

Associates News

Welcome to the JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATES QUEENSLAND WINTER Newsletter

Celebrating John the Baptist

This Newsletter continues the theme of the men who influenced Mary MacKillop's life. This month Archbishop Mark Coleridge has given us a picture of St John the Baptist to whom Mary had great devotion.

The figure of John the Baptist was so revered in the first century that some thought he was the Messiah; and there is still a small sect called the Mandaeans who venerate John as the Messiah. It's not by chance that the Fourth Gospel in particular has the Baptist pointing to Jesus as the Messiah and making it quite clear that it is he and not John himself who is the anointed one of God.

John was not the only Baptist in his time. He was part of a larger renewal movement which gathered around the River Jordan. The movement was



PLANNING GROUP

Pauline McGuire (Chair)
pmcguire@tsv.catholic.org.au

Marie Sellin
mariesellin@hotmail.com

Janette Dobson
janettewdobson@hotmail.com

Erin Jones
ejones@tsv.catholic.org.au

Bernadette Roche
broche@onthenet.com.au

Moya Campbell rsj
moya.campbell@sosj.org.au

CONTENTS

Editorial	1
Re-enforcing our Josephite Connections	2
Formation of Northside Group	2
In the Footsteps of Mary MacK	3
Resources...	3
A Thanksgiving Prayer...	3
Living with Josephite heart	4
Face-to-Face Meeting	5
Date Claimers	5
Reflection and Prayer Sheet	6

FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SEASONAL NEWS PLEASE EMAIL:

qldassociates@sosj.org.au

PHONE 0408 455 768



searching for a new beginning in what seemed a desperate time. The new beginning would be like the People of God, after forty years in the wilderness, crossing the Jordan to enter the Promised Land. In John's own time, the People of God needed to take possession of the Promised Land in a new way, especially since the Romans were the occupying force. Going down into the waters of the Jordan and emerging from them was symbolic of a new entry, but the substance of it was the personal conversion of which John speaks powerfully in the gospels. The symbol without the substance was meaningless.

The New Testament suggests that John was related in some way to Jesus, but it's hard to know how exactly. Jesus also seems to have been part of the group that gathered around the Baptist at the Jordan, as were some of his first disciples. The group scattered when John was arrested; and Jesus returned to his home town of Nazareth. When he returns he doesn't go into hiding; he begins his own public ministry which is very different from John's. John preached the need to prepare for the coming of God's Kingdom; Jesus preached its coming. Jesus worked miracles as signs of the inbreaking of God's Kingdom; John worked no miracles.

Yet from the first, Christianity saw in John the figure prophesied by Isaiah, the voice 'crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord' (40:3). Even in the womb, John greets the embryonic Messiah (Luke 1:41). His preaching of repentance for the forgiveness of sins was part of preparing the way, as was his designation of Jesus as 'The Lamb of God' (John 1:29). Finally there was his martyr's death which foreshadowed the death of Jesus. For all of these reasons, the Baptist is the great voice of Advent.

If St Mary MacKillop looked to John the Baptist as a special patron, it was surely because she saw herself called to be "a voice crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord" and we can see clearly how right she was to read the story of God in her life in this strange and wonderful way.

Maybe a question to take us to prayer: "What was it about John the Baptist that caused Mary MacKillop to accept him as a source of inspiration for her life?"

RE-ENFORCING OUR JOSEPHITE CONNECTIONS

Rockhampton area Josephite Associates had the privilege, along with Sister Margaret Smith, of being invited guests at the blessing of extensions and renovations to St Joseph's School, Wandal on 3 April. It was a truly inspiring experience to be surrounded by so many



wonderful young students who welcomed us and sang their hearts out. I don't think I've ever heard "Christ Be Our Light" sung with such enthusiasm and gusto. From tiny prep students, through all grades, to their Year 6 buddies, there was total participation in the whole liturgy. The air was electric! Bishop Michael McCarthy was so encouraged and uplifted by the liturgy that he stated he wished he could take the whole school with him as he travels throughout the Rockhampton Diocese. This would be no mean feat especially as the Diocese extends over more than 415,000 sq kilometres.

