

FCJnews

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Let us
'counterbalance'

...Our world
needs love –
compassion,
gentleness,
concern,
tenderness

– all those words and feelings which fill us with warmth and with the awareness of how blessed we are. Unfortunately, the media and the news items in our world so often put the main focus of attention – and consequently draw our attention – to people and events which are full of pain, of cruelty, and with attitudes of animosity. We are exposed to the vindictiveness of elected leaders who are presumably chosen for the possibility of bringing improvements and development to their constituencies, and who instead fight for their own status by denigrating others. On TV and in films many people don't seem to talk to each other but shout at each other, seeming only to want to express their power rather than listening and wanting to know what the other really thinks. All of this is somehow hard to take and painful to our eyes, ears and hearts. But regrettably we can get too used to these images which are continually put before us, and we fear for the children of today who so easily and typically imitate what they see in adults.

Surely we can do something to dampen and even halt this cycle of hostility. One remedy is put forward by the Archbishop of Armagh in Northern Ireland, Eamon Martin, who spoke in response to the dreadful tragedy which happened in Nice on 15th July 2016. He said: "I invite everyone to undertake an act of kindness or compassion this weekend, perhaps to counterbalance with love this awful crime."

Let us take this invitation to 'counterbalance' – in fact to weigh down the scales heavily on the other side – with acts of kindness and compassion. Let us be tender with those with whom we live, and communicate with others in honesty and gentleness, so that we bring more concern and care into the whole world.

Judith Routier fcJ
Province Leader

Pilgrimage in the steps of Marie Madeleine



Morguefile license

'A pilgrimage is a ritual journey with a hallowed purpose. Every step along the way has meaning ... New and old places in the heart are visited. Blessings are received and healing takes place. On return from the pilgrimage, life is seen with different eyes. Nothing will ever be quite the same again.'

(from *Illuminated Journeys*)

How clearly the statement above spoke of my experience of our FCJ pilgrimage in the steps of Marie Madeleine earlier this year.

Pilgrimage has many layers. There is the space element, covering the geographical distances travelled; the time element, when we bring the past into the present in order to move to the future. There is the hidden element, where reflection and experience are deepened and embraced, and there is the companionship of like-minded people.

In John's Gospel, we have our starting point in time and space. 'In the beginning' takes us back to the early Genesis story and then moves through millennia till it focuses on the coming of the Christ at a certain time and in a certain place. Christ's mandate in Luke 4 shows the direction that Christ would take and which he called his followers to embrace. From Israel the Christian community spread through the world all the way down to the eighteenth century and to a European country ravaged by war and violence. And there, in 1781, in the French town of Châteauroux, a little girl was born who was to carry on the mission of Christ in the world of her time.

The horrors of the French Revolution and the political turmoil of the following years brought much suffering to the people of France. Who could have guessed how many graces would be poured out across Europe and then to the world through the raising up of heroic French Christian leaders, men and women, who felt called to found religious Orders for the benefit of the poor and suffering?

Among these chosen ones was Marie Madeleine.

We know how God moved in slow and mysterious ways in moulding and shaping his chosen instrument. Marie Madeleine d'Houët had no way of knowing how things would turn out. Her struggle when she felt called to make the vow of chastity, the conflicting advice she was given, the harsh way in which she was treated in the early days of her vocation's discernment, her struggle to obtain approval for her little Society and the uncertainty of the future were very real. Her pilgrimage started in the past and was lived in the present.

In our own pilgrimage, we have a longer history than hers, but we still live in the present with no knowledge of what will be. Living in a time of violence and political uncertainty, with complex social issues facing us as Christians, we need the same fortitude and trust in God that Marie Madeleine showed. Her words are relevant for our time and place: 'Courage and confidence, but above all, great confidence!'

Let us pray that we may experience that thirst for justice and mercy that she had. With our companions of poverty, humility, obedience and gentleness may we share our gifts of Jesus' Heart, Spirit, Mother and Name.

