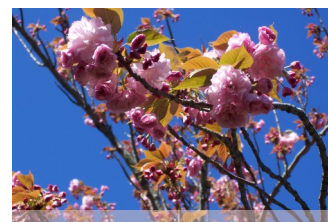




# COMMUNITY OF THE HOLY NAME



## Spring 2018 Newsletter

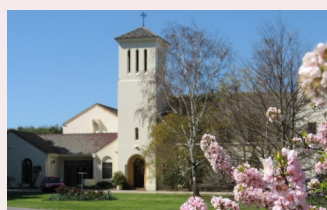
### IN THIS ISSUE...

We hear the extraordinary story of Kezha Angami, from the Eastern Theological College, Jorhat, in India.

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Editor: Liz Johnstone



We are a Community of Anglican Sisters who have been living, praying and ministering in Melbourne for more than 125 years. Nowadays, our main ministry is hospitality, offering a place of spiritual renewal and refreshment.

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## "Thank you CHN",

*By Kezha Angami*



Coming from a small tribal state called Nagaland in India, the decision to pursue a doctoral study in Australia was a massive decision which took nearly four years of planning and preparation. As my scholarship did not cover our living expenses, we explored through a friend Rev. Dr Howard Wallace and got in touch with an institution that was willing to help us with accommodation in return for my services.

However, things did not work out with our accommodation as expected and, upon arrival in Australia, we had to immediately start searching for new accommodation and a job to cover our living expenses. Coming to a foreign land, not knowing what to do and where to get help is an experience we will never forget.

The first four months of our stay in Melbourne were filled with hopelessness and despair. I remember looking for accommodation and jobs every week. Weeks turned to months, but nothing seemed to be working out. We prayed and continued our search for jobs of any kind. My wife, Zhano, managed to get a part time job for few hours a week in the city at Dalton McCaughey Library, which was of great help during our crisis but wasn't enough to cover our daily expenses let alone the rent. We spent several sleepless nights thinking about how to find the means for paying our rent after using up our savings. By this time, we had already lived in two suburbs and used up all our resources. All this was affecting me, and I was falling far

behind in my research work. Mentally and physically we were exhausted and broken but even in such a situation we decided never to give up. We reminded ourselves that God who brought us this far will surely not forsake us.

God answered our prayers through our friend Dr Visier, who at that time was working with World Vision and had been in touch with the CHN Sisters for programmes of welcoming and helping refugees. He introduced us to Sister Carol and Sister Valmai. I can still clearly remember the 2nd October 2014, when we first came to CHN, a place that is truly breath-taking and peaceful. I remember meeting all the sisters and how good they were towards us. That day they offered to help us with our accommodation and we accepted gratefully. Hence, by the second week of the following month, we had finally moved into the hermitage at CHN. The excitement and the feeling of relief and security was something that both Zhano and I felt after such a long time. It was after coming to CHN that I could finally concentrate on my research work and catch up lost time. We celebrated our first Christmas in Australia with the Sisters of CHN, which was an awesome experience.

Living in CHN, we have experienced countless blessings. One of the many blessings that we experienced is the birth of our first baby girl. Our daughter Avi has brought immense joy into our lives and I believe into this community as well because she is very much the daughter of CHN as much as she is ours. She is blessed and lucky to have received all the love of the sisters here in CHN for which we will remain forever grateful.

I have finally completed my doctoral studies in Missiology, the study of Christian mission. I couldn't have done this without the help of the sisters of CHN. They have given us a space to live and a part-time job to sustain my family. Without this support I would have been side-tracked in my research work, because the more important thing for me as

*(continued on page 3)*



Dear Friends,

We are now experiencing some beautiful Spring weather and the gardens and grounds are looking beautiful, thanks to Kezha and Colin. Colin Murphy has recently joined our staff to help with the gardens, making a big difference. He is married to Faye, one of our Associates.

