



A LAMENT

for the innocents

Showing support towards the victims and survivors of child sexual abuse

www.fortheinnocents.com



for the innocents

www.fortheinnocents.com

For the Innocents (FTI) is an advocacy and victim support group of 58 ordinary people committed to restorative justice. It has met monthly since 2011 to support all victims of child sexual abuse.

FTI is also committed to righting the wrongs through public education.

FTI actively fosters the creation of healing gardens as places of transformative healing.

FTI seeks to sustain survivors due to the neglect by leaders who illegally covered up monstrous crimes.

Reflective gardens are a symbol of the bravery of survivors of child sexual abuse and their families.

Such gardens stand as a permanent apology, continually heard.

Healing Gardens are intentionally designed to support those experiencing disruption, confusion and uncertainty.

They provide a space where the fractured are open to a heightened awareness to connect with something far greater than themselves where faith can be restored

Contents

Page	
2	For the Innocents
3	Pilgrimage in support of abuse victims and apology
4	<i>Song: “From Little Things Big Things Grow”, Paul Kelly</i>
5	Introduction & Welcome, <i>Michael Parer</i>
6	Ballarat Victims' Co-operative Welcome, <i>Frank Sheehan</i>
7	<i>Song: “In the Palm of His Hand”, Maria Forde</i>
8	Principal's address, <i>John Crowley</i>
9	Healing gardens and the national apology, <i>Peter Schneider</i>
10	An Ode to the Church, <i>Mick O'Brien</i>
13	<i>Song: “You Raise Me Up”, Josh Groban</i>
14	For the Innocents apology, <i>Bob Munro</i>
15	Reflective silence, <i>Michael Parer</i>
16	Psalm 139 – Proclaimed together
17	Ballarat Moving Towards Justice (MTJ), <i>Carmel Moloney</i>
18	The Loud Fence Movement
19	Quilt of Hope, <i>Carmel Moloney and Adrienne Annear</i>
20	Pilgrimage Cross, <i>Mairead Ashcroft</i>
21	Matthew 18:1 – 7, <i>Peter Schneider</i>
22	Invitation to pilgrimage, <i>Michael Parer</i>
23	<i>Final song: “You've Got a friend”, James Taylor</i>

Pictures: supplied by The Ballarat Courier, Rosa and Peter Schneider, and David Parer.

For the Innocents



House of Reps of the Prime Minister's National Apology delivered in Parliament on 22 October, 2018.

For the Innocents (FTI) offers this example of a pilgrimage in solidarity with the abused innocent victims. We offer it as a resource, a stimulus for others to create their own pilgrim ceremony.

FTI's pilgrimage was on 20 October, 2018 to give witness to and support the Prime Minister's National apology delivered in Parliament on 22 October, 2018.

We began at the St Patrick's College Remembrance Healing Garden and after our celebration walked through Ballarat city to the Cathedral to hang ribbons. We then lunched at the Golden Nugget Hotel.

FTI is a group of 58 ordinary people that grew out of Corpus Christi Guys, stimulated on 25 March, 2011 by Chrissi and Anthony Foster's horrendous account of the sexual abuse of their two daughters in 'Hell on the Way to Heaven'

FTI focuses on healing strategies for the abused, their families, whistle-blowers and devastated communities and proposes the establishment of healing gardens in every diocese in Australia.

We went as pilgrims, in the spirit of the Emmaus encounter, with the desire to meet Jesus in our fellow pilgrims.

Pilgrimage in support of abuse victims and apology

From The Ballarat Courier, 21 October, 2108.



APOLOGY: Former Parish Priest, Michael Parer addresses the group gathered at St Patrick's College's healing garden on Saturday, October 20. Picture: Lachlan Bence

People from all walks of life gathered together at St Patrick's College's healing garden on Saturday with a single aim, to show support towards the victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

A group called For the Innocents organised the pilgrimage into town, which started with a ceremony at the healing garden and ended with the tying of ribbons at St Patrick's Cathedral.

The event was held in the lead up to Monday's national apology to be delivered by Prime Minister Scott Morrison at Parliament House.

Michael Parer, a former Parish Priest of Gordon, Millbrook, Springbank, Mount Egerton and Ballan, organised the event with the intention of endorsing the apology, but highlighting what more needed to be done. He said this included making changes to an inadequate redress scheme and having a symbol such as a healing garden in the nation's capital.

"We are here to seek forgiveness of those who have been abused in the name of our church and in the name of the silence of so many church managers and leaders," Professor Parer said.

"We have come from Sale, which had 15.1% abuse among diocesan priests, the highest in the country, and we've come here to Ballarat because this is the epicentre, and the number of suicides is terrible."

