



# Catholic Women's League Australia Inc.

"IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO TOUCH THE HEART OF ANOTHER, NOR IS IT EVER IN VAIN" *Pope Benedict XVI*  
"I have come that they may have life and have it to the full" *John 10:10*

National Newsletter

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## From the National President



Settling back into the ordinary routine of every day life is not easy following the trip to the Holy Land to attend the WUCWO Centenary Assembly. So many times each day, I find myself reflecting on the places we visited. Reciting the Rosary is a perfect example! The Second Mystery of Light has an even deeper meaning now for my husband and I, as well as the four other couples from our pilgrimage group who renewed our wedding vows at the Wedding Sanctuary in Cana in Galilee.

An article about the Centenary Assembly and also the recollections of some of our members who attended the Assembly, and also the Canonisation of St Mary of the Cross, appear later in the newsletter but I would like to share with you my experience of the final Mass of the Assembly.

On 13 October 2010, WUCWO delegates came together for Mass on the Mount of Beatitudes. There were about 350 of us gathered together on a purpose built amphitheatre overlooking an altar on the top of the mountain. The setting was magnificent and afforded a beautiful view down the mountain towards Capernaum and the lake of Galilee.

The Mass was celebrated in French. Several priests from a number of African countries, one from Switzerland who works in South Africa, one from Argentina, one from Spain and a Columban priest from New Zealand who works as a missionary in Korea and was the Chaplain for the Korean delegation, concelebrated. His mother, a League member from New Zealand, was also in attendance.

The principal celebrant and homilist, was a young priest from Senegal. During his homily, he took the opportunity to reflect on the business agenda of WUCWO during the Assembly and drew those deliberations into the context of Christ's message to us in the Beatitudes. He made the point that it was very important that as delegates to WUCWO, and also as members of our own national bodies, to discuss and determine what our program of

work for the Church and the world should be. He emphasised that in such deliberations there must be a sense of unity, a sense of Christ centred purpose and a careful need to not become side-tracked into developing and implementing programs which are not Christ's programs but rather might reflect our own strongly held positions and views.

To reinforce his point, this young priest reminded us that there was, in truth, only one program that we are asked as Christians to follow and live and this program is the one that Jesus spoke, in His own words, in the Sermon on the Mount and in particular the words spoken in Matthew 5:1-12. When Pope John Paul II celebrated Mass at the Church of the Beatitudes in March 2000, he said during his homily: *'In the end, Jesus does not merely speak the Beatitudes, He lives the Beatitudes. He is the Beatitudes. Looking at him you will see what it means to be poor in spirit, gentle and merciful, to mourn, to care for what is right, to be pure of heart, to make peace, to be persecuted. This is why Jesus has the right to say come follow me.'*

This message of Jesus, so clearly spoken in the Sermon on the Mount, is crucial to the work of WUCWO and applies to us at all levels of the League. "It is Christ's program we are to live not our own." This same message was reaffirmed every day at the conference by Fr. GianMaria Polidoro OFM during his reflections, and also by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, His Beatitude Fouad Twal, during the Opening Liturgy at the Co-Cathedral of the Latins. As St Mary of the Cross MacKillop said in 1881: *'Beware of self mixing up with the work of God.'*

Archbishop Denis Hart announced on 3rd December, the Feast Day of St Francis Xavier, that the preliminary phase cause of Dr Sr Mary Glowrey, the founding President of the League in Victoria and Wagga Wagga, had commenced. Fr Paul Puthanangady SDB has been appointed by the Archbishop of Bangalore to assist and guide the Society of Jesus, Mary and Joseph (JMJs). Mary Glowrey joined the JMJs in 1920 and placed the remainder of her life at the service of the medical and spiritual needs of the people of India.

This Christmas let us offer our prayers for the people in the Holy Land and for all those who are persecuted for their faith, that the peace of the Christ Child will be restored in the hearts of all peoples throughout the world by the power of the Holy Spirit. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

**Madge Fahy**

## From the National Chaplain



### A Sainly Sunday in Rome

Sunday October 17, 2010 was the day when Australia came to Rome. Over 8,000 Australian pilgrims registered to go to the canonisation of Australia's first saint. During the days leading up to the canonisation, I could hear many Australian accents in the streets near St Peter's where I was staying. It brought back memories of the World Youth Days that I have attended. When hearing an Australian accent or seeing an Australian flag or hat or scarf, people would stop each other on the street: 'Where are you from?' was the most common question. Nobody needed to ask 'why are you here?'



We were all in Rome for the same reason. On October 17, the Holy Father proclaimed Blessed Mary of the Cross MacKillop as a saint, along with five other new saints. The Mass of canonisation on the Sunday was a very prayerful and joyful experience.

In his multi-lingual homily, the Holy Father reminded us of the faith and fidelity of the new saint:

'Despite many challenges, her prayers to St Joseph and her unflagging devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to whom she dedicated her new congregation, gave this holy woman the graces needed to remain faithful to God and to

the Church. Through her intercession, may her followers today continue to serve God and the Church with faith and humility!'

It was a very proud thing for all Australians to see the picture of the new saint hanging from the façade of St Peter's Basilica, reminding us that Australia has a place among all the members of the Church, and that God can work through an Australian to achieve extraordinary things in service of God and neighbour.

As well as October 17 being the day that Australia came to Rome, it was the day that Rome came to Australia. It reminded us that we are part of something bigger than our parish or our Diocese or as members of an association; we belong to the Universal Church with members all over the world speaking all languages. St Mary of the Cross shows us that an Australian, one like us can reach the heights of holiness; that we can see and do God's will despite obstacles; that we can love the Church despite the faults of her members and that we can go to extraordinary lengths to help others in need.

As members of the CWLA, we can draw some inspiration from the life of the new saint. St Mary was one, like Dr Sr Mary Glowrey, who went to great lengths to do something when she saw a need. One of the most quoted of St Mary's sayings is 'Never see a need without doing something about it'.

May St Mary of the Cross inspire all Australians to strive for holiness of life, to be proud to be a Catholic and an Australian.

**Father David Cartwright**  
National Chaplain

### Last Days of Advent

The liturgy of Advent...helps us to understand fully the value and meaning of the mystery of Christmas. It is not just about commemorating the historical event, which occurred some 2,000 years ago in a little village of Judea. Instead, it is necessary to understand that the whole of our life must be an 'advent,' a vigilant awaiting of the final coming of Christ. To predispose our mind to welcome the Lord who, as we say in the Creed, one day will come to judge the living and the dead, we must learn to recognize him as present in the events of daily life. Therefore, Advent is, so to speak, an intense training that directs us decisively toward him who already came, who will come, and who comes continuously.

*Pope John Paul II, December 18, 2002*



## BIOETHICS



### What Does Progress Really Mean?

News reports and media commentators too often uncritically use the word “progressive” and “enlightened” to dub any movement towards the acceptance or legalization of such procedures as euthanasia, reproductive technology or abortion.

The widespread and frankly rather lazy use of such rhetoric has both a divisive and demoralizing effect on the many socially concerned and engaged people who oppose such practices.

Firstly, such language implies that those opposing the “reform” agenda have moral and philosophical concerns based on inactivity, mindless-reaction, bigotry and fear of change. Secondly, such terminology carries with it an unspoken and unproven assumption: that the erosion of the “intrinsic” and “transcendent” value of human life by the “sweet reason” of secularist arguments is all part of the inevitable and unstoppable process of advancing society and the march of history.

As the insightful English Catholic historian Christopher Dawson wrote as far back as 1961: *‘It is part of the liberal ideology which presupposed the inevitable movement of progress which science (or secularism) continually advances and religion (and all transcendent belief) retreats...’*

We can all feel the hope and courage drain out of us when the secularist agenda dominates the media airplay, the votes in parliament or even the voices around the school reunion lunch table.

