

MAGAZINE OF THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF GRAFTON, NEW SOUTH WALES

# NORTH COAST ANGLICAN

WINTER 2020 | ISSUE NO 2

A NEW

*Spiritual Leader*

FROM GRAFTON DIOCESE TO THE  
LEADER OF AUSTRALIAN ANGLICANS

# FROM THE BISHOP

**O**n the weekend before Ash Wednesday I was at a service at St Paul's Cathedral, Melbourne. When we were asked to refrain from shaking hands at the Greeting of Peace and told that we would only be receiving Holy Communion in one kind, I must admit to thinking at the time, "is this an overreaction?". Yet things moved so quickly that I was issuing similar instructions myself a few days later. In the end, the new arrangements made absolutely necessary by COVID-19 to protect the community led to a very different observance of Lent and Easter.

Although we are now at Pentecost, spiritually my mind is still back with the events following the Crucifixion and the morning of the Resurrection. After Mary Magdalene encounters the Risen Christ on that first Easter morning (*Mark 16:9-11*) she tells the disciples the news "while they were mourning and weeping. But when they heard that he was alive and had been seen by her, they would not believe it". A subsequent appearance by the Risen Jesus is also not believed (*vv. 12-13*), resulting in a third, in which he "upbraided them for their lack of faith and stubbornness". During the COVID-19 restrictions, most of us have suffered from stress, anxiety, worry and all sorts of other confusing emotions in the strange "wilderness" type space it has created. As we journey through the rest of the year, let's not allow it to blind us to the gentle breeze of Resurrection hope. Jesus comes to us in a wilderness space and spreads a table. He says to us, as he said to the disciples, "Do not be afraid". Perhaps you're not ready for a celebration of Pentecost yet. That's okay, don't push yourself. But at least be like those disciples on the Road to Emmaus whose hearts were open to meet Jesus there and talk to him.

At the time of writing, the path forward out of COVID-19 is still very unclear. Yet I wonder what might be the learnings from these extraordinary events? I'm sure there are many, but here are three.

Firstly, thankfulness. We have many challenges, but there remains much to be thankful for. A good public health system, biomedical research, an efficient government with a safety net for those financially affected, essential services. And where would we be without the internet?

Secondly, a heightened awareness that the vulnerable of our society need to be protected and that their needs override the needs of the individual. The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously questioned the rule by populism that much of the world had fallen into, with its suspicion of experts and anything that threatened the "me" culture of individualism. I think we now have a renewed appreciation for the Common Good.

Finally, as a church, it has taken us into some new spaces as we explore how to "be church" without a building. These new ways of being church are actually reaching more people with the Gospel than the in-person approach. On average, many more people have tuned in to the Sunday morning online services from our various churches than would typically have been physically present in those buildings on a regular Sunday! I'm encouraged by this because it affirms that for most Grafton Anglicans, faith can flourish and thrive without a building because faith is about the mission of the Gospel, not about the building itself. I thank the clergy and lay people who are using their creativity and other gifts to make these new ministries possible. I know that many are planning to continue offering online options moving forward.

As we move out of COVID-19 let's call afresh upon the Holy Spirit as we join in God's mission to a bewildered and broken world.

+Murray



# Faith, Mission and Ministry in a Time of Pandemic

BY THE VERY REV'D DR GREGORY C JENKS

"Beware the Ides of March", say the soothsayers of ancient Rome to the central character in William Shakespeare's play, *Julius Caesar*.

This year March 15 occurred on a Sunday and at the Cathedral we had arranged a service with interfaith participants to mark the first anniversary of the terror attacks in Christchurch, New Zealand. The arrangements were already under the cloud of the growing COVID-19 crisis, but with hindsight we can now see that this was our last Sunday service the way things used to be.

Maybe your parish held one last round of services on March 22, but many other parishes across the Diocese had suspended public worship by then.

In the weeks that have followed we have been catapulted into a dystopian and post-apocalyptic reality that we once only encountered in film and literature. We are playing catch up with reality as we discern what life—and ministry—look like in a new world on the other side of a disaster which has changed everything

And all this after a summer of eternal fire (so it seemed at the time) when "apocalypse" was a term commonly found on the lips of commentators and politicians.

On the back of the summer fires, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the future up close and personal.

And then there is the Diocesan restructure project. Remember that? The reports from the consultation process were submitted to the Diocesan Registry on

April 30 and will be considered by Bishop-in-Council this month.

We are not just called to restructure our church, but also our economy, our communities and our own lives.

Our mission remains the same: to be authentic witnesses to the risen Lord at work in our world and in our lives.

But the context has changed and many of the familiar tools have been ripped from our hands.

Yet there have also been seeds of hope.

In parishes across the Diocese we have seen communities of grace emerge as people care for one another in practical ways despite our inability to gather for worship, faith formation and compassionate service.

We have witnessed an amazing surge of creativity as ministry teams moved online and as parishioners joined them in that unfamiliar space. We are reaching many more people with the message of hope than we often did with our expensive network of buildings and committees.

Perhaps there is a message for us all as we contemplate restructure?

Not only does the fire allow the forest to renew itself, but this crisis may prove to be an opportunity for the church to rediscover its true identity as communities of grace where lives are transformed and disciples are formed.

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## NORTH COAST ANGLICAN

Transforming lives through Jesus Christ

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# From Grafton Diocese to the Spiritual Leader of

# Australian Anglicans

BY VIVIAN HOSKINS

**A**rchbishop Geoff Smith was recently elected Primate of the Anglican Church of Australia. He will be the spiritual leader of Australian Anglicans for the next six years.

