



Photo by Dr Ruth Maltby at Mungo NP

Thy kingdom come

Teytey malkuthakh

May we desire, as deeply as you desire, that your compassionate and caring guidance will permeate the world and give birth to the loving unity of all things, the oneness that you desire.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Nehwey tzevyanach aykanna d'bwashmaya aph b'arha

May your heavenly heart's desire become the heart's desire of all of us during our lives on earth, as we are supported by this planet you gave us for our home.

A paraphrased interpretation from Aramaic of the Lord's Prayer,
Teilhard de Chardin on the Gospels by Louis M Savary, p54, Paulist Press.
Printed with permission.

CONTENTS

News from here and there	3 - 7
Brisbane Sydney	
The STOP Campaign	8
Sophie Aboud	
Catholic Mission Conference 2023	9-11
Tricia Gemmell	
Hope for the Bees and International Grail News	12

PUBLICATIONS

Global Justice Overcoming Poverty Bulletin

4 pages of short up-to-date reports and articles. Issued bi-monthly from January.

To receive a copy, contact info@grailaustralia.org.au

Available by email or by post if necessary.

Pacific Outlook Bulletin

4 pages on economic, social and environmental issues of the small island nations of the Pacific. Issues bi-monthly from February.

To receive a free copy, contact info@grailaustralia.org.au

Available by email or by post if necessary.

ADDRESSES

The Grail Centre
22 McHatton Street
North Sydney NSW 2060.
Tel. 61 2 – 9955 3053
admin@grailaustralia.org.au

Brisbane Grail
c/- Jill Herbert
14 Carawatha Avenue
Ferny Hills QLD 4055 (Brisbane)
vidler_herbert@aapt.net.au

Contact for The Grail Melbourne and Grail members North Queensland

admin@grailaustralia.org.au

Website www.grailaustralia.org.au

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE

Brisbane Calling

An Indigenous Voice to Parliament

Father Frank Brennan launched his book, *An Indigenous Voice to Parliament: Considering a Constitutional Bridge*, on 27 April in Brisbane as a joint initiative of St Ignatius Parish, The Grail and Garratt Publishing. Two hundred people filled the church and 100 listened online. Helen brought First Nations students from Brigidine College where she works to do the *Acknowledgment to Country*. Later, when talking to us Fr Frank reminisced that he had attended Brigidine College in Years 1 and 2. At that stage the College, run then by the Brigidine nuns, was from Year 1 to 12. All the books sold out – the mark of a good launch! Fr Frank's book outlined the 'Yes' and 'No' cases and 'Yes 23' campaign material was also available. This launch had been prompted by a flier of a launch in Sydney thoughtfully sent to Ann by the Sydney Grail. Louise Wellington, Chair of the St Ignatius Parish Council, leapt at the chance to invite Father Frank to launch his book in Brisbane. A sumptuous supper was provided by the Brisbane Grail – Darryl and Mary Nelson cooked all day! Even reluctant cooks dusted off their aprons and made jam drops, cupcakes, biscuits and all manner of slices. It was a very successful evening and an honour to be part of it.

In Her Voice- Australian Women Preach

The Grail collaborated with St Ignatius on their popular 'Women of Spirituality' Night on 25 July. Toni Janke, one of the *In Her Voice* podcasters not only appeared on the panel of speakers but entertained us with two songs. She had sung on the recent televised NAIDOC week celebration, so we were very fortunate to hear her in person. The topic was 'Nurturing the

nurturer' and we heard from speakers from a multi faith and multi race perspective. Helen sold books at the door and the Grail provided a delicious supper.

As an unexpected sequel to this event, the Grail was asked to speak at a seminar on 27 July entitled 'Breaking the Stained Glass Window' at St Francis Anglican College- giving a Catholic perspective regarding women in the church. Some quick research on the Vatican and the Australian Catholic Bishops websites gave an up-to-date account of Pope Francis' appointments of women in senior positions in the Vatican and in synods worldwide. A positive statement on Women from our Bishops had helped to mitigate some recent disappointments. Ann was able to tell people of Rosemary Goldie's appointments at Vatican II.

Helping Ethiopian Projects

Supporters of Ethiopia are forever coming up with innovative ways to raise money to support women in this wonderful country. The **Waltz and Schmaltz Duo** (Josephine Brown & Olga Lipsky) organized a Mother's Day Lounge Concert playing four hand classic piano pieces which raised money for midwives' wages at the Dakuna maternity clinic and other building projects, examples being replacing the fence to keep the hyenas and monkeys out. Once again Mary, Darryl and Ann laboured over the scones and jam that Josephine Vidler had baked. Some of us attended the **Barbara May Foundation** dinner and lectures on 2 June by Drs Andrew Browning and Judith Goh who perform fistula surgery and train others in Africa. Dr Goh said she had never experienced a maternal death in Australia and was shocked by daily deaths in Africa. The Foundation supports Valerie Browning in Afar and builds hospitals in

South Sudan and Uganda and other places in Africa.