Mary O'Shannessy fcJ

Christ the King Parish, Baciro – Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Christ the King Parish Church is situated on Melati Wetan Street, in an area called Baciro, near the main city of Yogyakarta in Central Java, Indonesia. It has about 4000 parishioners located in a quite large area around Baciro.



Three Priests in Baciro Parish, Fr. Suratmo, Fr. Mulyatno and Fr. Rusgiarto with a young parishioner

We have three priests in the parish with many lay women and men helping on the parish council. They are very active in making the parish very lively. Our parish priest is Father Adolphus Suratmo. He is supported by Father Carolus Borromeus Mulyatno, who is also a lecturer, and Father Evaristus Rusgiarto, a retired priest. The priests do wonderful work in encouraging and supporting parishioners to get involved in parish activities. They give their time generously to visit families and the elderly. They really try to support and bring back those who have moved away from the Church for any reason. The members of the parish council are also very involved in supporting the running of parish activities, besides helping to maintain the parish church and the priests' house.

There are many activities in Baciro parish. Every year there are classes for preparation for Confirmation, for First Communion, for Catechism. The Single Moms community meets once a month. Sunday School happens in some cluster areas and is coordinated in the parish at both Easter and Christmas and for the children's Mass. Catholic Women's groups meet regularly. The altar servers have their regular meeting too. A couple of times a year, the parish council arranges seminars for the parishioners. The lay ministers are prepared to serve the community by some training and time for reflection together.

Daily Masses are still favoured by the parishioners. Daily Mass is at 5.30 am and about 50 to 80 people will be there to celebrate it, including some students whose schools are near the church. Twice a week, Mondays and Wednesdays, there is a Sisters' choir, which enlivens people's participation, while for other days there are other choirs too. Every Friday before Mass, Morning Office is recited. On Wednesdays, after Mass, there are physical exercise workouts for people who want to attend.

Over the last couple of years, Christ the King Parish in Baciro has become an active and welcoming Church, with more people in attendance. This is due to the great collaboration between the parish priests, the parish council and the parishioners. In addition, some Sisters from different congregations in the parish are taking part in many activities in the parish.

We are proud of our parish.



Statue of Christ the King, in front of the church

Dewi fcJ



On any given Sunday up to 1000 bikes/scooters are parked outside the church

Introducing Genazzano's new Principal, Ms Karen Jebb



Ms Karen Jebb

'I will lead Genazzano FCJ College with vision, vitality, authenticity and commitment to best practice.'

I come to Genazzano FCJ College with a passion and commitment to Catholic education. I believe that educating young women in the Catholic faith environment is a privilege and an honour. I am graced with a strong faith and a steadfast commitment to Catholic education and after eleven wonderful years as Principal of Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill, I am extremely excited about my new leadership role in this unique high-performing K-12 college that includes the Hopetoun Boarding House, a beautifully appointed Early Learning Centre and a spectacular campus.

I have had the privilege of working in three Catholic schools with rich and inspiring charisms: the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion, the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart inspired by Saint Mary MacKillop, and the Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict. The charism of each of these learning communities has deepened my faith and enriched my leadership. I have made it a priority to learn, appreciate and embrace the charism of each school. I believe that it must become a part of me so I can lead authentically. I have very much enjoyed reading about the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus and speaking with various Sisters about Marie Madeleine and the Society. Having recently journeyed on a pilgrimage following in the steps of Marie Madeleine d'Houët in France, I feel privileged to build on the wonderful work of the Society and continue to embed the charism in our contemporary Australian educational setting. The rich FCJ history, values and traditions are inspiring and life-giving.

The primary role of any Catholic school is to support families in educating students in the faith. Inspired by the word of God, the person and message of Jesus and the believing community of the Church, I believe leaders are charged with the responsibility of striking the balance between the culture we live in and the mission and profound values and teachings of the Catholic Church. In day-to-day

terms this involves affirming the positive values found in the wider society, while also challenging societal values that do not respect the dignity of the human person.