He was one of two former Grafton Diocese clergy who stood for election. The other was The Rt Rev'd Richard Condie, the Bishop of Tasmania. Each was ordained in Grafton Diocese and served their formative years here.

Bishop Richard was deaconed at Grafton in 1992 and priested here the following year. He served in Murwillumbah Parish from 1992-94 before moving to Victoria and was elected Bishop of Tasmania in 2016.

Archbishop Geoff was appointed by the church's Board of Electors after a voting process beginning on March 14 and ending with an electronic ballot on April 7.

The Primate is the President of the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Australia and represents the Australian Church in the worldwide Anglican Communion, at the invitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

"I am very conscious of the enormous privilege we, the church, have in sharing the mission of Christ, and the importance of unity in that task," Archbishop Geoff said after his election.

"My prayer is that our unity might be strengthened to better enable the witness and work of the church in the world."

Bishop of Grafton, Dr Murray Harvey, said he had written to Archbishop Geoff congratulating him on his election as Primate and assuring him of the thoughts and prayers of the whole Diocese of Grafton.

"Many people in the Diocese have asked me to communicate to Archbishop Geoff their prayerful support as he begins this incredibly important role in the life of the Anglican Church of Australia," Dr Murray Harvey said.

Archbishop Geoff was born and raised in Brisbane where he also completed his tertiary and theological education. He was accepted for ordination in the Diocese of Grafton and ordained a Deacon in 1982 and Priest in 1983.

His first appointment was to the Parish of Port Macquarie where he served as an Assistant Curate alongside The Rev'd David Hanger. Thus began a friendship that continues to this day despite irreconcilable differences over State of Origin Rugby League.

Archbishop Geoff served as Priest Assistant in Lismore prior to him and Lynn answering God's call to serve with Anglican Board of Mission (ABM) in Papua New Guinea, in the parish of Taraka, a suburb of Lae in Northern Papua New Guinea.

Displaying qualities that shape his ministry to this day, Geoff stepped out in faith and purchased the local picture theatre for a new church before all the funds were available to complete the purchase.



Returning to the Diocese of Grafton, Geoff became the first vicar of the parochial district of Sawtell-Bonville prior to being appointed Rector of Ballina where his church building skills led to the construction of the present, modern St Mary's.

Here they found time to launch Emmanuel Anglican College at the Diocese's youth and holiday camp, East Ballina, perhaps not fully aware that it would become

**“My prayer is that our unity might be strengthened to better enable the witness and work of the church in the world.”**

one of the major K-12 educational centres on the North Coast with a current enrolment of more than 700 students and a staff of about 100.

He spent a five year term as the National Director of ABM where his hands-on experience in PNG proved invaluable.

His die-hard loyalty to Queensland then took Geoff and his family first to the Parish of Surfers Paradise as Rector, and then as Assistant Bishop, General Manager and Registrar of the Anglican Diocese of Brisbane.

From here the Smith family moved to South Australia where Geoff accepted an appointment as Archbishop of Adelaide following a former Diocese of Grafton colleague, The Most Rev'd Jeff Driver.

In his limited spare time Geoff maintained an interest in various sports and his legendary affiliation with the Brisbane Broncos Rugby League team accompanied him wherever he went and their achievements frequently rated a mention at Sunday morning services.

Geoff and Lynn have two adult children, Daniel and Natalie.

Rector of Northern Beaches Anglicans, Rev'd David Hanger, described the new Primate as “a man with a love for Jesus and a missionary heart, innovative, visionary and prepared to push boundaries to create new possibilities.”

Rev'd David also described his former colleague as a canny, aggressive card shark and claimed the two men remain the undefeated 500 (card game) pairs champions of Diocese of Grafton contested during residential clergy gatherings.

Archbishop Geoffrey assumes his new responsibilities with immediate effect as his predecessor, the Archbishop of Melbourne Philip Freier, retired from the primacy on 31 March.

Photo: Newly elected Anglican primate of Australia, The Most Rev'd Geoff Smith, Archbishop of Adelaide. (Credit: St Peter's Cathedral, Adelaide)



# Being Together in Isolation



Northern Beaches Anglicans filming online material in COVID times for the next generation



# A Timely Reminder of Youth Matters

**BY THE REV'D SIMON REEVE  
NORTHERN BEACHES ANGLICANS**

**A**s I read through the account of the early church in the book of *Acts*, I tend to forget what age the apostles might have been when they transformed the world. I sometimes wonder if I, as a 45-year-old, would have been encouraged by the apostles to stick to my own demographic and connect with the more middle-aged folk of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. And yet here I am, ministering to youth and young families in Woolgoolga, and offering resources to parishes across the Diocese for this younger generation.

Often when I am asked, “What is happening with the youth in the Grafton Diocese?” to be honest, I must reply, “Not much”. And the reason is pretty obvious. Parishes already have too much to do. Rectors already have their plates full, and many older parishioners are overloaded as they seek to maintain existing ministries.

And yet all the reliable church-growth research points to the importance of investing in ministry to the next generation. Children are more likely to attend church regularly as adults if their parents read the Bible with them. Youth who read the Bible and pray regularly in their teens are more likely to instil religious values in their own children. In fact, in the words of Professor of Sociology, Robert Wuthnow of Princeton University, “... one thing the church must do, no matter what else it does, is minister to young people...”.

Now, to say that there is “not much” youth ministry happening across the Diocese is not to say that nothing

is happening at all. There are some parishes where young families are well-catered for and youth ministry is a priority. Even during this pandemic some parishes are using online social media platforms, like *Instagram*, *House Party* and *Zoom*, to remain connected with their younger congregation members. A couple of churches are also producing online resources specifically aimed at this younger generation. And the value of elevating ministry to young people can be plainly seen in the growth of numbers attending these churches, and in the joy of inter-generational church gatherings.

