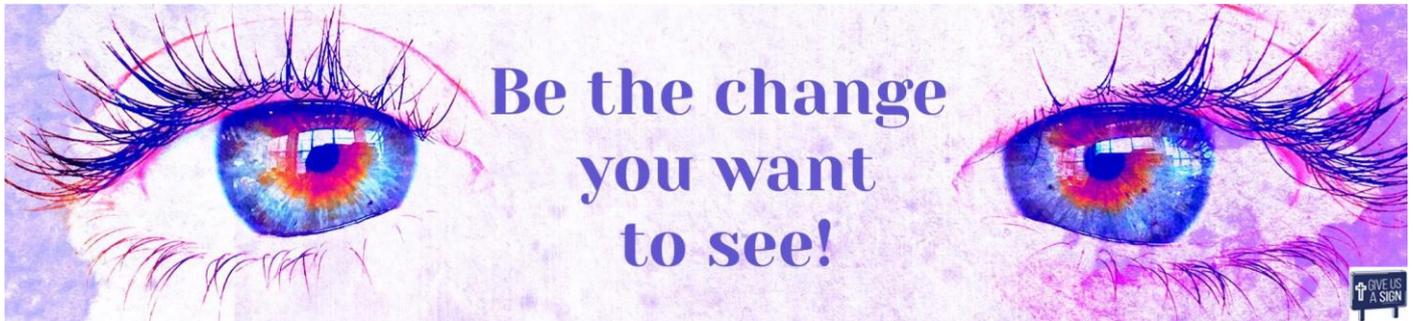




At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ

Ordinary 2018 | No.6

Season of Creation 2018: Give us a Sign



Last winter's newsletter encouraged communities to embrace Pope Francis' desire for care of the environment in the now universally popular **Season of Creation** movement.

Season extends from Sept 1 to 4 October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi. Around the world faith communities, often inspired by Pope Francis' revolutionary encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, are taking on board the call to 'ecological conversion' in a myriad of ways, sharing our responsibility as global citizens with movements such as the 'war on waste' and the impact of plastic on earth, ocean and space. We are invited to a change of heart – and know well that it comes at personal and communal cost.

In July 400 people attended a Vatican conference: *Saving our Common Home and the future of life on earth*, to celebrate the 3rd anniversary of the encyclical: Christians and non-Christians, scientists, artists, politicians, economists and activists – all involved in various ways in working for climate justice and the protection of dignified life on earth.

The appeal for action goes beyond logical or intellectual understanding. Rather it is a cry from the heart, from the depths of the forests, a cry heard through the music and beauty of Creation that we need to protect against our human behaviour. (La Croix, 13/07/18)

Pope Francis continually asks us to go to the margins and places of vulnerability to renew community life. Care for creation is to the fore, with such engagement bringing true renewal. The Tighes Hill community garden working bees are an example. Parishioners and those in need benefit from the fruits. Newly-planted seeds and composted soil point to wonderful surprises emerging in the Spring.

Give Us A Sign <http://www.giveusesign.org.au>

This year an ecumenical and interfaith group has been preparing material for communities to utilise in the *Give us a Sign* campaign – visually inviting us to make the lifestyle changes required for the common good. A number of phrases, especially from *Laudato Si'*, have been suggested for promotion from local signboards. Rose McAllister, inspiring artist and Religious Studies Co-coordinator at San Clemente High School Mayfield, has powerfully interconnected them with her artwork - examples of which are displayed with permission in this newsletter.



The earth and dignified life on earth are common goods. We must be ready to defend them with all the gifts and talents at our disposal. And we need to do so together in solidarity with each other. (La Croix. 13/07/18)

Photo: Community Garden working bee
July 2018 at Tighes Hill

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Preparing the way for a new Diocesan Resource Centre

It is a few months since the closing of the St Laurence Centre at Broadmeadow, and many are looking forward to a re-opening on the Hamilton site – hopefully by the end of 2018.

Keenly anticipating this reality, a small group has been meeting regularly to consider some of the aspects of a new-look centre: a flexible learning hub, welcoming and accessible to all. We envisage it as a meeting place, a learning centre, a focus for archival displays and research and a locus for various exhibitions or events.

But principally our hope is that the doors will soon be open to all who value library facilities – and the opportunity to keep abreast of ongoing learning. Teachers and SRE staff are also anticipating an ease of access to helpful resources.

In the interim, energy has been channelled into sorting fine collections donated to the diocese. Some of them will enhance existing collections: the St Laurence Library, Newcastle Christian Library and the Dilley Library, gathered across the years at Lochinvar by the Sisters of St Joseph, whose legacy of faith formation to the diocese is inestimable and ongoing.