Mary MacKillop personally promised to send sisters to Rockhampton in the months prior to her death and this was fulfilled in 1912 when the first



sisters arrived to open St Joseph's School at Wandal, followed later by another at Park Avenue. With a motto of "To Love is to Serve", Mary's work is being carried on today at Wandal by teaching staff who are extremely committed to maintaining the Josephite legacy in the school, a supportive parent community, and of course the ultimate goal, students who are responding to their school motto. Well done St Joseph's Wandal!

Throughout her life, St Mary MacKillop provided a wonderful example of faithfulness to church teaching and respect for ordained ministers while, at the same time, not shirking her responsibility to ensure the wellbeing of those who deserved extra assistance. In this spirit, our Associate Group took the opportunity to respond to the Plenary Council invitation for submissions on "What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?" Eighteen members reflected together in three small groups, which allowed for frank and respectful discussion. Our individual hopes and prayers for our future church were then combined and tabled in a submission. We believe we are tasked to be a visible presence in our church today, and this was our opportunity to identify within the wider church as Josephite Associates on mission.

FORMATION OF NORTHSIDE GROUP

On 23 March 2019 a number of Associates living on the Northside of Brisbane met at Nundah with a view to forming group.

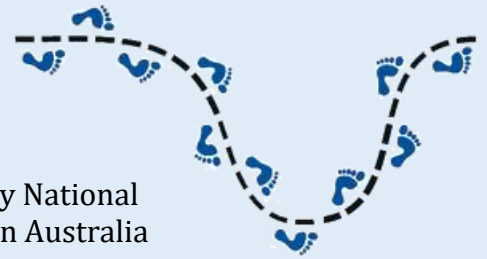
Sr Moya gave a presentation where we were able to examine our purpose and our roles in relation to the Sisters. It was decided that we would endeavour to meet four times a year for prayer, reflection and fellowship.

Our first meeting will be Saturday 15 June at 2 pm at Nolan Hall adjacent to St Joseph's Primary School, 16 Leslie Street, Nundah (behind Corpus Christi church). Our discussion will centre on articles from the Winter Newsletter. We would encourage anyone who would like to attend to do so.

RSVP by Wednesday 12 June to Sr Moya, Marie Sellin or Carolyn Grimward. The contact details are on the first page of the Newsletter.



In the Footsteps of Mary MacKillop 25th Anniversary National Pilgrimage



The Sisters of St Joseph invite you to join the 25th Anniversary National Pilgrimage, giving you the opportunity to journey to places in Australia made holy by St Mary MacKillop.

The Pilgrimage commences in Melbourne on Tuesday 22 October, visiting Penola, Adelaide and other significant places, and concludes in Sydney on Sunday 2 November 2019.

Cost: \$3,575 – \$4,390 (twin share) depending on capital city of departure (Australia or New Zealand).

Single supplement for all areas \$685 pp.

For a brochure, application form or further information please email national.pilgrimage@mmp.org.au or call Sr Therese Leydon rsj 0417 683 123 or Sr Annie Bond rsj 02 8912 4818.



RESOURCES FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, MEETING PRAYER AND DISCUSSION

The website of the Sisters – www.sosj.org.au – can provide us with wonderful resources for our own spiritual growth, material to use in meetings and information to use in spreading the word about Saint Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tennison Woods, the work they began and how it is carried on today.

Look under “Resources” and check out the “Online Store”. They stock medals, jewellery, CDs, books, candles, cards, posters and prints – all of which would make ideal gifts.

A Thanksgiving Prayer for a Winter Day

On this winter's day
We are thankful for the small things that lift our spirits -
The warmth of another's smile or embrace,
The glimpse of the sun through the clouds,
Freshly brewed coffee,
Newly baked bread,
Hot soup.

On this winter's day
We are thankful for glimmers of hope;
For acts of kindness that tell us
We are not alone
In our sorrow,
In our suffering,
In our uncertainty.