But as Dawson also comments, it is exactly the secularistic mythology of “progress” that is contradictory and illogical—it is bound to destroy both the soul of society and the dignity of the person *‘this one-sided development of culture has become a threat to the survival and is contrary to the real interests of humanity and society...’*

However perhaps this one-sided account of progress is wearing thin?

### South Australian Euthanasia Bill Defeated!

In the South Australian Parliament, just before this newsletter was finalised, a Bill permitting euthanasia in South Australia was defeated on “voices” (that is it was considered that if put to the vote it would have been defeated 12-9).

Until the night of the vote, the Parnell Bill was expected to win by all sides in the debate. There was a strong contingent of pro-euthanasia lobbyists, including the notorious Phillip Nitschke crowded into the public gallery expectant of an influential victory which would snowball reform throughout Australia. The Bill appeared to be riding on the years of systematic campaign by the South Australian Voluntary Euthanasia Society, the sponsorship of the Greens and the widespread media polling data.

The Catholic Women’s League of South Australia and many other community organisations submitted strong opposition to the Parnell Bill. The CWL (SA) urged the Senators to promote “dignity in dying” not with “the full stop of euthanasia” but with the “active” and dynamic relationships of the suffering and terminally ill with family members and an active health and wider community.

In an unprecedented step, the leading bioethicist, Associate Professor Nicholas Tonti-Filippini spoke of his own experiences with chronic and declining health and palliative care in a intensely moving and intimate letter which was cited by several members of the house: *‘Each year I was reminded (by his health insurance company) how much of a burden I am to my community. The fear of being a burden is a major risk to the survival of those chronically ill. If euthanasia were lawful, that sense of burden would be greatly increased for there would be even greater moral pressure to relinquish one’s hold on a burdensome life. Seriously ill people do not need euthanasia... Rather than help to die, the cause of dignity would be more greatly helped if more was done to help people live more fully with the dying process.’*

Dr Tonti-Filippini also added that there were many other aspects of the Bill which were problematic and illiberal: that it was not a “broad-based enquiry” by the community, it was not supported by aged-care organisations throughout the state or by the AMA and it did nothing to support the existential “pain” and loneliness of those who suffer.

One female member of the House voted against the Bill even though she declared herself in principle “pro-choice”. Ms Bressington MLC recorded her conviction of the danger to those whose health status was most precarious, notably the indigenous population: *‘I don’t care if it is not hip to be pro-life’, she said, ‘There are slippery slopes, they do exist.’*

Other members spoke not of the progress of such legislation, but of their concern that such procedures would spiral downwards—that “*voluntary euthanasia would inevitably become involuntary euthanasia.*”

### **The Council of Europe Defends Abortion Conscientious Objection**

On October 8<sup>th</sup> in Strasbourg, another so-called “progressive” resolution was moved by Britain’s Christine McCafferty. It aimed to remove what she called the reactionary, and in her mind “repressive”, “*problem of unregulated use of conscientious objection*” by medical staff and hospital administrations in the matter of abortion.

Once again, it was expected that the “culture of reform” was dominant in the Council and would most likely vote in favour of voting to “coerce” the referral and cooperation in abortion in all countries throughout Europe.

However, two relatively young members of the Council, one from Ireland, Senator Ronan Mullen, and the other from Italy, Senator Luca Volonté, successfully moved amendments which reversed the entire direction of the resolution, effectively moving to safeguard the right of medical practitioners to stand by their consciences.

These amendments were strongly supported by a number of health-law groups, the work of WUCWO and the petitions of the French pro-life network.

Far from rejecting the value of liberty, the radically drafted legislation restored the moral freedom of medicine. The Director of the European Centre for Law and Justice, Gregor Puppincik implied that such “reversal” demonstrated not that the Council was retrograde but that history was not a one-way street. Progress can rightly be aligned with the preservation of *‘right to medical conscience...’*. *‘Freedom is a condition of the exercise of medicine and of conscience... it is important to remember this and defend this fundamental liberty.*

Perhaps there are signs that a rediscovery of values and a re-awakening by people to the truly advanced principles upon which both the defence of life (BOTH its value and its quality) are built. Is it possible that these two recent and unexpected legislative defeats,

one in Australia and one in Europe, are in fact signs of a different kind of “progress”, ones (which Dawson calls *‘the higher order of transcendent truths and values and ends...’*) upon which all caring, sound and just societies are built.

**Anna Krohn**

## **National Colloquium for Catholic Bioethicists**

From January 23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011, the seventh Australian Association of Catholic Bioethicists Annual Colloquium will be conducted in Melbourne. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference requested that the 2011 seventh Annual Bioethics Colloquium be held on the theme “*Eugenics in Contemporary Bioethics*”.

In planning the Colloquium, the Australian Association of Catholic Bioethicists noted that eugenics is widespread practice in Australia. Approximately 90% of children who are diagnosed with disabilities in utero are aborted. There is also a practice of sedation and demanding feeding, in other words, starvation, for those who survive to be born with a disability and whose parents do not wish them to survive.

The Colloquium will also consider eugenics at the end of life in relation to the advocacy for euthanasia to be available for people who are in pain or experiencing “existential suffering” which is word for loneliness and depression. This year the first of the baby boomers turned sixty five and in the next twenty years the demand for aged care facilities is likely to double. In recent months, various Australian States and Territories have commenced debating the issue of legislation of assisted suicide and euthanasia. These Colloquium proceedings come at an important time for Catholic bioethicists, health professionals, parliamentarians and members of the legal profession to be aware of the Church’s teachings on the inherent dignity of the human person and the sanctity of human life, from conception to a natural death.

Catholic Women’s League member and health care ethicist Jo Grainger will be presenting a paper at the Colloquium on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> January titled *‘Nursing and assisted suicide – the international experience.’* The Colloquium proceedings are open for health professionals, academics and legal professionals. The general public are invited to the opening public forum and Colloquium dinner. Full program and registration can be found on the Colloquium website [www.bioethicscolloquium.com.au](http://www.bioethicscolloquium.com.au) or call Monica O’Shea on 03-9412 3377.

## WUCWO Centenary General Assembly

Thirty-one of our members have returned safely home after participating in the historic Centenary Assembly of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations (WUCWO) at the Pontifical Institute Notre Dame Centre in Jerusalem. For many within the Australian contingent, this journey was a lifetime dream come true.



*Thora Regan AM, Madge Fahy, Joan Hughes and Catherine McGrath*

Five hundred delegates from around the world gathered in the Holy City to celebrate a century of service by women for the Church and society at the Centenary Assembly. The delegates attended the Opening Mass celebrated by the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Fouad Twal, before his departure for Rome for the Synod of Bishops of the Middle East. This was followed by five days of meetings and discussions, in addition to which, the participants were also able to enjoy visits to religious sites in Jerusalem and Galilee. A very special moment for those delegates who had been accompanied by their husbands was the renewal of their marriage vows at the Wedding Sanctuary in Cana.



*WUCWO women carrying banners with a depiction of Our Lady particular to their country during Mass at St Saviors Franciscan Church in the Old City of Jerusalem*

Guest speakers at the Centenary Assembly included prominent lay women who hold positions in the Church and society. Ludmila Grygiel, a Polish author, who has worked extensively on marriage and family life as well as Christian anthropology, was the keynote speaker on the theme "You are witnesses of Love." Marguerite Peeters, journalist and author, founder and Director General of the Institute for Intercultural Dialogue Dynamics, which studies global cultural change, provided some guidance on "How to be Christ's witness in a globalized world." Christine Vollmer, founder and president of the Alliance for the Family, an organisation which is dedicated to guiding children and young people towards healthy, happy and stable family and community life, discussed "The importance of formation to be an efficient witness in today's world." Florence Gillet, a French theologian and writer who has published works on Mary, Therese of Lisieux and Chiara Lubich, spoke about "Mary, testimony of God's Love, yesterday and today."

