

# *Spirit* of Sandhurst



Tribute Edition - Bishop Joseph Grech DD  
March 2011  
Catholic Education Sandhurst

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## Reflections from the Director



As I write I am preparing to go on pilgrimage to Rome for the Canonisation of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop and my reflections have centred on the vision, courage, faith and tenacity of Mary in establishing schools so that all children would receive the gift of education – something we may tend to take for granted today. In Catholic Education Sandhurst we acknowledge our colleagues with the Educaré Awards in October each year and we celebrate UNESCO World Teachers' Day on October 29.

So what indeed is at the heart of education and teaching? What difference do our schools and our teachers make in the lives of our students? I would like to share with you an excerpt from the address by Dr Nicholas Tonti-Filippini, nationally respected bio-ethicist and ex-student at the celebration of 150 years of Catholic education at St Monica's Kangaroo Flat recently:

*"I would like to talk about the debt that I owe this [St Monica's] community. This was a place that helped my family to introduce me to truth, to goodness and to beauty. This was a place that received a young mind and opened the doors of knowledge and understanding, a place that shaped our behaviour so that we could learn to appreciate and respect each other, a place that showed us the greatness of God's creation beyond ourselves and beyond the littleness of Kangaroo Flat.*

*This was the place that taught us that the religious dimension is intrinsic to culture. Here in this laboratory of culture and humanity we were formed as children to discover goodness and to grow in responsibility, to seek comparisons and to refine our critical senses, to learn our history and geography and become skilled in language, science and mathematics, so that we could draw from the gifts of the past to understand the present better and to be able to plan wisely for the future...*

St Monica's is a place of discovery and of love. Those of us who are past students owe a debt for the beginning that we were given, for the people here who taught us to know and to love."

As an educator I am inspired, heartened and motivated by these words. Let us not lose sight of the sacred responsibility and awesome privilege it is to 'draw forth the hidden wholeness' of the students who parents entrust into our care each day. I give thanks for all educators – principals, teachers, parents and school staff – may we continue to be inspired and to inspire each other as we work together across home, school and parish to enable young people to 'live life to the full' (Jn 10:10) in the courageous spirit of Mary MacKillop.

Blessings

Director

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Layout: Catherine Barianos

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2011

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Printed by Espress Printers Epsom

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# *L*egacy

# Family





# Bishops of Sandhurst

The passing of the Victorian Education Act in 1872 caused great concerns for the denominational schools in Victoria. The number of Catholic Schools dropped within two years of the Act but they survived because each Catholic community was responsible for financing and maintaining its schools. The formation of the Diocese of Sandhurst in 1874 under the leadership of Bishop Martin Crane OSA ensured that the schools continued to survive and prosper. This strong foundation was continued by Bishop Stephen Reville OSA and through the Episcopates of John McCarthy, Bernard Stewart and Noel Daly. Each of these leaders had Catholic Education at their heart and were great supporters of the schools and the teachers in them. Each could claim significant contributions to various aspects of Catholic Education during their period in office. Bishop Grech continues the tradition today.



**Bishop Martin Crane OSA**  
1874 - 1901



**Bishop Stephen Reville OSA**  
1901 - 1916



**Bishop John McCarthy**  
1917 - 1950



**Bishop Bernard Stewart**  
1950 - 1979



**Bishop Noel Daly**  
1979 - 2000



**Bishop Joseph Grech**  
2001 - 2010



*Wednesday 5th January 2011*

**The Reception of the Body and Funeral Vigil for Bishop Joseph Grech took place at Sacred Heart Cathedral Wednesday January 5 at 7pm.**

More than a thousand people came together to pray for the eternal life of Bishop Joe in what was an emotional outpouring of grief and celebration of Bishop Joe's life and ministry.

The Cathedral organ played "fanfare of a Bishop" as the congregation gathered for the opening prayer. Bishop Joe's family took their seats at the front of the church as an emotional Monsignor Marriott welcomed everyone to the Cathedral for the vigil.

Death, whether expected or unexpected, brings grief and immense sadness, the vigil, as the name suggests, is a time for keeping watch. The funeral vigil for Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech was an opportunity for friends, colleagues and members of the parish and Sandhurst community to gather with Bishop Joe's family to keep watch with them in prayer.

Symbols of Bishop Joe's life were carried to the front of the Cathedral and placed tenderly beside the coffin as the congregation prayed for the life of their much loved Bishop. A bible, a photo of Bishop Joe at the recent pilgrimage to Rome and a Maltese flag were some of the symbols of this wonderful life.

As Monsignor Marriott invited all present to come forward to place a stone in the water he spoke of the power of water to refresh us and soften those things too hard to bear. "Come forward and place a stone in the water and ask God to soften the grief in our hearts and refresh our spirits" he said.

The funeral vigil and reception of the body of Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech, 6th Bishop of the Diocese of Sandhurst was an opportunity for a private expression of grief for those who had taken Bishop Joe into their hearts, a chance to touch his hands and to say one last goodbye.

May the love of God and the peace of the Lord Jesus Christ bless and console us and gently wipe every tear from our eyes.





