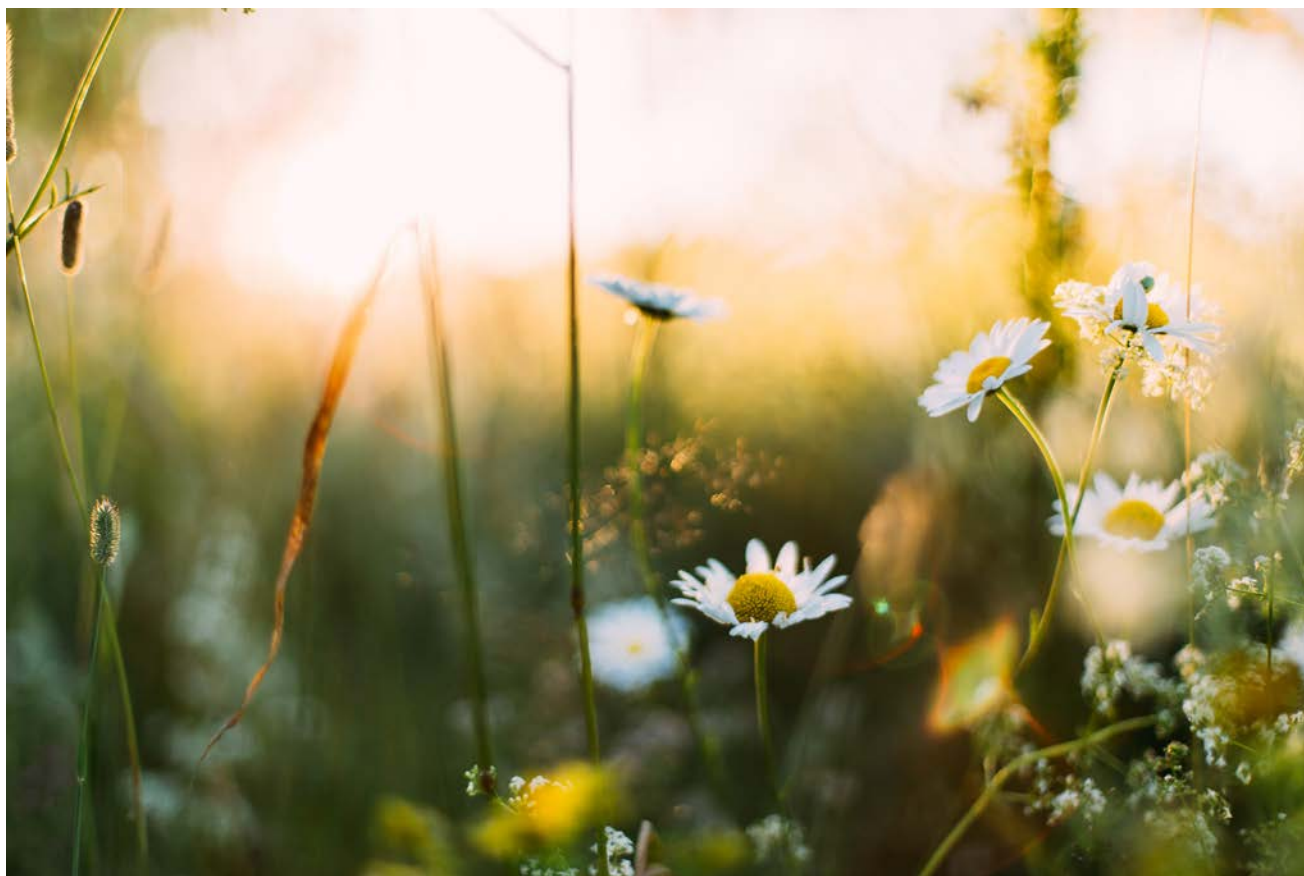


I N F O R M

*Catholic Women's League Archdiocese of Sydney
August/September 2022*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The weather is finally warming up and hopefully the rain will stay out to sea. September being Father's day we pay tribute and pray for all fathers; past, present and future. Fatherhood is to be valued and supported as it is one of the most valuable assets a child and family can have.