On this winter's day
We are thankful for



All that stirs us into life;
For funny stories and laughter,
For music that sets us dancing,
For words and wisdom that inspire us.

On this winter's day
We are warmed
By the beauty of this place in which we live,
By the company of family and friends,
By our passion for justice and peace.

May the thoughts of our hearts,
the words of our mouth,
the work of our hands,
and all that we do with our lives
speak of grace and truth
as we seek to live in the way of Christ. Amen.

By Lynne Frith from the *Gifts in Open Hands* Blog



Living with a Josephite Heart

The Spotlight for this Newsletter is a wonderful woman who has had a close association with the Sisters and has shown in her everyday life a commitment to the charism of Mary MacKillop - **Jean White** of Moorooka.

Jean's family were involved in the early days of the Moorooka parish and were there to welcome the Sisters to St Brendan's School. The Sisters often visited Jean's family and offered support when her mother was ill. As a matter of course Jean was sent off to St Brendan's when it was time for her to begin school. As the years passed Jean came to know and appreciate the Sisters, not just as her teachers but as loving guides in her life. With the Sisters she began to be of service in the Church by helping out in the Sacristy.

Jean married Mervyn (also a product of Josephite education) and in time their children attended St Brendan's. In those days the schools relied heavily on the support of parents and Jean, ever loyal to her Josephite Sisters, was more than willing to be there for them in whatever capacity they required.

It was in the late 80s that Sr Gemma McGilverary, knowing Jean's devotion to Mary MacKillop, spoke to her about the idea of forming an Associate group in the area. Jean contacted Sr Joan Finucane and a tiny seed was planted.

At first the group was small and informal but it soon grew to include women from surrounding parishes. Men were invited to join but in the 80s they were a little shy of being part of what was seen as a women's group.

Initially much valuable leadership was provided by the Sisters who would come to the meetings, provide a Prayer Reflection and show a video or give a talk about Mary MacKillop. In true Josephite fashion the meetings always included a welcome cuppa and a chance to chat and offer friendship to newcomers. Through this building of community the group continued to expand and new groups were formed.

Jean remembers the Retreats at Beachmere and facilitated meetings at Nundah to assist the growth of the groups.

In her role as Secretary in those pre-email days, Jean used personal contact to keep members informed and reminded of meetings and events. She also placed notices in parish newsletters.

With other Associates Jean was active in volunteering at the Mary MacKillop Centre at Annerley. Here they would meet visiting schools, church and other groups and spread the word about Mary MacKillop, her work and place in Australian history.

Over the years Jean has seen changes in the Associates. The input and leadership from the Sisters in the early days gave the Associates a good grounding. Gradually Jean and other women in the group took on responsibilities and the Sisters stepped back to become welcome guests at meetings. After more than 30 years of active involvement Jean also stepped back and became a mentor for those who so ably took on roles in the local group.

Although Jean is no longer as active as she once was she attends meetings when she is able to through the kindness of other Associates. Her contact is also kept up through regular visits from other women in the group. Jean sees her role today as one of being a listener and a prayer support.

After meeting and spending time with Jean I have been impressed and see her as exemplifying the

**three cornerstones of
Josephite Associate living:**

**Prayer,
Friendship
and
Service.**



FACE-TO-FACE MEETING – MARCH 2019

March 2019 saw the Queensland Leadership Team meet for the annual face-to-face meeting. Two associates were invited to join the meeting as observers, Ken Theodore and Anne Childs. Having observers at the leadership meetings adds a variety of perspectives and of course wisdom. Ken attended the meeting but unfortunately Anne was unable to attend so we hold her invitation until the next meeting.



Formation over the weekend focused on the article by Sr Joan Chittister – *“Let the Call be heard”*. The article focused on four areas:

Purpose – *Why do we exist?*

Legitimacy – *Where did we come from?*

Identity – *Who are we?*

Mission – *What must we do?*

The article challenged us to look at how we answer these questions; it inspired us to produce a prayer sheet focused on the four areas. I personally found it enlightening and it made me look at the associates in a different way. The prayer sheet follows this on the next page.