In our last Newsletter there was an article by Revd. Glenn Buijs about the Jireh Foundation which was begun to assist refugee families to purchase their own home. The family is carefully chosen and is responsible for all the repayments. The first family, who are Sudanese, moved into a house in Clyde North. The eldest daughter, Achok, said "My family felt like outsiders when they first arrived in Australia. Owning a house is important because it allows us to feel like 'Australians' It makes us feel like we are carrying our own weight and doing something for ourselves, so we can stand in pride and sing 'Advance Australia Fair.'"

Sister Hilary, who has been living and ministering in Footscray for many years, is now living with the sisters in Esther House. It is a big change for Hilary. Sister Lyn continues to be involved in ministry with Lifeline and some counselling within her parish in Bendigo. Sister Avrill is soon to celebrate a great milestone - her 50th Profession Anniversary which falls on her 80th birthday: more on that in the next Newsletter. Sister Jean is still a resident at Rosehill and continues her ministry among the people there. Jean has been there for seven years and has seen many changes occur. Sister Sheila is still in her unit at Brighton.

I was invited by the Little Brothers of Francis to join them for a few days from October 1st - 5th as they celebrated St Francis' Day. The evening prior to St Francis' Day a service is held which is called the Transitus. This service is to commemorate the death of St Francis. It is a very moving and solemn service followed the next day by celebration, feasting and joy. They have a lovely property at Tabulam and it was amazing to wake each morning to see a mother rock wallaby and

her joey just outside the door of the Guest Hermitage.

The Spirituality Centre continues to be the focus of our hospitality and we are now receiving bookings up to 2021. We are grateful to

those people who volunteer to help us especially after a group has left and preparing for the next one. We have received many favourable comments on our hospitality, accommodation, food and the peaceful and prayerful atmosphere of the house.

Our monthly Prayer Days continue and the Prayer Aid booklets have been very helpful to people who are not able to attend.

They are available on our website [www.chnmelb.org](http://www.chnmelb.org)

My thanks go to Liz for her ongoing work with our Newsletter and Prayer Aids. Liz is also a Probationary Oblate of the Community, soon to be admitted as a full member along with Dennis Mills at the Oblates' Advent Quiet Day. Our Oblates and Associates continue to grow and be very supportive of the sisters and our work. If you would like to know more about our Associates and/or Oblates you are welcome to ring Sister Avrill or Sister Valmai on 03 9583 2087 or check our website. You may like to pay us a visit. You would be most welcome but please ring that number to arrange a suitable time.

We continue to know God's leading in our lives and those precious words of Mother Esther

"Our future is in the hands of God"

My love and prayers

Sister Carol CHN

Carol CHN



Board members of Jireh Foundation, Mr & Mrs Bieth, Sisters Carol, Valmai & Gloria, CHN. Picture: Janine Eastgate.



## “Thank you CHN”, continued from front page

a new dad was to provide for my family and make sure they were safe. They have also given me the space to do my research in the CHN library as I no longer had a table to work at in the Hermitage with the arrival of our precious daughter. Moreover, at the beginning of this year the move into the Lodge was a massive added blessing. It was the most crucial time for my research work and in the Lodge, I had my own study room. For the next few months, day and night, I locked myself inside and continued to work. Some of the sisters of CHN have also helped in proof reading part of the draft copies of my work which has improved the quality of my dissertation. Therefore, without the support of the CHN sisters I could not have successfully completed my doctoral studies. The topic of my Thesis is Cross-Cultural Mission: The impact of the American Baptist Missionaries on the Angami Naga Tribe. The originality of this research is in analysing the original missionary correspondence and reports (archival materials) collected from the American Baptist Historical Society, Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

We have been living in this community for almost four years now. There is a calmness and serenity in this community and we have experienced love, peace, joy and blessings. This, I believe, is because the sisters of the CHN who are here and who have gone before us have maintained an intimate relationship with our living God through their dedication, devotion, service and unceasing prayers. God is working through this community to reach out to the lost, the refugees, the homeless and destitute.