Dilley Library

Dilley Library resources can be viewed online at <http://mncatholic.softlinkhosting.com.au/oliver/home/news> by searching the author or title.



Photo: Jenny Harris, Sr Patricia Egan and Sr Maureen Salmon in Dilley Library



Photo: Mandy Greaves, Librarian at St Joseph's College Lochinvar helps Jenny Harris access Dilley Library records

Study Guide for parish discussion

Gaudete et Exultate (Rejoice and Be Glad), Pope Francis' apostolic letter on holiness, uses scripture and the witness of the saints (both canonised and those holy people we already know), to demonstrate that God's call to holiness is for each and every one of us.

This plain English guide, with Australian case studies and reflections will make Pope Francis' message easily accessible to all readers, exploring how his words can be applied to our lives today.

Available from Garratt publishing. <https://garrattpublishing.com.au/product/9781925073591/>

Christian Formation Course 2018



Photo: Christian Formation Course participants 2018

18 participants are now half way through the course: a commitment across 32 weeks – with each unit seeming to fly past so quickly. A couple of enthusiasts have observed

“ *The CFC has bought the Bible to life for me! helping to make God's word accessible & more meaningful in my day to day life; very much helping me gain a greater appreciation of our Faith.* ” (Yvonne)



Photo: Christian Formation Course participants 2018

“ *This course has changed my preconceptions about Christianity by encouraging me to look at God and the Bible from a whole new perspective. This will, I believe, foster a more personalised relationship between me and God.* ” (Lawrence)



Meet a disorderly woman !

Those fortunate enough to have participated in a seminar or class with Michele Connolly rsj know of her exuberance and capacity to have us on the edge of our seats. Currently on the faculty of the Catholic Institute of Sydney, she has also penned a most creative book in her area of specialisation, *The Gospel of Mark*.



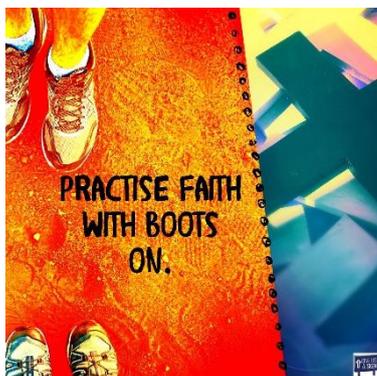
Entitled *Disorderly Women and the order of God*, could it echo this year's Anzac and NAIDOC theme: *Because of her, we can?* Might the women in Mark, like the inspiring stories across our airwaves this year, also inspire us in our contemporary living?

Indeed, but not immediately so! Michele invites us beyond taking the stories at face value and leads us, instead, into an area of fascinating exploration:

The unique contribution that Michele Connolly makes in this book is the framework against which she reads women in the gospel of Mark – namely that of colonial Australia... She brings a feminist postcolonial perspective to the text and its context, enabling her to recognize that Markan women are portrayed as 'isolated, mute' and with little impact on society; but a counter-narrative is possible. This book invites readers, whatever their location, to engage a new lens for reading the Markan text and encountering its female characters.

Elaine Wainwright Richard MacLaurin Fellow,
University of Auckland, New Zealand

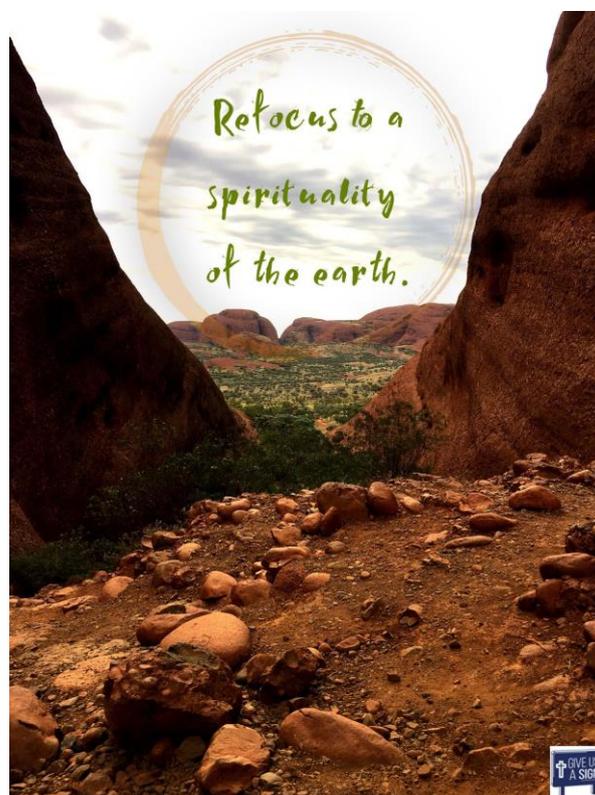
Congratulations, Michele. You are a born teacher. You encourage us to engage critically with the Markan women and their portrayal, so as to more insightfully reshape the gospel in our time and culture. Our diocese is proud of you and your urging us towards a more mature faith.