A panel discussion was held with Catholic women from the Holy Land and there was an interreligious panel with youth from the Focolare Movement.



*Outgoing WUCWO President, Karen Hurley, introducing the new WUCWO Board*

Outgoing WUCWO President, Karen Hurley, said: "We received a fantastic welcome from the people of the Holy Land, and we sincerely hope that our sisters in Christ in this region will be able to join us, becoming more involved in various activities in which we participate. I hope that in the next 100 years of our organisation, we will be able to really involve all women, whether they are part of the national organization, or not, because they are sisters in Christ, and together we can make a difference in the world."

While acknowledging the many areas of service that Catholic women have already undertaken, delegates



at the Assembly reaffirmed the aim of WUCWO which is, "to promote the presence, participation and co-responsibility of Catholic women in society and the Church, in order to enable them to fulfil their mission of evangelisation and to work for human development" in unity, particularly for increasing educational opportunities, poverty reduction and the advancement of human rights beginning with the fundamental right to life.

WUCWO women reiterated that the dignity, value and "genius" of women should be universally recognised, and that the importance of intergenerational relationships and the involvement of youth, and the cultural and theological contributions of women be supported and recognised for the attainment of a more humane, just and compatible society. Delegates committed themselves to the study and witness of the Word of God and the Social Teachings of the Church, to ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue and to peacemaking.

Congratulations to Catherine McGrath, from the Diocese of Wollongong, who was elected WUCWO Board Member Australia. Catherine will represent CWLA for the next 4 years on the Board. Catherine replaces Brenda Finlayson DSG, from the Diocese of Ballarat, who resigned after almost 10 years of exceptional service and leadership on the Board.



*Brenda Finlayson DSG and Catherine McGrath*

WUCWO's theme for the next four years is "**You will be my witnesses**" (Acts 1:8). Member Organisations will focus their efforts on eradicating infanticide, forced marriages of young girls and the sexualisation of children. WUCWO women pray through their Patroness Mary, Queen of Peace, that they too will, 'Receive power when the Holy Spirit comes' upon them and that they will be Christ's witnesses to the 'ends of the earth.'

**Robyn Fahy**

## MGL Seminary Building Appeal

The Missionaries of God's Love (MGL) was founded by Father Ken Barker in Canberra in 1986. As well as working with the poor and marginalised in our society, the MGLs have a particular calling to youth ministry helping, amongst other things, to conduct the Disciples of Jesus' Summer Schools of Evangelisation throughout Australia.



The MGLs are racing the clock to raise \$1 million by the end of this year to construct a new building in Melbourne to accommodate their burgeoning numbers of seminarians. They have already outgrown the current seminary with the overflow of young seminarians living in the presbytery next door and a rented house nearby.

Please consider giving a donation to the MGL Seminary Building Appeal as a Christmas gift. Donations can be sent to 6 Boake Place, Garran, ACT, 2605 or made online at [www.mglvocation.org](http://www.mglvocation.org). **All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.**

The young men who sense a call to priesthood with the MGLs are searching for a place where there is true poverty, a genuine spirit of docility to the Magisterium, a love for Eucharistic adoration and strong commitment to evangelisation.

When the Lord tells us to "pray constantly", he is obviously not asking us to recite endless prayers, but urging us never to lose our inner closeness to God. Praying means growing in this intimacy. So it is important that our day should begin and end with prayer; that we listen to God as the Scriptures are read; that we share with him our desires and our hopes, our joys and our troubles, our failures and our thanks for all his blessings, and thus keep him ever before us as the point of reference for our lives.

*Pope Benedict XVI, Letter to Seminarians,  
October 19, 2010*





But Lilly Friedman's dress had one more journey to make. Bergen Belsen, the museum, opened its doors on October 28, 2007. The German government invited Lilly and her sisters to be their guests for the grand opening. They initially declined, but finally traveled to Hanover the following year with their children, their grandchildren and extended families to view the extraordinary exhibit created for the wedding dress made from a parachute.



*Lilly Friedman and her parachute dress on display in the Bergen Belsen Museum*

Lilly's family, who were all familiar with the stories about the wedding in Celle, were eager to visit the synagogue. They found the building had been completely renovated and modernized. But when they pulled aside the handsome curtain they were astounded to find that the Aron Kodesh, made from a kitchen cabinet, had remained untouched as a testament to the profound faith of the survivors. As Lilly stood on the bimah once again she beckoned to her granddaughter, Jackie, to stand beside her where she was once a kallah. "It was an emotional trip. We cried a lot."

Two weeks later, the woman who had once stood trembling before the selective eyes of the infamous Dr Josef Mengele returned home and witnessed the marriage of her granddaughter.

The three Lax sisters—Lilly, Ilona and Eva, who together survived Auschwitz, a forced labor camp,

a death march and Bergen Belsen—have remained close and today live within walking distance of each other in Brooklyn. As mere teenagers, they managed to outwit and outlive a monstrous killing machine, then went on to marry, have children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and were ultimately honored by the country that had earmarked them for extinction.

As young brides, they had stood underneath the chuppah and recited the blessings that their ancestors had been saying for thousands of years. In doing so, they chose to honor the legacy of those who had perished by choosing life.

*This article was written by Helen Zegerman Schwimmer and published by numerous web sites, including The Jewish Press. Helen is the daughter of Holocaust survivors and was born in a displaced person's camp located on the grounds of the St. Ottilien Monastery in Germany. Helen Zegerman Schwimmer has written and produced several documentaries including the autobiographical 'Miracle on Seabreeze Avenue' for which she received the Women's History Month Video Award. Her Jewish cooking video, 'A Taste of Shabbos', has been acclaimed worldwide for its contribution to promoting Jewish culture. Helen's new book, 'Like The Stars of The Heavens', is an anthology of her popular columns originally published in The Jewish Press.*

### **Memory Awakens Hope**

Advent is concerned with that very connection between memory and hope which is so necessary to man. Advent's intention is to awaken the most profound and basic emotional memory within us, namely, the memory of the God who became a child. This is a healing memory; it brings hope. The purpose of the Church's year is continually to rehearse her great history of memories, to awaken the heart's memory so that it can discern the star of hope....

It is the beautiful task of Advent to awaken in all of us memories of goodness and thus to open doors of hope.

*Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger,  
Seek That Which Is Above, 1986*

## *Saint Mary: An Australian Example of Feminine Genius*

Pope John Paul predicted that the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond, would need women, those both inside and alongside the Church, to lead the way in building up a concrete and authentic “culture of life”. The founding members of the Catholic Women’s League organisations in Australia had a burning desire to research and work for the humane treatment of female workers, for the well being of families and for the defence of life which pre-figured the massive vision of John Paul. Without using precisely his words, they understood the key elements of a “culture of life”. The League organisations throughout Australia have, in their own quiet, faithful way, also provided us with home-grown examples of what Pope John Paul II decades later called the “feminine genius”.

This “culture” and this “genius” would ensure that the neglected, silent and damaged members of society would be nurtured, respected and protected as the most healthy, vocal and recognised people in the same society. Women will do this by person-to-person networking and by ensuring that governments, communities and philosophies are truly personalizes.

Many CWLA members have taken part in the celebrations surrounding the sanctification of Australia’s first saint—a woman of extraordinary feminine genius—our own Saint Mary MacKillop. They are also familiar with other great Australian “geniuses”: Caroline Chisholm and Eileen O’Connor for example. But closer to the CWLA has been the exciting news about the progress towards official Church recognition of the founding President of the CWL of Victoria and Wagga Wagga, Sister Dr Mary Glowrey.