*Thursday 6th January 2014*

**He was a man of the people and on Thursday, January 6 the people came in their thousands to farewell their much loved Bishop of Sandhurst, Joseph Angelo Grech.**

Thousands of mourners filled the Cathedral and overflowed into marquees in the Cathedral grounds, an estimated 4,500 people in all.

The sombre atmosphere of the congregation bore testimony to the deep feeling for this warm hearted Bishop. Disbelief and sorrow lingered, along with the grateful acknowledgement that Sandhurst was blessed to have had Bishop Joe at the helm for almost 10 years.

Remembered for his warmth, passion and the ability to make each person feel special, his legacy will be his enormous capacity for pastoral care and his love of young people.

Cardinal George Pell led the funeral service along with a multitude of Bishops and Priests. The Sacred Heart Cathedral Choir sang for their Bishop, the congregation united in their grief and desire to pay their respects to such a great and humble man.

The Apostolic Nuncio, His Excellency Most Reverend Giuseppe Lazzarotto joined Cardinal Pell, Sandhurst Diocese Administrator Monsignor Frank Marriott, Archbishop of Melbourne Denis Hart and the Bishop of Darwin Eugene Hurley as the Principal Celebrants. 33 Arch Bishops and Bishops from across Australia and Australasia, as well as almost 200 hundred Priests from Sandhurst and beyond, concelebrated the funeral mass.

Members of Bishop Joe's family travelled from Malta, including his brother Carmel and sister Rosetta, together with Bishop Joe's Aunt Tess and Uncle Jim from Melbourne who were by his side when he passed away. A large Maltese contingent was also in attendance.

His Excellency, Mr Frank Tabone, High Commissioner for Malta, delivered the tribute to Bishop Joe. He said that although people were saddened they could also be comforted by the work Bishop Joe had done to help people during his life.

The requiem mass was held 40 years to the day that Bishop Joe arrived in Australia to continue his studies for the Priesthood. His close friend and fellow Seminarian Archbishop Coleridge delivered the homily recalling the many gifts and achievements of Bishop Joe, who he described as a servant of the Universal Church.

"At times people forget that all Bishops are involved on three levels – local, national and international. Most people see only the local. But some bishops are involved more than others at the national and international level – and Joe Grech was one of those," said Arch Bishop Coleridge.

At the conclusion of the Mass, and as the coffin of Bishop Joseph Angelo Grech DD, Bishop of Sandhurst was lowered into the crypt beneath the Sacred Heart Cathedral, people clapped in spontaneous appreciation of the man of the people.

Perhaps Archbishop Coleridge said it best with his words, "We gather in Sacred Heart Cathedral to say, "Good-bye, Joe". But we also say, "Thank you, Joe: grazzi hafna!

"Thanks for so many beautiful and surprising things through your beautiful and surprising life, cut short in a way neither you nor we expected."

# Funeral





# Youth of Sandhurst

Last week I was asked to help write a funeral notice for Bishop Joe to put in the local paper on behalf of the Bendigo Life Teen group. A team of young people that worked closely with him to plan and run youth masses and catechesis once a month here in Bendigo. I found myself struggling to succinctly describe the impact that Bishop Joe has had on the young people of our diocese of Sandhurst, let alone the young people of Australia and the world.

Bishop Joe firmly believed that young people are not the church of tomorrow, but the church of today and his warm, gentle and welcoming nature made the young people of our church feel wanted and loved by God. He always made time for the young people of the Diocese, be it leading Scripture reflections, celebrating youth masses, answering the young people's wish for more regular catechesis following WYD in Sydney in 2008, or working with the newly ordained Father Robert Galea to deliver the "Stronger" youth Retreats the most recent of which took place less than 4 weeks ago in Echuca.

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On the 10th of December last year I was appointed the Youth Ministry Worker for the Sandhurst Diocese and it was to be my job to help Bishop Joe reach his goal of having 100 young people from the diocese attend WYD in Madrid in August this year. I know that my job has now been made much more difficult but I promise you Bishop Joe I will not lose sight of your goal, I will go for the lot!

**Tim Lougoon**  
Youth Ministry  
Coordinator

Bishop Joe was a rare man, in that he actually had the ability to engage us, the youth of today. And in doing so, made us feel at home in a place where most of us feel intimidated, uncomfortable or bored.

When Bishop Joe talked about Jesus his excitement and passion was contagious. He used language that we could understand which made it simple and easy to relate back to our lives and who we are. He continually spoke about how important each of us is, reminding us that God loves us for who we are because he made us and as we know... God doesn't make rubbish. Even though Bishop Joe could be talking to a crowd of over a hundred people, it could seem that he was speaking only to you. No matter who or how many people he was talking to, he was always genuine.

A memory that I am very fond of was our final diocesan rally at the end of the World Youth Day week in Sydney. The week was so powerful and overwhelming that by the time it came to this night I was exhausted, but also never wanted it to end. It was here, after our rally that I went to give Bishop Joe a hug and ended up crying into him, of course he just embraced me and could not have cared any less for the tears that soaked his robes. This is the type of love that he had for all of us, regardless of anything it was just unconditional.