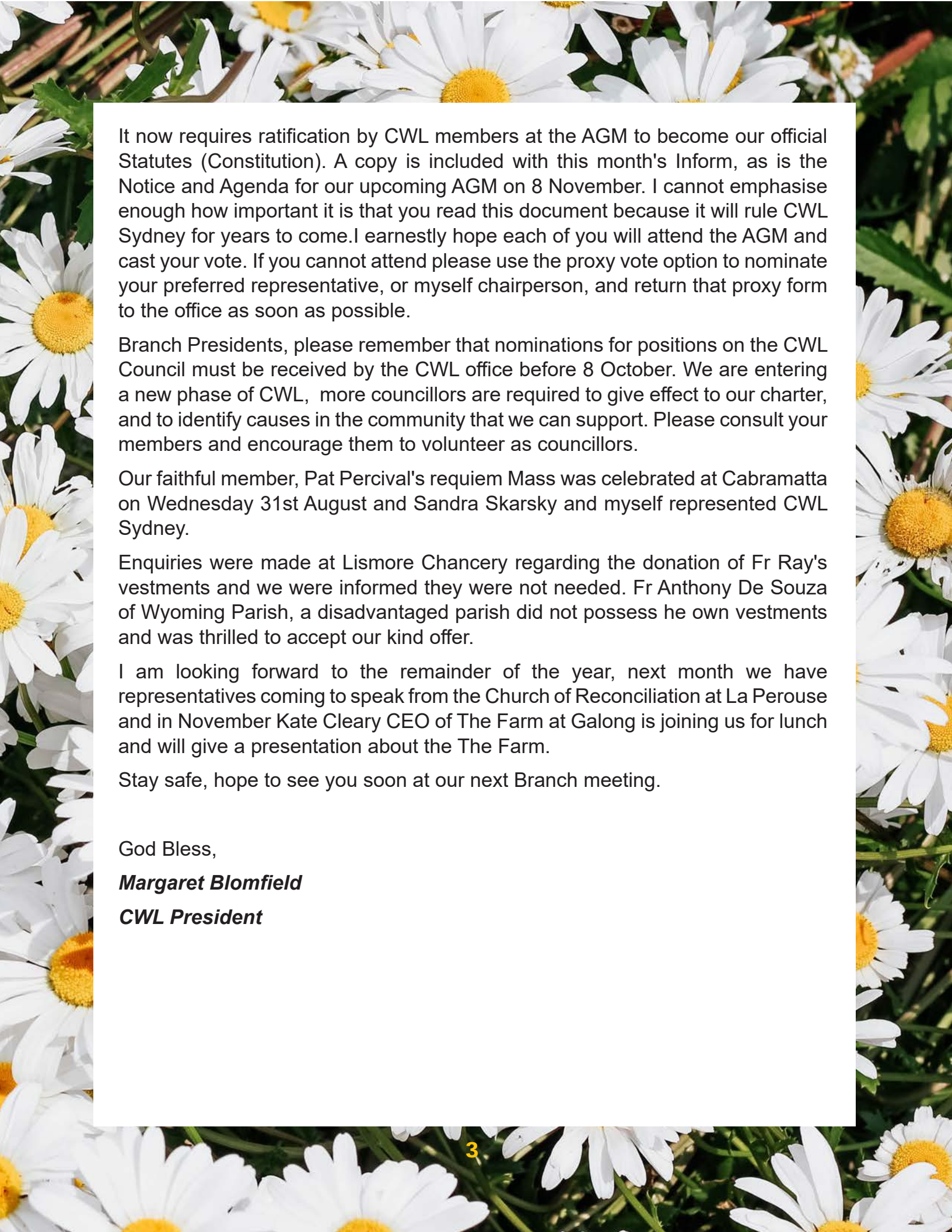
Prof. Kathryn Goozee from KaRa Minds at North Ryde spoke on Brain training and the various forms of dementia at the July branch meeting. The KaRa Minds centre focusses on delaying dementia and in depth studies of the brain and the disease.