We are one of the many fortunate beneficiaries of this ministry extended by the CHN.

Reminiscing on my journey in undertaking this research, it took me back over 20 years where God's hand had been leading me all along, from the day I committed my life for fulltime ministry. Having completed my Bachelor of Theology in 1997, I served as a missionary in Nepal. A few years later, I did my Bachelor of Divinity and served as a mission co-ordinator of our church council and as promotional officer of Eastern Theological College, Jorhat for several years. Because of these ministerial experiences and the need in the department of mission, I was recommended by the college board to do my Masters in Missiology and on completion became a lecturer at Eastern Theological College, teaching mission subjects to postgraduate students. Being in teaching ministry for over seven years, I was always keen to learn more and there was a need to upgrade the mission department in the college, so I explored pursuing doctoral studies in missiology at the Yarra Theological College, University of Divinity. Now that I have completed my studies, after graduation, when we go back, I will be teaching in the same college.

Today as we look back we can only say “Thank you” to our God the provider and the way He is using the CHN sisters as His precious instrument and His very special vessels. Once again, from the bottom of our hearts, we thank all the CHN Sisters for your kindness and generosity.

## About Nagaland

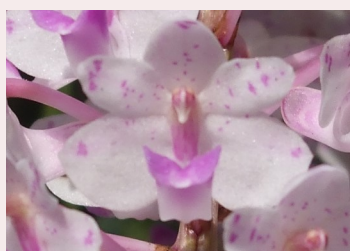


Nagaland is a mountainous state in northeast India, bordering Myanmar with an area of 16,579 sq. km. and a population of 2.27 million. Its capital city of Kohima suffered heavy fighting in World War II, commemorated by memorials at the Kohima War Cemetery.

English is the official language, the language of education, and spoken by most residents. Nagaland is one of three states in India where the population is mostly Christian. The state has always evoked a sense of mysticism and awe,

intensified by the remoteness of its geographical location. Sometimes referred to as the Switzerland of the East, for its exquisitely picturesque landscapes, vibrant sunrise and sunset, lush and verdant flora, a land of unimaginable beauty. For the adventurous, Nagaland is an ideal place for trekking, rock climbing, jungle camping and limitless exploration possibilities in its lush and verdant sub-tropical rain forests which also offer a plethora of medicinal plants.

It is inhabited by 16 major tribes, each distinct in character in terms of customs, language and dress. The Nagas are known for their warm hospitality, their joie de vivre, dance and music, singing Gospel songs that touch your soul.



Nagaland is home to 396 species of orchids, many of medicinal importance. Kopou is also used for festive hairstyle decoration.



## Oblates' News, from Sister Valmai and Oblate Sue Retschko

As always we were very pleased that so many Oblates were able to join with Sisters, Associates and friends for the Holy Name celebration on 7th August this year. The 11.00 am Eucharist was held in what seems to have become known as the 'Sisters' old chapel' in the Spirituality Centre and was followed by a light lunch in the Dining Room. A number of those attending remarked on the more than usual happy atmosphere this year and we of the Community were thankful to be able to share the day with so many faithful friends and supporters.

Oblate Joyce Newton's niece Dawn arranged for Joyce to transfer from Lovell House where she had lived for some time to a Nursing Home in Sydney near where Dawn lives. There was some concern that she would miss her many Melbourne friends as well as her beloved St. Peters, Eastern Hill. However it seems that she has settled in well. Sister Elizabeth Gwen phones her regularly but Joyce's deafness makes it difficult to communicate satisfactorily.

A very readable biography of our late Oblate Jean Henderson by Susan Sherson was launched after the 11.00am service and lunch at St. Peters, Eastern Hill on Sunday 2nd September. Appropriately, this was New Guinea Martyrs Day as it was in PNG that Jean spent many years as a missionary nurse and educator and pioneered the establishment of hospitals in the Anglican missionary field there. The event was well attended and all 100 books that St. Peter's Bookroom provided were rapidly sold.