Women of Vision still in sight

Ann has been asked to give her presentation on Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo to the Portuguese community. *Women of Vision* includes information on Maria Teresa Santa Clara Gomes, another significant Portuguese Grail member, which will hopefully expand the knowledge of the Grail in the Portuguese community.

Closer to home but travelling afar is Brisbane member Mary Mennis. She is now in China revisiting places where she and her late husband Brian taught almost 20 years ago. When they retired, they spent a year in China and made many friends there. Mary has always kept in contact and showed us photos from those happy times. We wish her a happy trip.

The Brisbane group is planning an inner-city retreat for November 1st this year – A day of reflection, prayer and togetherness. Watch this space if you are in Brisbane then.

Update from Antarctica



Dominic Vidler (Jill and Pat's son) continues to enjoy the icy surrounds of Casey Station in Antarctica. The first photo (above) is Dom completing the Mid-Winter swim (they made a hole in the ice

at what is usually the jetty area) and in the second photo Dom is dressed in proper gear for the deep south.

The Mid-Winter swim is a big event at all the stations and takes place on the Winter Solstice – or as close to this day as possible depending on the weather.



The water was about -2°C and the air temperature was about -20°C. The day continued with many celebrations, a fabulous four-course dinner and exchange of gifts – most of which were hand-made while on station. On the weekends some expeditioners walk on the ice to get to some of the outer huts. Dom loves these excursions. The Aroua Australis light shows have been amazing some nights. Dom feels the time is flying by as they count down to their return sometime in November/December.

Seeing Nkuli Mashabane

Some of us in Brisbane were overjoyed to see Nkuli Mashabane when she was here for the International Aids Conference. Nkuli is Zodwa Mabaso's daughter. Zodwa is a Grail member in South Africa and she was in Australia in 1986 and travelled to Brisbane, then came to Sydney for an International Grail Council meeting in 2015 when she was a member of the Grail's International Leadership Team. Some of us have also met Zodwa at other international meetings.



Many Grail members in Australia will remember when Zodwa's son, Nklankla (Michael), spent two years living with Pat Sheeran in Melbourne during the 1980s. During that time, he travelled to Brisbane to attend the Grail Pacific Summer School in January 1987. Nkuli was pleased to have followed her mother and brother to Brisbane and to meet some Brisbane Grail members.

Ann Aboud, Jill Herbert and Judy Brown

Sydney News

Refugee Celebrations

In June, Kay Hunt, Ruth Crowe and two of the teachers from The Grail project in Parramatta were delighted to accept an invitation from HOST International and Afghan Women on the Move to a **Refugee Week Celebration** in Parramatta. The theme for Refugee Week 2023 is connecting with stories of 'Finding Freedom' in Australia. We shared a 'success' story of one of our students.

Zena was a teacher in Afghanistan. Since arriving in Australia with her family the only work she could find was cleaning toilets in a hospital. She found her way to our classes where Martha Mollison helped her put together a CV, write some job applications, prepare for interviews as well as improve her English. As a result, Zena now has a permanent job with the Department of Education working with children in after-school activities. Not in the classroom yet, but she is working on that!

More recently we received a surprise invitation from our Uyghur friends to be guests at a special presentation, 'Tales of the Wind' – a night of Uyghur poetry, dance and food at the community centre in Auburn. While it was sometimes difficult to understand the poetry (presented in Turkic), the dancing was beautiful and socially, the evening was very pleasant and the food, delicious.

From Norma Tracey

We received an update from Norma Tracey in early July saying that she will be working at Koolyangarra Child and Family service, South Penrith as a consultant and a member of Nepean Community & Neighbourhood Services (NCNS). This is an innovative grass-roots organisation that works across the Greater Western Sydney, Nepean, Blue Mountains and Lithgow areas. Neighbourhood centres and the Aboriginal Family Centre are located in the Penrith LGA. Staff also support clients via our case management and care coordination programs from Blacktown to Lithgow and including Katoomba.