The Annual CWL Mass was celebrated by Father Greg Morgan and although numbers were small, the day and lunch was enjoyed by all. Diahanna Senko from the Ukraine Crisis Appeal was Guest speaker and enlightened us on the situation in Ukraine and the support they provide including their methods of fundraising.

Our project to donate Doonas to the Ukrainian CWL at Lidcombe was very successful due to the generous support of the branches, Five Dock Parish and Branch, Dalton Gardens and members. Eleven single doonas, covers and sheet sets, 11 Queen doonas, covers and sheets sets along with 16 Coles and Big W/Woolworths gift cards to the value of \$50ea were delivered to Olga at CWL Lidcombe for distribution to the displaced Ukrainian families.

The project of the year, The Farm in Galong aims to provide a place of restoration for women affected by substance abuse. The aim is reunite families and re-introduce participants to the workplace with various programs. The Farm was setup in 2017 when a convent on three acres on a beautiful rural setting near Cootamundra was offered to the group. The site is ideal for the program, offering residents a quiet environment away from the pressures of modern life.

Events of the past few years have demonstrated some deficiencies in our current by-laws (Constitution) so I asked our solicitor to review that document and if appropriate, to recommend changes. A new constitution (for legal reasons now to be called "Statutes") has now been formulated by our solicitor Josephine Heesh and our Canon Lawyer Dr Rodger Austin. The statutes have been reviewed and approved by the CWL Executive and by CWL Council.



It now requires ratification by CWL members at the AGM to become our official Statutes (Constitution). A copy is included with this month's Inform, as is the Notice and Agenda for our upcoming AGM on 8 November. I cannot emphasise enough how important it is that you read this document because it will rule CWL Sydney for years to come. I earnestly hope each of you will attend the AGM and cast your vote. If you cannot attend please use the proxy vote option to nominate your preferred representative, or myself chairperson, and return that proxy form to the office as soon as possible.

Branch Presidents, please remember that nominations for positions on the CWL Council must be received by the CWL office before 8 October. We are entering a new phase of CWL, more councillors are required to give effect to our charter, and to identify causes in the community that we can support. Please consult your members and encourage them to volunteer as councillors.

Our faithful member, Pat Percival's requiem Mass was celebrated at Cabramatta on Wednesday 31st August and Sandra Skarsky and myself represented CWL Sydney.

Enquiries were made at Lismore Chancery regarding the donation of Fr Ray's vestments and we were informed they were not needed. Fr Anthony De Souza of Wyoming Parish, a disadvantaged parish did not possess he own vestments and was thrilled to accept our kind offer.

I am looking forward to the remainder of the year, next month we have representatives coming to speak from the Church of Reconciliation at La Perouse and in November Kate Cleary CEO of The Farm at Galong is joining us for lunch and will give a presentation about the The Farm.

Stay safe, hope to see you soon at our next Branch meeting.

God Bless,

Margaret Blomfield

CWL President

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Dear Sisters in Christ,

It was a real joy to catch-up with many of you at both the WUCWO Mass in May and at the annual Mass for CWL in the Archdiocese of Sydney in July. Such occasion provides us with an opportunity both reconnect with each other in the solidarity of our Catholic faith and to reflect on the past, present, and future of our mission as members of the League.

One of my ministries as a priest is to lecture in philosophy. I am thoroughly enjoying this, especially the interaction with students of various backgrounds. One of my students pointed out to me recently how unfortunate was that the work of so few female philosophers are often discussed and, when they are discussed, it is often exclusively under what can be a rather narrow banner of “feminist approaches”. In my homily at the annual Mass, I decided to draw on the philosophy of Saint Edith Stein (providentially, it was also her feast day that day) whose work I have recently come to appreciate with new vigour. I truly believe that in the life and witness of Edith Stein we find a powerful example for the CWL to follow in our own time. Thus, I leave you with these words for further reflection and invite you to invoke her intercession for the growth of this wonderful organisation.

