

The Immigrant Apostles' Creed



I believe in Almighty God, who guided the people in exile and in exodus,
the God of Joseph in Egypt and Daniel in Babylon,
the God of foreigners and immigrants.

I believe in Jesus Christ, a displaced Galilean,
who was born away from his people and his home, who fled
his country with his parents when his life was in danger.

When he returned to his own country
he suffered under the oppression of Pontius Pilate, the servant of a foreign power.
Jesus was persecuted, beaten, tortured and unjustly condemned to death.

But on the third day Jesus rose from the dead,
not as a scorned foreigner but to offer us citizenship in God's kingdom.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the eternal immigrant from God's kingdom among us,
who speaks all languages, lives in all countries, and reunites all races.

I believe that the Church is the secure home for foreigners and for all believers.

I believe that the communion of saints begins
when we embrace all God's people in all their diversity.

I believe in forgiveness, which makes us all equal before God,
and in reconciliation, which heals our brokenness.

I believe that, in the Resurrection, God will unite us as one people
in which all are distinct and all are alike at the same time.

I believe in life eternal, in which no one will be a foreigner
but all will be citizens of the kingdom where God reigns forever and ever. Amen.

(Rev. Jose Luis Casal, Director, Presbyterian World Mission)

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NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

Melbourne

At the time of the publication of our last Newsletter, we were unable to report on some of the events and concerns occurring in Melbourne around Easter. We begin with those updates, followed by the activities of the last few months.

We were all shocked to hear just before Easter that Mark Lockwood, Lauren's husband, had become seriously ill and was rushed to hospital. After some time in hospital and in rehab, Mark was able to return to his home in the Dandenongs. Mark and Lauren have been receiving on-going support from their local Quaker community and we have been praying for Mark's continued recovery.

On Palm Sunday, we held the Holy Week reflection at the Kildara centre. Kathy Wayland, Dinny Culican Ward and Andrea Venier presented material based on a woman's (Miriam's) perspective of the events leading to the Passion. It was a good opportunity to have some quiet space and thoughtful discussion on *Receptivity* and the approaching Easter season. There were about twelve present, but news of it attracted wide interest so we hope we will see more of these like-minded people in the future.

On the Tuesday evening of Holy Week, Kathy and Andrea had the good fortune to participate in *The Last Corroboree*, a Last Supper ritual and meal with an indigenous focus, held at the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry. It was a moving and enriching experience, and we would highly recommend it to interested members and friends. The prayer stones we purchased for the Grail National Assembly were made by a local indigenous woman who works with the Ministry. We hope to grow our connection with the Ministry in the future.

In early April, many of us were delighted to spend a Saturday afternoon at Dinny's 85th birthday party. It was a happy time spent with her family and friends, and included a piper performing some Scottish favourites while Dinny joined him in singing. We enjoyed sharing in the anecdotes and expressions of gratitude for her amazing life thus far!

We had more celebratory news when Jo Flynn married her partner of 20 years, Joan, in mid-April. We wish them many more years together of good health and happiness. Although belated, the Melbourne group is planning a party later in September to carry on the good cheer.

Our annual Big Morning Tea fundraiser for the Cancer Council and the Christina Ghobadi Foundation was held in late May. It was a wonderful, warm event with twenty-six attendees. Special thanks to Kathy and Daryl Wayland for hosting and to Vali Ghobadi for setting up items for sale. Everyone came attired in a wide variety of head gear in support of Ann Niall who was undergoing chemo treatment at the time. Our reflection was a heart-felt remembrance of loved ones taken by cancer and a boost to those courageously fighting the disease. We raised an amazing \$1,015! This will pay for three wellness grants for young people dealing with cancer as well as a donation to cancer research.

