WWCC the same as a Police Check?

The main difference between a WWCC and a police check is that the Working with Children Check is an ongoing assessment.

Once an application for the WWCC has been approved, that approval will last for five years. However, throughout that period, the information will be monitored. A police check on the other hand, is considered a point in time check. It is proof of a criminal history check, up to the point of application, and it is not monitored or reviewed until a new application is submitted.

Is your Parish or Chaplaincy "Registered" to verify WWCC's through the OCG Portal?

All Parishes and Chaplaincies must register with the OCG via an online form by entering your organisation's name,