Even the usually cynical Australian media has unwittingly aired what is a deep and complex conversation about the character of Australian women and this has provided us with opportunity to reflect upon how “feminine genius” in John Paul II’s sense will influence the character of Australian women and by extension Australian society.

The media has presented Saint Mary through the lens of three very different “cultures” of womanhood—each with its own ideals, landmarks and leading lights.

The first idea of “womanhood” is associated with an admittedly glamorized and toned down version of

secular ideological “feminism”. This is the feminism celebrated by the political factions associated the old Women’s Electoral Lobby and today’s Emily’s List. This type of feminism, attempts to compete with dominant male models of civic power. Its principles encourage women to be avowedly ambitious, bluntly anti-religious (though probably open to the eclectically “spiritual”) and magnetized by the taking and holding onto of bureaucratic and political power. While many of the interests of this group involve a commendable concern for the education and just employment and treatment of women and girls, there is also the acceptance that the pragmatics of female progress depends upon gender homogenization, the sacrifice of unborn lives and the rejection of traditional notions of spousal *complementarity* in marriage and family.

The second portrayal of Australian womanhood is in some ways a reaction to the first. It very consciously lays down its political concerns and yawns at the dogged seriousness of ideological “feminism”. This post-feminist ideal aims to appropriate the powder-puffs of nostalgic femininity along with the athletic and free morals of the “mythical” Aussie bloke. Models of this type of Australian female are, well, model-material. They exchange the social revolution of the feminist agenda for retail therapy. While they may be as intelligent and dedicated as their male colleagues they wobble along on ankle-breaking heels while they swear and toss back the booze like waterside-workers. They aim for an easy-going alliance with men in the workplace, but dream and dress after male desire and approval. They are stoical about their failed and abusive relationships and take the abortions, STDs and hang-overs as the necessary evils on the pilgrimage to happiness. What they cannot imagine is that the sexy “sun-kissed” bikini wearing good time girls are not a goal but the vapid fantasies of male consumerism and lust.

The third type or even stereotype of Australian women- has a long and revered heritage. It is exemplified in Henry Lawson’s story of the Drover’s Wife (remember the State School Reader?) It usually involves the bush, the battler and the eminently practical. The exemplars of these women are rich in character and courage. They are the women who inhabit Dorothy MacKellar’s landscape but far from being mythical they are as real as our favorite aunt, Country Women’s Association president or school teacher.

Perhaps the most “stupendous” star of this beloved type of womanhood- is the great *La Stupenda* herself: Dame Joan Sutherland. It certainly feels like a member of family has gone with her recent death. Dame Joan exemplified all that was great about the traditional Australian heroine. She was marvelously but humbly talented, she was dedicated and generous, she complemented her male-mentor (her husband Richard Bonyng) with love and ease, she broke the glass ceiling of our cultural cringe without losing what one famous conductor called her “awful Australian accent.” She wore her genius lightly and with humour, was self-effacing and magnanimous.

There are ways in which Saint Mary MacKillop also captures this third type of woman too. Many reporters and public figures have evoked her as a model of the heartwarming “Aussie battler” with an ample share of grit and common sense and no nonsense egalitarianism. While none of this is simply wrong, we cannot simply tame Mary as a comfortable though virtuous Australian souvenir.

Social activists have sensed the “something greater” of Saint Mary- but in doing so attempt to mould Mary after their own aspirations: either as radical feminist or humanitarian. They might imagine that she wore the traditional trappings of religious life and “the faith of her time” (as one person dismissed it) with tolerance but no real depth.

Some accounts of her life even vet out her own accounts of her dedication to the Cross of Christ, her love of the office of priesthood, or her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus because they are simply too embarrassing.

Mary was neither an appealing mascot of Australiana nor a proto-secular humanist. She was something much more consoling and shocking, something more than a local heroine and more universal than the humanist ideal: she was a saint.

As Parramatta’s retired Bishop Kevin Manning notes, Saint Mary is an exemplar for everyone especially Christians not “*because she is a great horsewoman, or a rebel against the bishops, but because of her holiness of life...*”

Her letters and her life give us many illustrations not only of heroism but of the type of joyful love against all odds which Christ presents as he unfolds the Beatitudes, the foundation stones of holiness. Despite being shambolically (and invalidly) excommunicated by the weak-minded and ill Bishop Shiels, she recalls in her letters, feeling an overwhelming love for the Church and for his office.

“Blessed are you when they persecute you in my name...”

When Mother Mary realized the imprudence of Fr Julian Tennison Woods idealism—he rejected her friendship and even her correspondence—she acted not only with determination but with overwhelming mercy and forgiveness. When her vision for education afforded her Sisters defamatory and abusive rejection in the streets of Adelaide, she not only suffered, she joined her suffering to the Cross of Christ. “Blessed are the merciful ...”

Writes Father Paul Gardiner, there were times when far from being the self-confident and defiant secular feminist- she rather had to step out in faith to God’s providence: “*Mary was clearly not bounding along confidently as the competent woman of affairs. Rather, she was hesitant and lonely, and it was only the conviction that God required it of her that gave her the courage to keep going in the most unpromising situations.*” “Blessed are they that mourn...”

Like all saints, it is what God achieves through her that interests Saint Mary, not her own check list of qualities and achievements. She is “blessed” not only because her goodness was of such a “high caliber” (as if she is a type of moral high-jumper) but because the joy and light of God’s love is luminous through her.

This is what is her genius and the light she throws on our search for womanhood and Australian character today. This is what we see also in women such as Mary Glowrey and Caroline Chisholm This is what all Christian women are invited to be, whether married or unmarried, consecrated or professional. We are called to be the salt of paradox and the light of love. The culture of life is what John Paul II calls the “sign of contradiction” (standing out from the expectations and assumptions of society) and the light of love (affirming what is deepest and most truly human).

As the great Gilbert Keith Chesterton writes of the saint that she can “... *be found restoring the world to sanity by exaggerating whatever the world neglects, which is by no means always the same element in every age. Yet each generation seeks its saint by instinct; and he (or she) is not what the people want, but rather what the people need. . . . Therefore it is the paradox of history that each generation is converted by the saint who contradicts it most.*”

**Anna Krohn, Bioethics Convenor**

(A version of this article first appeared in *The Record*)



## *Recollections of Jerusalem and the Canonisation of St Mary of the Cross*

*Several members of the League kindly took the time to share their memories of the WUCWO Centenary Assembly in Jerusalem and the Canonisation of St Mary of the Cross in Rome*

### **WUCWO Centenary Assembly**

My journey to Israel started as early as 2009, when I was asked, "Was I going to the WUCWO Assembly (World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations) celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> year in October 2010?" "Of course I wasn't!" was my reply. When I repeated this to my husband, he said "Why not?" and so the trip of a lifetime, my very first trip overseas, began.

I really think that just experiencing the plane travel would have sufficed as a trip in itself. The preparation, the packing, the not knowing what to expect and the time on the plane was exciting. I travelled and room shared with Tricia Joyce, (yes, we are still friends).

We flew into Tel Aviv at around 11.15pm on Tuesday and we were met by Sammy, who was to take us to our Hotel. He kept saying to us "do not move, do not move from here" as he had another party to collect, 20 women from the Ivory Coast of Africa. We finally left the Airport at 2.15am and travelled by bus to Jerusalem. The first impact was of the lack of colour, the white of the buildings, of the soil/stone, the sparseness of the vegetation and the hills. The freeway cut through the dry, hilly, stony landscape. There was a feeling of Jesus and how it must have been all those years ago.