Thinking about other members who have been unwell, we are pleased that Joanna Waite and Alice and Kevin Ley seem to have improved. Irena Dunn's condition was finally diagnosed and she has been much better, and we are glad that Ann Niall has finished her six months' course of chemo and radiation and is doing very well. She will have 'top up' treatments for the next two years. We admire the courage and vitality of these dear women.

We have had visitors in and out of 'Hesed' this year. Alison has been down from Sydney a couple of times over recent months and we hosted Mary and Ken Hanley while they were in Melbourne for medical treatment. There will be more visitors in the coming weeks. In the meantime, our *lectio divina* reflections continue every fortnight at 'Hesed' and are well attended and rewarding

experiences. Kathy, Irena and June Ryan are in the process of designing bathroom improvements for 'Hesed'. The Body Corporate is also arranging necessary exterior renovations.

May and June were also busy times pre-paring for the National General Assembly (NGA). The Melbourne participants (Genny Grabau, Carol Farmer, Dinny, Kathy and Andrea) wish to thank Sydney members, especially Tricia Gemmell and Anne Day, for their wonderful work and hospitality. We congratulate the National Team on the inspiring program. We also want to acknowledge Mount St Benedict's and its staff for their care at many special events we have held there over the years.

We are grateful to June and Laurie Ryan for hosting our last two Regional Meetings. June has also offered to produce a new batch of Grail cards, now that we have ironed out some of the production glitches.

Andrea has been liaising with Catalyst for Renewal in Melbourne to advertise *An Evening with John Allen Jnr: Pope Francis and the Devolution of Responsibility to the Local Church*, which will be held in September. This promises to be a most challenging discussion and, so far, numbers attending are quite strong. We will help with hospitality on the night.

We wish to acknowledge recent deaths of family members of some of our Grail sisters.

We remember Bé Marujo's mother, Maria do Rosario. Bé is a member of the Portuguese Grail who spent a couple of years at 'Hesed' in the 1980s working with us on setting up the Yarraville Neighbourhood House. She had cared for her mother at home and then visited her daily in the nursing home, over many years. Helen Gomez' sister, Mary, died in Singapore recently. Helen's niece, Collette, is Mary's daughter. Collette and her husband Mark attend many of our Melbourne events and are good friends. We remember, too, Brian Mennis, who died a few months back – husband of another Mary and Alice Ley's brother-in-law. We pray for peace for all our sisters and their families.

We acknowledge, too, Evelyn Gigacz, who died a few weeks ago. Evelyn was a former resident at 'Tay Creggan' and long-time friend of The Grail, as was her husband, John. The family generously remembered The Grail in their prayers at Evelyn's funeral and asked those present to make a contribution to our work in Melbourne. We thank them sincerely and pray for them all.

Finally, we want to inform you that Andrea is stepping down from her leadership role in Melbourne for the next few months to help with the care of her mother, Gemma. Regular activities will be maintained with assistance from other members, but development will be scaled down during the rest of this year.

Andrea Venier

Sydney

First, a brief overview of some regular scheduled programs and then a variety of other events and activities that have engaged us since our last Newsletter in April.

Every Wednesday evening, 7:30 – 9 pm, a group meets at the Grail Centre, 'Avila', for *lectio divina* – reading a text together, silent contemplation of the text, concluding with a time of free sharing of any insights or comments. We are reading the Gospel of Luke and have reached Chapter 8. No pre-reading necessary, feel free to join us at any time. Tricia Gemmell is leading two programs: 'Women of Vision', bi-monthly on Tuesday mornings, entails a collective reading and discussion of interviews with sixteen Grail women responsible for founding The Grail in a range of countries in all six continents. The title of this program is taken from a book in which these interviews have been

published, by Marian Ronan and Mary O'Brien (Grail USA). There are two meetings left to run in September and November.

'The Grail meets *Laudato Si*' relates Pope Francis' encyclical to the vision and mission of The Grail. The meetings are monthly on Saturday mornings, 10 am - 12 noon. The next and final session is on 8th September. Each session, while part of a series, has its own discrete topic, so new participants are welcome at any time.

