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EMMANUEL NEWS

MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER, 2007

At Emmanuel Centre
25 Windsor St
Perth, 6000

AN OPPORTUNITY
TO SHARE
THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

You are invited

MORE INFORMATION INSIDE

People with Specific Requirements can ask to have this newsletter provided in Braille, a language other than English, large print, on computer disk or audiotape

CHRISTMAS?



How did we ever come to the mess that we are in about Christmas? Maybe you are so busy that you can't see any mess! There again maybe you know what I am talking about. Have you noticed that we spend many many hours and more money in the search for just the 'right' gift. We tear our hair out searching high and low for a gift that is 'different', 'unique' and 'special'.

Email has taken over the postal system for getting our "Season's Greetings" to the world. And it can all be done with one 'click' of the mouse button. Gone are the days when we sat down and wrote a special message to those on our list.

Stress levels rise higher as Christmas draws nearer. A panic attack is only a heart beat away. Running from shop to shop is a familiar scene. Our shopping lists get longer and longer along with the queue at the checkout.

Deciding where Christmas lunch will be sets off a drama worthy of any 'soap opera'. "My way" is heard more and more. Making holiday travel plans becomes bigger than "Ben Hur".

How far we have come from the first Christmas! That first Christmas was about 'gift', too. The giver was God and we received Jesus into our world. I think the Scriptures talk about that gift being wrapped, too, in 'swaddling clothes and lying in an animal feeding trough, a "manger"'.

I guess any of us over 40 years old will remember how it was at Christmas years ago. Midnight Mass was always so special. As a child it meant that I could stay up late and the really exciting part was that after Midnight Mass we would come home to open up our Christmas presents. Not that we had that many but it was still a big event in our young lives.

There was no Christmas Pageant back then. Strange how they don't even call it a Christmas event now. It is only a Season thing.

The schools produced Christmas plays and concerts and a highlight of the time was to go into town and see the Christmas lights. Many people had their own Christmas lights which they took out of storage and put on the tree – a real tree not a plastic one.

Making our own decorations for the tree took ages and ages and we were so proud of our achievements. Everybody contributed something.

Our entertainment consisted in Mum on the piano and each of us kids playing some instrument and singing carols.

So, what happened?

Somehow the meaning and value base has been buried under the COMMERCIALISM driven by the business world and the need to spend dollars. The commercial world convinced us that the simple things in life were old fashioned and not good enough. It convinced us that we needed more and more and more and more and.....

Are we any happier that we have the latest blender, that piece of jewellery that we have gazed at in the shop window? Are the children any happier because they now have the latest Ipod, Playstation 4 or Game Boy?

I don't think we will ever totally reclaim Christmas for Christ. The commercial world has too much to lose to allow that. I can, however, do what I can to reclaim Christmas in my own world.

My heart still gets a boost when I hear a Christmas Carol – I mean a 'real' Christmas Carol not just a 'holiday song'.

For every gift I buy I set aside a percentage for the poor. Even the gifts I give must be the kind that will encourage and support life. Guns and war games, in my mind, do not speak of the Prince of Peace.

What is achieved by arguing about the location of Christmas lunch or tea. I can only be in one place at a time and so wherever I am that is where I will find the gift of God.

What will Christmas be like in your heart and home this year?

May the joy and peace of Jesus among us fill your hearts and stay with you and yours.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Barbara Harris (Co-ordinator)

AN OPPORTUNITY



TO SHARE



THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

MONDAY 3rd DECEMBER, 2007

At Emmanuel Centre
25 Windsor St
Perth, 6000



TIMETABLE

11.30am.....Christmas Carols
12 noon.....Lunch & Sharing
2pm.....Close

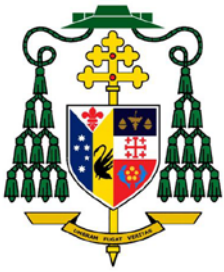
You are invited

To share with others in preparation for Christmas

Come along, join in the singing and meet other people of Emmanuel
Children welcome

Please bring a small plate of finger food to share

RSVP Tuesday, 27th November, 2007



**"CHILDREN ARE
A PRECIOUS
GIFT"
(Pope John Paul
II)**

**Pastoral Letter on
The Care and Protection of
Children**

My Dear People

On this Family Weekend I wish to call attention to the need to protect and care for children whom the late Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, referred to as "a Precious Gift".