As we were late arriving, our room at the Pontifical Institute Notre Dame of Jerusalem Centre had been re-let, we were homeless, farmed out to different hotels, until Thursday when we joined the others back at the Notre Dame Centre. The fortunate part of this was that we were lucky enough to stay at the Knights Palace hotel in the Old City.

Early in the morning, we walked the narrow cobbled roadways taking in the atmosphere of people going about their daily routines. Children off to school, shops, just shutters pulled up, opening into a room about two metres wide that was at street level. We saw lots of shops for fruit and vegetables, for grocery items and similar to our milk bars. The buildings high walled and off white/cream stone. The road doubled as walkway, wide enough for a small car only. Shopkeepers were very adamant that they had the very thing we were looking for and we would not get better elsewhere. We became adept at saying

"no". All the streets in the Old City were cobbled with stone, worn by centuries of footsteps. We were continually walking uphill. The Old City is within the Wall with entrances through the Gates, surrounded by the New Jerusalem, a busy bustling city.

Mass, celebrated by 12 priests, was in the Conference Centre some mornings. This experience was particularly moving for me. There we were, 500 Catholic women from all parts of the world, meeting together to celebrate faith and unity, so quietly so prayerfully. The homilies were so hopeful with a lightness that we all enjoyed. English and French the majority languages. To meet Fr GianMaria Polidoro, OFM, was also very special for me (his inspirational articles appear regularly in the Women's Voice).

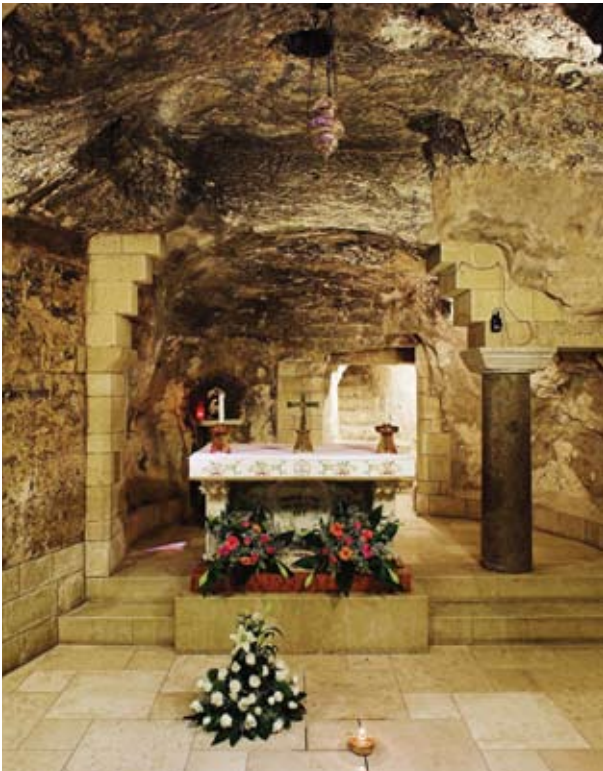


*Fr GianMaria Polidoro OFM, Brenda Finlayson  
DGS and Maria Giovanna Ruggieri, the new  
WUCWO General President*

*Where did we go? What did we see?* Only now am I beginning to realise that, yes I have been there! For me there was a sense of "on the bus - off the bus". "Where was that? What was that?" Long queues of people waiting to see something that flashed by in a second. To be able to see the places that I read about in the Scriptures and try to imagine how it was, conjured up vast distances, dry, dust everywhere, always a stony hill ahead to be traversed, shade almost non-existent, to arrive to the hospitality that still is apparent today.

We participated in five Stations of the Cross in the Franciscan procession along the Via Dolorosa (Way of the Cross) which begins at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and returns there for the ritual closing of the Church each night. Along the way, we each had the opportunity to carry the cross. Despite the crowds and non-participants, it was a moving spiritual experience to walk along the Way remembering where Jesus suffered on his last day.

Crossing the Sea of Galilee by boat from the Kibbutz Ginnosar and attending Mass at the Mount of Beatitudes while looking over the Sea were profound reminders of the life of Jesus. We also visited the Church and Garden of Gethsemane, the Tomb of Mary, the Mount of Olives, the Church of the Pater Noster where Jesus taught the Lord's Prayer. Opposite the Church of the Annunciation in Nazareth, the Church of St Joseph, built over St Joseph's carpentry workshop, was another special moment for reflection.



*Grotto of the Annunciation where the Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary*

The journey may be over however it will always be with me. As I reflect and look at photographs and read the scriptures, I will be back in Israel visiting those special places. For me the pilgrimage has given a depth to my prayer. I am so blessed to have a supportive husband and Tricia, a great travelling companion. We all survived the drama of what was a very special experience.

**Jewell Start, Ararat CWL Branch**

### **The Rome Experience**

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop opened the first Victorian school in Numurkah in January 1890, and as I live there I thought it was a golden opportunity to combine the Canonisation with the WUCWO Assembly.

Through the great network of the League in Victoria and Wagga Wagga, I was able to meet up with three other League women who had the same thought! These ladies were Mary Flanagan of Bacchus Marsh (where the second Josephite school in Victoria opened), Margot Lucas and Mary MacDermid who are from our newest Branch in Narre Warren.

We joined with one pilgrimage organised by Harvest. Our flight from Tele Aviv following the conclusion of WUCWO Assembly arrived in Rome late on Thursday. The following morning, our group leader, Fr. Donal McIlrath (an Irish Columbian stationed in Fiji, but on Sabbatical in Rome) took us to the Basilica of St John Lateran for Mass, which was celebrated in one of the Chapels, with seats along the sides. This reminded me of the Nun's chapels of yesteryear. Many of the Popes are featured around the Cathedral, and the floor has beautiful mosaics.

Nearby are the Santa Scala (Holy Stairs) brought from Jerusalem to Rome in 326 AD by St. Helena. These stairs are said to be the steps that led up to the praetorium of Pontius Pilate which Jesus Christ stood on during his Passion. We visited the Basilica of the Santa Croce where there are fragments of the Holy Cross and also reportedly two thorns from the Jesus' Crown. We then travelled out of Rome to visit the Catacombs of St Sebastian. The catacombs were originally lime quarries, and when disused, the poorer people of Rome began to bury their dead there, then later the Christians did the same. It was interesting to see the cavities, sometimes three high as one walked along the tunnels. It is reported that the Christians came here to honour the dead, but it would have been impossible to live here, as is believed, because of the fumes.

*The Footsteps of Mary MacKillop in Rome:* We saw the Termini Station where Mary arrived from Brindisi on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1873 after six weeks at sea from Adelaide, the Anglo Americano Hotel where she spent her first nights, and opposite here is the Scotch College (Pontifical Scotch College) where her father studied for the priesthood.

Mary was a regular visitor to several churches, Sant' Andrea al Quirinale and the tomb of St Stanislaus Kosta, a young Jesuit whose life greatly impressed Mary, the site of the once Santa Sacramenta Chapel where Mary visited faithfully most evenings for Benediction, and the Church of Santa Agata dei Goti where she often prayed and also met Monsignor Kirby who became a wonderful help and support.

We also visited the last Church of the Gesu, Mary loved to go there, and here she met Fr Anderledy

SJ who helped her with the translation of important documents into Latin. The Church remains the Mother Church of the Jesuit Order (1568) and it is here where St Ignatius of Loyola lies in peace. One wonders at the beauty of these old churches, their construction, their artwork, the likes of which will rarely be seen here.

We moved onto the Convitto Internazionale San Tommaso where Mary lived while in Rome, now a residential College for students studying at the Angelicum (the Dominican University). We were able to visit the chapel for prayers. The Ignatian Rooms are adjacent. Mary visited here and recorded her happiness at hearing Mass in the room where St Ignatius died.