There are many challenges that face the church of tomorrow, and in essence they are shaped by what we are doing today. And so it is interesting to think of how the COVID-19 crisis may have given tired church members the opportunity to stop and do just that, to rethink and reshape ministry.

Think of how a young family might react if they walked into your church services. What would they enjoy? What would they need to feel comfortable? It's also worth considering how your church might connect with your local public school, whether through assistance in the canteen, scripture or through a breakfast club. There are numerous ways to build relationships with the next generation. I would be happy to chat with anyone about how they might rethink ministry to the next generation, in thinking of youth groups or running a holiday kid's club.

The book of *Acts* records an amazing time in history where we see the Holy Spirit working in a truly remarkable way. Maybe the remarkable world events of recent days are a chance for renewed transformation in the church.

“There are many challenges that face the church of tomorrow, and in essence they are shaped by what we are doing today.”



# The BDC Barracuda Bus

When the COVID-19 pandemic was on the horizon the Bishop Druitt College Critical Incident Response Team rallied together to brainstorm ideas beyond booklet and online tasks. The team soon realised that innovative strategies, and not hibernation strategies, would help to maintain the emotional connection between the college and our families. To this end, the college developed a series of ideas to build social engagement and motivate learning to continue throughout this period. These creative ideas included:

- Daily *Google* meets with classes as well as weekly year level catch ups to connect with peers and teachers;
- Weekly online challenges and community building activities such as singing, dancing and physical activities;
- Book and technology borrowing facilities and support to ensure all students could maintain equal and reliable access;
- Care packages for primary families that included not just awesome teacher constructed workbooks to supplement the online classroom materials but also arts packages, sports games and a Barracuda jigsaw puzzle;
- Secondary packages that included novels, purpose-built workbooks, and interactive games as well as design & technology and cooking supplies for hospitality tasks;

- The college converted the “kiss and ride” student drop off to a drive-through for collections such as staff Easter care packages (Easter eggs, hot cross buns, tea, a stress ball and, just for a laugh, a toilet roll); and
- The BDC Barracuda bus delivery service.

One of our college buses, the little red Barracuda bus, was tasked with supporting deliveries throughout the region. The Barra bus, loaded with care packages, and staffed by Marty Kelleher, Ben Pike and Assistant Principal Simon Doyle, with support from Gary (Newcombe’s Coach Lines), went on a delivery expedition with destinations as far west as Thora and Glenreagh and as far north as Arrawarra. The little red bus also made deliveries south to Nambucca and Scotts Head.

Families were delighted to receive their care packages delivered to their door, particularly those children on the more remote properties.

Bishop Druitt College’s Principal, Mr Nick Johnstone, was “proud of his staff for going above and beyond during the COVID-19 period” and thanked his college’s families for continuing to have faith in their school during this time.

“The Barracuda bus has brightened the faces of so many children and their mums and dads during the last few weeks and we will continue to deliver exciting packages until we can return to normal classes”, said Mr Johnstone.





# Online Church during COVID-19

**BY ARCHDEACON TIFFANY SPARKS**

Six months ago we would never have dreamed about having a conversation about Diocesan-wide church online. We never would have thought we were ready to enter the daunting nature of the online world, let alone it become a natural part of our life as Church. Yet here we are.

"COVID-19 has prompted the Ballina and Lennox Head Anglicans to get on board with online services. Borrowing from the idea of "Couch Pub", where a pub choir went online, we call our services "Couch Church". The response is great, with many of our older parishioners discovering that they can navigate the online world. We are excited to find that Couch Church is reaching many more people than would attend a regular service," said The Rev'd Cathy Ridd.

There aren't many good things to come out of the current crisis, but there are a few. One of them is that we are braver and more creative than we ever thought we were. Our churches are closed for public safety, but we haven't packed up and left. Instead clergy, chaplains and lay ministers around the Diocese have come up with new and creative ways to connect with each other and their community, to continue to keep spreading the good news of a God that is always with us, especially in crisis. Parishes are connecting in a variety of ways, live on *Facebook* and *YouTube*, forums, *Zoom* or other video chat options, online community groups and pre-recorded compilations all serving to inspire thousands around our Diocese and beyond who are unable to physically connect. This is something to rejoice about. I saw a meme that other day, that while church buildings

are closed, a church has opened up in every home. There is truth in this and it isn't just church online, but via phone, mailbox drops and good old snail mail.

"We are going to be making changes about how we go about our life as a faith community here at Grafton Cathedral. We will still be having our services at the normal time 9am live streamed to *Facebook*.. We will continue to be people of faith and on the other side of that coin people of hope," said Dean Greg Jenks.

This crisis is renewing our perspective on what is important. As we have heard on the TV many times over the last few weeks, "We Are All in This Together". It reminds us of the importance of our community which is built on the foundation of a God who desires relationship with each and every one of us. It reminds us of the importance of connecting with people and ensuring we are safe, well and that we all know that we are deeply intrinsically loved – even when we feel alone and isolated.

My prayer is that this creativity, passion and innovation for connecting with our communities and beyond will allow us to have greater strength and insights for exploring future ministries, models and formats even after this crisis is over.

I would like to thank all the clergy and lay people for their contributions and passion. If you would like your church added to the Diocesan online page, please let me know. And don't worry, we all don't have to reinvent the wheel – we all don't have to be doing this. This is a time where perhaps we can receive pastoring from each other instead, please feel free to share our "Online Church" page in your parish: [graftondiocese.org.au](http://graftondiocese.org.au)



# *raise the rate* **FOR GOOD**

**A**nglicare North Coast is calling for an increase to welfare payments for good. The call is made alongside the launch of the *2020 Rental Affordability Snapshot*, which found that even a doubling of Jobseeker payments (formerly Newstart) was not enough to improve the affordability of rental properties for many households.