The purpose of this weekend is to affirm the irreplaceable role of families in society and in the Church. Families give society strength and stability and affirm the dignity of every human person, especially children whom they have a God-given responsibility to raise and nurture for the enrichment of society.

The Church recognises their unique role in passing on the Catholic faith to their children and the witness they give to others of love, fidelity and generous self-giving.

Today we recognize the special role families play in our parish communities and we assure them of our admiration and love.

I wish to take this opportunity to draw attention to the proper care and nurturing of children and to address some of the destructive forces that have caused such tragic consequences in the lives of children here in Australia and throughout the world.

Let us be convinced in the words of Pope John Paul II that each child is a precious gift, and, as believing people, let us be the first to love them, the first to defend them and the first to stand by their parents, acknowledging their generosity and spirit of sacrifice.

Our parishes, schools and other Christian communities should be places where families are made welcome, where the joy of children is shared and where help is offered especially when families face special difficulties.

Here I wish to commend those parents who are asked by God to raise children with special needs. We know the struggles, the sleepless nights, the emotional and financial pressures with which they are burdened. We admire them and we thank them, because they are carrying these heavy burdens, often with a joyful and loving acceptance of God's will, on behalf of us all.

We must also be aware of the other burdens that families bear, the absence of father or mother for whatever reason, the financial stresses of modern life leading often to sudden and severe poverty, and the problems of mental health that are unfortunately so common in our modern society.

These must be the concerns of all our parishes and communities. We are called to recognize the family struggles in our neighbourhood, and be ready to include families, affirm and support them and reach out to them in love.

When we look around at the fearful problems that children face in today's world our hearts go out to them. Apart from those whose tiny lives are snuffed out in what Pope John Paul called the "holocaust of abortion", millions of children grow up in poverty and in the midst of violence and war. Some children are sold into the slavery of prostitution, others are exploited by being drawn into the workforce at a very early age, with little or no education or family life.

We think too of the innocent victims of family breakdown and their feelings of insecurity and abandonment.

So many of our young people are targets of commercialism. Some are destroyed by drugs, and others lose respect for the dignity of women and the proper use of human sexuality through easily available and morally corrosive pornography. Others are damaged for life by the terrible crime of sexual abuse.

This is a time for action.

The Christian Community must give priority to the nourishing of families to care properly for their children. The Church through her parishes and agencies can strengthen family life spiritually and nurture them within an accepting community of brothers and sisters, like an extended family.

Continued

We must use our voices to protest against the exploitation of children by calling on those with power and influence in Australia and elsewhere to stop the practices that do so much harm to children.

Finally and habitually we must pray for families that they receive the spiritual, economic and social means to care for their children. In this I praise the efforts of groups that lobby hard at political and policy making bodies for the welfare of families and children. We must keep their welfare in mind in our Prayers of the Faithful at Mass and provide happy experiences for children within the family of the Faith.

I urge all families to recover family prayers. Prayer at home, initiated by the father or the mother, binds and unites the family together under God. Family life will be strengthened when prayer is part of its daily life. Prayers at mealtime, before going to bed, at birthday celebrations, at wedding anniversaries, at times of sorrow and death, and at times of rejoicing and thanksgiving, will lead children to sense the abiding presence of God, of Jesus and the saints in their lives and develop in them deep love for one another, forgiveness and mutual care.

Family prayer will help them grow as full and active members of the Church, witnesses to others of Christ's love and effective members of society in which they will mirror the ethical standards without which no country can thrive.

Sacred images exposed in the home will also be a constant reminder that Christ is our inspiration and hope.

I call on our priests and religious to be Good Shepherds of families and show them the immense love that God has for them for the indispensable role of life and love they have been given.

I conclude with a Prayer for the Family

Most Rev B J Hickey
Archbishop of Perth

22 August 2007

This letter was released in the Archdiocese of Perth for the Family Celebrate Weekend on October 5-7th 2007



PRAYER FOR THE FAMILY

Heavenly Father

**We praise you and thank
you for this day.**

**Look with love upon our
family.**

Bless us and keep us safe.

**Guide our coming and our
going and all that we do.**

**We turn to you in times of
joy and sadness,**

**knowing you are always
there.**

We welcome Jesus, Your

Son, as the unseen

guest in our home,

our constant companion,

our light and our salvation.

**Keep us together as a close
and loving family.**

**We ask this in the name of
Jesus Christ,**

our Lord and Saviour.