As an educator in faith for many years, a key goal has been to provide opportunities that invite students, staff and parents to engage in the world with passion and empathy, gentleness and respect, a concern always for justice and a hunger for serving and transforming our society. This can be achieved through the unpacking of the college mission within the charism of the college. The distinctive lens of the Religious Order of a school provides a particular worldview that needs to be reflected on, embraced and enacted in all facets of school life. Hence, the opportunity to imbue the college community with the vision of the Society of the Faithful Companions of Jesus is my first priority. Within the context of Christianity, a Catholic school is a faith-filled community which fosters respect, dialogue, companionship, authentic relationships, contemplation, action, prayer, self-reflection and celebration, and ideally is overwhelmingly a place filled with hope.

I view myself as a lifelong learner. I possess tertiary qualifications that include a Master in Education, an Executive MBA, a Graduate Diploma in Theology, a Graduate Diploma in Educational Administration and a Bachelor of Education/Science.

I will lead Genazzano FCJ College with vision, vitality, authenticity and commitment to best practice. As leader I intend to enthuse, engage and empower others to have a shared vision, strive for excellence, foster innovation, be compassionate, plan effectively and work in the spirit of collegiality.

Fundamental to education is a well-developed, innovative and evolving curriculum that is holistic, differentiated and integrated. It is my belief all students need to be given opportunities to reach their potential through the provision of a rigorous academic program that gives direction, meaning and purpose for individuals, yet allows for independent



GENAZZANO
FCJ COLLEGE

Genazzano FCJ College



Senior students with Ms Jebb



Principal and juniors taking a walk

learning and personal and communal engagement. We live in a rapidly changing world with extraordinary advancements in technology, global communication and innovative pedagogy. In such an exciting and challenging context an openness to embrace change is pivotal for both teacher and student.

To omitted encourage excellence within the classroom, the school environment and beyond is imperative to provide a rich, holistic education for our young people. The education of students requires passion and vitality, authentic role models and the development of critical thinking leading to discernment.

The essential role of Catholic schools is to educate the whole person and to build relationships as staff respectfully journey with their students and each other. I am inspired to lead a college that honours mutual respect and dignity, diversity, companionship, professionalism and best work practices, enhancing connectedness and partnership with staff and students alike, affirming the very nature of our humanity as made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1: 27). A multi-dimensional and, at times, complex area within a school, the wellbeing of students and staff requires constant review, reflection, innovation and strategic planning to ensure the building of community is upheld, sustainable and life-giving.

I enjoy networking within both the college and wider community settings and I take these opportunities to promote the vision, mission and achievements of the Genazzano school life.

My first seven months at Genazzano FCJ College have been all that I hoped and more. As principal of Genazzano FCJ College, I seek to continue the wonderful invitation that the Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus hold out to all of us – to become ever more Faithful Companions of Jesus.

Ms Karen Jebb



The College at night

‘As an educator in faith for many years, a key goal has been to provide opportunities that invite students, staff and parents to engage in the world with passion and empathy, gentleness and respect, a concern always for justice and a hunger for serving and transforming our society.’

Introducing FCJ College Benalla's new Principal, Ms Joanne Rock



Ms Joanne Rock

‘In all of my leadership roles I have attempted to be a leader who encourages collective ownership of decisions and mutual respect for diverse opinions.’

‘Continuous school improvement requires regular reflection on current practices with the intention of always seeking the answers to: ‘Why do we do what we do?’ and ‘Could we do this better to improve the learning outcomes for our students?’

I come to the FCJ College community with over 25 years experience in Catholic education, with a range of leadership experiences and a passion for being a part of a thriving and innovative learning community that is faith-based and student-centred.