Child abuse survivor Mairead Ashcroft took part in the pilgrimage after having joined For The Innocents for support on her own journey.

She was one of the survivors who did receive an apology from her abuser in the form a letter while he was living in the United States.

She said keeping that piece of documentation played a key part in his jail sentence.

St Patrick's College principal John Crowley addressed the group during the ceremony, reflecting on the school's own journey from the start of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

He emphasised the importance of developing relationships of trust and integrity with the school's former students who were victims of abuse.

Song: “From Little Things Big Things Grow”

Paul Kelly

*Gather round people let me tell you're a story
An eight year long story of power and pride
British Lord Vestey and Vincent Lingiarri
Were opposite men on opposite sides*

*Vestey was fat with money and muscle
Beef was his business, broad was his door
Vincent was lean and spoke very little
He had no bank balance, hard dirt was his floor*

*From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow*

*Gurindji were working for nothing but rations
Where once they had gathered the wealth of the land
Daily the pressure got tighter and tighter
Gurindju decided they must make a stand*

*They picked up their swags and started off walking
At Wattie Creek they sat themselves down
Now it don't sound like much but it sure got tongues talking
Back at the homestead and then in the town*

*From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow*

*Vestey man said I'll double your wages
Seven quid a week you'll have in your hand
Vincent said uhuh we're not talking about wages
We're sitting right here till we get our land
Vestey man roared and Vestey man thundered
You don't stand the chance of a cinder in snow
Vince said if we fall others are rising*

*From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow*

*Then Vincent Lingiarri boarded an aeroplane
Landed in Sydney, big city of lights
And daily he went round softly speaking his story
To all kinds of men from all walks of life*

*And Vincent sat down with big politicians
This affair they told him is a matter of state
Let us sort it out, your people are hungry
Vincent said no thanks, we know how to wait*

*From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow*

*Then Vincent Lingiarri returned in an aeroplane
Back to his country once more to sit down
And he told his people let the stars keep on turning
We have friends in the south, in the cities and towns*

*Eight years went by, eight long years of waiting
Till one day a tall stranger appeared in the land
And he came with lawyers and he came with great ceremony
And through Vincent's fingers poured a handful of sand*

*From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow*

*That was the story of Vincent Lingiarri
But this is the story of something much more
How power and privilege can not move a people
Who know where they stand and stand in the law*

*From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow
From little things big things grow*

Welcome & Introduction

Michael Parer



We recognise the Wathurong people, the traditional owners of this land, who have been its custodians for 1,600 generations.

A pilgrim quests for redemption, for rediscovery, for new enlightenment, for insights to lighten the paths into our future, to lead with confidence through darkened passageways, to help us make quality decisions that impact and reach our families and community.

For the Innocents (FTI) is an advocacy and victim support group of 58 ordinary people committed to restorative justice. It has met monthly since 2011 to support child sexual abuse victims, their families and truth-telling whistle-blowers as the ripples are far wider than the active abuse. FTI is committed to righting the wrongs through public education and actively fosters the creation of healing gardens as places of transformative reflection. It seeks to sustain survivors and thrivers because of the neglect of institutional leaders who illegally covered up monstrous crimes.

We come from outside Ballarat, from the Sale diocese, which has the largest number of abused within the church as learned from the Royal Commission's statistically weighted numbers. We have come through Melbourne with its terrible parishes of abuse – at Doveton with Peter Searson, from Oakleigh with Kevin O'Donnell, Gardenvale with Ronald Pickering and Bill Baker at Sunbury. We have come on pilgrimage seeking forgiveness from the abused and their families for what our church has done throughout Australia in our name.

The era of Bishops James O'Collins and Ronald Mulkearns was characterised by scandal and continuous cover-ups that continued well into this century.

I will invite us all later, to join in pilgrimage led by Mairead Ashcroft with the pilgrim cross, to display the Quilt of Hope, to receive loud ribbons from John Cleary to tie to the Cathedral fence, and then gather at the Golden City Hotel for lunch.

Ballarat Victims' Co-operative Welcome

Frank Sheehan



Frank Sheehan, spokesperson for the Ballarat Moving Towards Justice victims group, welcomed the visiting pilgrims to Ballarat. In 2011 a small group of parishioners in Ballarat became aware of the sexual abuse suffered by a close friend's son decades ago. As their awareness of clerical related sexual abuse increased so too did their outrage and desire to take action.

Moving Towards Justice was formally created in 2012 as a group to offer support and advocacy to so many whose voices som many whose voices had not been listened to for so long. Many revelations of church related sexual abuse of children began to come to public attention in 2010.