As always, be assured of my love and prayers for you all.

Fr Greg Morgan

Homily: CWL Annual Mass 2022

“Lay all your cares about the future trustingly in God’s hands and let yourself be guided by the Lord, just like a little child...” It is no doubt providential that this year’s CWL Mass in the Archdiocese of Sydney takes place on the Feast Day of Edith Stein (Saint Benedicta of the Cross). For Edith Stein is often upheld as a “witness to authentic Catholic feminism”.

Edith Stein was born in Poland in 1891 and died in 1942 - during the Second World War. She was Jewish but gradually gave up on faith altogether, saying that, by the time she was a young adult, she abandoned prayer altogether and became an atheist.

Now Edith was an incredibly precocious woman who possessed a tremendous intellect (PhD in Philosophy, 1917). But it is only in the last few decades that scholars are beginning to appreciate the profundity and depth of her philosophy; particularly in terms of her contribution to a method in philosophy called phenomenology. Sadly, because she was a woman and because she was Jewish, her thought was all too readily dismissed in academia during her life time, and she lamented how unfair it was that was always overlooked for Professorships.

However, it is the spiritual struggle of Edith Stein’s life that is most important. During the early stages of her academic career, she suffered with severe depression. In fact, she once wrote the following, rather ominous, words: “I gradually worked myself into real despair ... I could no longer cross the street without wishing that a car would run over me... and I would not come out alive...”

So, what changed this discriminated, depressed, atheist into a beloved, luminous, saint? Well, quite

literally, it was a single book. By chance, one evening she picked up the biography of St Teresa of Avila. So enthralled was she by the writing that she read the book all through the night. And by morning, she simply said "This is the truth." Ultimately, Edith Stein joined the Carmelite Order and entered the convent in Cologne and was given the name St Teresa Benedicta of the Cross.

Perhaps most consequentially, on entering the convent she consecrated herself not only to her vocation but she also told Our Lord that she was ready to give her life for the sins of the world. That's quite a prayer to pray.

This brings me to the fundamental point I want to make: Certainly, there is much to be said about her intimate knowledge of the Cross — she was a woman who really suffered but came to know the creative power of suffering — but she was also a woman who came to embody the "child-like" nature Our Lord encourages in today's Gospel. Hence, she advised: "Lay all your cares about the future trustingly in God's hands and let yourself be guided by the Lord, just like a little child..."

Even when she was writing one of the most sophisticated works of her life, *The Science of the Cross*, she expressed the same Gospel sentiment: "I am going about my new task — the writing of the *Science of the Cross* — like a little child making its first attempts at walking."

An Annual Mass is an opportune moment for us to reflect on where we have been and where we are going as an organisation. And although there is much we might extrapolate from the words of Saint Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, there is one thing I think she would want us to really hear today: "let yourself be guided by the Lord like a little child..." What does that mean? A child is always willing to reform; a child is always willing to try new things; a child is never interested in status-quo; a child is natural innovative.

And, so, I ask us all to reflect: what have we done over this past year that is new? What have we done this past year to disrupt the status quo? What have we done this past year to innovate? And, going forward, I also ask us to reflect: what plan do we have going forward that allows God to lead us to do something new? What are we going to do over the next coming year to avoid keeping the status-quo? What are we going to do this year to innovate?

The secret to the spiritual health, welfare, and apostolic vitality of any Catholic organisation is its ability to be child-like (not childish): and this disposition has nothing to do with one's biological age — the Saints were always "young"; they were always attractive; and they were always willing to begin again from scratch if necessary.

As many of you would know, Saint Teresa Benedicta's prayer was heeded. She was eventually tracked down by the Nazis as a Jewish convert, and executed with her sister, Rosa, at Auschwitz. Yet, never did she lose that child-like trust. Everything, she said, "come[s] down to my one topic: how important it is to learn to live at God's hands." Her final words to her sister were: "Come, we are going [to die] for our people."