Dr Leon Ankersmit, the Interim CEO of Anglicare North Coast, has studied the history of welfare in Australia and finds the current situation – prior to this temporary doubling of payments – to be the most unrealistic survival mechanism for households in living memory

“In real terms, that is, compared to minimum wages and the buying power of the dollar, Newstart has not increased for 26 years. \$40 per day is just not enough to live on in Australia in 2020, when you cannot rent a house or a flat for less than \$200 per week. Even when you double the Jobseeker payments with the Coronavirus supplement, it is still only 70% of the minimum wage. This supplement is only temporary. We are very concerned about what will happen in our

communities once the payments revert to the original settings. Anglicare North Coast receives additional funds from the Commonwealth Government to give assistance to households facing a financial emergency. Normally it would be expected that a household might face such an emergency once or twice each year, for example when the car breaks down at the same time as the kids need new school uniforms. Now, we have received a significant boost to our funding for emergency relief in anticipation of a much greater level of need.

“Newstart and Jobseeker are often referred to as a short-term “safety net” payment for people who need to actively seek work. But most of us know that there simply aren’t enough jobs to employ everyone, and that for as many people who are unemployed, there are many more who are “under-employed” working just a few casual hours per week. With the current conditions for business and commerce, those problems are magnified and we see growing queues at Centrelink. The welfare safety net is not much use if many people simply fall through because the payments are too low to maintain a roof over their head and feed the kids. And that is what we are seeing. Many households are sliding into a permanent state of financial crisis, and these are households with children who are the citizens of the future.

“Domestic and family violence as well as mental ill-health are enormous risk factors for our community. We know this because both these issues have been prominently discussed in the media in recent years. They are well-known problems. My grave concern is for those households that already live with these risks as well as the households who will join this list because of ever-present financial strains resulting from loss of jobs,



loss of income, loss of secure housing, and the feeling of being judged as undeserving of a more realistic level of assistance, especially when that assistance will help to keep vulnerable adults and children safe.”

The faith community has an opportunity to respond. We may reach out with kindness and without judgement

into our community to relieve the burden of the poor. We may write to our elected members of State and Federal Parliament to convey our concern and let them know that we want Australia to be a community that looks after its most vulnerable members. We can pray for wisdom and discernment for our leaders and for relief and perseverance for those who suffer.

## Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot: More affordable homes needed

Anglicare North Coast has released the findings of our annual survey of rental affordability.

The *Snapshot* surveyed almost a thousand rental listings across the North Coast and found that there is still a chronic shortage of affordable rentals – even after recent welfare increases.

The Snapshot shows that:

- 18 rentals (2%) are affordable for a person on the new Jobseeker payment (formerly Newstart), which has been doubled for six months in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Without the increase, no rentals (0%) would be affordable for jobseekers in the North Coast;
- Pensioners and people with disability have been left behind with no increase to their payments;
- Just 1% of rentals (11 in total) are affordable for a person on the Age Pension;
- 0% of rentals (4 in total) are affordable for a person on the Disability Support Pension.

Anglicare North Coast's Interim Chief Executive Officer Leon Ankersmit said the increase should be open to everyone on government payments – and that it should be permanent.

“Welfare increases have given some people badly needed relief,” Dr Ankersmit said.

“But the market is still failing people on the lowest incomes. Our *Snapshot* shows that a person who is out of work can afford less than 2% of rentals – and that's with their payments doubled. Under the old rates, no rentals at all (0%) would be affordable across the North Coast.

“Age pensioners and people with disability have been left out altogether. They are at the very bottom of the market, and can afford less than 1% of rentals. Instead of looking after for them in the midst of a health crisis, we are leaving them to the mercy of the market.

“We must raise the rate of these payments for good. If they are halved in six months – and if pensioners and people with disability are left out – renters across our region will be pushed even deeper into poverty and homelessness.”

Dr Ankersmit said that more must be done to help people on the lowest incomes.

“We're asking people to stay at home – so we must invest in homes for people who need them most. Nobody should be squeezed out of the market during a health emergency.

“That's why we must invest in affordable housing. Our shortfall is massive. We need 12,600 new affordable rentals to meet the shortfall on the North Coast over the next 15 years.

“Investing in housing would be the most powerful way to tackle the rental crisis – and boost our regional economy. We're calling on the Federal and State governments to work together and end this shortfall – and ensure everyone has a place to call home,” Dr Ankersmit said.

The local *Rental Affordability Snapshot* report can be downloaded from [www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au](http://www.anglicarenorthcoast.org.au). The full report for rental affordability in Australia is available from [www.anglicare-ras.com](http://www.anglicare-ras.com).



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ALL DONATIONS TO ANGLICARE NORTH COAST OVER \$2.00 ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE AND ARE USED TO HELP US FULFIL OUR MISSION

# Meet the

# Ordinandy

Our Diocese has been blessed by four people who have responded to God's call on their lives and have accepted ordination in the Anglican Church of Australia. At the February Vocations Panel, Mr Aaron Coates was recommended for ordination to the transitional Diaconate, Mr Grant Sparks and Mr Kassimiro Yanga were recommended for ordination to the Vocational Diaconate and The Rev'd David Brown was recommended for ordination to the transitional Diaconate as an Ordained Local Minister. Here are their stories. Please keep Grant, David, Aaron and Kassimiro in your prayers as they prepare for their ordination.

