

## In Search of Light - Jesus, Nicodemus and Us

'The Chosen' is a television drama series based on the life of Christ. The first episode is set in 26AD in Capernaum where we meet Sanhedrin member and Pharisee Nicodemus touring the region, tax collector Matthew, fisherman brothers Simon and Andrew, demon possessed Mary Magdalene and wandering craftsman Jesus of Nazareth.

One feature that distinguishes 'The Chosen' from other T.V. or film adaptations of the gospel message is how it introduces us to Jesus. Instead of giving us immediate access 'The Chosen' invites us into the lives of Nicodemus and a diverse array of first century Jews who have their lives turned upside down by their personal encounters with Jesus. With 'The Chosen' you are challenged to see your own flaws and struggles in the characters. You watch them search for purpose pre-Christ and see their lives transformed post-Christ.

Nicodemus may seem like a strange choice for a primary character in a show about the life of Jesus. After all, he only shows up in one gospel, that of John and there only makes a handful of appearances; the well known 'Born Again' conversation, the conclusion of which we listen to this year on the Fourth Sunday of Lent, a brief argument Nicodemus has with others in the Sanhedrin about whether Jesus should get a full hearing and at the burial of Jesus to which he brings an exorbitant amount of spices.

Nevertheless, Nicodemus is one of the few in-betweeners present in the gospel. On the one hand, he's a Pharisee, a group that evangelist John unequivocally associates with opposition to Jesus. On the other hand, when he has his encounter with Jesus the questions that he asks are not intended to trick or catch Jesus like those posed by his peers. He seems to show genuine respect for Jesus and real interest in what he has to say. Moreover, later on when the other Pharisees display a reckless disregard for investigating the claims of Jesus, it is Nicodemus who presses them with exactly the kind of point a searcher for the truth would make 'Does our law judge a person before first giving them a hearing and learning what they teach?'

Finally, to conclude his story, the gospel of John suggests that Nicodemus has indeed arrived at a degree of faith demonstrated through his willingness to side with the dead Jesus by burying him.

Taking its cue from the gospel, 'The Chosen' uses the character of Nicodemus to explore the tension between faith and fear, light and darkness, hope and despair.

In episode 7 we see Nicodemus' conversation with Jesus as recounted in John 3:1-21. Nicodemus, a man of great honour and influence, entirely and rightly rooted in the Jewish Law, recognizes in the most profound way that the young itinerant seated across from him is the fulfilment of the Law, the long-

awaited Messiah.

The series has followed him as he has struggled to understand, with humility and openness who Jesus is and what that means. Jesus at the close of the conversation asks Nicodemus to follow him. His request is a literal one and the viewer



witnesses how the idea astounds Nicodemus, a man of his age with a family and a place in the Sanhedrin.

Should he leave it all behind to walk behind Jesus from village to village proclaiming truths about a kingdom that was different than any he'd ever imagined, about a rebirth that defied all understanding? Jesus gives Nicodemus, the date, the time and place to meet and the viewer watches the wheels continue to turn in the mind of this ardent

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*Sacred Heart Parish, North Albury, pays respect to the Wiradjuri people, the traditional custodians of the land on which we gather to celebrate our faith and worship God. We acknowledge with respect elders past, present and emerging.*

## IT STARTED A CONVERSATION

A magnificent display of bonsai adorned the altar for the visit of Bishop Mark on the weekend of Feb 6-7. John van Lint from Valibo Nurseries had loaned the plants for the 'special occasion'. Valibo Nursery was established in 1964 following in the tradition set by the van Lint family in the Netherlands six generations ago. The name of the nursery 'Valibo', is significant. Its origin is **VAn Lint BOomkner**—(Boomkner is Dutch for tree grower).



John van Lint with one of his prize bonsai trees

John has developed a deep interest in Bonsai; he is a master, and his extensive collection is now renowned as one of the most impressive between the capital cities. He retired in 2014 but maintains his passion for bonsai as a hobby. Visitors are welcome to view his collection and the regular Autumn fundraising event "Bonsai

under Lights" has become a part of the local social calendar. Bonsai is a Japanese art form, which involves cultivating trees in containers to mimic the shape and scale of full sized trees. Many people see a spiritual meaning in practicing the art of bonsai. It symbolizes harmony, peace, an order of thoughts, balance and all that is good in nature, an appropriate message from our altar.