Pope Emeritus Benedict once said: "It is not the sporadic majorities which form in the Church here and there that determine the path she and we will take. The saints are the true, crucial majority, and it is from them that we take our bearings. Let us stick to them! They express the divine in the human, the eternal in time". My prayer is that the CWL will draw on that conviction — to be part of the crucial majority of the saints; not the sporadic majorities that are here today but gone tomorrow.

Ukraine Crisis Appeal



Diahanna Senko from the Ukraine Crisis Appeal was Guest speaker at our August Branch meeting. It was bittersweet to hear how much assistance the Ukraine require but endearing to see how Diahanna and the Ukraine Crisis Appeal have fundraised so effectively to help their homeland.

Birthing Kits

On the 24th July Tex, Viki and I were warmly welcomed to the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) by their President Maxine Bachmayer to partake in the “Birthing Kit Packing Day”. Birthing Kits are distributed to pregnant women living in rural communities and low-resource settings around the world. They are designed to support hygienic practices and environments during childbirth in under-resourced settings. The majority of the kits are sent to sub-Saharan Africa. What is in a Birthing Kit:

SOAP – to wash the birth attendant’s hands and the mother’s perineum.

PLASTIC SHEET – to prevent the mother and newborn coming into contact with the ground or an unhygienic surface.

GLOVES – to cover the birth attendant’s hands and provide protection from infections such as HIV for carers and care recipients.

GAUZE – to wipe clear the newborn baby’s eyes, and to clean the mother’s perineum prior to giving birth.



A complete Birthing kit



Maxine, Tex, Sally and Viki packing the kits

CORD TIES – to cleanly tie the umbilical cord.

A STERILE BLADE – to cut the umbilical cord and reduce risk of newborn tetanus and infection.

The items are laid out on the gloves, wrapped tightly, placed in a plastic bag which is then “burped” so the air can escape and therefore more kits can be packed for distribution. Tex & Viki were excellent “burpers” me not so proficient!

After a couple of hours 1,000 kits were packed ready for distribution. The cost of the items for the kits are \$5.00 and the funds were kindly donated by the Pinshaw Family Foundation. We found it a very rewarding way to spend a Sunday afternoon and to continue the tradition of CWL Sydney supporting the annual NCJW “Birthing Kit Packing Day”.

Sally Fennell

Mary Cook's experience on the Feast of Corpus Christi

The Corpus Christi Sunday afternoon "Walk with Christ" was held after two years in lockdown on June 19. Many Sydney Parishes organised themselves under banners.

I saw the Archdiocese's CWL banner and other Catholic Organisations. Our Ryde Gladesville group was led by Fr Daniele with fellow parishioners, Our youth were very well represented.

The Procession began at 2.30pm and was led with the canopied Blessed Sacrament. This was accompanied by sung hymns and the Rosary. Booklets were given out so all could follow and join in the liturgy. The travelling sound system

was excellent and worked so effectively.

We arrived at Martin Place and filled St Mary's Cathedral forecourt to capacity.

Archbishop Fisher addressed the people on the traditional meaning of Pilgrimage.

He then followed the Monstrance around the crowd blessing the people. Benediction followed given from the top of the Cathedral steps.

People disbursed through Hyde Park happily smiling and greeting one another. The afternoon was a joyful and prayerful experience.

Mary Cook
Ryde Gladesville Branch

To the President,

Catholic Women's League Sydney

Dear Margaret

On behalf of my sister and I, This is a short reflection of the assistance that the Scholarship has provided us last term.

After receiving the scholarship, my sister and I felt relieved and blessed knowing that God was with us and by his grace provided us with this gift. We have been progressing well in our studies, but with the new laptops we are far more efficient and self reliant in our work, and will be for the present and into the future.

The scholarship fund allowed us to purchase laptops that help us in so many ways, thanks to the Catholic Women's League Sydney for our scholarship. We are well prepared for school now, especially in our preliminary term which is the most important in setting us up for HSC success. Now, it is easier for us to study and go back to our work from earlier in the year.