As for our monthly Book Club, convened by Sonia Mrva, our most recent choice was Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, celebrating its bicentenary this year, which *easily* provided thought-provoking material for a night's discussion. We talked about modernity, atheism, romanticism, electricity, original sin, science and social responsibility, the atomic bomb, contemporary experiments with 'creating life', acceptance and exclusion, and more, would you believe. In September, we take a leap to contemporary American literature with Lionel Shriver's *The Standing Chandelier*.

Working as we do in collaboration with a number of organisations and groups engaged in the same areas of mission, the weeks fly by. We have been active in the Working Group of the Australian Fair Trade and Investment Network (AFTINET) since its inception in 2000. This year's fund-raising dinner in May was particularly successful as AFTINET's reputation for reliable information and consistent campaigning on justice in trade agreements continues to grow.

The Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia (ISRA) invited two Grail members to their Spirit of Ramadan Iftar Dinner in June. Our association with members of ISRA goes back eight years. They are always generous sharing their resources; and this interfaith dinner, with prayer, a reading from the Koran, a poem of Rumi, tributes to friends of other faith traditions and warm conversation, was a fine example of this. Fr Chris Riley, CEO of Youth off the Streets, was the guest speaker, held in high regard for his work with Muslims, especially his assistance in building an orphanage in Aceh, Indonesia, after the tsunami of 2004.

The Columban Mission Society celebrated a centenary this year with their characteristic hospitality. A large number attended a Eucharist and dinner (another interfaith gathering, since Christian-Muslim dialogue is a work of the Columbans in Sydney) and, again, two of us were invited to enjoy the delight of community with many friends.

On Earth Day, the New South Wales branch of the Australian Christian Meditation community organised a gathering where Rev. Linda Chapman was the principal speaker. Linda is an Anglican priest and founder of Open Sanctuary, a contemplative community at Tilba Tilba, committed to sustainable living principles. From her deep faith she drew her listeners into a greater awareness of the profound interconnected-ness of creation and our personal need to cherish this.

The Catholic Archdiocesan office for social justice held a day in May that focussed on two issues: solar energy and anti-slavery projects. Kathleen Molony of the Anti-Slavery Network shocked us with the information that there are approximately '4300 slaves in Australia at present'. This Network is connecting with victims of mistreatment and oppression, especially migrant workers.

If you haven't seen it and get a chance to do so, we recommend the documentary film, *Disaster Capitalism*, the result of six years' research by writer Antony Loewenstein and film-maker Thor Neuriter. Promoted by Aid/Watch and Jubilee Australia, the film takes us to Afghanistan, Haiti and Papua New Guinea to show the dark side of West-ern aid, when, after a disaster in a country, global aid funds from governments with political objectives combine with investments from multinational corporations seeking assets and profits, and so gain control over future developments in the receiving

country. In other words, the film addresses the question, ‘When aid and politics meet business, who really gains from the global aid industry?’ and urges action for change.

Looking ahead into September and October, Catalyst for Renewal and The Grail are jointly presenting on 9th September this year’s [Rosemary Goldie Lecture](#) by John Allen, American journalist and specialist in Vatican affairs. The topic will be *Pope Francis’ Efforts for Reform: Implications for the Australian Church preparing for its Plenary Council*.

Speaking of the Council, we will try to contribute to the renewal and reform of the Australian Church through our submissions and activities. At the same time, we are seeking to encourage the participation of young adults in this project of personal and community growth in the Spirit.

We were happy to hear that, on October 13, Pope Paul VI and Bishop Oscar Romero (El Salvador) will be acknowledged as saints of the universal church. We plan to celebrate on that date with an evening Eucharist and meal at the Grail Centre, beginning at 5 pm. Monday 15th is the feast day of Teresa of Avila after whom our Sydney house is named. We shall include her in our celebrations, too.