Amen

Sign Language Film for London's Buses



Bus users in London have been able to view a new 30-second film about sign language produced by Deaf people in support of British Sign Language Recognition Day.

The film went to air on over 350 buses across London between March 18 - 19, 2007.

Mayor Ken Livingstone said he hoped "commuters find the film clip informative. Londoners communicate in over 300 languages and over 200,000 Deaf and hearing people regularly use British and Irish Sign Language (BSL/ISL)."

The Mayor said "BSL is a real, full and living language that is part of a rich cultural heritage and has evolved in the UK's Deaf community over hundreds of years. It is a natural language that is as accessible to Deaf people as spoken English is to hearing people."

"Many people may be unaware that there are many different sign languages from around the world, and as with English, BSL has its own London regional dialect." Copyright 200-2007 MayorWatch



Department of the Attorney General



The Office of the Public Advocate has a new TTY contact number for people who are hearing impaired.

The new line has a computer based TTY system that enables people who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech-disabled and who have a TTY facility to contact the Office directly.

The Office's new TTY number is

1300 859 955

If you would like more information about the Office of the Public Advocate's TTY telephone service, please contact us on our general line 9278 7300 or 1800 807 437 (free call, country callers only) or email us at opa@justice.wa.gov.au.

background noise, and with crystal clear sound! (depending on type of hearing loss). Welcome to an Audio Loop!

A personal audio loop system enables the hearing-aid wearer to "tune in" directly to the sound system. An audio loop system allows anyone within "the loop" to turn on their hearing aids and get a "direct" reception. Audio loops can be as small as a personal one that is worn like a necklace, to one that can cover a whole room or hall.

Some churches and meeting venues have audio loops installed. Updated information about Catholic venues with audio loops is available from Julie Williams at the Catholic Pastoral Centre on 9422 7901

Audio Loop System



Imagine you are trying to listen to something that you are really, really interested in, and you are sitting a long, long way away from the speakers, in a large hall filled with lots of people. There are chairs being shuffled, some people are coughing and some are chatting. And humming away loudly in the background is the air conditioner. A cacophony of sound!

Then imagine being able to turn the "T" switch on your hearing aids, and get a direct feed from the speaker without ALL the

FR GEOFF BEYER, A PRIEST OF THE ARCHDIOCESE SHARES HIS EXPERIENCES AS A PERSON WITH AN HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Fr Geoff Beyer

Fr Beyer was born in a family that has known deafness in every generation, providing him with a wealth of experience, personally and from close family members, of the characteristics of deafness.

As a child, his relationship with his grandfather involved writing notes, as he had a profound hearing loss and at the time there was no hearing technology available. Fr Beyer mother had a slight hearing loss that was not as severe as his grandfather's, and she also wore hearing aids.

Fr Beyer grew up in Perth, started out as a teacher, and continued in this field when he became ordained as an Anglican Priest and worked in the Bunbury area. Within a decade, Fr Beyer has converted to Catholicism and began working as a Parish Priest in the Armadale area. It is at this time that he first started noticing his growing deafness.

Over the years, it has become apparent to him that many facets of his vocation as a Priest, including parish council meetings, community gatherings and seminars, involve communication where there is often background noise. Other factors that made listening difficult at times were where more than one person is talking at the same time, different types of voices and accents. All of which require concentrated effort when coupled with hearing loss in order to understand what is being said.

Being open about his hearing loss with colleagues and parishioners has been his main method of dealing with the effects of deafness. Hearing aids are also an essential tool and help maintain his love of music. One of the programs on his hearing aids is specifically for the enjoyment of music. When he first got his latest hearing aids, some sounds were causing his hearing aids to whistle, requiring the program to be altered so that he could enjoy music such as Beethoven's Violin Concerto without 'feedback'.

Another tool that Fr Beyer finds helpful is the audio induction loop, whereby sounds transmitted through a microphone can be directly fed into a hearing aid, eliminating all the background noise and loss of quality caused during the travel of sound from the source to the receiver. Most churches were built before audio loops became more widely known. Some churches have had audio loops installed, but forget to put up notices indicating that they are present. This can be frustrating. Fr Beyer and many others are looking forward to trying out the new audio loop in St Mary's Cathedral when the renovations are complete.

Fr Beyer is currently working as an Associate Judicial Vicar with the Perth Archdiocesan Catholic Marriage Tribunal, and is also studying at Notre Dame University.