## MR GRANT SPARKS

I have felt a call to the Diaconate since my late 20s when I saw my first vocational deacon and was compelled to find out what the Diaconate was. I quickly knew that this was what God was calling me to be. To discern this vocation, I briefly put aside my career in software engineering and obtained a degree in Theology. Surely a theologian should be able to discern a vocation to the Diaconate! The calling never left me and was only reaffirmed in my academic and formational studies.

Life events, challenges and opportunities have finally brought me here today in Grafton Diocese for ordination to the Vocational Diaconate after a very long journey. I am passionate about the Vocational Diaconate and its potential for aiding the future of the Anglican Church and I look forward to the day where I can offer my gifts in their fullness as a Deacon in the Church of God. I have a wonderful blended family of six children, five boys and one girl, one granddaughter and two Border Collies.

## MR AARON COATES ST MARK'S CASINO

My journey towards ordination actually began when I was 19. I describe my calling at the time as being an overwhelming urge that I had to act upon, and something that God would constantly remind of. The first step that I took on the path to ordination was when I approached my priest at the time and discussed my calling with him. However, I was too young and I needed some life experience first. So, I prayed to God and asked for the life experience that I would need – God certainly gave me what I asked for – and more.

Before I knew it, I was in the Australian Army, where I served 13 years, including operational service in East Timor. After my military service, God provided more life experience by placing me as a Protective Services Officer in one of the most dangerous hospitals in Queensland. I was frequently confronted with issues of drug and alcohol abuse, child abuse, domestic abuse, mental health issues and regular incidents of violence and assaults. This was the life experience that God provided me with.

It was while working for Queensland Health that God eventually brought me to discernment, and formation and a university degree. Throughout my studies, there were indeed difficult times, and each time God would give me the same answer that was given the first time I questioned being a university student – "I will get you through this if you want me to. Have faith."

So since that day when I was 19, God has given me life lessons that not only have value to me but also for those that I care for. God has shown me how much I am capable of achieving. There is so much more I could mention about this amazing journey God has blessed me with, but the true beauty is in the realisation that this journey has only just begun.

## MR KASSIMIRO YANGA

I am from South Sudan and I migrated to Australia on a humanitarian visa in 2005. I settled in Coffs Harbour with my family and sponsor, Magok Mading Mou, through the help of Coffs Harbour Anglican Church and Anglicare North Coast.

Previously Catholic, when my family arrived to Australia, I joined the Anglican Church with my wife Edina who is an Anglican and we became members of St John's The Evangelist Parish at Coffs Harbour. I have been serving in the church my whole life, and I entered to Seminary in Khartoum Sudan to become a Catholic Priest, but due to cultural and Catholic laws I wasn't able to. I came to Australia and I am still serving God in the Anglican Church as a Licensed Lay Minister.

I have three children, two boys and one girl. Their names are Monica, Mathew, and Mark. My hope is to give my children a good future by encouraging them to finish school and to have skills for their future. I thank God because Monica is at University doing speech pathology. Mathew is finishing year 12 and hopes to do engineering at university. The little one, Mr Mark the Aussie, is doing well in year 9 this year with his disability, I hope he will do well in future. He is actually the smartest person in the house when it comes to technology.





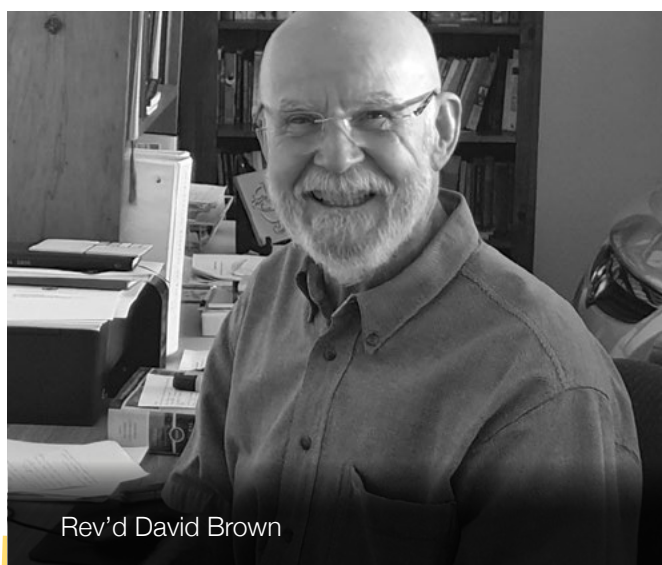
Mr Grant Sparks



Mr Kassimiro Yanga



Mr Aaron Coates



Rev'd David Brown

My other hope is to serve the people of God with faithfulness here in Australia. May God continue to bless us, and may God continue to bless Australia, protect and keep us safe from the virus. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Grafton Diocese in welcoming us to their midst and caring for us up to this day, especially the Bishop our good shepherd. I also thank the clergy involved in the formation program, the Vocations Panel, Examining Chaplains, and especially the Ministry Development Officer for her tireless work. I will serve God in faithfulness and love to his people.

### **THE REV'D DAVID BROWN ST MARY'S BALLINA**

The journey that has led to the portal of the doorway to the Diaconate has been long, and at times, very confronting. It meant going down some of the streets of the past, accepting the reality of the landscape of the present and navigating highways and avenues of the future without a map.

The journey began in 1961 when after a two year period of discernment and theological study my sense of vocational call was affirmed by the relevant Councils of the Methodist Church. Another 25 years was to elapse before becoming an ordained Minister in the Uniting Church of Australia. Parish and Chaplaincy ministries followed my ordination in 1986.