Helen Gomez has been twice back to Singapore and Malaysia in recent weeks, as two of her older sisters died after long periods of illness. The first was Sr Collette, a Sister of the Good Shepherd in Singapore; the second was Mary, a well-known and respected educator, who was living with her husband, George, in Johore. We share the sadness of loss with Helen and all the members of the Gomez family and pray especially for George in his loneliness.

Very recently we joined the Barnes family in the Uniting Church, Epping, to farewell Nan, aged 93, who died in her sleep in Northaven Nursing Home, Turramurra. The funeral service was a warm celebration of Nan’s wonderfully open-hearted life, a blessed occasion for everyone there.

Alison Healey and Sheila Hawthorn

Brisbane

We have had a wealth of gatherings this season. In May, June and July we met at Justice Place and studied the book, *Women of Vision*, by Marian Ronan and Mary O’Brien (Grail USA). *Women of Vision* is based on research and interviews with 16 founders of the International Grail movement in various countries which we felt deserved our close attention. Leading the sessions were Tricia Gemmell, on holiday from Sydney, Ann Aboud, Jill Herbert and Helen Jeffcoat. We tried to bring the chapters to life, adding stories of our own meetings with these Grail women and how influential they had been. The program was well attended - and the splendid afternoon teas enjoyed by all.

In August and September, we have scheduled a two-part series of reflections on contemporary movements in spirituality. The first was *Reflecting on Contemporary Eco-Spirituality*, presented by Janet Galos, drawing on the insights of Elizabeth Johnson, Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry, Denis Edwards and others. Janet focussed on why we need a new spirituality for a new era and the qualities of this new spirituality. Janet is a teacher who has studied theology and follows related interests in eco-spirituality, Christian feminism, Indigenous spiritualities and meditation.

The second reflection in September is titled, *The Wind Blows Where it Chooses* (John 3:8) and will be led by Kevin Treston. He will ‘explore why movements in contemporary spiritualities are emerging in the Christian world today: what cultural and religious influences in our world, especially in Western cultures, are both generating a recovery of traditional spiritual practices and nurturing new

expressions of spirituality'. Kevin has worked in a ministry of teaching and consultancy for many years throughout Australia and in several other countries.

We are indebted to Judy Brown for arranging for these talks to be held at Delamore Village, Kedron, and to Ann About for organising these events which are indeed food for the soul. After which, we are all looking forward to our November retreat on Bribie Island.

Helen Jeffcoat

Townsville

On Tuesday, 31 July 2018, at the Ville Resort (Casino), the Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG) Inc. celebrated 25 years of positive contributions and achievements and courageous responses to challenges, in service of the multicultural community of Townsville. It is a work done in collaboration with many other services and individuals, including migrants and refugees now Townsville residents. The TMSG addresses communal and individual needs of migrants and refugees and seeks their participation in and contribution to an enhanced quality of life for our multi-cultural society.

The celebration began with a breakfast event featuring presentations by Marie Sellstrom from Rural Australians for Refugees, Abdul Razaaq, an asylum seeker living in Dandenong who shared his journey and philosophy of 'Don't give up, give back,' and Mi Mi Khaine, who, from her own experience, highlighted the challenges of settling in Townsville.

There was a book launch also of a beautifully presented publication documenting 25 years of migrant and refugee resettlement in North Queensland and the role of the TMSG.

I sat in the room and observed the many people present and realised how many I knew personally from my work with TMSG and with the Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma. This wonderful celebration was made especially enjoyable for me by the presence of Sheila Hawthorn who had been President of TMSG Management Committee for many years, providing support for refugees and migrants in their resettlement.

While Sheila was here, we enjoyed a happy evening with Deb Pennington and Cheryl Bacchini - dinner and lots of conversation. As a relatively new Grail member, I learned more about Grail activities in Townsville emanating from their home over the years. Then Sheila and I spent a valuable morning together reviewing and organising accumulated Grail resources and correspondence for their future archiving. In all, a stimulating time.