Song: "In the palm of His hand"

Maria Forde

*I come to you I'm broken
I come to you in pain
I come to you I'm hurting
I come to you again
I come to you with tears, Lord
I do not cry alone
I feel your tears upon my cheek
They mingle with my own*

*May God bless you
May God keep you
May God hold you
May God bless you
May God keep you
May God hold you
In the palm of his hand*

*I come to you I'm angry
I come to you with fear
I come to you for answers, Lord
I know that you are here
Listen to my heart, Lord
I am feeling so alone
I ask that you walk next to me
And gently lead me home*

*May God bless you
May God keep you
May God hold you
May God bless you
May God keep you
May God hold you
In the palm of his hand*

*I come to you with thanks, Lord
You listen to my prayer
I am no longer hurting
And I know that you were there
I ask that I remember
To thank you every day
To know that you are with me, Lord
But a breath away*

*May God bless you
May God keep you
May God hold you
May God bless you
May God keep you
May God hold you
In the palm of his hand
And may he keep you
In the palm of his hand
And may he keep you
In the palm of his hand*

Principal's address

John Crowley

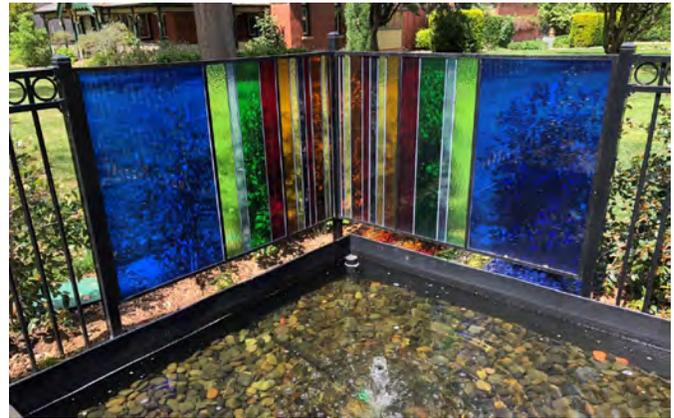


John Crowley, Principal of St Patrick's, welcomed the pilgrims to Ballarat and then spoke about the establishment of the garden which was part of a wider response to the abuse that took place in the school. A committee of students, staff and victims, for an on-going process that included an apology and a healing garden, was established. They met on a cold Ballarat evening in June, 2017 to open the Garden together, following their formal Apology. The Reflective Garden has a stained glass window to highlight the bright and colourful loud fence. In front there is a water fountain which has a light, lit each evening, as a symbol of hope.

There is a seat with the words:

"This reflective garden stands both as a symbol of respect for the bravery of victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and their families, and for the College's deep remorse for the pain and suffering inflicted upon the Ballarat community."

The words on the seat were given to us by the survivors. The garden was funded through the support of a number of generous people. The gates are a replica of the original fence which allows people to come in from the street. The garden will remain part of our history to ensure that such abuse never happens again.



Healing gardens and the national apology

Peter Schneider



A National Monument to all victims of sexual abuse is one recommendation of the Royal Commission.

For the Innocents has proposed the creation of a National Healing Garden in the nation's capital, as an appropriate response to this recommendation to accompany the National Apology to the victims, their families and the whistle-blowers who told the truth, which will be delivered by the Prime Minister on Monday.

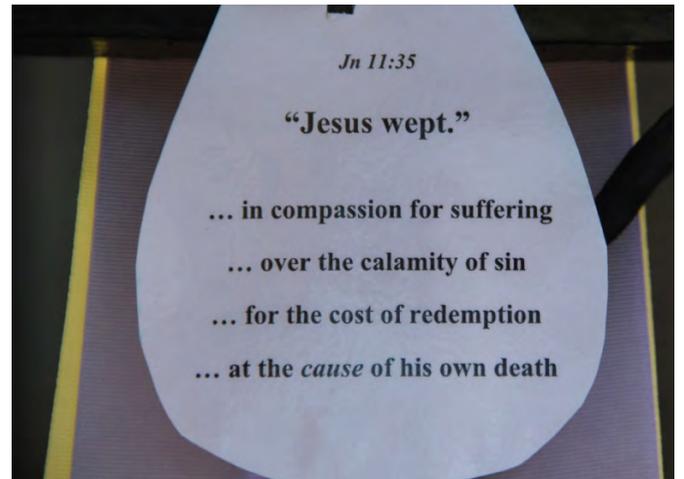
The establishment of such a garden would be an enduring voice to stand as a permanent apology, continually heard.