It is a gift to us all to have Fr Beyer, with all his experiences and gifts, including those of deafness, contributing to our understanding of the diverse parts that together make whole the body of Christ.

October 2007



Please display this symbol
and show you will give
hearing help

Here's your opportunity to help deaf and hard of hearing people. Show that you're participating in the HEARING HELP CARD scheme by displaying a sticker bearing this symbol in your window. A free standing card suitable for desk or counter is also available. A poster on your notice board or wall will inform hearing impaired people of your willingness to help



FAMILIES

When someone develops a mental illness there is commonly a 'ripple effect' - having an impact on the whole family. How does the diagnosis of a mental illness affect family and other carers? And what can be done to help . . . ?

What are the effects?

As well as the person directly affected, mental illness usually has a great impact on other members of the family too. Recent research by Carers Australia confirms what family and other carers of people with a mental illness have always known that they live with far higher levels of emotional stress and social isolation than other people.

The sense of shock can be very great, especially when a loved one develops a psychotic illness and confused, disturbed behaviour is not recognised for a long time as being caused by symptoms. There may also be the realisation, akin to grief, that the illness could have a lifelong effect on the person's life. A study by "Beyondblue", the national depression initiative, has

also confirmed that the emotional stress of being close to someone with depression or anxiety can, not surprisingly, lead to family members feeling depressed and anxious themselves, especially when they are not receiving any support.

Some people, too, will experience prejudice and stigma, increasing the sense of isolation. This is even worse when lack of understanding means there is stigma within the family itself. Not only parents, but brothers, sisters, grandparents, in-laws and other relatives and close friends are also affected in these ways, and all need understanding, support, education and training.

What is being done to Help?

Family and other carers need information, support, respite and training. When mental illness strikes, 'knowledge is power' for all the family as well as the person with the illness. Clear, understandable information about symptoms, treatments and what people can do to help themselves are invaluable in making people feel empowered. For this reason, SANE has developed a wide range of publications for families and provides information and referral to family members, as well as others, through the SANE Helpline.

Family support groups are also important to many people, providing peer support and helping to overcome the sense of isolation. Organisations such as ARAFMI (the Association of Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill) and the Mental Illness (or Schizophrenia) Fellowships and other groups provide this service in all States and Territories. The Mental Illness Fellowship's Well Ways Program is a good example of the kind of structured education they can also provide. Carers Australia is increasingly involved in supporting family and other carers of people affected by mental illness, and can provide respite care and advice on eligibility for the Carer Allowance and other benefits from Centrelink.

What do families Need?

Helping families needs to be an integral part of mental health services. Help for families needs to be a routine and mandatory part of clinical treatment so that family needs are assessed, and that information, support, training and respite care are provided, including referral to non-government support agencies. Improved support for families is a key pillar of the SANE Charter. It is still viewed by many governments as 'an extra' rather than an integral part of mental health services. The SANE Helpline is a confidential, national Freecall service, offering information and referral on mental illness and related issues: Visit the SANE Bookshop at www.sane.org for details of the SANE Guide for Carers which contains information and tips especially for families. SANE's Telephone Number is 1800 18 7263. Dr Paul Morgan Deputy Director

Diary of a Catholic mother, living with a mental illness.

“Many hats made from the same thread”

I, like most people wear many different hats. Mother, Grandmother, Sister, Daughter, Aunty, Friend, Co worker, Catholic, P and F member, Cook, Housecleaner, Driver, Bill payer, Next door neighbour and so on and so on. But as different as these roles can be it is still me that is underneath these hats, and I like to think they all have been made with a common thread. That thread is God.

He is always with me in all I do, and when I get stuck I say to myself “What would Jesus do in this situation?” And it always helps me to make the right decision. At home when the dishes are piled up and I am tired I say to myself “I really don’t want to do these dishes Lord, but I will do them for you” and somehow it always seems a little easier to do.

When my teenager asks to go to a friends party, even if I know the name and address of the family having the party, and I trust my child to make the right decision, I still worry, but I also say “My God be with her, keep her safe till she returns to me” and I put my worry in God’s hands.

My mental illness often makes me feel a sense of hopelessness. It is hard to find a reason to go on. At these times I don’t want to wear a hat, it is still me, underneath, struggling day by day hour by hour minute by minute, just to exist. But I am exhausted by the weight of the hats, I can’t carry them. The pain of life is too much.

Even though I feel so alone, I am not. People’s prayers for me are listened to.