My goals are to encourage in students a responsibility and love for their own learning, and to ensure educators understand the need to make material relevant, to develop positive relationships, and foster cooperative self-discipline by setting clearly defined expectations and encouraging inquiry and investigation. My main vision is to inspire and motivate students to reach their full potential and to understand their place in a connected and globalised world. I strongly believe in the partnership that exists between parents and the learning community to bring about success for all students.

One of my passions as an educator is to expose staff to and excite them with contemporary learning models and opportunities and to get them involved in coming up with innovative strategies to motivate our students in their learning. This needs me to articulate clearly a contemporary learning philosophy to staff so they will embrace the new idea. I am committed to keep abreast of contemporary educational practices that ensure best practice and outcomes can be achieved for all students on the learning spectrum and to ensure that learning is shared among staff in professional conversations. Continuous school improvement requires regular reflection on current practices with the intention of always seeking the answers to: ‘Why do we do what we do?’ and ‘Could we do this better to improve the learning outcomes for our students?’ As a leader, I often pose these questions to staff and ensure we can all articulate answers to these vital questions. I believe that successful schools contextualise the learning activities for their school communities, ensuring that all can access and interact with the learning opportunities being offered: such schools continually encourage and lead discussions that ensure this is being taken into consideration when curriculum planning occurs. Learning must be relevant, collaborative and future-focused.



FCJ College Benalla

I am fully committed to providing young people with the tools necessary to live a full and rewarding life. At all times, I promote education as the means of nurturing and transforming the mind, heart and spirit, providing the learner with the faith, strength and capacity to succeed. My desire is to develop in young people a sense of hope and the ability to engage with the issues of our time, stand in solidarity with the oppressed and seek to build a more inclusive community.

In all of my leadership roles I have attempted to be a leader who encourages collective ownership of decisions and mutual respect for diverse opinions. I strongly believe that I must set the tone with a keen sense of responsibility and accountability, underpinned by gospel values, fairness and compassion. I am and have always been a hands-on leader. I lead by example, and would never expect anyone in my community to do something that I would not do myself.

I am a happily married mother of two children, who has been blessed with a wonderfully supportive husband and a loving family. My interests are extensive and varied and include learning, an interest in other cultures enhanced by numerous travel experiences, spiritual development, physical fitness and healthy living, family gatherings and experiences, reading, music and theatre.

Ms Joanne Rock



Ms Rock with senior students



Ms Joanne Rock and husband Marcus

The Kimberley Exchange Program Genazzano FCJ College 2016

To be an Australian we have to know our past, our history and recognize our role in creating change in the future. (The Genazzano 2016 Kimberley Message)



A desert Walk



Student art

From Sunday 29 May to Sunday 19 June we were given the privilege of representing Genazzano FCJ College on the annual Kimberley Exchange program. Our journey was a very important part of the twenty-eight year history of the Kimberley Exchange Program for Genazzano FCJ College. The vision of Sister Rosemary Crowe fcJ, in collaboration with Sister Margaret Mary Kennedy fcJ, then principal of the college, has given many Genazzano students the privileged position of embarking on an amazing immersion program in the Kimberley. The message of the Exchange was clear; we were embarking on a program of reconciliation and justice. Throughout our trip we met, sat with and listened to the Aboriginal elders and the children as they shared their stories about culture, family, identity, spirituality, country and culture. We immersed ourselves in a very special program that allowed us to learn and experience the sacredness and power of Aboriginal culture and story – the story of the First People of our country.

Our trip started in Broome. In Broome we attended school with our host sisters at St Mary's College. We were very fortunate to be able to attend the 50th Jubilee Mass for the diocese where we heard the Elders from the different communities speak in their own languages and we witnessed the men from Kulumburu carrying in the sacred Scriptures with dance and music.

While we were in Broome we went fishing with some of the local families and visited the museum, the Broome Regional Medical Centre, the Dialysis Centre, Goolarri Media and the St John of God Heritage Centre. Here we met Sister Pat Rhatigan who fondly remembered many of the FCJ nuns who have made an important contribution to the history and story of Broome and the Kimberley Region. Sister Pat shared with us many stories about the St John of God Sisters and their long history and work in the missions and the Leprosarium. Our trip to Broome was made all the more special sharing memorable moments with our host families, such as watching the sunset while having dinner at Gantheaume Point and going to the Outdoor Cinema.