## Swapping Roles



Articles for Heartbeat welcome  
Send to [bevispurtle@internode.on.net](mailto:bevispurtle@internode.on.net)

## KAIROS PRISON MINISTRY



Kairos is a Lay-led, Christ-centred Ministry; we invite all program participants into follow-on activities to build Christian Community.

*Why do we ask our supporters to provide home-made biscuits?*

A Team presenting a Short – Course inside a prison is there to model servanthood to the inmates while making them aware that we are inside with the prayerful support of many people on the outside.

On each of the three days of the Short Course, every participant gets a dozen home-made biscuits, and on the third day everyone in the prison; all inmates and all staff get a dozen home-made biscuits. Junee has over 500 prisoners so we need a lot of biscuits.

The afternoon of the third day of a Short Course is deeply immersed in ideas of forgiveness and reconciliation. Each participant and team member has been writing a list of people in their lives they have been struggling to forgive. This is leading to a forgiveness ceremony at the end of that day when the lists are burnt by each family table group, in turn with prayers led by the Chaplain.



As they leave at the end of that day, each participant is given two dozen biscuits (they now have more biscuits than they want to eat) with the suggestion that they might consider giving good, home-made biscuits to someone that they really don't like very much, maybe someone they need to forgive. Some inmates choose to share something of that experience the next day, and we hear some moving and sometimes amusing stories of some staff individual who thinks he is Mr. Popular because lots of inmates have given him biscuits. An inmate told me of a guard that he particularly disliked refusing the offer by throwing the bag on the ground and stamping on it; I asked the inmate how he felt about that. "Pretty good – I did the right thing and he didn't get the biscuits." Theology is not complicated for these blokes.



A Regional Committee, forming a team to go into a prison, always asks for prayer support from our Church communities, and providing home-made biscuits is another way you can each in your own way answer the call to visit the prisoner.



# I MISS MY FRIEND

**SISTER KATHLEEN CUDMORE rsm**

**1/2/44-15/7/20**

*Lyn Hamilton*

In my life, I have been fortunate to cross paths with an incredible array of people that have left their mark on both the world at large, and me as an individual. None more so, than the late Sr Kathleen Cudmore rsm.

Once I had made my decision to embrace the Catholic faith in 2010; the late Fr Kevin Flanagan 'coupled' me with Sr Kathleen; to guide me through the RCIA process. Thus began my relationship with truly one of God's special people. In my prayers I regularly thank Fr Flanagan for putting me with Kathleen.

In those early days of our relationship – which quickly became a firm friendship; Kathleen's love of research contributed to her incredible knowledge on just about any subject; having me either in stitches of laughter or in quiet awe as I listened to what she had to say. At our first meeting, when I told her I originated from a small country town in Tasmania [Deloraine]; she was able to tell me how such a small country region had come to have a vibrant convent community, Sisters of Mercy. In my younger days, I can recall this Convent School being extremely well supported and embraced by the community at large. I also have a copy of her thesis "Towards Integrating Mission in Mercy -Sponsored Institutions"; completed as part of her Master of Theology, 1997.

I don't think I ever saw Kathleen angry; the nearest – in frustration – she once said, "I should have married a farmer [referring to her Griffith country upbringing] – but I married a carpenter; and he's no help around the house!"

Following completion of my journey towards becoming a Catholic, 23 April 2011, Kathleen presented me with a Bible, signed by her; which I hold as a most prized possession.

Coincidentally, I chose the saint's name "Veronica" – the woman who wiped Jesus's brow; not knowing until some days later that this was Kathleen's actual middle name!

With the RCIA formalities over, our friendship blossomed.

Thursdays was our day to 'do lunch'; choosing a pub, club, small restaurant – either side of the border. Lunch was regularly concluded with a visit to the Hume Weir Shop for an Ice Cream; I used to vary my choice – I always laughed – Kathleen would ponder, then **always** choose



Vanilla! We would eat our ice creams and look across over the weir and chat or simply sit in a peaceful silence.