My hats are standing on a hat stand called God who has been taking care of things for me while I rest. And as I start to feel better I gradually take my hats back, and the common thread spreads again.

Bible reflection: Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, And you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light”.

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REDUCING STRESS

SLOW BREATHING EXERCISE

When we are tense we often breath too fast. Practice this exercise 3 to 4 times a day when you are feeling stressed or anxious so that you can use this as a **SHORT-TERM** coping strategy.

1. Time the number of breaths you take in one minute. Breathing in, then out is counted as one breath.
2. Breathe in, hold your breath and count to five. Then breathe out and say the word ‘relax’ to yourself in a calm, soothing manner.
3. Start breathing in through your nose and out slowly through your mouth, in a six-second cycle. Breathe in for three seconds and out for three seconds.

4. This will produce a breathing rate of 10 breaths per minute. In the beginning, it can be helpful to time your breathing using the second hand of a watch or clock.
5. Count to yourself.
6. Continue breathing in a six-second cycle for at least five minutes or until the symptoms of overbreathing have settled.

After practising this exercise, time the number of breaths you take in one minute. Practise the slow breathing exercise each day before breakfast, lunch, dinner and bedtime. Use the technique whenever you feel anxious. Gradually, you’ll be familiar enough with the exercise to stop timing yourself.

(from BeyondBlue)

It is strange, isn't it?

Isn't it strange how a \$20 note seems like such a large amount when you donate it to church, but such a small amount when you go shopping?

Isn't it strange how 2 hours seems so long when you are at church, and how short it seems when you're watching a good movie?

Isn't it strange that you can't find a word to say when you're praying but you have no trouble thinking what to talk about with a friend?

Isn't it strange how difficult and boring it is to read one chapter of the BIBLE but how easy it is to read 100 pages of a popular novel?

Isn't it strange how everyone wants front-row-tickets to concerts or games but they do whatever is possible to sit at the last row at church?

Isn't it strange how we need to know about an event for Church 2-3 weeks in advance to include it in our agenda, but we can adjust it for other events in the last minute.?

Isn't it strange how difficult it is to learn a fact about God to share it with others; but how easy it is to learn and share gossip?

Isn't it strange how we believe everything that magazines and newspapers tell us but we question the words in the BIBLE?

Isn't it strange how we send jokes in e-mails and they are forwarded right away but when we are going to send messages about God, we think about it twice before we share it with others?

The meaning of the World Youth Day Logo

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8).



This Logo is one that we hope you will see around a lot over the next two years. Logo's are a good way to label an event or organisation so that people will recognise it as soon as they see it. But! logo's usually always have a story or reason for the design. Knowing the reason for a logo is a good way of learning more about the event or organisation it represents. This explanation was taken from the WYD08 website.

The **Cross** raised in victory, representing Christ and the life of witness which the Holy Spirit gives us.

The **flames** of the logo represent the Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in tongues of fire. The colours of red, orange and yellow (used for the flame and opera house) symbolise the Trinity and Unity of *God*. They also bring to mind the colours of the Australian outback.

The **blue** of the logo (the words are blue) represents the oceans that surround Australia, the waters of Baptism, the sea of humanity and Mary, full of grace.

The **Opera House** is the symbol of Sydney, the host city for World Youth Day 2008.

For more information about WYD08 and to see the logo in colour go to www.wyd2008.org

OVER THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT?

"I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow."

"I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights."

"I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you'll miss them when they're gone from your life."

"I've learned that making a "living" is not the same thing as "making a life."

"I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance."

"I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catcher's mitt on both hands; you need to be able to throw some things back."

"I've learned that whenever I decide something with an open heart, I usually make the right decision."

"I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one."

"I've learned that every day you can reach out and touch someone. People love a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back."

"I've learned that I still have a lot to learn."

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

FIRST KISS



So, it's your first kiss and several questions might come to mind:

Is it the right time?

Is anyone watching?

Does your partner even want to?

Is your breath fresh?

And... Should you use some tongue?

Then you lean in and just go for it!!!

MODERN DAY MOSES



Did You Know?

The feet have 250,000 sweat glands each and produce about a cup of sweat every day. By the time we reach the age of fifty our feet have covered 86,000 kms. In an average lifetime our feet will carry us 128,000 kms – the equivalent to three times around the world.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CELEBRATE FAMILY WEEKEND OCTOBER 5-7th, 2007