We are aware that the scholarship is a recognition of our hard work and passion in embodying Christianity and recognising how strong we are in our faith and for that we are extremely grateful. The scholarship has shown us our hard work and embodiment of Christ are not going unnoticed, and since receiving the scholarship, we have now been able to reach our goals and complete our work with persistence, passion and effectiveness.

So thank you to the Catholic Women's League Sydney who sent this miracle our way and God Bless.

Doors open for women in the Curia

The Roman Curia consists of numerous departments now known as dicasterys, which form the central administration of the Vatican, to assist the Pope in the governance of the church. Previously the dicasterys could only be led by Cardinals and those in Holy Orders.

On 5th. June 2022 Pope Francis implemented a new Constitution for the Roman Curia known as Predictate Evangelium, in English, Preach the Gospel.

In the preamble it stated that the Popes, Cardinals Bishops and other ordained ministers, are not the only evangelisers in the Church. The power of governance and responsibility, does not come from ordination into the priesthood, but from a mission entrusted to individuals by the Pope. This opens the doors for women to participate in decision making processes within the Curia.

On 13th May 2022, Maria Lia Zervino, the President General of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations WUCWO, together with two other women were appointed by Pope Francis to the Dicastery for Bishops. They will serve by the will of the Pope, in the process of identifying and electing new diocesan bishops.

WUCWO must now increase the preparation and experience of members, in the specific fields in which the Church may call them to serve. Areas such as judges in matrimonial courts, formation teams for seminaries, ministries such as listening, pastoral care, human rights etc. where women, by their nature, function equally, or sometimes better than men.

These topics will be discussed and debated at the

WUCWO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14 – 20 May 2023

Assisi, Italy

The Assembly will be preceded by an audience with Pope Francis in Rome, to which all women of WUCWO are invited. It will be the first time in the 112 years of WUCWO's existence, where a Pope has been involved in the preparation of the General Assembly.

Jay Turner
WUCWO Intl/Sec

St Ambrose Concord West Reflection Day

Starting with a delicious morning tea on the patio our monthly meeting followed. As this day was the Feast of St Bridget of Sweden we had the Readings of the Day and learnt about Bridget's life. A discussion followed about St Bridget, then the Saint's name we each took at our Confirmation. St Therese of the Little Flower was the most popular saint mentioned. One member took Saint Therese, Patron of Florists because she knew that would be her chosen career. The flower arrangements on the altar at St Ambrose church appreciates her choice and talent.

After sharing friendship over our lovely lunch we continued the spiritual part of the day by reciting the Seven Mysteries of Our Lady of Sorrows Rosary. The Theme of the Day followed. "What Do Trees Teach Us About God?"

With 36 species noted, trees are mentioned 293 times in the Old and New Testament. Other than God and people, the Bible mentions 'trees' more than any other living thing. There are trees on the 1st page of Genesis, in the 1st Psalm, the 1st page of the New Testament, and the last page of Revelations.

The Garden of Eden had the 'Tree of Life' and the 'Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. On Good Friday we recall the Tree when we venerate 'The Wood of the Cross.' Every major biblical character and every major theological event has a tree standing by it. Trees are God's investment in humanity's future. They are the only thing that God give a ring to on each birthday.

Trees

Joyce Kilmer 1886- 1918

I think I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God each day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that in summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose blossom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But God only can make a tree.

After discussing the poem, praying for the Universe and sharing the Readings of Pope Francis, the Bishops and "What Do Trees Teach Us About God?" We reflected on the words. "I believe in God the Creator of Heaven and Earth." We showed pictures and spoke of the natural elements, the spectacular landform, beauty achieved by nature and special scenery which makes us feel closer to our Creator.

Before concluding with the Vigil Mass at St Ambrose we enjoyed afternoon tea and further discussion about our universe and our need to respect and care for our trees and the beautiful world God created.