One day when helping Kathleen 'tidy' her 'home office' – I came across a full page article from a major Canberra newspaper – a broadsheet newspaper; the article was quite detailed. This gave me an incredible insight into this quiet spoken nun; her extensive teaching career – specialty being maths and science; having a bus licence; being one of the first to march with the 'stolen generation' in Canberra .. it went on and on. [I took a copy of this article and had it laminated. When she entered Mercy Place in the last years; I made sure this article was available to be read by those who had not known this once vibrant lady]

When Kathleen's 50 year celebration of being professed [2005] was planned; I was indeed humbled to be included in those invited to the special Mass and then luncheon.

That was my first introduction to 'the Cudmore Clan'. [When Kathleen entered the Convent, her brother Frank said the reception was in Goulburn and the Cudmore families booked out a complete motel for the occasion!] At this 50 year celebration mass and luncheon, I began speaking with Kathleen's cousin Jill, who now lives in Albury. We both shared the same thoughts about the mass – the beautiful singing of the nuns had us feeling we had stepped into a scene from Sound of Music! Magical! Since then, I have enjoyed several interactions with the Cudmore Clan and the Sisters of Mercy – thank you yet again Kathleen for expanding my world.

Most of us know the story of how Kathleen lost her mother at only 18 months of age. She always referred to her father as 'Daddy'; and he always signed his letters to her 'from Daddy'. I want to reproduce here the poem he wrote when Kathleen entered the Convent:

## **I'M THE DADDY OF A NUN**

*That day she left me early; I was feeling mighty blue,  
Just thinking how I'd miss her; And the things we used to  
do.  
But now, somehow, it's different – With each rising of the  
sun,  
And my heart is ever singing: "I'm the daddy of a nun."  
Since to err is only human, there's a whole lot on the slate  
That I'll have to make account for; when I reach the golden  
gate.  
But then I'm not a-worrying; about the deeds I've done,  
I'll just whisper to St. Peter: "I'm the daddy of a nun."*

In closing, I so very much miss those soothing hugs from Kathleen, when the world seemed darkest, she could always lead me to sunshine. As the actor Morgan Freeman once said in his greatest movie role, "I miss my friend."

# Easter Celebration



Easter is known as the celebration of light. The Easter celebrations begin with the service of light, which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus, the "Light of the World". We gather to celebrate that Jesus has risen from the darkness of the tomb to new life.

During the Easter Vigil Mass the Easter fire, is blessed, and the Easter candle is lit from it for the first time. Then the light is passed from the Easter candle to our candles. The passing of candle from person to person dispels the darkness of the church. It is a symbol of Christ, the 'Light of the World'. As the fire lights up the darkened church, we welcome the risen Jesus, the light of the world.

Many of the Easter customs are symbols of new life and rebirth. Two very significant symbols are light ( Paschal Candle) and water ( Easter Water). On Holy Saturday night the joyous cry of 'Alleluia' is heard once again. The word 'Alleluia' comes from two Hebrew words 'hallel', an expression of praise and 'Jahve', God's name.

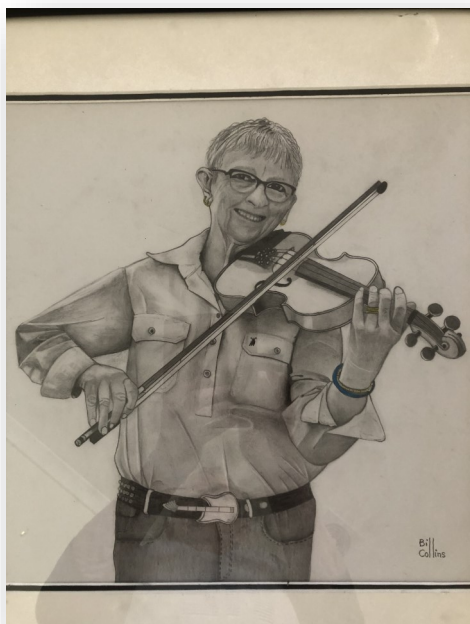
The Easter season lasts for fifty days. As we journey through these days we encounter the Risen Jesus making physical contact with different people. As we do so let us reflect on the following:

What difference does Jesus' Resurrection make to us and our life?