Lessons from the Long Paddock

The 2nd Wilcannia-Forbes eConference will be on their website from August 9. www.wf.org.au
Last year's conference was creative, enlivening and remains 'live'. This year's promises to equally inspire. It features four very 'earthed' faith journey stories, followed by a response from a 'critical friend': Michele Connolly, RSJ, Richard Leonard, SJ, and Bishop Columba Macbeth-Green OSPPE.

This conference is a highly valuable, connecting and engaging resource for parish renewal or individual viewing. It can be watched in segments and opens up very helpful discussion.



New resources coming to Dilley Library

- *Disorderly Women and the order of God* by Sr Michele Connolly
- *What Does it all Mean? Faith's Big Questions* by Richard Leonard, sj
Having recently won a prestigious award, Leonard does not shy away from the biggest challenges to faith inside and outside of the Church, but outlines a contemporary and accessible response to the issues that confront and sometimes confound believers today. Has an easy, quick reference index.

Contact Jenny Harris to borrow these resources



Ongoing Learning

Contact the **Adult Faith Formation Office** for information about any advertised course or event, or if you wish your parish to engage in planning its adult faith learning process.

Date	Event	Venue	Time
Tue 31 July	Integrity in the service of the Church – Module 1	Parish Hall Taree	11am – 2pm
Tues/Thu Aug	Christian Formation course – Church from Age to Age Aug 2, 7, 16, 23	Toohey Room Newcastle West	6pm-9pm
Sun 5 Aug	Dr Frank Brennan - Christians for Peace	Uniting Church Adamstown	5pm – 8pm
Tue 7 Aug	Dr Richard Lennan seminar – The Future of faith: Challenges & possibilities	Victor Peters Suite Newcastle West	5.30pm – 9pm
Wed 8 Aug	BBI eConference – Synodality in Practice: Listening to the Spirit and Leading Change	Victor Peters Suite Newcastle West	10am – 3.30pm
Wed 8 Aug		Callinan Centre Morisset	10am – 3.30pm
Wed 8 Aug		St Clare's High School Taree	10.30am - 3pm
Thur 9 Aug		John Lavery Hall Glendale	10am – 2.30pm
20 Aug		Murray Room Newcastle W	5-9pm
21 Aug		Holy Spirit PS Kurri Kurri	5-9pm
22 Aug (excerpts)	Dr Richard Gaillardetz – Vatican II, Pope Francis and our role in realising a church of relevance and hope in the modern world	Parish Hall Charlestown	10am – 12pm
11 Aug		Toohey Room Newcastle West	9.30am – 1pm
13 Aug		Holy Name Primary School Library, Forster	5pm – 8pm
14 Aug	St James' PS Muswellbrook	5pm – 8pm	
Thur Sep	Christian Formation course – People of God Sep 6, 13, 20, 27	Toohey Room Newcastle West	6pm-9pm
Tue 18 Sept	Integrity in the service of the Church – Module 2	Parish Hall Taree	11am – 2pm
14 Oct	BBI eConference DVD – Synodality in Practice <i>Upper Hunter Regional Gathering</i>	St Joseph's High School Aberdeen	TBC
Wed 17 Oct	Integrity in the service of the Church – Module 1	Therry Centre East Maitland	10am – 1pm
Thur Oct/Nov	Christian Formation course – Sacramental Life Oct 18, 25 Nov 1, 8	Toohey Room Newcastle West	6pm-9pm
Wed 14 Nov	Integrity in the service of the Church – Module 2	Therry Centre East Maitland	10am – 1pm
Thur Nov/Dec	Christian Formation course – Liturgical Life Nov 15, 22, & 29 Dec 6	Toohey Room Newcastle West	6pm-9pm
Sun 16 Dec	Carols in the Cloister	St Joseph's Convent Lochinvar	6.30pm to 8.30pm

#133. *We need the spirit's prompting, lest we be paralyzed by fear and excessive caution, lest we grow used to keeping within safe bounds. Let us remember that closed spaces grow musty and unhealthy...*

"they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God with boldness" Acts 4:31

Gaudete et Exsultate – Rejoice and Be Glad. Pope Francis, 2018