**Marion Ryan,
Concord West Branch**

Thank you Margaret

At the August Branch Meeting, Margaret Bouffler received her 2021 NCW NSW Jean Arnot certificate in recognition of her work in the community. This recognition is for women 90 years plus whom NCW NSW consider worthy of recognition. These nominations are considered by a committee. The selected women are honoured with certificates, recognising their commitment to the common goal of working to advance the status of women and children. They display the diversity of their dedication to that goal and provide an example of the many different ways a goal can be reached. Each awardee exhibits the strong characteristics of NCW NSW's founding leaders.

Margaret's recount of her life to date..

Margaret was born on 8th June, 1930, in Newcastle, the daughter of George Bouffler, and Violet Dougherty. Her older siblings are Marie (deceased) and Kevin.

Margaret was educated at the local Catholic Schools in Cessnock, Dubbo and Condobolin, where she completed her Intermediate Examination. Her first job was secretary to the secretary of Condobolin District Hospital.

Her father's transfer to Sydney as bank manager saw the family Margaret worked as a typist secretary, and in 1950 began working at MLC Life Assurance in Martin Place.

In 1955 she made her first trip to England, working during the winter months and hitching in the summer months. This trip allowed her to make lifelong friends (and great accommodation) for many of her subsequent trips!

After her return to Australia in 1956 she began work at William Collins Book Publishers, initially as a secretary. She worked her way up in the company, eventually becoming the Australian Manager for Collins Liturgical Publications. This involved travel all over Australia, selling liturgical books to all denominations.

Orders used to take several weeks to arrive from Scotland where they were published, so she had to encourage booksellers to "order big" so they would not run out when the book was popular.

During this time she was a member of the Xavierian Club, a group that had Catholics from all parts of Sydney, which met regularly for social gatherings, and great speakers.

Margaret sees her membership of the Theresians as a very important part of her faith. This group of trained people ran Sunday School for Catholic students who attended State Schools. Many of the students came from migrant families, so part of their work involved visiting the families in their homes to explain their work. After they had completed their training, they were able to wear the Theresian uniform.

Margaret retired from work in December, 1985. She negotiated with management to keep her company car, in the same way that male employees did. She was the first female to do this. A great achievement!

In 1986, both she and her friend Noelene Kelly purchased a Nissan Urvan, and spent the next six months travelling around Australia (anti-clockwise). This was the start of many trips both locally and internationally.



Margaret joined Enfield Branch part of Catholic Women's League (CWL) Sydney and began her long connection with this group. Before too long she became a CWL Sydney Councillor. She took a great interest in the library, recommending titles to members, and updating the library with books and publications, some of which were religious, while others were secular, and much easier to read.

As a Councillor, Margaret saw that it was important to increase membership, so with the support of Parish Priests she spoke at Masses about the CWL, and was able to help with the formation of new branches at Drummoyne, Five Dock and Concord West. She also helped to save Fairfield, which had been in danger of closing. Margaret was also instrumental in the formation of the CWL Sydney Evening Group for "younger" working women and this group met monthly for many years. On average eight members met and enjoyed a light meal provided by Margaret.

Margaret has attended many CWL conferences, in 2017 Margaret was awarded Life Membership of CWLA NSW Inc for her dedication and continuing work in its role of supporting and encouraging women's standing in society.

Throughout her life Margaret has been able to knit and sew. Once she retired these skills have been used to make items for sale to raise funds for various charities. Margaret's specialities include aprons, neck pillows, embroidered hand towels, especially with grub roses, shopping bags covered with distinctive and unique fabrics.

Margaret moved to Cardinal Freeman Village in 2001 and has been part of village life. Even though she has slowed down a little (no more driving) she is still keen and enthusiastic, participating as much as she can, still reading and crafting.

Doona Drive for Ukraine Refugees



Pictured here is a recently arrived couple from the Ukraine with Olga, Ukrainian CWL, Lidcombe receiving doonas, linen and gift cards to assist them and their family.