Healing Gardens are places of growth and rebirth and are intentionally designed to provide a physical space that supports all who are dealing with disruption, confusion and uncertainty in their lives.

The Healing Garden offers a place where simply stopping to take a breath – a grounding and uplifting pause – allowing the spirit to ride in on the rhythm. It provides a space where meditation, reflection, contemplation, spiritual and centring exercises are stimulated.

It allows for a space where earth, wind, fire and water are represented through a variety of natural and sculptural elements, arranged in the four cardinal directions to provide natural distraction and opportunity for positive reflection.

The Healing Garden provides a space where the fractured may be open to a heightened



sense of awareness and of connectedness to something far greater than themselves. It becomes a place where faith can be reignited. Such a deep shift in attitude can sometimes result in life changing experiences facilitating forgiveness and healing.

Healing Gardens are carefully designed and programmed for human experience and transition. This can lead to profound experiences and open visitors to the possibility of transformative learning and wide ranging connections.

A secondary purpose of today's activity is to espouse the Prime Minister's national apology and to offer our own support for all those who have been affected by crimes against the most vulnerable of our communities and of the inactivity and cover-ups by leaders who should have done better.

An Ode to the Church

Mick O'Brien



I want to begin with an adaptation of Carlo Carretto's, Ode to the Church, which was shaped by the story of Lazarus who, after several days in a dark, smelly tomb was raised back to life by his beloved friend, Jesus.

How much I must criticise you, my church, and yet how much I owe you. The stench of abuse and death cling to my clothes. You made me suffer more than anyone and yet I love you like no other.

I should like to see you destroyed and bound up in a tomb, just as you have destroyed and bound up so many others, and yet I need your presence.

You have given me so much scandal: cover-ups, lies, and wickedness; and yet you alone have made me understand holiness. It is you alone, who inspired me to say, "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the son of God."

Never in this world have I seen anything more compromised, more false, more corrupt; yet never have I touched anything more pure, more generous, more lovely. I've watched you hide behind lawyers, cling to money, and side with power. But I've also seen you stand with the weak, with those abandoned; I've seen you offer up everything, even your very life, for the sake of others.

Countless times I have felt like leaving, like slamming the door of my soul in your face; and yet, without you, I have nothing of worth; I am lifeless.

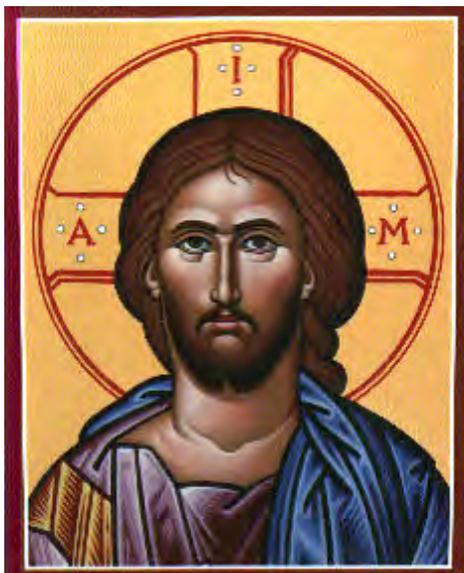
No, I cannot be free of you, for I am you, even if not completely you. Anyway, where would I go – to build another church? But I could not build one without the same defects, for they are my defects. And again, if I were to build another church, it would be my church, not Christ's church. What a disaster! No, I'm old enough, I know better.

The High Court of Australia in its judgement in Mabo 2 said "The act and events by which, that (i.e. the dispossession by the government of Queensland of the indigenous people of their lands) were carried into practical effect, constitute the darkest aspect of the history of this nation. That nation as a whole must remain diminished unless and until there is an acknowledgement of and retreat from these past injustices.

These comments were directed, as I've indicated, to the dispossession by the government of Queensland of the indigenous people of their lands. In addition the early genocide of the first Australians, their continued mistreatment to this very day, the cruel and inhumane treatment and false imprisonment of refugees and asylum seekers, together with the sexual and physical abuse of our most valuable and vulnerable citizens – our children – and their betrayal by those who should have been the first to jump to their protection and defence must also rank as amongst the darkest aspects of our history."