The day before the Canonisation, we attended a special presentation of Mary's life. This was a drama created by the Australian Catholic University with actors interspersed with film clips of the Nuns, the school children and the works of the Josephites. A remarkable performance!

**Margaret Lucas, Sandhurst Diocese**

**Another Pilgrim's Tale from Rome**

Our small group consisting of five ladies, four from Wollongong and one from the Bathurst diocese in NSW, went directly from the WUCWO conference to Rome in anticipation and excitement for the days leading up to the canonisation ceremony for St Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

We had tickets to attend the afternoon session of the performance depicting the life story of Mary MacKillop. This was an excellent display of wonderfully talented performers and was very much appreciated by the many people in attendance.

We were up very early on the "great day" and arrived at the entry place before 6.00am. There were only approximately a dozen people before us at this particular point of entry and the time passed fairly quickly as we chattered to those gathering around us. The barriers were removed at 8.00am by which time a great mass of people had arrived and we needed to be very careful as people just pushed and surged forward. Once through the security procedure, one of our ladies moved forward toward the altar and managed to get seats which were just four rows from the front!!

What a wonderful experience it was from the beginning to the end of the entire procedure. Naturally, it was very formal and the message

given to those gathered was to be restrained in our response to the proclamation of canonisation.

The organisation was just exceptional right down to the very well orchestrated distribution of communion to this vast crowd of thousands of people.

The following day we attended the Australian celebration of Mass at the beautiful Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls. This gathering was of (mostly) Australian people who expressed their joy in the very Australian way.

I congratulate the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Sacred Heart of Jesus order and all of the many people involved in the planning and organisation of each of the celebratory functions both in Rome and in Australia. In particular, I mention His Eminence George Cardinal Pell for his marvellous homily which was delivered in a way which was so typically Australian—all of the factual history delivered in a very sincere down to earth 'story'—which drew each of us present into a great atmosphere of being 'family'.

The most moving moment for me was when the Josephite sisters processed into the Church wearing the colorful blue pashmina shawls which drew the eye to these absolutely beaming faces. We could just feel their joy reaching out and touching us all. Certainly the experience for me is one never to be forgotten.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, pray for us and help us to reach out to others in faith and love.

**Peg McEntee OAM, Wollongong Diocese**

**Message of the Christmas Tree:  
Life Is "Ever Green"**

The traditional "Christmas tree" is a very ancient custom which exalts the value of life, as in winter the evergreen becomes a sign of undying life. In general, the tree is decorated and Christmas gifts are placed under it. The symbol is also eloquent from a typically Christian point of view: It reminds us of the "tree of life" (see Genesis 2:9), representation of Christ, God's supreme gift to humanity.

The message of the Christmas tree, therefore, is that life is "ever green" if one gives: not so much material things, but of oneself: in friendship and sincere affection, and fraternal help and forgiveness, in shared time and reciprocal listening.

*Pope John Paul II, Angelus,  
December 19, 2004*



## VICTORIA & WAGGA WAGGA

**Cause of Dr Sr Mary Glowrey:** We were overjoyed to receive wonderful news from India about the cause of Dr Sr Mary Glowrey, the founding President of the League in Victoria and Wagga Wagga. The preliminary phase of her cause has commenced pursuant to Part II of Sanctorum Mater, the instruction for conducting diocesan or eparchial inquiries in the causes of saints. This instruction is available on the Vatican's website. The Society of Jesus Mary and Joseph (JMJ) is the petitioner. Fr Paul Puthanangady SDB has been appointed by the Archbishop of Bangalore to write the *Libellus*.



*Dr Sr Mary Glowrey already affected by cancer to which she would succumb*

Fr Paul Puthanangady is a member of the Salesians of Don Bosco. He was ordained in 1964 in Torino, Italy, and holds a doctorate in theology with specialization in liturgy (Ph.D.), from the Pontifical Athenaeum of Sant'Anselmo in Rome. He is professor of theology and liturgy at the Salesian Theologate, Kristu Jyoti College, Bangalore. He is also the Episcopal Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Bangalore. He has published four books, edited several others and has written more than 200 articles for Indian and international journals.

Sr Stella Maris, the Provincial Superior of Guntur, has asked that members of the League join with the JMJ sisters in praying that Dr Sr Mary Glowrey's life of holiness may be acknowledged by the Church.

League members wishing to obtain a copy of the prayer for the cause of Dr Sr Mary Glowrey should send a self-addressed and stamped DL envelope to the Committee for the Cause of Dr Sr Mary Glowrey, Mary Glowrey House, 132-134 Nicholson St, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065.

**Petition Campaign for Legislative Reform:** As a result of a Resolution passed at the CWL Victoria and Wagga Wagga Ballarat Diocesan Conference in May and subsequently at the General Conference in Colac in August, we have been running a targeted petition campaign pressing for legislative reform to ensure that a person, who kills an unborn child through an act of domestic or other violence, or by an act of culpable driving, can be charged for killing that unborn child. At the present time, an unborn child has no protection under the law in Victoria and only limited protection in NSW. The CWL in Victoria and Wagga Wagga are petitioning both the Legislative Council in Victoria and the Legislative Assembly in NSW to introduce into Parliament a Bill to amend the law. Our 'mirror' petition concept was designed to ensure that every signature would count and that maximum pressure could be brought to bear on each state legislature.

Those League members who were unable to be actively involved in collecting signatures had a crucial part to play. They were our powerhouse of prayer. The founders of the League in Victoria and Wagga Wagga set out to change the world through prayer and action and this vital campaign needed all our efforts.

The response to the campaign has been extraordinary with people from all walks of life signing the petition. Signed petition forms are still arriving at our Campaign Headquarters. Due to the overwhelming public support for the campaign, it has been extended until the end of December and the petition forms will soon be available on the new CWL Victoria and Wagga Wagga website.

We are deeply grateful to the Petition Campaign Co-ordinator, Gertie Mangan, and Joan Edgar who have both devoted many hours, in difficult circumstances, to creating widespread public awareness about this vitally important issue.

**Life Vote:** Some of our members have been very active in the Life Vote campaign in the lead up to the Victorian State election. Approximately half a million pro-life flyers were distributed in the last week of the campaign by Life Vote. These were mainly targeted leaflets exposing those politicians who had voted for the Abortion Law Reform Bill in 2008, but also

included one leaflet against the pro-euthanasia push by Maxine Morand MP (Member for Mount Waverly).

The results were extraordinary! While there were many reasons behind the large swing against the government, the Life Vote campaign undoubtedly added to the momentum.

The Life Vote campaign targeted 23 specific seats. Maxine Morand who had moved the brutal Abortion Law Reform Bill lost her seat on an 8.3% swing to pro-life candidate, Michael Gidley. A further 10 MPs who had voted for the Abortion Law Reform Bill have lost their seats. Another 10 MPs have seen their seats change from safe to marginal, meaning they are in reach of being defeated at the next election in 4 years.

May the love, joy, peace and hope of Christmas be with you today and always.

**Robyn Fahy**  
**Committee for the Cause of Sr Dr Mary Glowrey**  
**PR Advisory Group**

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Leonie Holmes and Christine Redden have been very busy writing to our State and Federal Politicians, protesting Bills regarding Euthanasia, Abortion, and Same Sex Marriage, which have either been introduced or are about to be introduced in our Parliament.