As a consultant in NCNS Norma explains: (1) I will have a little house in which to see the mothers with new born babies; (2) and the mothers who are pregnant, in separate groups; (3) I will be writing and sending out all our booklets and books from this service; (4) I will be available to go to or to do zoom sessions in rural and regional areas as requests come in. (5) Teaching is

certainly on the list and supervision is part of the program. In all this I will most certainly be supported with Dorinda Welle from New Mexico. Everyone involved is very excited about the program. I intend to send updated newsletters to keep you all in touch with how it is progressing.

Norma was also invited to be a Guest Speaker at the July gathering for ‘Spirituality on the Couch’ to celebrate NAIDOC Week with the theme “FOR OUR ELDERS”. She shared some deep insights into inter-generational trauma, as well as deeply moving stories of building trust between herself, non-Indigenous, and Indigenous mothers.

The Voice to Parliament

Together with many other ‘faith’ groups, The Grail in Australia supports an Indigenous Voice enshrined in the Constitution. In June, we attended the online book launch of *The Voice to Parliament Handbook: All the detail you need* written by Thomas Mayo and Kerry O’Brien and illustrated by Cathy Wilcox. As the campaign builds momentum a number of us are door-knocking around our local areas, as well as making phone calls. We have been trained in how to approach people who may think differently, and we all wish to have courteous and respectful conversations.



We have partnered with Creators of Peace to offer a workshop at the Grail Centre on Saturday, 9 September, to explore the steps we can take to engage constructively in

Challenging Conversation. Shoshana Faire from Creators of Peace, and Initiatives for Change, is a very experienced facilitator and practitioner who has run well over a thousand workshops in corporate, government and community contexts on the skills that contribute to better relationships, teams and meetings. She is passionate about building bridges across divides.

Reflection Mornings and Food for the Soul

Reflection mornings focusing on *Teilhard de Chardin on the Gospels* by Louis Savary SJ are held each month. These are well attended and we are enjoying the reflections and discussion very much. Savary’s paraphrase of the ‘Our Father’ from the Aramaic, the language Jesus used, is truly inspiring. A sample from this is on the front cover of this newsletter. Our *Food for the Soul – lectio divina* – weekly gatherings are also well attended. Liz Lee continues the Labyrinth Walks on the last Friday of each month, at 10am, at the Centennial Park Labyrinth. Liz uses the resource, ‘Walking with the Beloved in the Gospel of John’.

Grail in Australia Archives

For years ardent teams of people have spent many, many hours sorting, culling and filing Grail National and International archival material ready for permanent storage. Recently an archivist from the History Company, the group responsible for the formal process of appropriately packing and transporting the archives, has spent several days at Avila packing much of the material ready to be permanently rehoused.

That re-housel will be in the Australian Religious Archive at the University of Divinity in Melbourne, which is on Franciscan property in Box Hill.

“The Friars are delighted to welcome religious archives to St Paschal Estate,”

said Phillip Miscamble, Provincial Minister. We are also delighted because the Grail had a long association with the Franciscans at Box Hill, especially through Fr John Evangelist McCristal OFM. Fr John was not only Margaret McCristal's brother, but a very special friend of the Grail for many years. It is the actual friary, where all the men lived, that is being appropriately adapted for the precious archives.

Vale Bill Warner

We finish our news on a sad note. In early August, Bill Warner, husband of one of our Grail members, Fran Warner, went home to God after battling cancer. Bill has been part of our lives for many decades; he was a true friend, an advisor in a number of areas, and as many people said, 'He was a great guy, with a ready smile and a compassionate heart who lived life to the full'. Apart from the support Bill offered to

the Grail in Sydney, he and Fran spent a year in Uganda in 2005, working with the Grail in Kampala. They also visited the Grail in Tanzania and it was at the time when the Grail women there were thinking about setting up a Girls' Boarding School in a place called Mwanga. When they heard the news of Bill's death, Maria Goretti, one of the women who was instrumental in making the school a reality wrote, 'Bill and Fran have done wonders for Tanzania especially regarding the building of Saint Teresa of Avila Girls Secondary School and St Imelda's Pre and Primary School in Moshi. I have no doubt Bill has been received in heaven'.

We will all miss him dearly. May he rest in peace in the loving embrace of God and the ancestors. We send Fran, Alice and Will and their families special love and prayers at this time.

Ruth Crowe and Sheila Hawthorn

THE STOP CAMPAIGN



My name is Sophie Aboud and I am an advocate for victim-survivors of sexual violence. I am a leader of The STOP Campaign, a volunteer not-for-profit based in the ACT. I was also named the ACT Young Woman of the Year in 2023 for my activism in the sexual violence

space. Thank you for this opportunity to share a little bit about my own advocacy to support and empower people who experience sexual violence in Australia, the vast majority of whom are women.