Following my retirement in 2004, I happened to drive past St Mary's Anglican Church in Ballina and there on the noticeboard was an invitation to join with the congregation in the celebration of a sung Eucharist. I accepted the invitation and that was the beginning of a relationship that is now in its 16th year. It has become one in which my commitment to the witness and worship of the congregation has deepened and strengthened. That commitment eventually prompted me to explore the possibility of ordination in Anglican Orders in the Diocese of Grafton. Ordination to the Diaconate is a gift and it is my prayer that I will accord it the reverence such a gift deserves.

Just a little personal information to prove that I am not a robot: I have a darling wife Isobel, three delightful daughters and three grandchildren who fascinate me, and of whom it must be said, "are very advanced for their age". Isobel is a gardener, and I, a gardener's labourer. We love reading, walking, laughing, the wonder and beauty of creation, green tea and organic 70% dark chocolate.

Prior to my ordination in the Uniting Church I was privileged to pursue a career in journalism but I always made sure the facts were included in a good story.

# REFLECTIONS

## Teddy Bear Hunt

Living in the midst of a pandemic can be difficult for young families adapting to self-isolation. A young mum from the Sydney suburb of Berowra asked her community to put teddy bears in their front windows and challenged other communities to do the same. Sue, Helen and Prue have enjoyed putting together displays at St Paul's, Byron Bay to be enjoyed by children as they walk by. The displays were changed to focus on Easter, Anzac Day and more recently as a thank-you to the teachers and staff at Byron Bay Public School, which is across the road from the church.



## Term 2 Learning

Like all schools now Clarence Valley Anglican School is engaging students through online learning primarily through *Google Classroom* and *Zoom*. It has been a steep learning curve for families (including some grandparents), teachers and students who have been thrust into this new learning era. As a school, of course, we have implemented new systems and protocols as seamlessly as possible and have been available to troubleshoot issues with the support of our wonderful staff.

At the time of writing we are now in week 3 of Term 2 which sees us continuing with online learning with a return to school plan in place. This means PreKinder, Kindergarten, Years 11 and 12 have returned to the classroom and some students are returning in stages. Week 5 is scheduled for all students to return to a normal classroom setting. We are thankful for the way in which our community have responded to the changes in schooling since the end of last term.

## Anglican Diocese of Grafton

**Do you have an up-to-date will? Please consider giving to the work of the Church in your will.**

Our diocese has been blessed by the generosity of benefactors in times past. As we seek to expand Christ's Mission in the 21st century, please consider how you might contribute. You should get legal advice before making your will. You may wish to consider the activities of the Anglican Diocese of Grafton as the recipient of either a specific gift or the residue of your estate.

The following wording may be useful for you and your legal advisor when making your will: "*I bequeath to the Corporate Trustees of the Diocese of Grafton in the State of New South Wales the sum of ..... to be used for the general purposes of the Diocese of Grafton in such manner as the said Trustees may approve.*"





# Diocesan Day of Prayer

BY ARCHDEACON TIFFANY SPARKS

On Good Friday through to dusk Easter Eve, our Diocese prayed together in solidarity during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you to everyone who participated in the Grafton Day of Prayer.

It was a wonderful response from parishes, schools and individuals who covered us all in prayer over a 28-hour period.

Not one hour went by where we weren't being prayed for. It was heartening to see the different and creative prayer responses, anything from private prayer to streamed prayer, songs, scripture reading and reflections.

The Diocesan Day of prayer commenced with Port Anglican on Friday afternoon, then Ballina Anglican at 11pm that evening. The Rev'd Naomi Cooke from Bishop Druitt College then shared a Good Friday Reflection via YouTube.

We joined in prayer with St John's Coffs Harbour, Ballina Anglicans and Grafton Cathedral on Saturday, followed by a Holy Saturday Reflection with Rev'd Naomi and The Rev'd Chad Rynehart from Lindisfarne Anglican Grammar School.

It is hard to remain connected while we are all literally isolating. This day provided us with an opportunity to deliberately connect with each other as the body of Christ in the world today. The day reminded us that each ministry unit isn't an island, we are all connected and in relationship across the diocese and that Jesus is with us, even when it is Holy Saturday.

The contributions were beautiful, reflective and prayerful. Thank you to all who dedicated their time to this. I hope that we continue to deliberately pray and connect with each other and building each other up during this time.

*Ever present God,  
be with us in our isolation,  
be close to us in our distancing,  
be healing in our sickness,  
be joy in our sadness,  
be light in our darkness,  
be wisdom in our confusion,  
be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,  
that when the doors reopen  
we may with the zeal of Pentecost  
inhabit our communities  
and speak of your goodness  
to an emerging world, for Jesus' sake. Amen*



Bishop Murray Harvey invited people to the day of prayer in response to the COVID19 crisis via video. You can read and watch Bishop Murray's full message at [www.graftondiocese.org.au/bishops-message-covid19-day-of-prayer/](http://www.graftondiocese.org.au/bishops-message-covid19-day-of-prayer/)

# Coffs Student Wins the Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize

Emma Serisier, Year 12 2019 at Bishop Druitt College, has won the junior category for The Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize, the largest water science competition for high-school students.