As we travelled further afield we met Sister Alma Cabassi RSJ in Halls Creek and learnt about her work with the local community. Our visit reaffirmed just how important it is for us to continue to support Sister Alma's work and to organise ongoing clothing drives for this community. In Warmun we were fortunate to be able to work in the classrooms at the Ngalangangpum School and attend the official opening of their new school. Our last stop was Bidyadanga where we were given a very warm welcome by Fr Benny Calanza, the Elders and the children.

Throughout our journey several key issues made a huge impact on us. Something we take for granted is our medical and health services. The medical and health services in the Kimberley have very different standards and facilities compared to those in Melbourne. In Broome we visited the Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service

‘Our trip to Broome was made all the more special sharing memorable moments with our host families, such as watching the sunset while having dinner at Gantheaume Point and going to the Outdoor Cinema.’

(BRAMS) where they offer treatment for a variety of health issues including kidney failure, sexually transmitted diseases and diabetes, just to name a few. As the doctors working at BRAMS mentioned, they are quite under-staffed as many doctors are not willing to come up to the Kimberley and work in the remote communities. This creates problems because there are so many people suffering from these diseases but they cannot access the services they desperately need when they are so isolated.

Learning about kidney failure in the Dialysis Centre was quite confronting as we saw a dialysis machine in action. It is really sad to think that patients have to come three times a week and sit connected to the machine for four hours for the rest of their lives. In the remote communities we were able to play with the children living in the area. The children were amazing and very cute, but it was sad to watch them drink two litres of soft drink and smoke cigarettes from the young age of five. Learning about and experiencing these issues first-hand had a huge impact on all of us.

In Warmun, formerly Turkey Creek, we helped out in classes at the Ngalangangpum School, a small Catholic school. During one of our evening discussions we discussed how important Narbin (God) was to the children and staff in the school. Narbin was included in the majority of the lessons. The teachers would teach the children the Narbin ways. When a child was misbehaving the teacher would not yell at them but instead teach them more about Narbin and how hurting someone else is not the Narbin way. Each day there was Narbin Time; this was like prayer time. When Narbin was being spoken about all the children would be still and quiet. After recess and lunch Narbin Time was vital in calming the students down and preparing them to learn. The lack of any God-like figure in the community school at Bidyadanga was noticeable. We felt that this made a huge difference in the classrooms. Having a living faith in schools can make a difference in a learning environment.

Two-way education is very important in Western Australia and in other places that have mixed cultures. When there are multiple languages in the one place, problems can arise and the best way to solve these is through understanding and knowledge. While we were in Broome we learnt about two-way education in the communities. In Warmun, two-way education is used very well. The children learn both the Aboriginal language and English. This connects Aboriginal culture with the students’ learning experiences and also creates acceptance for different languages. While in Broome we also learnt about a different form of two-way education: the two-way education in the medical and health area. The doctor at Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service told us how he prescribes medicine. He not only gives the patient medicine and tells them how to use it, but he also explains and educates why the patient is taking it and what they can do to prevent this condition from happening again to someone else in their family. We all believed this was a very wise way of teaching children and adults about health issues. Our journey was a powerful and personal one and one that we hope will stay with us for the rest of our lives. Our journey reminded us of the key messages of faith, a love of learning and companionship that Marie Madeleine d’Houët so confidently supported and reflected in her own life. These gifts support and enrich us every day as we embrace challenges and new experiences in our lives. Throughout the Kimberley Exchange we were given opportunities that were unique and memorable. Each day we embraced the new experiences with the clear intention of bringing them back and sharing what we have learnt and hoping that perhaps one day we will return to the Kimberley.