Where are the signs of the life and hope of the Risen Christ in our parish community ?

Do we live as Mary of Magdala lived, as bearers and proclaimers of the good news that Jesus lives?

## I LOVE BEING PART OF SACRED HEART



**Mary Hunt is the violinist in the choir.**

When asked for a photo of herself, she replied that she was no good at selfies, but attached an amazing drawing by a man whose name was Bill Collins.

I grew up in Cooma and am the eldest of 16 children. I went to St Patrick's school and the Brigidine Convent in Cooma. I had 9 sisters and 7 brothers. I started learning Violin at age 8 and did classical training through to 8th grade. I was privileged enough to be taught by mother Cabrini whom I kept in touch with until her passing.

My mother was an amazing woman. I love being part of the Sacred Heart community. We moved here in late 1969, lived here for 30 years then went farming at Walwa for 20 years on the farm my husband grew up on. Now living at Table Top. My husband Allan is very supportive of my musical endeavours. We have been married for 55 years. We had 4 children. Unfortunately our youngest son Gary found life too hard and took his own life in 2005. An angel in heaven. We have 4 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

Heartbeat April 2021

## EASTER IN POLAND (Wielkanoc)

*Gush Kipper*

Easter is the most important religious time in Poland with Passion plays performed in towns and villages.

On Holy Saturday people come to the church with all of the kinds of food which will be eaten during the coming year. The food is carried to the church in decorated baskets. Everyone also brings eggs which have been painted with various designs, many of these being symbols of Easter. This food is then carried to the altar to be blessed by the priest.



On Easter Sunday mass is celebrated with beautiful singing. After Mass the Easter meal is

special foods, cakes and some of the food which had been blessed. The children have egg cracking games with the painted eggs. The winner is the person whose egg lasts the longest without cracking.

## COVID IMPACTS ST VINCENT de PAUL

*Trish Parkinson*

Vinnies North Albury Care & Support Centre was greatly affected by the Covid-19 Pandemic. Because the risk of infection to our members from those seeking assistance, was high, we closed the Centre for two weeks in March. We cautiously reopened in a way that minimised contact, to provide a service to those in need in Albury, as many of the charities closed, including Vinnies St. Patrick's Conference. Some of our members also chose to withdraw for a time.



**St Vincent de Paul Society**  
*good works*

Due to the size of our interview rooms, we were unable to have people inside the building, so we did telephone interviews three days a week, the clients then came to the Centre to pick up a pre-package food parcel. Vinnies Retail Centres had to close due to the age of their volunteers, (mostly over 70 years), this unfortunately meant that the source of income which helps to fund the Care & Support Centres was lost.

The Government Covid-19 Supplement, which was rolled out, helped to lower the number of people seeking assistance from Vinnies, our total numbers decreased considerably. As the restrictions eased, we re-opened five days per week for four hours a day, but we still preferred people to ring before attending if possible. For those who did not have a phone, they could come to the door and we did our interview at the door with social distancing.

As the Government Supplements decreased, and although Albury Care & Support Centre reopened we have noticed an increase in those seeking help. Come the end of March we anticipate a greater increase, due to the removal of Covid-19 supplements for Job Seeker and Job Keeper.

We were able to support many families at Christmas with a Food Voucher and where applicable toys for their children to the value of \$10,700.00. This was supported by a grant from The Albury Rotary Club, our local Catholic schools and members of Sacred Heart Parish, we were extremely grateful for their assistance. Also due to the pandemic, Vinnies Community Sleepout was virtual; once again I wish to thank all who sponsored me in this fund-raising, a total of \$5621.00 was raised for the Care & Support Centre.

Vinnies are always looking for volunteers either in the shop or Care & Support Centres, if interested please contact me on 6048 9530.

## BOOK REVIEW

**Sand Talk** by Tyson Yunkaporta

*Review by Catherine Cutler*

We are accustomed to a certain way of thinking. We want the world to be simple, but we talk about it in complicated ways.