When Peter Connor, one-time Bishop of Ballarat, gave evidence before the Victorian Parliamentary enquiry it was extraordinarily honest and made the voluntary admission that: "...the church was listening to insurers and lawyers who were saying "Admit nothing" and at that stage "Never say you are sorry". I think that was the difficulty for bishops because they were taking the wrong advice never to meet with victims and never to admit something had happened. What Joseph Ratzinger wrote in 1969, he could have been saying today; "...from the crisis of today the church of tomorrow will emerge – a church that has lost much. She will become small, will have to start afresh, will release from the beginning. She will no longer be able to inhabit many of the edifices she built in prosperity... It will make her poor and cause her to become the church of the meek. The process will be all the more arduous, for sectarian narrow-mindedness as well as pompous self-will will have to be shed... But when this trial of sifting is past, the great power will flow from a more spiritualised and simplified church."

Without speculating on what was the crisis then, let me suggest that one of the causes of today's crisis was the absence of women in roles of responsibility within the Catholic Church. This was not a matter of accident. It was NOT



that women were not allowed to participate in the life of the church, but that they were purposely removed from active involvement. The false deification of the blessed Mary; the false assertion of her maternal virginity; the pornographication of Mary Magdalene; and the dogma that sin entered the world through women and therefore they are inherently evil, all are matters that impinge on the twisted sexuality promulgated within the Catholic Church further removing Catholic priests from a right experience of human relationship with sexuality. What God invented and declared as "good" should never have been sullied by twisted dogma (largely promoted by Augustine who apparently had a 16 year extramarital affair, then dumped the poor woman.) What was going on inside his head?

What will it take to achieve the change that is needed?

One: any church leader who has ever pronounced apologies or actions or sentiments or commitments to putting victims and survivors first must be held to account by the Catholic community, because it would appear that the Royal Commission has viewed many of these statements with scepticism.

Two: we need a stringent policy of putting the right people, with the right skills in the right places all the time. In other words we cannot afford the blunders of incompetent administration, advisors and minders, and we certainly can't afford the fumbled attempts to use spin and PR to protect and cotton wool church leaders from facing the consequences of their actions, or in many cases, inactions.

Three: diocesan and church organisations need to open the doors and the windows to genuine participation of the Catholic community in how their money is spent, and in the proper planning to make the church relevant in the daily lives of the people in our community.

Four: church leaders should publicly commit to employment ratios for women in senior positions and encourage diversity in their workplaces.

Five: church leaders must demonstrate a move away from a church of privilege, of comfortable lifestyles far removed from many of the faithful.

Six: church leadership should publicly commit now to a public consultation and deliberative process on all issues within the Catholic community and other source of respectful dissent and even disengagement

As Pope Francis has said, we need to become a church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security.

A prayer for those with power and authority:

Oh God, you have given them the great responsibility of having power and of being in authority over their fellow citizens.

Help them always to act fairly and justly; but to justice, help them to always add mercy and compassion. Help them to know when to reinforce rules and guidelines, and when to relax their application. Help them never to be guilty of prejudice against any person, or of favouritism for any person.

Help them to remember that people are always more important than things, and that people are always more important than machines.

Keep them from exercising their authority in harshness or in tyranny, and keep them also from being afraid to exercise it when appropriate, and help them by their presence in their example to make them and those who work for them a united community.

Help them to remember that although they are called to rule, they have a master in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Song: “You Raise Me Up”

Josh Groban

*When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary;
When troubles come and my heart burdened be;
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence,
Until you come and sit awhile with me.*

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up... To more than I can be.*

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up... To more than I can be.*

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up... To more than I can be.*

*You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up... To more than I can be.*

You raise me up... To more than I can be.

For the Innocents Apology

Bob Munro



We are ordinary people who want to apologise to you, the victims, survivors – the innocents – and to your families and friends for the pain, trauma, isolation and unwarranted guilt you may have carried as a result of sexual or other abuse by Catholic clergy, religious teachers or workers. We acknowledge that such abuse has also occurred in other communities.

We who want to say sorry are of many persuasions. Some of us belong to a church and some now do not; some of us are people of faith and some now are not; some of us believe in a supreme being and some now do not; some of us trained for ministry but did not complete it; some of us were ordained for ministry but now have left; some are still in ministry; some of us express no religious belief and have no religious attachments.

But all of us are deeply scandalised by what has been done to you and your families, be it by individuals or organisational structures. We recognise that in the process your beliefs and faith may have been shattered.

Too often, legal and procedural actions take over and the individual's pain and needs, especially for healing, drift out of view. We acknowledge that these crimes were committed in a religious context, which diminishes the message and the worth of those whose aim it is to love one another and show care.

While we are aware of and encourage established groups working to achieve justice in

this area, our focus is directed entirely towards victims becoming survivors through healing.

It is true that our apology is quite different from any which might be offered by those who have hurt you. But we hope that our apology will be at least one part of the healing you seek and are entitled to.