A letter about the issue of Euthanasia was individually emailed to all politicians both Upper and Lower House in South Australia and to all Federal Senators in early November. We have had a wonderful response from them and invariably they said that they appreciated us contacting them. Our letter follows:

*Dear Senator,*

*The 639 members of the 46 branches of Catholic Women's League SA respectfully express our wish that when the Euthanasia Bill comes before the Senate, you will vote against it. Following are some of our reasons.*

*Facing the diagnosis of a terminal illness or even a slow progressing debilitating disease is a great challenge. The Palliative Care Service allows trained persons into the family's home and into their lives at this special time. It allows communication between Specialists and General Practitioners*

*at a time when medicine is overwhelming them. It allows the person and more importantly their families to freely talk about the progression of the disease and what they will have to face. It allows discussion regarding religious matters that may be worrying the person and referral to the appropriate person. It does not mean that it is the end as there is a lot of growing to be done over this period of time.*

*To decide that Euthanasia is the best option in this case is robbing the person and their families of this very special journey. Some families cannot face the day to day responsibility of caring for their dying relative, either due to lack of confidence or their own failing health. Hospital is certainly best in these situations and families can still be part of the care. When death occurs there is of course grief but also an overwhelming sense of satisfaction to have been able to care for their loved one. The loss is there but families accept the end and move on much more quickly in their grief.*

*Euthanasia is actively planning and carrying out your own death. It has to involve medical intervention, not for life saving measures but for death. What a full stop. How can the family be prepared for this?*

*Please maintain dignity in dying by voting against the euthanasia bill.*

We are currently working on sending out individual emails to all the Federal MPs in the Lower House and this letter covers the three issues of Euthanasia, Abortion and Same Sex Marriage:

### **TELL AUSTRALIANS IT WILL NOT HAPPEN**

*Decriminalising abortion has allowed the rate of abortions to exceed the birth rate. First trimester abortions are the most common but more and more we are seeing abortions being carried out in the second trimester for purported medical reasons. The impact on women has not been fully evaluated. **It is happening.***

*If Voluntary Euthanasia Bills are passed in parliament, we are afraid that euthanasia will be used not only for the terminally ill but for those who have irreversible brain damage, who have mental illness issues or those who are just too old to care for any more. The list could go on. **It could happen.***

*Every person has the right to carry out their lives as they feel they have been created. Gay people*

*are no different. However, is it necessary for them to marry as the Same Sex Marriage Bill suggests? Australian Law should give gay couples equal rights but marriage should be kept as a contract between a man and a woman. There will surely be gay couples wanting to have children, creating another series of moral dilemmas.*

***It could happen.***

*This sounds very reactionary but we ask you to search your consciences and tell all Australians that.....*

***It will not happen.***

**Pauline Victory**  
**President – South Australia**

## QUEENSLAND

Greetings from Queensland! As 2010 draws to a close so does my term as State President Queensland, so I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the Presidents of the other states for your friendship, the pleasure of your company and your help and advice over the past four years. I do appreciate the friendships which I have made throughout Australia.

Following the State Conference in Queensland, which was held in the country town of St George in September, members returned in high spirits. I was most grateful to our National President, Madge Fahy, for making the effort to attend this conference. It was immediately following the Tasmania Conference. Due to personal reasons, I was unable to be present at this conference.

Since my last article, I attended the New Zealand National Conference which was held in Invercargill on the South Island of New Zealand. This was reported in the last issue of National Newsletter by Gertie Mangan, National Vice President. What a pleasure it was to meet up with Gertie and to experience a National Conference in New Zealand. National President Tui Pascoe made the three of us from Australia most welcome.

As the members of Queensland Catholic Women's League wind down after a year of hard work and prepare for the birth of Christ, I take this opportunity of wishing each and every member throughout Australia a very happy and holy Christmas and may many blessings be bestowed on you in 2011.

**Joan Armstrong**  
**State President - Queensland**

## CANBERRA & GOULBURN ARCHDIOCESE

Greetings and God's blessings! As the year draws to a close, we look back and give thanks for all we have achieved in the past twelve months and look forward with great anticipation to the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

I trust all those who attended the WUCWO Assembly in Jerusalem in October and those who were fortunate enough to be in Rome for the canonisation of Mother Mary MacKillop, now St Mary of the Cross, are safely returned home and we look forward to reading reports in the weeks to come.

The canonisation was a wonderful and joy-filled occasion and it was very moving to hear Mary MacKillop's name being finally called out and added to the growing list of wonderful saints worldwide. May she continue to intercede for us and grant many blessing to the faithful in this great land under the Southern Cross.

In early October, under the sponsorship of CWL of Victoria and Wagga Wagga, the League in the Archdiocese circulated a petition among members in NSW seeking to bring about amendments to the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) Current laws in NSW do not adequately recognise the loss of, or damage to, an unborn child as a result of violence or culpable driving.

It is with a great sense of loss that I sadly record the death of Marj Culkin, a long standing and valuable member of CWL. Marj's beautiful requiem Mass at St John Vianney Church, Waramanga, was well attended by members from all over the Archdiocese and all agreed she will be sorely missed. May her dear soul rest in everlasting peace.

The World Community Day Service, held at the end of October at the Presbyterian Church of St Andrew in Forrest, ACT, was attended by a large number of members of CWL. The theme of the service 'Turning Darkness into Light' and was conducted by the Rev Joy Bartholomew and the homily given by Deaconess Kathryn Clark, chaplain to St Andrew's Retirement Village. The ACT Unit of Australian Church Women did a marvellous job with the order of Service and as several CWL members are part of the Executive of the ACT Unit, they are to be congratulated on a job well done.

As part of my duties, I continue to visit branches throughout this 88,000 square kilometre Archdiocese. On the feast day of St Charles



Borromeo, it was my pleasure to visit the furthest flung branch at West Wyalong, NSW, in the Western Deanery. Pat Liddiard, Archdiocesan International Secretary, accompanied me on the six hour round trip. We arrived in time for a late morning Mass in the Chapel attached to St Mary's Church, followed by lunch in the adjoining Parish Centre. During lunch, it was my very great pleasure to award Certificates of Appreciation to Alice Collins and Monica Glennon and to join in wishing branch President, Olga Scott, a very happy 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. A truly memorable day!

I was delighted to be present on the feast of the Holy Souls, together with representatives of most of Central Region branches, at a Melbourne Cup afternoon co-hosted by St Joseph's, O'Connor and St Brigid's and St Patrick's. This was an initiative of the President of St Joseph's branch, Judith-Ann Sjostedt, and proved to be a huge success. Guest of honour was 94 year old Joyce Purcell, resplendent in a magnificent lavender and purple hat. Joyce was thrilled to win a prize in the 'Hat Parade' judged by two sisters of St Joseph. The tables were laden and afternoon tea was sumptuous, so another social triumph for members responsible.

In late November, the Knights of the Southern Cross had organised a fundraising dinner for military chaplains in training and guest speakers included Bishop Max Davis and General Peter Cosgrove. I was pleased to represent CWL at this function and the League donated some raffle prizes to ensure the success of this worthy event.

Unfortunately, due to the unavailability of Archbishop Mark Coleridge, our usual combined November Mass with the Knights of the Southern Cross, for deceased members of both organisations, has had to be postponed until Thursday 16 December. However, we are still hoping for a good number of members to be present on the day to remember those dear CWL souls who have passed into eternal life.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, please let us not forget those less fortunate than ourselves. I hope your Christmas will be happy and filled with much joy and many blessings. We continue to be full of hope for the future and wish you all good health and, peace in your hearts and homes in the year to come and beyond.

I leave you with some words from that great reformer, Saint Charles Borromeo, a very spiritual man:

'The tiniest fire of divine love has been lit in you. Then do not rush to make a parade of it. Do not

take it out into the icy blast. Keep the furnace door shut on it so that it does not die out. Keep your mind fixed on God.' Deo gratias.