The Oblates' Annual retreat has just concluded as I write. Twelve of us took part, including Sister Elizabeth Gwen and myself and we all appreciated the material that Bishop Lindsay Irwin gave us as he led the retreat. A bonus for the Oblates was that it was held in the Spirituality Centre where they said they felt they had 'come home'.

With all that has happened in the life of the Community in the past 12 months, the move into Esther House, the very successful functioning of the Spirituality Centre, the Sisters have been increasingly aware of the loving and prayerful support of so many and not least our Oblates. The bond that is always there between the Community and the Oblates seems to have strengthened as in these past 12 months additional Oblates and Probationer Oblates have generously given time as volunteers both in Esther House and the Spirituality Centre so have joined us in meals, Midday Mass or an Office which has given us the opportunity to be together in our everyday life.

I want to pay tribute in this article to our Oblate Office Bearers. In particular I feel sure all would agree that Sue has done an excellent job in keeping the lines of communication open. **Sister Valmai**

Bishop Lindsay Urwin conducted our Retreat, the theme he chose being a series of reflections on Jesus the Good Shepherd as related through the 23rd Psalm. This year, our first at the Spirituality Centre, we were blessed in both our celebrant and our surroundings, we had a most wonderful Retreat.



*Bishop Lindsay Urwin, OGS*

Each day Bishop Lindsay gave us some memorable reflections. He explained, from the catacombs in Rome, how the earliest images of Jesus conveyed the tender care of Jesus as a shepherd, the one who leads but doesn't drive, and the one who 'settles us down' (St Bede) and restores our soul.

The preacher Charles Spurgeon described the 23rd as 'The pearl of the Psalms', the Lord as our Shepherd, is our 'anchor point', the Psalm can always be prayed in our 'in between times' and sums up the Christian faith. In the dark places of life, we need fear no evil, even in the reality of death. This is not a contraindication of our belief in a loving God, as Jesus himself experienced both, in all of life, He provides and is faithful.

Bishop Lindsay related a story of a lone Scottish shepherd boy, who had encountered two Christians walking together. They had taught the boy through the 23rd Psalm a way of recalling who Jesus was for him. Using the five fingers of his hand the two Christians taught him to say on each of the fingers on his left hand - The, Lord, Is, My, Shepherd. Sadly, this boy perished in a snow storm.

Some years later the same two Christians were tramping the same hills and happened upon a widow's cottage. The woman invited them into her home for some refreshment. On the wall was a faded photograph of a young boy. The travellers noticed the photo and commented to the old woman that they had met him. She was amazed and replied that it was her son who had sadly died with his sheep in a snow storm. She went on to relate a mystery.

When her son was finally found dead and frozen, his right hand was holding the little finger of his left hand. The two Christian travellers explained how they had taught the boy to pray, so, at the last... The Lord was his Shepherd.

'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever'.

On behalf of the Oblates, we thank the Sisters of the Community, Sister Elizabeth Gwen, Sister Valmai and Sister Carol for their care, hospitality and prayerful support. **Sue Retschko**

DATE FOR THE OBLATES' DIARY: Saturday December 8 Advent Quiet Day. 10am – 4 pm. BYO Lunch.  
Leader: The Revd. Ken Letts. Bookings to Sue Retschko on 03 9807 4432/0499 404 343 or email [suerets@bigpond.net.au](mailto:suerets@bigpond.net.au)



## Associates' News by Sister Avrill

The weekend of 14-16 Sept. 2018 was a special one for nine of our CHN Associates. It was the first Associates' Retreat to be held in our "new" Spirituality Centre, and it was voted a great success. Retreatants enjoyed exploring areas of the building previously reserved for "Sisters only".