We recognize that many are affected by the consequences of your experiences. While there are some who have never told anyone, often there are family, friends and colleagues who have come to know what has happened. They too may carry a burden of their own pain and guilt as they judge themselves as having failed to act in some way to protect and support you.

We also acknowledge the many good, compassionate priests and ministers, religious and workers in this field. They often feel the wrath and disdain of society, which should really be directed at the offenders. It is unfair that those good people find themselves affected by that and we wish to offer them our support and encouragement. Often they are themselves struggling to assist victims to become survivors through healing.

We want this apology to flow to all those who have been affected. It is an awful and unjust burden you have been forced to bear. We acknowledge your suffering. For this we say sorry.

Reflective silence

Michael Parer



A pilgrimage is a ritual journey of moral significance. Every step along the way has meaning. The pilgrim knows that life giving challenges will emerge. It is a transformational journey during which significant change takes place. New insights are given; deeper understanding is attained; 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.

Let us pause for two minutes of silence to lament those who suffered as vulnerable children at the hands of evil perpetrators. Ballarat was chosen because of the terrible abuse and over-representation of more than thirty suicides as investigated by Detectives Denis Ryan and Kevin Carson since the 1960s. We remember their families, the truth-telling whistle-blowers and all who have been impacted by the cover-up and illegal actions of institutional authorities.



Psalm 139 – Proclaimed together

*O Lord, you have searched me and know me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.*

*Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.*

*Where can I go from your spirit?
Or where can I flee from your presence?
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.
If I take the wings of the morning
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,
even there your hand shall lead me,
and your right hand shall hold me fast.*

*If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me,
and the light around me become night’,
even the darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness is as light to you.*

*For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.*

*My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.*

*How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!
I try to count them –
they are more than the sand;
I come to the end - I am still with you.*

Ballarat Moving Towards Justice (MTJ)

Carmel Moloney



In 2011 sexual abuse in the Catholic Church took on a personal face for a small group of parishioners at St. Columba's in Ballarat North. Carmel, a member of the Parish Bereavement Team, was made aware of the sexual abuse suffered in childhood by Michael, son of her friend Margot. Michael's life had been difficult for decades before his family finally discovered his terrible secret: as a child he had been the victim of a predatory Christian Brother.

For Carmel, the revelation was deeply shocking and she was compelled to find a way to attempt to bring comfort to Margot and to Michael. Those of us who teamed with her that week, to plan a service of healing, had no inkling of what we were to discover over the next four years or of what would be required of each of us.

As ordinary parishioners, our awareness of church-related sexual abuse had begun slowly. Ballarat priest Gerald Ridsdale went to jail in 1994. Those of us who noticed at all were led to believe that victims were being looked after. Bishop Peter Connors published a letter to the parishes in 2007 apologising to victims. There were rumblings about misconduct but, on the whole, things were kept quiet. Most of us had no real understanding of the scope of the problem or, more importantly, the lifelong consequences for the victims, their families and communities. We wonder now why we, parishioners and the broader community, failed to engage with the issue.

Where, after all, do universal rights begin?

In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college she attends; the factory, farm or office where he works.

Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination.

Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere.

Without concerted citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.

Excerpt from Eleanor Roosevelt's famous speech at the presentation of "IN YOUR HANDS: A Guide for Community Action for the Tenth Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights." March 27, 1958. United Nations, New York.

The Loud Fence Movement

Loud fence was a uniquely Ballarat inspired movement. It is a movement that encourages individuals to tie brightly-coloured ribbons on the fences of Catholic institutions, as a symbolic act of solidarity with survivors of sexual abuse, their families, truth-telling whistle-blowers and all affected communities.

St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat, is giving lasting significance to the gesture with a memorial garden. The diocese, so troubled by a history of sexual abuse, will follow the example set by St Patrick's College and turn these ribbons into a permanent memorial. Bishop Paul Bird has begun to consult with victims and their families to establish a healing garden in the grounds of the cathedral.

However, whether in ribbons or memorials, Loud Fence stands for healing. It taps into a more universal spirit that the suffering of innocents is something to be universally deplored. It is also about solidarity, because one of the darkest legacies of these crimes was to drive its victims out into a wilderness of guilt and self-destruction.

Loud fence recognises this and through the symbolism demonstrates that the community recognises the wrong and embraces not just victims, but all those who have the courage to admit and demand this cannot happen again.

Adapted from The Ballarat Courier - 4 December, 2017



Quilt of Hope

Adrienne Annear

Under the auspices of the group Moving Towards Justice (MTJ), the Quilt of Hope was created as a practical response to reach out to the mothers of victims. The intent was to develop a tangible outcome that could be used as a memorial in recognition of the victims, survivors and their families.