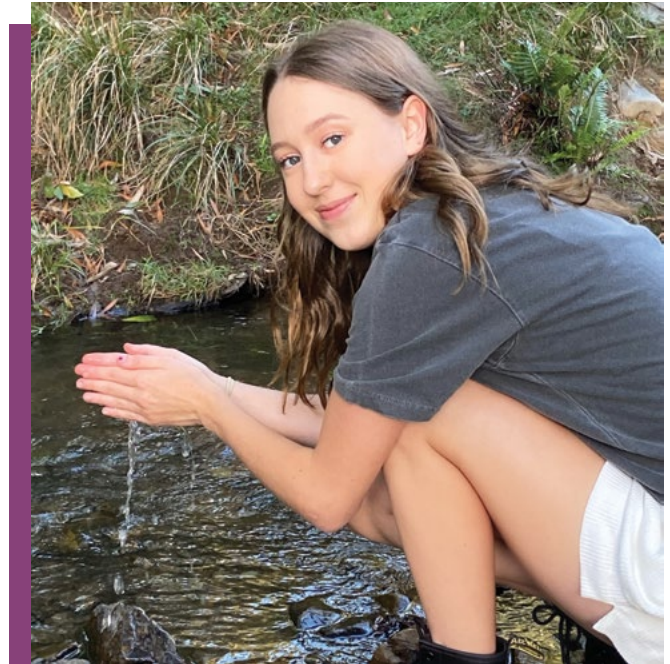
Emma was successfully presented with three other National finalists on May 6 and was selected to represent Australia with 34 other countries at the International competition in Stockholm.

Emma said, "Young, rural women have a unique perspective of the issues faced by the agricultural community that ultimately have an impact on every one of us. Being acknowledged by the Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize highlights that rural women are pioneers in solving world problems relating to clean water and sustainable development."

"Emma has won the Australian Stockholm Junior Water Prize, the world's most prestigious youth award for water research. She will compete against the best in the world in Stockholm later this year (albeit in a virtual environment) for the international award," said Alison Hollier, Science Teacher (Chemistry) Bishop Druitt College.

"I am so proud of Emma. This is an extraordinary achievement and is thoroughly deserved. Her Science Extension research project that led to this final report investigated adding eggshell waste to the soil to enhance the retention of phosphate fertilisers in the soil, reducing its run-off into natural waterways and hence reducing eutrophication.

"Emma gained international success in 2019 when she received a third place at the International Science



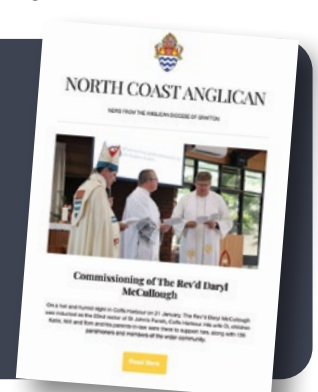
and Engineering Fair for another research project that investigated the remediation of soil using backyard chickens. She is passionate about developing farming practices that are both effective and environmentally friendly and has applied her scientific skills to solving these real-world problems."

**View Emma's abstract and promotional video:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_B2oXRGt6Ow&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_B2oXRGt6Ow&feature=emb_logo)

## Did you know NCA has gone digital?

In 2020 NCA is going digital! The Diocesan community has the option of not only receiving NCA in their inbox, but also receive electronic newsletters and updates each month. Sign up today to make sure you are kept in the loop.

Please send your details to Kaytrina in the Registry on [admin@graftondiocese.org.au](mailto:admin@graftondiocese.org.au) and remember: It's free!



## ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Grafton Diocese has established formal procedures to deal with sexual misconduct. Persons aggrieved by the sexual misconduct of a church worker - whether they are an ordained or lay person - should report it. If you wish to speak to someone about sexual abuse by a church worker

**please phone 1800 370 757 or email [dps@graftondiocese.org.au](mailto:dps@graftondiocese.org.au)**

to reach our Director of Professional Standards who can receive your report with confidentiality.



# The Holy Grail, The Chalice and Spiritual Communion

The Holy Grail in various dictionaries is described as a cup or chalice or dish that medieval legend appeared to have unusual powers associated with the regeneration of life. The Grail is also described as a romantic symbol of the heart's desire, for spiritual or physical nourishment, psychic wholeness or immortality. It was sought after by medieval knights and identified as the cup used at the Last Supper. This was also identified with the cornucopia of the classical myths, a symbol of abundance and divine generosity. The symbolism is related to the Celtic magic cauldron that never emptied, a pagan legend. The legends and symbols all add up to the mystery of Divine Grace and the yearning of spiritual beings to find what is lacking in the ordinary. The Grail as a chalice is essentially a female symbol, both receiving and giving.

In our time The Grail can take a new symbolism and meaning. It can be described as the quest to find a vaccine for the COVID-19 virus and an immediate cure

which will last a lifetime for those infected. For many Christians who feel bereft when unable to take the Holy Sacrament of Communion because of distancing and safety measures to deal with the spread of the virus the Holy Grail of the Chalice takes a new symbolism. "Spiritual communion" is a way to describe the means of grace by which a person prevented from sharing in a celebration of the Eucharist, but through prayer and faith shares in the communion of Jesus Christ. New prayers are being written and old ones given new life.

*Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the benefits you have given me, for all the pains and insults you have borne for me. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. O most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may I know you more clearly, love you more dearly, and follow you more nearly, day by day. Amen.*

After the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester.



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GRAFTON DIOCESE

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\$50,000 and over	0.50% p.a.

\*Interest paid six monthly

## Cheque Accounts (Parishes, Ministry Units & Anglican Affiliate Entities Only)

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Parish	0.25% p.a.
Anglican Affiliate	0.25% p.a.

\*Interest paid monthly

## Cash Management Accounts (Parishes, Ministry Units & Anglican Affiliate Entities Only)

Entity	Interest Rate
Parish	0.75% p.a.
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\*Interest paid monthly

\*All Interest Rates are current as at 13<sup>th</sup> May 2020 and are subject to change

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# Bigger Than Life

BY JAN FRYER

Are you bigger than life? I hope so! As a Christian when we believe and take God's promises seriously, we are destined to live an "eternal life" with him, so we really are "bigger than this life" on earth.