Our Retreat Leader was the Revd Canon Dr Colleen O'Reilly, Vicar of St George's, Malvern, and senior clerical Canon of St Paul's Cathedral. Colleen's retreat offered us a time to reflect on the Church's worship as the highest expression of our identity as one, holy, catholic and apostolic people in complex and demanding times. Her reflections drew on both scripture and liturgy.

In her introduction Colleen reminded us how easy it is to recite the creed without thinking about what we are saying. The words "one, holy, catholic and apostolic" trip off our tongues, sometimes glibly, yet these are the four marks of the Church which should be demonstrated whenever we gather to break bread. In his book, "The Gospel and the Catholic Church" Michael Ramsey wrote "If we want to understand the Church, we can never separate it from the Eucharist". The Church as an institution may be falling apart, but God's Church will never fall apart. Whatever has changed or will change, wine and water, oil and bread will always be needed. These are the essentials. The Church is going through a period of huge change, and we need to be aware of the difference between going to church and being the Church. Redemption comes out of our life in community. We are a people still "under construction" and we need each other.

In her first address, Colleen spoke of living as one people, reconciled to God. The words in the Liturgy, "We are the Body of Christ", are an expression of our unity, with God first, and then with each other. Do we always mean what we say? We shouldn't be saying anything in our worship that we don't believe. How we pray should be consistent with how we live. If our heart is not right with another, Matthew 5:23, 24 tells us to seek reconciliation before coming to the altar. The Eucharist is the concrete expression of our unity. We undermine God's peace by demonising one another. People have many facets. We tend to see only one, and say, "You're wrong". We need to understand there are different facets, to see things from different points of view and not let the unity be fractured.

The story of Cain and Abel is a story of fractured unity. Perhaps we can identify with aspects of it. Have we ever felt murderous outrage towards another? Have we ever felt envy? It becomes much more serious when the jealousy is not of what someone has, but of who someone is. In his jealousy of his brother, Cain turns him into a stranger, and thus feels free to murder him. We need to be shown by God how to welcome the stranger. In the words of John Calvin, we need "teachable hearts". God

asks, "Where is your brother? Where is your sister?" The story of Cain and Abel tells us that we have a responsibility to and for each other.

The following are some of the dispositions of heart that move us closer to unity and reconciliation.

We need to be honest about ourselves, with ourselves. We need to be honest with each other about our differences, but without judgement. We may feel passionately about something but have to allow that others may feel differently. This does not make them wrong. It is lack of insight into ourselves that leads to conflict with others and a lack of genuine community. A truthful perspective on ourselves leads to compassion for others. Don't remember the failings of others. There is to be no holding of grudges or resentments, no refusing forgiveness to another who seeks it. Remember how God forgives us. Contribute in practical ways to the lives of others, sharing our time, our talents, ourselves. "We were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (Rom. 5:10). All has been accomplished, but all is yet to be experienced.

In her second address Colleen talked about living as a holy people. She said that there is often negativity around our perceptions of holiness, as we tend to equate it with off-putting "holier than thou" attitudes. We readily acknowledge the holiness of God, but how often do we think of it as having something to do with us? Scripture calls us to be "God's holy people", but do we believe it? Bread, wine, oil and water are ordinary things, not holy in themselves, but we take them and put them to holy use. We too are to allow ourselves to be put to holy use. We can perhaps all recall times when we have been in the presence of holiness. Being with someone when they die is a holy moment. If one holds on to hope, holiness can come out of great suffering.