Archbishop Emeritus Leonard Faulkner, described as 'a modest Catholic of great influence' died in Adelaide in May. Before being appointed to the leadership of the Archdiocese of Adelaide, he was Bishop of Townsville (1967 – 83), where The Grail was responsible for the St Raphael's Women's College on the University campus. Always interested in our activities, he became a long-time friend. Mourners at his funeral were reminded that 'he was the first bishop in Australia to include a lay woman in church governance and to remove sexist language from liturgical texts'. Leonard Faulkner encouraged people and trusted in their integrity. May he rest in peace

Consulata Sakaria

National

Our National General Assembly gathered at Mount St Benedict's Conference Centre, Pennant Hills, Sydney, over the long weekend in June, Friday 8th to Monday 11th. As usual, we collectively funded the meeting, sharing costs so that members however far away they lived could attend. So a good, and lively, representation from our various regional groups gathered across 1600kms for a very enjoyable and encouraging few days.

Drawing from Judy Cannato's book, *Field of Compassion: How the new cosmology is transforming spiritual life*, Elizabeth Lee set the spirit of the weekend, 'We are the ones we have been waiting for'. And the Melbourne group gave evidence of this from the start with what seemed to me to be a beautifully focussed introductory prayer ritual.

The next days were given over to the usual things that must be done at Assemblies. Summary reports, covering the years since the last Assembly, had been circulated in advance. These were prepared by the National Team and other teams responsible for national administration and projects, and from the

Regional Groups and work teams focussed in particular areas of Grail mission. We discussed these in terms of achievements and shortcomings, recommendations and future plans. Policy documents were reviewed and ratified for the coming period. The strategic plan drawn up in the previous year was re-affirmed, especially the focus on outreach and involvement of young adults.

Perhaps, this all sounds rather tedious, but the National Team ensured that sessions were presented in creative and engaging ways and alternated work of the head with nourishment for the heart and spirit. There was good energy throughout and I heard some say that it was the best Assembly we'd had for a while. We are grateful for the care and kindness we received from the Conference Centre staff. Our warm thanks also to Fr Geoffrey Bugden who celebrated the Sunday Eucharist with us in a hopeful and joyful spirit.

We are currently electing a new National Team who will offer leadership and support in the next four years. They will begin their term on January 1, 2019.

Alison Healey

International

The International Leadership Team (2018 – 2021) is well launched into a number of projects and activities. *Maria Carlos Ramos* (Portugal) has particular responsibility for the Nucleus members in the movement and has recently announced the International Nucleus Team who will support her in this work over the next four years. They are *Crista Werner* (Germany), *Avelina Kimaro* (Tanzania) and *Martha Heidkamp* (USA). We are grateful for their generosity in offering themselves for this important work.

REFLECTION ON INDIGENOUS ACHIEVEMENT NAIDOC¹ WEEK 2018

We live at a time when it is no longer possible to be ignorant of the incredible achievement of our Aboriginal peoples. I use the word incredible; because the early Western settlers and explorers who saw it with their own eyes and recorded it in their writings could hardly believe what they saw, and looking through the lenses of racial prejudice and desire for land, they often didn't recognise what was right in front of them, i.e. the knowledge and sophistication in Aboriginal culture.

The written records of those early settlers and explorers, however, are now providing historians and researchers with a very different picture of the first Australians from the one most of us learned in school. Bruce Pascoe, who wrote the very readable *Dark Emu*, looks at the evidence which shows that 'Aboriginal people *did* build houses, *did* build dams, *did* sow, irrigate and till the land, *did* alter the course of rivers, *did* sew their clothes and *did* construct a system of pan-continental government to generate peace and prosperity'. They were not 'hapless wanderers across the soil, mere hunter-gatherers'.