This was brought home to me this week when technology had a win over COVID-19. One of the most amazing women in my church, Ballina Anglican Church, died on April 20 at 87 years, leaving me feeling bereft and heartbroken. Physically we could not attend her funeral because of the COVID-19 lockdown laws preventing gatherings and this funeral would have been "biggest" in normal times because Ellen Margaret Goodger was definitely "bigger than life".

Technology allowed me and others who loved Ellen to attend the funeral through live streaming. As family members told her story it felt like I was intimately journeying with her, hearing secrets of a life so well lived it was hard to really take it all in.

Ellen embraced life in trust and taking every opportunity offered to jump in the deep end. She was still running a church craft group, cooking for fundraisers, attending bible study groups and bringing others to events held in the church until six months ago.

Her family is large and close and each speaker testified to Ellen's zest for enjoying her life whilst also working hard to ensure others enjoyed life well too. Suzie her eldest daughter said, "She was their heartbeat!"

Carney and Ellen recently celebrated 65 years of married life. They met in Grafton at an Anglican ball and eventually settled in Casino for over 40 years and then in Ballina from 2000 in retirement. They went on to have four children: Suzie, Paul, Debbie and Kerri.



The list of Ellen's accomplishments is long, from sporting groups to service groups to faith groups, but the thing that sticks out to me is that she was always connecting with others, always humble, always willing, always accepting and loving to all who met her. She was not hard to love because she embodied it to others. She lived her faith.

Carney and family wish to thank everyone who has offered condolences and support during their sadness. They have been overwhelmed by the support offered. Ellen will be interred in Ballina Cemetery. A Memorial Service will be held at the Anglican Church in Ballina when life resumes post COVID-19.

# World Labyrinth Day

World Labyrinth Day is an annual event sponsored by the Labyrinth Society as a worldwide action to "walk as one at 1" to create a rolling wave of peaceful energy across the globe.

Plans for a large community gathering at St Mary's Church Ballina to celebrate the 12th Annual World Labyrinth Day Walk for Peace on May 2 had to be postponed for this year due to the Coronavirus.

However Archdeacon Matthew Jones and The Rev'd Cathy Ridd were able to participate in the walk at the labyrinth at Kerry Johnston's Centre for Equine Experience at Teven on the Saturday afternoon.

The following reflection by Thich Nhat Hanh was used by the walkers:

"When we walk like we are rushing, we print anxiety and sorrow on the earth. We have to walk in a way that we only print peace and serenity on the earth. Be aware of the contact between your feet and the earth. Walk as if you are kissing the earth with your feet."





# William Wilberforce

SOCIAL REFORMER. DIED 1833. FEAST DAY 30 JULY

William was born on 24 August 1759 in the port town of Hull in North East England to merchant parents trading with Russia and the Baltic States. His early life was marked by wealth and privilege, he studied at Cambridge University and joined the political scene. At 21 years of age he was the youngest member of the House of Commons and the MP for whole of Yorkshire.

Close friends undoubtedly influenced him in many ways. He was friends with the Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger, and they were the political and social celebrities of the day. He spent some time with a former schoolteacher who was a Christian and presumably, as a result of the rekindling of the relationship, read William Law's book *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. This led William to question: "Can one serve God and one's nation in parliament?" Discussing this question with another friend John Newton a former slave ship captain and writer of the hymn *Amazing Grace*, Newton told William, *"God has raised you up for the good of the church and the good of the nation, maintain your friendship with Pitt, continue in parliament who knows that but for such a time as this God has brought you into public life and has a purpose for you"*.

With major changes to his lifestyle, he developed a lifelong concern for social reform. The transatlantic slave trade began during the 15th Century when the

Portuguese began to kidnap people from West Coast Africa and take them to Europe. William was influenced by an anti-slavery reformer Thomas Clarkson, and together with PM William Pitt, decided to make the abolition cause his own. William joined the Quakers, with Thomas Clarkson and the former enslaved African Olaudah Equiano, began the campaign against slavery. For William, "The slave trade was a sin for which Britain had to repent or be damned," and it took 20 years to end the British trade in enslaved people and almost 30 more years before slavery itself became illegal.

*"Can one serve God and one's nation in parliament?"*

Today, people over the age of 18 have the right to vote, but 250 years ago only a few elite people could vote, so against this background it is surprising that the campaign could be successful.

Wilberforce's greatest political achievement was his long fight to end the slave trade and the first milestone was the passing of the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act in 1807 which eventually led to the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 which abolished slavery in most of the British Empire. William died three days after the passage of the Act through Parliament and was buried in Westminster Abbey, close to his friend William Pitt the Younger.

Can we give thanks for the influence of friends and pray:

*"As grace first taught my heart to fear, so grace my fears relieved: how precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!"*

## In Brief

### APPOINTMENTS

#### New Primate

Archbishop Geoff Smith was recently elected Primate.

#### New CVAS Principal

The Clarence Valley Anglican School recently announced that their new Principal will be **Mrs Karin Lisle**. This is great news for the CVAS community and the wider diocese.

Karin is already a member of the diocesan community and is an experienced and gifted Senior Leader. She is currently Head of Primary at BDC and will take up her new role at the beginning of Term 3, following the retirement of Mr Oates at the end of Term 2.

### DIARY DATE CANCELLATIONS

**11-14 May** – Clergy Retreat has been cancelled.

**27 June** – Special Session of Synod has been cancelled.



God of the onward journey  
Amid uncertainty,  
give us courage  
Amid darkness,  
give us light  
Amid fear,  
give us hope  
Amid instability,  
give us balance,  
Amid conflict,  
give us peace  
And in all things  
accompany us along the way

*Penny Jones*