Crafted from 80 individual blocks embroidered by or on behalf of people, it was assembled and made by local quilt maker Beryl Andersen in 2014. The style of the Quilt is based in the traditional remembrance style originating from World War 1 with the use of calico and red thread for each block. A book about the making and meaning of the Quilt is currently being written.

An image of the Quilt was enlarged and placed on a large placard for display during the healing service at the Healing Garden at St Patrick's College,



Pilgrimage Cross

Mairéad Ashcroft



Thank you for this opportunity. I want to begin by acknowledging all victims of sexual abuse, especially those who are not institutional victims, and who will not be acknowledged by the Prime Minister in the National Apology to be delivered on Monday, October 22. I wonder how they will be feeling on Monday while silently holding their grief.

I am a long-term survivor of sexual abuse through the Catholic Church. I am a mental health practitioner, working with adult survivors, who have been traumatised in their childhood, affected in adulthood, now battling with alcoholism, drug use, homelessness and domestic violence.

I consider myself one of the lucky ones. I have a most supportive family. I suffer from PTSD and battle daily with my demons. My husband wakes me up when I have the night terrors, but I am well and happy, and feeling grateful for the life I have.

I am concerned by the National Apology on Monday. I wonder what it's for, what it means, what it's going to bring to the lives of people, or if it will mean anything at all. Will it bring beds for those with mental health issues? Will it provide a better health system for those struggling and self-medicating, battling the demons planted in their lives when they were just children? What's going to happen to them?

The national apology 'sounds great and isn't the government doing a wonderful job?', but what about our indigenous stolen generations? A similar apology of words has been made to



them in 2008 but there are still gross injustices taking place.

Unless I see some real change, some real action, I am rather sceptical. Until the recommendations set by the Royal Commission are followed, my personal faith in the system is somewhat weak. Remember that it is because of the rawness and vulnerability of survivors, trusting yet another organisation that advocacy groups and the Royal Commission are possible, and if we are let down again, recovery will be very difficult.

I can see that the work done to date is making reporting of child abuse less harrowing, but will convictions be made, and will longer, more appropriate sentencing occur? Time will tell. Sadly, childhood physical and sexual abuse will never end in my lifetime or my children's. I can only hope that there will be better support networks available to enable survivors' lives to travel the path of recovery sooner rather than later.

Matthew 18: 1–7

Peter Schneider



When asked to choose a reading and explain why I chose such a passage the choice for me was easy. I chose Matthew 18 vs 1 – 7. And there are 6 reasons I chose this passage:

Children are fully human and made in the image and likeness of God. It is the responsibility of all adults to treat them with dignity and respect.

They are the gifts of God and sources of joy, and adults are to delight in and be grateful for them.

Children are developing beings, and adults are expected to help teach and guide them.

They are also neighbours ... and strangers ... and orphans, and adults have a duty to seek justice for them and treat them with compassion.

Children are moral agents who sometimes miss the mark. They have growing moral capacities and responsibilities, and adults need to help nurture these capacities, be active examples of forgiveness, and apologise for their own wrongdoing especially toward children.

Finally, children are models of faith and acceptance, and adults have an obligation to listen to and learn from them, and not to destroy their trust.

And so, from the Gospel according to St Matthew:

The disciples came to Jesus and said, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

So he called a little child to him and made a space for him in front of them.

Then he said “I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But anyone who is an obstacle to bring down one of these little ones who have faith in me would be better drowned in the depths of the sea with a great millstone round his neck. Alas for the world that there should be such obstacles, for obstacles indeed there must be, but alas for the man who provides them!”

Invitation to pilgrimage

Michael Parer



I return to Ballarat as a once Parish Priest of Gordon, twenty miles down the highway. I am shocked that a close friend, Bryan Coffey was found guilty of abusing children during his ordination week. I now invite you to join us in pilgrimage through the city of Ballarat to the Cathedral to support victims, their families and the truth-telling whistle-blowers and to espouse the Prime Minister's historic national apology which will be delivered in parliament on Monday, 22 October.

A pilgrimage in the spirit of Emmaus

Luke 24:13-35

On the Road to Emmaus

The friends of Jesus set out for Emmaus seven miles from Jerusalem.

During the conversation and discussions they failed to recognise Jesus. He overtook and walked beside them.

'What's all this you're debating' he asked.

They stopped. Are you the lone stranger in Jerusalem who doesn't know what's happened?

What?