On 29th May 2022, the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League invited the Catholic Women's League Australia, to pray for the women and children in Ukraine, at a special Mass, in St Andrew's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Lidcombe.

Through connections made at this special celebration, the CWL decided to assist the fundraising drive for Doonas and linen required at St Andrew's for recently arrived war-affected Ukrainian Refugees.

Thanks to all members, branches, Five Dock Parish and Dalton Gardens, Ryde we were able to assist abundantly.



CWL Executive team with some of the donated doonas, bedlinen and gift cards.

Vale Patricia Percival

6.5.1922 to 23.8.2022

Pat had been a member of Catholic Women's League since 2004 with the Fairfield Branch.

Pat was a very active member of her Parish of Sacred Heart Cabramatta but as there was no CWL branch there she happily joined Fairfield. Pat was a Catechist for many years about 50 years and was the co-ordinator for many of those years.

Her four sons attended Patrician Brothers College at Fairfield so she was very involved with all sorts of ways helping out there.

Sadley Pat suffered the loss of her husband 33 years ago and also the loss of two of her six children, her son Bruce in 2018 and her daughter Marilyn in 2020.

Pat was a wonderful and lovely person, a Lady through and through. She travelled with me to meetings in the city for 10 years and we both enjoyed our time together chatting about our families.

Pat enjoyed her day at the Jean Arnott Luncheon and being presented to Dame Prof. Marie Bashir very much and the garden party at Government House when CWL celebrated our 100 years in 2013. There were many other outings too, our Fairfield branch bus trips always included Pat.

Pat will be sadly missed by all of us. 100 years is a long life, and her life was very full and blessed in many ways and she has earned her room in our Father's house. She was very dear to me. May she rest in please.

Sandra Skarsky



In Memory Prayer

Lord of life and love,
as we give thanks for times past,
grant us courage to embrace the
present
and grace to share the future.
In memory of loved ones dear,
kindle their flame to shine in the dark
and light the path ahead.
Show the way that leads to life
as we cherish days gone by
and inspire us with the touch of love
that faith and hope live on.

Days for Girls

Whilst at the NCJW for “Birthing Kits Packing Day” the President Maxine Bachmayer showed me another project that their members are participating in - “Days for Girls”.

On seeing the sanitary care kits I immediately thought of Tex and on showing her the shields she said that yes I can sew those and took 100 unmade shields to sew at home. What a trouper! My sewing skills are limited to taking up hems by hand and darning so I couldn’t volunteer but Tex’s sewing skills are exceptional.

Days for Girls create components that go into reusable sanitary care kits for girls and women in developing countries. When access to menstrual pads is lacking school days are lost.

Components of Day for Girls kits: 8 liners, 2 shields, 1 washcloth, 2 undies, 1 hotel soap, 1 transport bag, info sheet – all in a draw string backpack.

Sally Fennell



Brain training



Associate Professor Kathryn Goozee from KaRa Minds at North Ryde spoke on Brain training and the various forms of dementia at the July branch meeting. The KaRa Minds centre focusses on delaying dementia and in depth studies of the brain and the disease.

Branch News & Diary Dates

Upcoming Events:



ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

You are warmly invited to join us for a beautiful video by Dean Parkin where he recounts the First Nation people's epic journey across our great south land.

On October 9 at our Monthly Branch Meeting 10.30am

Guest Speakers:

Kelly Wylde & Lisa Bukston from the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry, La Perouse

Reminder:

We love hearing about the happenings at our Branches. If your branch has an upcoming event or exciting news to share please let us know!

Contact us:

cwlsydney@sydneycatholic.org

(02) 9307 8383

*Become a Diocesan Member of the
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Cost: \$40

I am willing to receive information by email: YES/NO

Please return with remittance of \$40 to:

Catholic Women's League
Archdiocese of Sydney
Level 8, 133 Liverpool St, Sydney 2000

Ph: 9307 8383

Email: cwlsydney@sydneycatholic.org

Thank you!

*If you wish to join a Branch as a branch member
please contact the CWL Sydney at the above details.*