Isobel Taylor, Isabelle Passaris,
Madalene Craig and Lourdes Leschen



Chalk Stories: Gen girls getting ready to learn about indigenous images



Jubilee Mass celebrating 50 years of the Diocese

Rejoicing in the Power of Education

In May this year Caritas Australia brought from The Philippines a young woman, Psyche Mae Ascenzio, to be the guest speaker in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne, at the annual fundraising event, 'Women for the World'.



Psyche Mae Ascenzio

Psyche Mae Ascenzio comes from the village of Bagong Silangan, home to the FCJ Learning and Development Center. Psyche Mae's family was very poor and life was hard for her parents. When she was nine she was introduced to the FCJ Sisters when she joined their Girls Club.

Psyche Mae did well at school and was successful in gaining a scholarship from the FCJ Sisters to go to college to study to be a social worker. One of the procedures the staff of the Center has in place is a mentor program to help support students through their courses and to assist them to meet all course requirements. In addition, graduates like Psyche Mae, are expected to give some time and their expertise to tutor the younger students.

Today Psyche Mae is employed by the Philippines Government as a Project Development Officer with an emphasis on gender perspectives. She told her audiences that she chose to be a social worker because she knew what it was like to be poor. Although she has not experienced domestic violence herself, she decided to focus on helping women who have experienced such violence.

For her own family Psyche Mae is working hard to help educate her younger brothers and sister. For herself she is working to gain a Master's degree and her dream is to ensure that her family is freed from inter-generational poverty.

While in Melbourne Psyche Mae visited Genazzano FCJ College and spoke to the Year 8 students.

Readers of FCJNEWS who have cooked and/or bought Christmas cakes since 1998 should be very pleased with their efforts to fund scholarships for young people like Psyche Mae at the FCJ Learning and Development Center. Thirty-four young people who received 'Christmas Cake Scholarships' have graduated and a further thirty are still studying.

Congratulations to those who began the FCJ Learning and Development Center in 2002 and to Sister Paola Terroni fcJ and her staff who work so professionally to provide a range of opportunities for personal development to the young people and women of Bagong Silangan.

Our challenge is to keep the story going!

'She told her audiences that she chose to be a social worker because she knew what it was like to be poor.'



Guests at the Caritas Australian luncheon



Life in the village for the people of Bagong Silangan, just 10-12 kms from Quezon City a suburb of Manila.



Congratulations to Our FCJ Jubilarians

On Sunday September 11 three FCJ Sisters celebrated a jubilee of their profession. Mary Kennedy fcJ celebrated sixty-five years, whilst Ann Connolly and Margaret Olsen celebrated sixty years professed.

The celebration took place in Genazzano FCJ College Chapel with Father Barry Moran as the celebrant. During the Mass the three Sisters renewed their Vows. All present joined in the joyous singing of the well-known hymns chosen for such an occasion.

After the Mass the Jubilarians with the FCJ Sisters, their families and friends enjoyed each others' company in the student cafeteria for afternoon tea.

There was much merriment and laughter as the Sisters related some of their memories of the events they experienced in the many years of their apostolate in other parts of the world where they studied and did apostolic work with FCJ Sisters in Europe and America.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED TO keep the Christmas Cake Project alive IN SUPPORT OF FCJ MISSIONS

WWW.FORAP.ORG.AU

This year Friends of Romania and The Philippines are supporting 42 students to go to college and gain a qualification, 11 in Romania and 31 in The Philippines.

In The Philippines 31 young people have graduated since 2010 and all are employed!

Come along and join a happy team of volunteers who have been cooking for the FCJ Missions since 1998!

Cakes still available 2016 include:

2 kilo square \$40

1 kilo round \$25

Contact the Coordinator:

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Or ring Julie on 03 9853 6527



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FCJ Missions You will find enclosed a donation envelope. Any contribution to the work of the FCJ Society's Missions is most welcome. The Sisters wish to thank all the contributors following publication of the May 2016 Edition.

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