The STOP Campaign formed in 2018 at the Australian National University, Canberra. I joined the Campaign in 2021 when I was a student at the ANU. I've since graduated from university, but I still lead the Campaign as a Board Director and program lead.

We work in universities and tertiary learning communities primarily in the ACT, but we currently have volunteers across Australia. Our mission is to have open and honest conversations about sexual violence and sexual wellbeing. We're passionate about empowering victim-survivors of sexual violence to achieve justice and healing, promoting accountability and positive behaviour change for people who perpetrate violence, and encouraging other young people to build safe and inclusive tertiary learning communities that are free from sexual violence and stigma.

The STOP Campaign's core projects include:

- Advocating for tertiary learning institutions to actively prevent sexual violence on campus, empower victim-survivors, promote accountability for perpetrators, and ensure that all tertiary students are safe;
- Creating educational resources on safe sex, consent, sexual and family violence, sex positivity, and accessing support services;
- Running peer-led workshops for students to prevent sexual violence and promote sexual wellbeing on campus;
- Leading workshops for young people (especially victim-survivors of violence) focused on empowerment, confidence and building connections; and
- Providing a platform for victim-survivors and their supporters to share their experiences and journeys towards healing.

I am currently leading the development of the College Program, which is a series of workshops with university students who live on-campus about sexual violence, consent, sexual health, and advocacy.

The most recent national data tells us that 1 in 5 Australian women have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15. While this is a shocking and very sobering number, the last few years have brought important legal and policy reforms which are largely the result of powerful advocacy work from women in our community. While there is still much work to be done, I am glad to see the beginnings of meaningful socio-cultural change towards a future where women can live without fear of experiencing sexual violence in any form.

I believe the core values that underpin my work with The STOP Campaign – respect, integrity and passion – align strongly with the work of the Grail in Australia to promote peace, justice and empowerment for all women. I am proud to stand alongside so many

incredible women in working to achieve communities that are safe, inclusive and peaceful. It reminds me that when we stand together, we are a force for change!

Sophie Aboud (granddaughter of Ann Aboud, Brisbane)

VALE LIZ



Elizabeth Lancaster was born in Mackay 70 years ago, the oldest of four children. For the past 40 plus years she was a very active member of the International Grail Movement and will be very sadly missed by them, especially by the Australian Grail community. Liz died in June after suffering ill health over the past few years.

As her brother, Michael, said in his tribute to Elizabeth, “a loving daughter and sister, special friend to many, a woman of great faith, kind in spirit and generous to a fault, always willing to put others first and help people no matter who they were – family, friends or strangers.” Her boundless hospitality to stranded Brisbane visitors and others will be forever appreciated by those she “took in” at quite short notice sometimes.

Being born into a very rich sugar care area of North Queensland and with her sharp clinical mind it is, perhaps, not surprising that she became a sugar chemist. Wanting a career change, she accepted a job offer with Alphapharm, a large international drug company with a substantial business in Brisbane. It was the start of a 40-year career with the company and she held several very responsible leadership positions. Again from Michael:

“She was affectionately known as the dragon lady by her staff, because of her being a stickler for doing things right and on time to the best of their ability. She was a good and loyal boss and was a great confidant to all her staff when in need, many becoming life-long friends both in Australia and overseas.”

Her strong Catholic faith was very important for Elizabeth and she practically expressed it by a life-long commitment to active helpful participation in her local Catholic Parish of Upper Mt Gravatt, Wishart. We know that Elizabeth was always very grateful for the many, many kindnesses shown to her by fellow parishioners and neighbours. May she now rest in peace.

Prayer

Remembering Liz Lancaster

All shall be well and all shall be well
And all manner of thing shall be well.

Live gladly because of His love.

God of all goodness grant unto us to
Desire ardently, to seek wisely,
To know surely and to accomplish
Faithfully Your holy will.

Here He is. Listen to Him.
He comes from the midst of heaven.
He comes singing and those who are
Here praying their flutes respond.

Julian of Norwich

REPORTS FROM TRICIA GEMMELL

Catholic Mission Conference 2023

Three hundred people attended the 2023 Catholic Mission Conference in Sydney 3-5 May,



where the focus was on synodality, truth-telling and mission. I believe it was a significant moment in the life of the Australian Church, in as much as 300 people passionate about mission gathered from all parts of Australia, not only to be renewed and inspired by the speakers, but also to be led in processes of deep listening and discernment to hear what the Spirit is calling us to be. We were challenged to engage our hearts as much as our heads, and to commit to something *more* in whatever it is we call our mission.