**Prue Gurnick**  
Student, St Joseph's College,  
Echuca





## Bishop Joe with the youth of Sandhurst

Bishop Joe loved young people, had had an incredible relationship with the youth of Sandhurst and young people he encountered around the globe. He believed in their goodness, their energy and their ability to form strong relationships with God and church.

Bishop Joe embraced the technology that is such a large part of young people's lives; he had his own facebook page and regularly conversed online with young people across the Diocese.

When Bishop Joe spoke in schools and youth groups he spoke from the heart and with the contagious enthusiasm, which inspired young people to a stronger faith and a greater sense of self worth. His most famous sermon, "God doesn't make rubbish" was a well known by the youth of Sandhurst, the words inspiring them to be the best they can be.

## World Youth Day Toronto 2002

World Youth Day was a favourite with Bishop Joe and he was determined for the young people of Sandhurst to have the opportunity to experience this global event. After becoming Bishop of Sandhurst in 2001 he began to make preparations for WYD 2002 in Toronto. What an incredible event this was as he accompanied 25 young people to Canada. Who could forget the image of Bishop Joe on a skateboard in Toronto?



## World Youth Day Cologne 2005

Cologne played host to World Youth Day 2005 and with much excitement Bishop Joe set about inspiring young people to take part. It was a great disappointment to him when he fell ill with a blood disorder weeks before and was unable to attend. It was at the Cologne WYD that Sydney, Australia was announced as host of the next World Youth day event to be held in 2008, 35 Sandhurst pilgrims were present to hear the much anticipated announcement.



## World Youth Day Sydney 2008

In 2008 World Youth Day and the Journey of the Cross and Icon came to Australia and young pilgrims from all over the world descended on Australia to take part in this spiritual event. Much preparation went into ensuring that a large number of young people from Sandhurst could attend World Youth Day in Sydney and young pilgrims from all continents were welcomed into homes in Catholic Dioceses throughout Australia and New Zealand. Days in the Diocese took place in Sandhurst and throughout Australia as a prelude to World Youth Day. Pilgrims came together with local Catholic communities to worship and to immerse themselves in the culture of the region. The World Youth Day Cross and Icon travelled to schools and parishes around the continent before making it's way to Sydney for the main event. Bishop Joe was the keynote speaker at the "Receive the Power Live Youth Festival" at Barangaroo, his words were dynamic and passionate enlivening the youth of the world. Bishop Joe was immensely proud of the fact that behind the Archdiocese's of Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane, Sandhurst had the highest number of pilgrims at WYD in Sydney. This was no mean feat but Bishop Joe was determined for it to happen, he wanted the youth of Sandhurst to be able to experience this extraordinary event and knew they would be forever changed by the encounter. Over 600 pilgrims from Sandhurst made the journey to Sydney for World Youth Day 2008.



## Stronger

From the WYD experience in Australia Bishop Joe forged an even closer bond with young people and in his belief that youth were looking for more ways to encounter Jesus Christ and he set about making this happen. Father Rob Galea who was a young Maltese Seminarian at the time was a driving force behind the initiative which became known as the Stronger Rallies and Retreats. Youth from across the Sandhurst Diocese and other parts of Australia were invited to take part in the first retreat which was held in December 2008. Over the past three

years the Stronger retreats have grown giving the youth of Sandhurst an opportunity to take part in praise and worship and adoration. The most recent Stronger Retreat took place in Echuca in December 2010, just weeks before Bishop Joe died. The experience will be cherished by those who took part.

**World Youth Day Madrid 2011** World Youth Day will take place in Madrid this year and over 70 youth from the Sandhurst Diocese are expected to attend. It was Bishop Joe's wish that Sandhurst continue to be excited by World Youth Day and inspired to find ways to allow as many young people as possible to be able to attend. Although he will not be there in person he will be there in Spirit as the youth of Sandhurst remember Bishop Joe who had such a great love for them all.

*Bishop Joe, you will be sorely missed, you touched so many people's hearts, directly and indirectly. The new Bishop will have very big shoes to fill. May you rest in peace.*

**Anna**

*What a lovely tribute Mass tonight at Sacred Heart Wodonga for an inspiration man of God. A loss to the Diocese, a loss to the Catholic Church and a loss to us all. I don't think I'll ever think of him again without being in a baseball cap and boardies riding a skateboard...*

*thanks Fr Jake!!!*

**Tracey**

*... People were drawn by your faith, enthusiasm, passion, vision, energy and humour. You will be missed greatly but always here in our hearts and our church...*

**Gillian**





# *The Legacy*

**New Wine... New Wineskins**



# Bishop Joseph Grech



CEO Staff Days 2010



World Youth Day 2005



Bishop Joe at the Stronger Retreat  
December 2010



DEXA Opening 2010



Leadership Gathering  
2010



Some of the tributes from the Catholic  
Education Office Staff Days  
January 2011





This Spirit of Sandhurst Magazine captures the spirit of Catholic Education in the Sandhurst Diocese - its uniqueness, vibrancy, innovation and commitment to enhancing the lives of its students, families and teachers.