**Angela M Devlin**  
**Archdiocesan President - Canberra & Goulburn**

## NEW SOUTH WALES

**CWL Sydney Annual General Meeting:** Our Annual General Meeting was held on 9 November in the Polding Centre. The theme of 'Kindness and Caring' was incorporated into our Opening Liturgy which was prepared by our Liturgy Officer, Helen Cook. We then viewed a PowerPoint presentation, 'Orchids and Thoughts', and each member was given an orchid.

President Loretta Chester welcomed State President Catherine McGrath, State Executive members, Diocesan Presidents and Representatives from Bathurst, Broken Bay and Parramatta. Following the meeting, we were given a presentation by Robyn, of Robyn Rowe Chocolates, on the making of chocolates and on the journey she and her family have taken. We were invited to enjoy the tasting plate and then purchase some of these delicious treats.

Following a delicious lunch, Mr Chris Meney, Director of Life, Marriage and Family Centre, Archdiocese of Sydney, spoke on our 'Kindness and Caring' theme, in particular how this relates to his work and his family. He was an enjoyable speaker and was most frank and generous with his answers to many questions.

Catherine McGrath spoke about her recent trip to the Holy Land and her election as the WUCWO Board Member Australia. Catherine then presented Moya Potts with Life Membership to CWLA NSW. This was a well deserved honour for Moya who was very humbled and expressed her thanks. She reflected on her time in Marian group and her involvement with CWL over the past 30 years. Congratulations Moya! There were also presentations to President Loretta Chester who is standing down this year as well as Vice President Mary Cantrall, Treasurer Sally Fennell and Secretary Adrienne Buckmaster.

The day ended with Remembrance Day prayers. So many members remarked on what an enjoyable day it was, how wonderful it was to be together, share stories and feel part of this wonderful organisation.

**Emily Potts**  
**Communications Officer – CWLA-NSW**

**'Outback to Rome' - Mary MacKillop Canonisation Luncheon:** On Tuesday 12 October, 80 of our members from Sydney celebrated the canonisation of Mary MacKillop and enjoyed a wonderful day. We began with a DVD about Mary's life and also the work of the Josephite Sisters in our communities. Our meeting room was decorated with posters of Mary, a replica building of her home and masses of Australian native flowers.

Each table was decorated with a can of native flowers and smaller cans for five cent coins for our Sri Lankan pre-school children. We wanted to bring the flavours of Australia and Italy to the room and the table. Bright tableware, lemon cordial, "chicken in a basket", tiramisu tarts, ANZAC biscuits, chocolate crackles to name just a few of our goodies. A huge thank you to all our wonderful cooks as well as our flower, delivery, set up, clean up and shopping ladies. Without you, the day just would not have happened.

The Mary MacKillop Quiz proved our ladies had paid great attention to the DVD and our lucky raffle winners received commemorative rosary beads, canonisation scarfs and Mary calendars. Sister Eleanor Dawson, a Josephite Sister, was our Guest Speaker and she was an engaging, enlightening and lovely lady. This day made us all feel we were a small part of the celebrations!

**Chris McKirdy**

## TASMANIA

**Australia's First Saint:** Like most of Australia, we were very proud of the canonisation of Saint Mary of the Cross. Churches in Tasmania held special Masses in her honour and our local Josephite Sisters celebrated the event with a number of functions. Banners were placed in many towns and our local newspaper, *The Mercury*, gave the event extensive coverage, also featuring the association between Julian Tennison-Woods – his work in Tasmania as a geologist and his support for St Mary in establishing the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart.

After all this excitement, it was down to business! We are in the throes of campaigning against the introduction of a Bill introduced by Senator Bob Brown, *Restoring Territory Rights*. Alex Schadenberg, head of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition of Canada, visited Hobart recently and spoke against the Bill. He advised those attending that his organisation had been successful in preventing euthanasia laws being passed in several

jurisdictions in Canada. Members have been encouraged to get writing!

Tasmania's Attorney-General, Lara Giddings, has announced that she is distributing a paper on the introduction of a Charter of Rights. At times, in clamouring for a charter, proponents point to the cases of Cornelia Rau (detained by immigration authorities) and Vivian Alvarez, wrongly deported to the Philippines. These cases were prime examples of bureaucratic bungling – situations likely to be compounded by a Charter. We believe that rather than enhancing a citizen's rights, a Charter would put at risk those we already have.



At our recent State Conference we were delighted to award Life Membership to two outstanding members – Mrs. Lola Phillips of Hobart and Mrs. Agnes Banim of Ulverstone. Both are pictured above with our Spiritual Director, Archbishop Adrian Doyle. Agnes is pictured on the left and Lola on the right.

We have not yet had our changeover of executive, which is expected to take place in December, so, on behalf of Tasmania, I wish all League members a happy and holy Christmas and peace and prosperity in the New Year.

**Lillian Deane for Marjorie Payton**

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CWL WA held our 2010 AGM and State Conference at the Mary MacKillop Centre in South Perth on Friday, 22 October, just days after the canonisation. We felt very blessed to be enjoying the Sisters' welcoming hospitality in such a busy and auspicious week.

This was a new venue for us and one that seemed to work very well. One of our members belongs to the South Perth community, and another works as

a volunteer at this very busy and popular Centre, so we were in no danger of getting lost in an unfamiliar setting. As well as providing very pleasant conference facilities the Centre is also renowned for its wonderful catering which needless to say was very much appreciated.

We began our day by joining the Community for Mass and felt very privileged to be made so welcome in their beautiful Chapel.

At the end of Mass, CWL WA Life Membership was conferred on two very surprised members: Dorothy Beyer and Karyn Kammann. Both ladies have given outstanding service to our organisation at many levels and in many different capacities. It was a joy to recognise and acclaim publicly all they have contributed and continue to contribute.

We were blessed that members of their families were able to be with us for the presentation, and to join with us afterwards for morning tea.

After morning tea, the rest of the morning was devoted to our first business session, in which Executive reports were given, followed by reports from the three Dioceses, our Portfolio holders and our delegates to outside organisations.

A resolution was passed asking the State Government to be more proactive in ensuring that wheelchair access to public buildings meets not simply basic legal requirements but also the real practical needs of wheelchair users.

A recommendation was also accepted that the State Government be asked to make funding available for the fitting of seat belts in buses owned by non-government schools. A programme to fit seat belts in all buses owned by the Education Department was completed at the beginning of 2010, and members felt that non-government schools needed to be encouraged to follow suit.

After lunch, we welcomed our guest speaker, Fr Gaetan Pereira SJ. Fr Gaetan, originally from India, is Chaplain at John XXIII College, one of Perth's largest Catholic schools. He recently visited the Christmas Island detention centre, and spoke very movingly of the real stories behind the headlines and the human needs of asylum seekers.

At the beginning of our second and final business session, our Acting State President Jeanine Dowse was delighted to be able to announce that nominations had now been received for all positions on State Executive and Council for 2011. Our new State President will be Karyn Kammann, assisted by Maria Parkinson as Treasurer and Sheila Cullinane, one of our newer members, as Secretary. Our Vice Presidents are elected from within State Council.

The main business of this session was to debate the draft revised Constitution, which had been circulated to members at the end of August. After some very lively discussion over issues of concern the consensus was that more time and input is needed, and the special resolution to adopt the draft was very soundly defeated. It now rests with the new State Executive and Council, to decide how to proceed in terms of both process and time frame.

As always the day provided a wonderful opportunity to meet together in fellowship and share our common concerns for the League and its future in Western Australia.

**STOP PRESS:** We are delighted to record that the sale of part of our property, the recently created building lot next to our current State headquarters, which was finalised at the end of November.

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**Secretary - Western Australia**

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