Indigenous thinking is different. It knows the world is complex and find deep ways to communicate this knowledge through pictures, carvings, stories. Tyson Yunkaporta uses sand talk, which honours the Aboriginal custom of drawing images on the ground, to bring clarity to complexity. He asks: what happens if we bring an indigenous perspective to the big picture - to history, education, money, power? Can we, in fact, have proper concepts of sustainable life without indigenous knowledge?

He challenges us to think differently- and save the world.

## ADDITIONS TO THE MEETING ROOM

*Cheryl Ryan*

There have been some changes to the meeting room on the Hall with the donation of spirituality books, bookcases, chairs and small table.

The collection was originally in the room used by the Breath of Life Ministry at the current Centacare building in the former St Brigid's school. Sr Margaret Walsh from Wagga is very happy to see the resources used by the Sacred Heart community.

A big thanks to the men of muscle from the Parish Council who helped in the move.!

Sr Liz Rothe RSM has begun to offer spiritual direction sessions in the room also and can be contacted on 0400404289 if you would like to attend.

We will organise times to access the books in the New Year and welcome everyone to join in this opportunity to share and maybe discuss what we have read!





# Xavier High School– Term 1,2021



The Year 7 students at Xavier High School, Albury, participated in their annual Year 7 Camp at Harrietville from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> – Wednesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2021. The experience was a great success! The Year 7 students participated in a wide range of activities and reflections to help them to grow in their understanding of what it means to go to Xavier! In the process,

they had lots of fun getting to know their peers better, and were a credit to themselves, their families and the Xavier High School community.

We look forward to seeing these students continue to grow in their understanding of what it means to go to Xavier, and to thrive as ***Courageous, Challenged, Collaborative, Compassionate*** and ***Christ-like*** members of our faith





# St Anne's Primary School News

Welcome to 2021 which has started out as a year of learning and fun. Some of our highlights so far this year include:

## Staff Professional Development

Because learning continues to be our key focus here at St Anne's, teachers began the year with Professional Development to support student learning. An overarching philosophy that drove our PD and attitude towards improvement came from work done by internationally known author and speaker Simon Sinek who talks about the 'Golden Circle'.



The WHY should drive the WHAT, not the other way round! If the WHY is done well, the WHAT will be done well also!

We all know WHY we are here at St Anne's. The WHY is our students and they drive our decisions, Professional Development and purpose for our school.

## Kinder's First Day

We welcomed 49 students into our Kinder classrooms this year. While they were settling in to the life of school with teachers Miss Tayla Vogel and Mrs Rebecca Art, parents were invited to share a complimentary morning tea to celebrate the milestone of their child beginning school. This was also a great opportunity for parents to meet the parents of other kinder children.

## Bishop Mark Edwards OMI visit

Students in Years 2-6 enjoyed a visit and spending time with Bishop Mark Edwards at the beginning of the year. He talked with students and shared information on his role as Bishop of Wagga Wagga, as well as looking at symbols a bishop wears and uses. Some students and staff were privileged to model some of these items.

## Opening School Liturgy

We celebrated the beginning of the new school year with a Liturgy presided over by Fr Martin. This year's theme was 'With heads, hearts and hands.' As Christians, we reflected on the fact that we are called to servanthood and called to be the hands and feet of Christ in our world. Our Year 6 School Captains and Councillors were also presented to the community and they officially received their blessed student badges.

## Pancake Day

We celebrated Shrove Tuesday with pancakes offered for a gold coin donation that would go towards our fundraising efforts to Project Compassion. We particularly thank the parents and staff members who assisted in the making and cooking of these for students, as well as the Year 6 Liturgy Team who assisted also.

## Ash Wednesday

We also reflected on Lent which began on this day and is a season of preparation for the celebration of Easter. During the forty days of Lent we are preparing to immerse ourselves ever more deeply in commitment to:

- a coming to greater clarity in our life (prayer)
- a simplifying our lifestyle (fasting)
- a reaching out to those who are poor (almsgiving)

In doing this we are preparing to renew our baptismal commitment at Easter. Lent is the time when we intensify the community's initiation of our new Catholics. Lent is really a time of retreat or renewal for the whole community in Christian living.