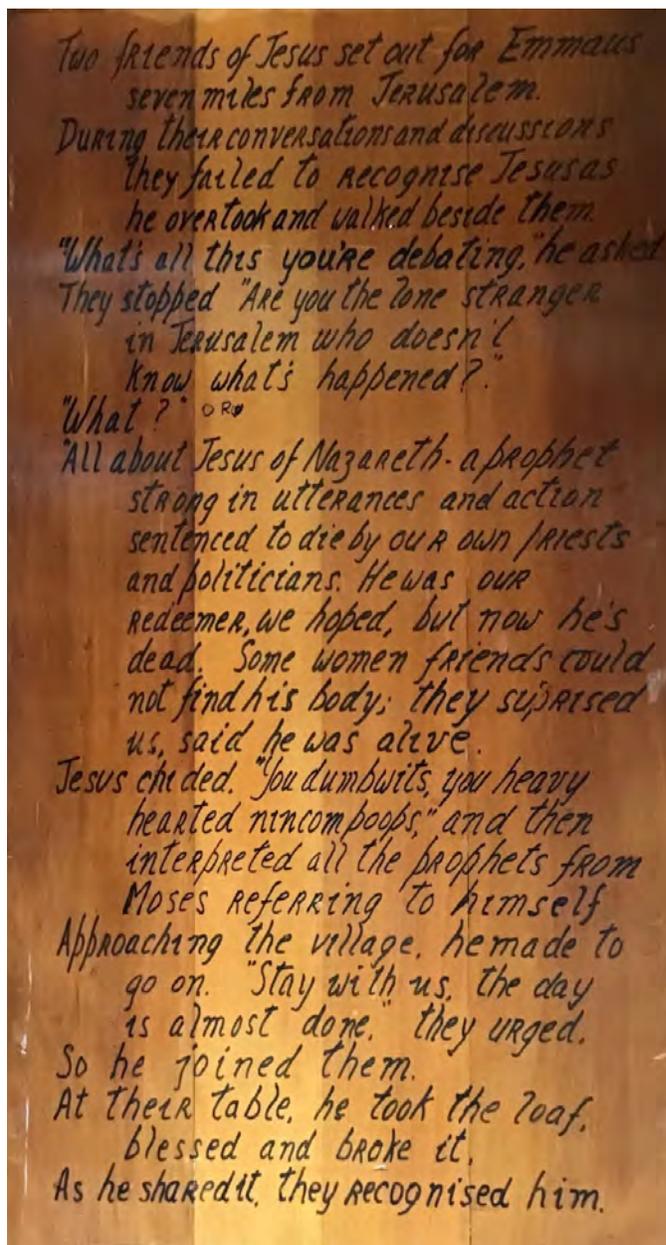
All about Jesus of Nazareth a prophet strong in utterances and, action sentenced to die by our own priests and politicians. He was our Redeemer, we hoped, but now he's dead. Some women friends could not find his body; they surprised us, said he was alive.

Jesus chided. You dumbwits, you heavy hearted nincompoops, and then interpreted all the prophets from Moses referring to himself. Approaching the village he made to go on. Stay with us the day is almost done they urged.

So he joined them.

At the table, he took the loaf, blessed and broke it.

As he shared it they recognised him.



Final song: “You’ve Got a friend”

James Taylor



Chrissi Foster and Julia Gillard.

*When you're down and troubled
And you need some love and care
And nothing, nothing is going right
Close your eyes and think of me
And soon I will be there
To brighten up even your darkest night*

*You just call out my name
And you know wherever I am
I'll come running to see you again
Winter, spring, summer or fall
All you have to do is call
And I'll be there
You've got a friend*

*If the sky above you
Grows dark and full of clouds
And that old north wind begins to blow
Keep your head together
And call my name out loud
Soon you'll hear me knocking at your door*

*You just call out my name
And you know wherever I am
I'll come running to see you again
Winter, spring, summer or fall
All you have to do is call
And I'll be there
You've got a friend*

*Ain't it good to know that you've got a friend
When people can be so cold
They'll hurt you and desert you
And take your soul if you let them
Oh, but don't you let them*

*You just call out my name
And you know wherever I am
I'll come running to see you again
Winter, spring, summer or fall
All you have to do is call
And I'll be there
You've got a friend*



A LAMENT

People from all walks of life gathered together at St Patrick's College's healing garden on Saturday with a single aim, to show support towards the victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

A group called For the Innocents organised the pilgrimage into town, which started with a ceremony at the healing garden and ended with the tying of ribbons at St Patrick's Cathedral.

The event was held in the lead up to Monday's national apology to be delivered by Prime Minister Scott Morrison at Parliament House.