The first keynote speaker, Dean Parkin, engaged in truth-telling around the Uluru Statement from the Heart, impressing upon us the fact that it is an invitation to us all to become citizens of a more inclusive and unified nation. Furthermore, this invitation was not given to the

government, it was given to the people, in the belief and conviction that we would accept it. The audience was clearly deeply moved by this conviction and gave Dean a standing ovation.

How do we know when truth-telling and prophetic speech come from the Spirit?

Dr Elissa Roper suggested that we look for signs of authenticity and the fruits of the Spirit, but also pointed out the need for training when it comes to learning how to speak boldly and listen with humility. Bishop Shane Mackinlay was able to reflect on his recent experience of the Plenary Council to say that the processes of dialogue and discernment cannot be rushed. They are also processes of learning and conversion, not subject to timetables, and we need to be patient and strive for consensus before making decisions.

On the second day, Chiara Porro, the Australian Ambassador to the Holy See, spoke to us on Zoom from Rome, in the very early hours of her morning. A large part of her talk focused on Indigenous issues, and it was interesting to hear her speak as if it is certain that a constitutional Voice will become a reality. This, at least, is how it sounded to me, which was a refreshing change to some of the negative debate we have been hearing here in recent weeks. I was also struck by her perspective, which is a new insight for me: that our identity as a nation grounded in a 60,000-year culture (if the referendum is passed) will change our standing and our relationship for the better not only with our Pacific neighbours but with the rest of the world.

Auxiliary Bishop of Brisbane, Tim Norton, spoke next, exploring mission as dialogue and mission as prophecy, sharing moving examples of modern-day prophets in Brisbane. When someone asked him what we can do when the institutional church is driving us nuts, he told us simply, “Go to the poor. That’s where Jesus is.” It was a challenge to usual ways of thinking, and we had many opportunities to hear the cry of the poor during those three days.

There were many more such challenges in the rest of the program, the biggest one being that of consciously trying to practise the honest truth-telling and the humble and deep listening that synodality calls for. I doubt that anyone left the Conference untouched by the Spirit, and that surely is good news for our world.

In early July I was asked to present a keynote address on synodality at the National Lay Congress of the Friends of St Augustine in Brisbane. The other keynote speaker was Fr Joseph Farrell, an American Augustinian, currently working in Rome as a member of the General Council of the Order. While he explored how synodality intersects with Augustinian spirituality, I looked at the question of what a synodal parish would look like and practical ways that we could make our own parishes more collaborative. Participants came from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria (and some were on Zoom), and keenly engaged in small group discussions and group sharing. I was impressed by the warmth of Augustinian hospitality, the strong bonds of friendship within the group, and the desire of all the participants to make their parishes vibrant centres of living faith.

Tricia Gemmell

HOPE FOR THE BEES



Mary Anne Baille bought some sunflowers at her local market recently. Later she found an article in *The Tablet* entitled ‘Sunflower Secrets’ by Isabel Lloyd.

Researchers have found that sunflowers attract so many bees, not because their pollen is highly nutritious, but because their prolific pollen is medicinal. Not only does a diet of pure sunflower pollen help protect domestic honey bees from a parasite called *Nosema apis*, but recent research has found that it reduces infestations of the destructive *varroa* mite, which have devastated colonies of bees around the world.

INTERNATIONAL GRAIL NEWS

The International Grail Movement celebrated one hundred years in November 2021. In the Netherlands, where the Grail had its beginnings in 1921, Grail women were discussing what they could contribute to mark this wonderful achievement. They decided to try to make arrangements for a Chair in studies connected with the Grail’s vision and mission in the world at a University in Nijmegen to honour the founder of the Grail, Jacques van Ginneken, S.J., a professor at Nijmegen University, together with the four young women studying there at the same time and who became our early Grail foremothers!



This year, in July, an academic ceremony took place at Radboud University Nijmegen to inaugurate this Chair which will be held by Professor Christa Anbeek, a Dutch Grail member with many years of experience in Academia. Christa’s official title is, Professor of *Women and Care for the Future (International Grail Movement)*, Faculty of Philosophy, Theology and Religious Studies. Her inaugural lecture was entitled: ***Women caring for the future in communities-with-a-***

heart: the international Grail moving into her second century. Through this development, Radboud University will welcome Grail women from around the world to attend International Conferences focussed on Christa’s research and teaching and also to study there if they wish. THANK YOU to our Dutch Grail sisters for this exciting initiative and congratulations to Christa.