Some people have tried to foster holiness by withdrawing from the world and indulging in extremes of asceticism. Others have tried to impose holiness on society, as in John Calvin's Geneva or Oliver Cromwell's Commonwealth. But these are distortions. Holiness first of all belongs to God who loves, not rejects, the world. The call to live a holy life is for the whole people of God, not just a few. Members of Religious Orders are not a chosen élite. Rather, their call is to be a summons to all. It can sometimes be a struggle to know when to accept and when to reject the standards of the world around us. What choices make us a holy people? Can there be holiness on both sides? It is our ongoing, life-long participation in the



*The Revd Canon Dr Colleen O'Reilly, Vicar of St George's, Malvern*



life of God's people that helps us become holy. Holiness is not our possession; rather it enables us to be signs of the holiness of God. In Isaiah 56:7b it is written, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples". God is inclusive, so we must be too. Holiness doesn't mean always being right, but it does mean being able to admit to being wrong and being willing to change. St Paul exemplifies this. After his encounter with Christ on the Damascus Road he changed not only his mind, but his name and his whole life. Our baptism is the first of the means by which we grow in holiness.

Colleen's final address was on living as a catholic people sent into the world. From childhood Colleen understood that the Church is ancient and global. This gave her a great vision of the Church catholic, and belonging to the universal catholic Church has always been a source of strength for her. To be a catholic Christian is to belong in one place at one time, while belonging also in every place at every time. It is to be part of God's project of restoring us to full

humanity. Christ undoes the impact of Adam's disobedience. Catholic means universal. The language of the Book of Common Prayer is that of the Elizabethan Court, and its theology too has changed. Our culture has changed. The Church lives in a real, complex and compromised world, and to be a catholic Christian is to deal with and find one's way through all of this. There is a constant tension in the Old Testament between being exclusive and being inclusive (catholic), and the same is true in the Christian Church.

As catholic Christians we have Good News for everyone, and we have to ask ourselves who we turn our backs on, who we forget about in our prayers. Being a catholic Christian means acting to meet people's needs rather than getting them to church. We are called to respond to people where they are. This takes us far beyond labels, "bells and smells", etc., to see ourselves as part of the whole Church, throughout the ages and throughout the world.

#### DATES FOR THE ASSOCIATES' DIARY

10.11.18 - Corporate Communion.

Celebrant: the Revd Andrew Lake, Vicar, St Augustine's, Mentone.

11.45 Arrive for 12 noon Eucharist with address; 1pm Lunch; 2pm Andrew's wife Pam will speak of her work with the Leprosy Mission a fascinating story.

2.2.19 - Annual General Meeting. Arrive for morning tea at 10.30, followed by AGM (11 am), Midday Office, Lunch and a Guest Speaker. We will finish with afternoon tea at about 3 pm.

On both days lunch is provided, so please book, by ringing 9583 2087 or emailing [avrilldover@yahoo.com.au](mailto:avrilldover@yahoo.com.au)

### Adelaide Oblates and Associates

Sister Valmai tells of The Holy Name follow-up weekend with the Adelaide Oblates and Associates, "This year it was a little later than usual. Sister Avrill and I were the Community representatives and we enjoyed it very much. The meeting was held on Saturday 25th August at the home of the Revds. Prue and Bart O'Donovan, both Oblates, at Evanston Park. It was a small gathering as unfortunately Oblates Marion and Carol had prior commitments. Avrill had taken some very good photos of Esther House for us to show them and we described how happily we are settled there. We talked about the successful beginnings of ministry in the Spirituality Centre as well as the project we are able to be part of to enable refugee families to buy housing. We are excited about all that has happened this year, after years of planning"

Sister Avrill picks up the story from here, "At the end of the day, Sr Valmai stayed on with Prue and Bart, and I returned to Adelaide. On Sunday I attended the Eucharist at St Saviour's, Glen Osmond with my hostess, Associate Rosemary Scrutton, and caught up with some who had been unable to get to Evanston Park on Saturday, including Keith Raynor, former Archbishop of Melbourne and



Episcopal Visitor to CHN. Afterwards we had a meal together in the Church hall.

We very much appreciated the hospitality of those who looked after us in South Australia, and it is always good to catch up with our extended CHN family over there."

## Being with God: a reflection

Prayer is about being present with God.