## Sporting Events

Some of the sporting events that were provided for students this term included:

**Swimming Carnival** – Students in Years 3-6 participated in a swimming carnival. A great day was had and it was wonderful to once again to see parents and family members in attendance. We had more competitors than ever in our 50m and 100m freestyle events and it was really pleasing to see our students compete so enthusiastically on the day. It was a closely fought carnival with Bongiorno (Red House) claiming victory.

**Athletics** – Students in Years 3-6 also participated in an Athletics carnival.

## Pancake Day

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## Welcome BBQ

St Anne's hosted a welcome BBQ for families to meet one another over 2 nights that were very well attended. We thank the parents who were able to assist with this in any way.

and genuine searcher. This all leads to a haunting and tragic scene in the final episode of Series 1. It follows the Apostles as they gather preparing to leave Capernaum on their way to Samaria – the public ministry of Jesus on its first tour. As you hear the Apostles count heads, you can see Nicodemus around the corner in agony, knowing the invitation has been offered .... and knowing he won't take it. Peter finds a purple bag of gold coins that was tossed by Nicodemus towards the group, a recognition of Jesus and his invitation, but a meagre and somewhat sad response to that summons to an adventurous, self-forgetful, new life. Jesus' face betrays his disappointment as he laments under his breath 'You came so close'.

The failure of Nicodemus' character to follow Jesus out of his fear of societal disapproval sets up an interesting plot trajectory for his future development.

What does it look like to sit on the sidelines – of the opposing side – while you watch the Jesus movement take off, knowing that you could have been part of it?

The same dynamics are at work in the gospel scene. The evangelist John tells us that Jesus comes

into the world as an envoy of God's love and mercy. He comes as light so that the world might welcome him and be transformed. He comes not to judge or condemn people but to draw them to God. There are those who long for the light and who welcome Jesus with joy and enthusiasm.

Surprisingly, most of these are people who live in darkness literally and symbolically – the blind, the poor, the sinner, the outcast. Jesus shares with them the gift of forgiveness and new life.

But others mistrust and reject Jesus. His light is a threat to those who consider themselves holier than thou. They prefer to remain in the darkness of pretence, self-righteousness, power and pride.

All is in darkness except for the light where Jesus stands centre stage alone. Gradually, we discern another figure moving in the shadows towards Jesus. We are told that it is Nicodemus, that he is a leading Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish governing council. We have learnt that the Law is bereft of authority, the Temple is empty. Where are they to go who have relied on the Law and the Temple. John is inviting them and us to come with Nicodemus to Jesus. Nicodemus is hesitant.

He is searching for the truth. He recognizes in Jesus the presence and goodness of God. Despite his very real fears and his inner conflict he takes the risk of making himself vulnerable. He has the trust and the courage to bring himself as he is, confused and uncertain into the presence of Jesus. There is no condemnation or judgement on the part of Jesus only the outpouring of understanding, consolation and compassionate encouragement.

From such an encounter shrouded in darkness Nicodemus grows in faith. Such conviction enables him after the crucifixion of Jesus to make a gradual progression towards the light. It is he together with Joseph of Arimathea who will lift the lifeless body of Jesus and place it respectfully and reverently in the tomb.

Most of us have experienced some form of darkness in our

lives – this darkness does not have to be a barrier from discovering God's love. In the darkness we are not condemned

or judged by God – if we allow God to accompany us in times of darkness then we can be lifted up by his love. Through the cracks in our lives however small his light can shine.

Or as Joan Chittister writes: 'The spiritual task of life is to feed hope. Hope is not something to be found outside us. It lies in the spiritual life we cultivate within. The whole purpose of wrestling with life is to be transformed into the self we are meant to become, to step out of the confines of our false securities and allow our creating God to go on creating. In us.'

*May Christ's light strengthen your faith and give direction to your life during the season of Easter.*



## FLOOR/WALL TILER

- LEAKY SHOWERS
- TILING REPAIRS
- BATHROOM RENOVATIONS
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