The truth was suppressed because the truth does not sit well with our story of colonisation. As Pascoe puts it, 'The underestimation of Indigenous achievement was a deliberate tactic of British colonialism'. Perhaps we can be proud that John Bede Polding, Australia's first Catholic Archbishop, was an outspoken and passionate advocate for Aboriginal rights. In his Lenten Pastoral Letter of 1849, he wrote: 'The wretched unfortunate Aborigines of the country – the first occupants of the lands over which your flocks and herds now roam – have a very strong claim upon you. Nor will the Lord hold you innocent if you have not used your best endeavours to promote their temporal and eternal well-being'. It was he who was largely responsible for these words in the Australian Bishops' Pastoral Letter of 1869, 'The Fathers of this Council...desire solemnly to lay upon the conscience of all who have property in these colonies the thought that there is blood upon their land'.

However, the unfortunate truth is that after Polding the views of Church leaders became part of the nationwide 'cult of forgetfulness', the 'Great Australian Silence' about the dispossession of Aboriginal Australia. I believe many Australians now are hungry for the truth. And the truth telling has well and truly begun.

We also need to know the truth of the Frontier Wars. Australian historian, Henry Reynolds, has devoted much of his life's work to researching this history of the conflicts between European settlers and the indigenous people. There seems to me to be a slowly rising tide of Australians who each year unofficially commemorate frontier war killing; furthermore, the debate about Australia Day is not going to go away.

Reconciliation must start with recognising and acknowledging the truth. And the truth expressed in the simplest of terms is this: our modern nation rests on the great tragedy of dispossession of Aboriginal Australians. It is true that we are not the ones who murdered and raped and pillaged to gain possession of the land, but we *are* the beneficiaries of those acts. And I believe we know this.

Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing in the Catholic Church. Expressed simply, it is the act of being sorry, of asking for forgiveness, and of being forgiven. I realise that reconciliation has much broader perspectives than this when we talk about reconciliation with Aboriginal peoples. However,

¹ National Aboriginal and Islander Day Observance Committee

it still has to start with acknowledging the truth and being sorry. And what is it to be sorry? It is to feel the pain of the other as if it were our own. It is to experience sorrow.

I love the way this sorrow has been expressed by Wendell Berry, famous American poet, writer, environmental activist and sixth generation Kentucky farmer. In an essay written in 1969, entitled *A Native Hill*, he takes a walk around part of his property. This is what he says: ‘The thought of what was here once and is gone forever will not leave me as long as I live. It is as though I walk knee-deep in its absence’. I wonder if this resonates with you. Have you felt something similar in your encounters with the Australian bush or desert or forest or sea shore? It is the pain of knowing our past. For Wendell Berry it is not only what happened to the American Indians that he mourns. He mourns too how the settlers quickly ruined the fertility of the land in their arrogance and ignorance. And that has been our Australian story too. Which brings me to my final reflection.

More than ever, in this time of ecological crisis, we have so much to learn from Aboriginal Australia, from both their agricultural and their spiritual achievements. To quote Australian anthropologist, Bill Stanner, ‘They do not enslave each other. There is no master-servant relationship. There is no class division. There is no property or income inequality’. That is not a bad place to start in imagining the future we want to create for this country. But I believe there will be no future of well-being for this country until we have reconciliation with our indigenous peoples.

And if you are of the view, as our Pope Francis clearly is, that the future of the whole world is currently hanging in the balance, because of humanity’s irresponsible use of earth’s riches, then you might like to look to the wisdom of our indigenous peoples, for whom care of the earth was a sacred mission in a cosmos in which there was no division perceived between the sacred and the non-sacred; everything was sacred.

‘The external deserts in the world are growing, because the internal deserts have become so vast’, says Pope Francis in *Laudato Si*. ‘For this reason the ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion’. Might I suggest that here too, in spiritual conversion, our indigenous brothers and sisters have much to teach us.

Tricia Gemmell, Grail Sydney