Life is busy and often gets cluttered by what is happening in our lives. Just as decluttering our homes is very helpful, so also is moving stuff aside to make space, be open and make room for the God who is present. It isn't about running away from the other things that are going on in our lives but making room to find the hidden blessings that are present if we stop and look.

Being still is something essential to us as human beings, but we so often fight it. We might be able to stop talking and learn to sit still and relaxed, but what about the mind? To be still is a letting go, an acknowledgement that I am not in complete control of my world, that it is not all up to me, or all about me. It is about paying attention, attending to God, attending to what is around and within you, letting go and loosening up.

When the disciples were in the boat and the sea became rough, they became terrified as they saw Jesus walking on the water. But Jesus says to them 'It is I, Do not be afraid.' (John 6.20). When Jesus says this in the Greek he is saying 'I myself am'. I am here, I am present, I am, the great I am of God. This is what we thirst for, the presence of God speaking within us and through us.

Prayer is just about being still, experiencing God. It is as simple as that! It is a time to recharge on the presence of God, so that we can continue to draw on that presence and re-enter it when we are caught up in the noise and busyness of our everyday lives.

Wendy Beckett uses a picture, *White Lilac* and writes that Manet painted a number of pictures of fresh flowers and he found great consolation in considering their simplicity and stillness. She writes: 'Silence has something of this function; a simplifying, a beautifying. It reminds us that we are only to be still and let the waters of grace refresh us and the sunlight of peace shine upon us.' (Sister Wendy's *Book of Meditations* by Wendy Beckett, 1998)

**Excerpt from *Day of Prayer and Reflection*, August 2018, by the Revd. Rachel McDougall**



Edouard Manet-Lilacs In A Vase, c.1882

## Some sayings of Syncletica: a reflection

Syncletica was a 'Desert Mother', a hermit living in the desert around 3rd c. AD renowned for her wisdom. We will look at three of her sayings.

1. On kindling the divine fire: *In the beginning there are a great many battles and a good deal of suffering for those who are advancing towards God and afterwards, ineffable joy. It is like those who wish to light a fire; at first they are choked by the smoke and cry, and by this means obtain what they seek (as it is said: Our God is a consuming fire [Hebrews 12.29]): so we also must kindle the divine fire in ourselves through tears and hard work.*

In the spiritual life, we can start with a bright and eager flame, but unless we tend that flame by taking on suitable spiritual practices, it will die down. We need established practices to sustain our spiritual lives.

2. On inner emptiness: *Those who have endured the labours and dangers of the sea and then amass material riches, even when they have gained much, desire to gain yet more and they consider what they have at present as nothing and reach out for what they have not got. We, who have nothing of that which we desire, wish to acquire everything through the fear of God.* Here Syncletica is urging her followers not to accept easily gained substitutes for authentic union with God. We can satiate ourselves with material goods, or pleasure, and yet still feel unsatisfied. We have a God-shaped space within us that nothing else will fill. Prayerful reflection on our

experiences moves us deeper within, to spiritual growth, nurturing our relationship with God.

3. On Stability: *If you find yourself in a monastery do not go to another place, for that will harm you a great deal. Just as the bird who abandons the eggs she was sitting on prevents them from hatching, so the monk or nun grows cold and his or her faith dies, when he or she goes from one place to another.* Stability, staying put, staying in the one place, is critical for spiritual growth. Our spiritual growth requires perseverance, steadfastness, remaining with commitments, and working through difficulties. Moving on can seem easier than remaining to work through misunderstandings in a relationship. It is easier than untangling our over-commitments. Staying put is an invitation to work with dysfunction with the grace of God. It is an invitation to deepen valued relationships and to examine our commitments and retain only what is valuable.

**Excerpt from *Day of Prayer and Reflection*, September 2018, by the Revd. Jill Renison**



Syncletica of Alexandria  
Menologion of Basil II c.1000

## 'Lift up your hearts': a reflection

"Lift up your hearts" is part of church liturgy that dates back at least to the third century. The congregation responds, 'We lift them up to the Lord'. They continue with 'Let us give thanks to the Lord our God' And the typical response is, 'It is right to give our thanks and praise'.