During the course of the two day meeting the team discussed policies, finances, succession and plans beyond 2020. The team was informed that IJALT is in the process of planning visits to regions and establishing overriding policies and procedures in line with the policies and procedures adopted by the Sisters of St Joseph. IJALT is establishing two new handbooks, Administration and Formation. This will allow the international movement of Josephite Associates to be a self-governed Movement and an authentic pathway to living a Josephite life with a Josephite Heart.

Into the future the team is investigating several ways of promoting the movement as well as assisting the groups in providing formation. Each newsletter will contain an article that can be used at local level to foster formation, e.g. this Winter Newsletter has an article on John the Baptist. We are also investigating the use of technology to allow us to ‘spread the story’ by establishing a video or online resources. This will be an exciting area into the future.

As you can see we are moving forward with vision and purpose remembering we are strongest together as keepers of a courageous tradition. Together, through the wisdom of our collective experiences, it is time to carry the charism into the world, not as individuals but as companions.

Pauline McGuire
Chair



DATE CLAIMERS

- **Pilgrimage: October 2019.** Full information in the accompanying brochure.
- **Associate Conference** to be held in **Sydney 5-7 July 2020.** This Conference will be held at Mount Street, North Sydney – the Shrine of Mary MacKillop. It is hoped that where possible someone from each group will be able to attend. Registration will be open to all Associates and details will be available closer to time.

Reflection and Prayer Sheet

The following could provide material for reflection and prayer:

WHY DO WE EXIST?

Inspired by Mary MacKillop, Julian Tenison Woods and St Joseph, we continue to share, live and reflect on our relationship with God through the Josephite charism in our world today.

WHERE DID WE COME FROM?

Initially, the Associates came through the waters of Baptism together with their lived experience and learning, continue to develop our understanding through listening, openness and acceptance, ultimately arriving at a point of belonging and love.

WHO ARE WE?

Associates are those who recognise the gift of the charism and that it must be shared in a way that makes it understandable to the People of God today, expressing our love for God, our service of others through friendship, hospitality and inclusivity, and always alert to unmet needs.

WHAT MUST WE DO?

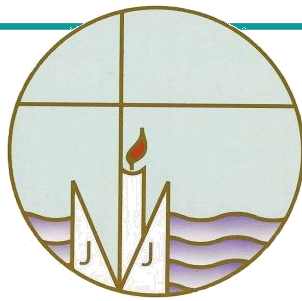
As Associates/Companions we are always called to nurture and tend the Josephite charism as meaningful witnesses with a genuine spirituality.

The richness of our baptismal call invites us to be inclusive of the wisdom and faith story of all, acknowledging and embracing the power of love.

Living the mission means to be flexible, moving with and beyond the richness of the story, enabling it to grow in a particular place and time.

*As Josephite Associates
we respond to the call
to live the charism of Mary MacKillop
in our daily lives
in our own unique way.
We support one another
by friendship, prayer and service
to make a difference in our local area
and so further the reign of God.*





DONATION TO THE QUEENSLAND ASSOCIATE MOVEMENT

NAME:

PHONE NUMBER/S:

AMOUNT GIVEN: (PLEASE CIRCLE)

\$20 \$30 \$40 \$50 OTHER \$.....

ALL DONATIONS CAN BE FORWARDED TO:

QUEENSLAND JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATE LEADERSHIP TEAM
VILLA MARIA CONVENT
123 WARREN STREET
FORTITUDE VALLEY QLD 4006

PHONE: 0408 455 768 **EMAIL:** qld.associates@sosj.org.au

CHEQUES AND MONEY ORDERS MADE PAYABLE TO JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATES QLD

OR PAID BY DIRECT DEPOSIT:

COMMONWEALTH BANK
ACCOUNT NAME: JOSEPHITE ASSOCIATES QLD
BSB No.: 064163
ACCOUNT NUMBER: 10429581
REFERENCE: SURNAME AND INITIAL (E.G. CAMPBELL M)

Thank you for your donation!