These are some of the most beautiful, heart-moving words in all of worship. They express the longing of the soul in this world for the wholeness of the new heaven and the new earth. They acknowledge that worship is no ordinary experience, but a heavenly and powerful one.

We lift up our hearts as God's forgiven people, called to holiness, to be transformed and made new. We lift up our hearts to hold them in God's love. For these few moments we are called to be so heavenly minded that we are lost in wonder, love and praise so that we might bring that vision of heaven into all we do on earth.

In Lamentations, we read 'Let us lift up our hearts as well as our hands to God in heaven' (3:41) and in Psalm 25:1 'To you O Lord I lift up my soul'. God calls us to 'seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God' (Colossians 3:1).

In the Hebrew Scriptures, the heart is much more than the

physical organ that pumps blood around the body: it is the very centre of our inner and spiritual life, our passions, our character and our will.

When you hear the familiar words, 'Lift up your hearts' it's an invitation to a way of life. With hearts lifted up and open, we can confidently receive the grace and mercy of God, and we can receive the gifts of communion with one another. So, wherever you find yourself in your journey of faith, it is an invitation to lift up your heads and lift up your hearts. God's grace is for you.

It is good to praise God for 'every good and perfect gift' the He gives us (James 1:17). When we are thankful, our focus moves away from our self-focussed desires and from any pain and anxiety of current circumstances. Expressing gratitude helps us to remember that God is in control.

*Excerpt from Day of Prayer and Reflection, October 2018, by Sue Retschko, CHN Oblate*



Traffic signal box,  
Auchenflower, Brisbane.  
Artist—Leesl Ross

## New in the Library by our Librarian, Philip Harvey

On New Guinea Martyrs' Day this year, Susan Sherson's new book, 'A Daring Woman : the story of Sister Jean Henderson, MBE' (Morning Star Publishing, 2018) was launched at St Peter's Church, Eastern Hill, Melbourne. This celebration of Jean's life included short addresses from three people who had come to know her well.

Rowan Callick said Jean Henderson was of that generation inspired by the New Guinea Martyrs. She took up the mission challenge of those who were lost in martyrdom. She is an example, in the same way, for us to re-dedicate our lives to Christ. The author herself, Susan Sherson, said Jean knew the story of the martyrs in depth. At Eroro, where she set up a hospital, she would hear the stories from the priests. She would keep coming back, in particular, to the stories of May Hayman, a nurse, and Mavis Parkinson, a teacher. It affected her very powerfully and was the cause of her lifelong dedication.

Sister Avrill Dover, CHN talked of Popondetta. An altar dedicated to May and Mavis was built in a clearing in the jungle, at the place where they were martyred, and everyone would go to celebrate there in commemoration. Avrill reminded those in attendance that St Peter's was Jean's spiritual home. It is there, later in her life, that Jean and Joyce Newton started the breakfast program for the homeless and those in need. Susan reported how Joyce

Newton said to her that Jean was always very involved in talking to everyone about their problems, while she (Joyce) stuck to doing all the washing up. Susan likened the relationship to Mary and Martha, Jean being the Mary and Joyce her stalwart supporter, the Martha.

Rowan concluded by talking about Jean's role, when back in Melbourne, of mentoring troubled youngsters out on parole. She would take on their troubles and it weighed heavily with her. She worked with them at her home; she was a missionary all her life, living for others.

These glimpses into Jean Henderson's life were an introduction to the book, which concentrates essentially on her long life of service in Papua New Guinea. Amongst her many other dedications, she was also an Oblate of the Community of the Holy Name. The biography is now available to borrow from the CHN Library, or can be purchased from the St Peter's Bookroom, phone 03 9663 7487, at \$29.95.

