



Emmanuel Centre
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EMMANUEL NEWS

June 2008



Dying with Alzheimer's.

Many people talk about living with Alzheimer's. I have been dying with Alzheimer's. No! I do not have Alzheimer's myself, but there are a lot of people in my life with Alzheimer's.

There is always that question hovering around "Why?" Why does God allow this to happen? Does this person need to suffer, need to be punished? When I get to this point I need to stop. There are no answers to the "Why" question. Changing my reflection, I ponder on how I relate to Alzheimer's. Why do I feel so uncomfortable when I visit someone and I realise that Alzheimer's like so many situations out of my control require me to die to something within my self.

My first death to Alzheimer's was my normal pattern of conversation. I have become aware of a ritual of dialogue when visiting people. I have a standard pattern of communication. For example, I may lead off with a "How are you?" It may turn out that the person with Alzheimier's has no idea how he/she is. They may

be aware that things aren't what they used to be, but they cannot pin it down to talk about it. So my great opening of "How are you?" falls into oblivion.

Again a question like, "What did you have for breakfast?" quickly follows into the black hole. "What have you been doing? Did you have any visitors?" Are questions for the same black hole. Perhaps time "before" (past), and time "after" (future) are no longer a point of reference. The result of all of this, of course, is that I get no feedback. I'm then hit with a thunderbolt. I am reminded as I visit with my friend that this MOMENT, this NOW is all my friend has and he/she is inviting me to be present in the "now"

Suddenly my Lord was speaking: *"My name is I am"* He paused, I waited. He continued, *"When you live in the past with it's mistakes and regrets, It is hard. I am not there. My name is not I WAS. When you live in the future, With it's problems and fears, It is hard. I am not there, My name is not I WILL BE. When you live in this moment, It is not hard. I am here. My name is I AM"*

A second revelation to me about my self is that I realise that my normal, every day conversations, are very much driven by feedback that I receive. Without feedback, I feel powerless. At the same time, in a strange twist of events, I have all the power to steer the conversation, because it is one way. On the other hand, I am left floundering in conversation without feedback. "Is what I am saying relevant?" Feedback allows me to feel that I am contributing to the "on-going" conversation. So this is my second challenge. I am out of my comfort zone.

The next challenge is silence. I do not feel comfortable with silence. I must be doing or saying something, especially if I am visiting someone in hospital or in their home. Just "being" in these situations I find it difficult. I don't appreciate what I can learn from others in silence. After all, even the wildest ramblings can provide me with tidbits of wisdom, if I chose to listen. But silence? What can I learn from silence? This is my third challenge. Do I really want to be still in silence and hear that inner voice? Am I challenged by the words "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted in the earth?"(Psalm 46:10)

There is little likelihood of my friend ever getting "better." If anything, the chances are very good that my friend will deteriorate. It is strange how things come across my desk just at the right time? A nurse friend of mine sent me an article. *Still Know Who She Is*. I share the article with you on the next page.

Let us reach out to those in our communities who sit with someone who has Alzheimer's. Be with them in their pain and in their silence. At the same time learn from someone who has Alzheimer's. Their life is not useless;, their struggles can challenge us all.

Barbara



I Still Know Who She Is

It was a busy morning, about 8:30, when an elderly gentleman in his 80s arrived to have stitches removed from his thumb. He said he was in a hurry as he had an appointment at 9:00.

I took his vital signs and had him take a seat, knowing it would be over an hour before someone would be able to see him. I saw him looking at his watch and decided since I was not busy with another patient, I would evaluate his wound. On examining it I saw it was well healed, so I talked to one of the doctors and got the needed supplies to remove his sutures and redress his wound. While taking care of his wound, I asked him if he had another doctor's appointment this morning, as he was in such a hurry.

The gentleman told me no, that he needed to go to the nursing home to eat breakfast with his wife.

I inquired as to her health. He told me that she had been there for a while as she is a victim of Alzheimer's disease.

As we talked, I asked if she would be upset if he was a bit late. He replied that she no longer knew who he was, that she had not recognized him in five years now.

I was surprised and asked him, 'And you still go every morning, even though she doesn't know who you are?'

He smiled as he patted my hand and said, 'She doesn't know me but I still know who she is.'

I had to hold back tears as he left, I had goose bumps on my arm and thought, 'That is the kind of love I want in my life. True love is neither physical nor romantic'. True love is an acceptance of all that is, has been, will be, and will not be.



CATHOLIC MENTAL HEALTH MEETINGS

Kelmscott, Good Shepherd Church,
40 Streich St, Kelmscott.

Meetings 2nd Thursday of the month at 12 noon.
Coming meetings: 10 July, 14 August, 11 Sept, 9 October, 13 November, 11 Dec.

Lesmurdie, Our Lady of Lourdes Hall,
207 Lesmurdie Rd, Lesmurdie

Meetings 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.
Coming meetings:, 16 July, 20 August, 17 September, 15 October, 19 November, 17 December

Morley, Infant Jesus Hall, 47 Wellington Rd ,
Morley. Meetings 4th Thursday of the month at
7pm. Coming meetings: 24 July, 28 Aug, 25 Sept,
23, Oct, 27 November

Northbridge, St John's Court, Aberdeen St,
Northbridge 12noon-2pm. every second Tuesday.
Coming meetings: Contact Harry 9444 4626

NOTE CHANGE OF TIME

Clarkson, St Andrews Parish Centre, 53 Belleville
Gardens, Clarkson. Meets last Wednesday of the
month, 10am.

Contact Fr Phillip 9407 7512

Whitfords, Our Lady of the Missions Centre, 270
Camberwarra Dr, Craigie, 7.30pm First Monday of
the month. Contact Donna 9447 8223.



Communion with God Communion with Others

Personal prayer, meditation

Have you ever finished watching a program on TV and at the end of the program thought: "What a waste of time that was?" Do you have long periods travelling on public transport where you are just sitting? If so, you have found some time in your day to practice meditation. It is so much easier to use 'down time' like this when you begin to meditate rather than trying to find new time.

Try this exercise:-

- Sit still and concentrate on your breathing for a while.
- Pray for the intention of deepening awareness of God's Holy Presence.
- Pray: 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit', for this intention and recall the Triune God, the Trinity, who is the source of all communion.
- Recite a line from Scripture such as 'Be still and know that I am God'. Or 'As a child at rest in its mother's arms so is my being at rest in you'. Repeat the line for as long as you feel comfortable and recite it in time with your gentle breathing.

At first, five or ten minutes will seem like a long time. Later you will wonder where thirty minutes has gone! At the end of your recitation of the line from Scripture pause for a minute and see if any prayer or thought should arise. Pray that prayer or ponder that thought. Conclude by making and reciting the sign of the cross very slowly, deliberately and meditating on the mystery of God,

Web sites, Lectio Divinia

Lectio divina is an ancient form of meditating on the scriptures that has come down to us through the Benedictine spiritual tradition. This way of prayer is appealing because it is a practice of prayer grounded in our Scriptures and is a prayer form developed before any divisions occurred among Christians.

The following links are to places where you can learn about lectio divina or get resources to learn how to pray.

www.centeringprayer.com/lectio.htm

Re-focus on relationship with God

God is a communion of love and we are invited into this communion. How well do you think you know the 'Divine Trinity'? Choose one or more of the scripture passages below to ponder during the week. Read the short verse and spend five or ten minutes pondering two questions: What does this tell me about God? What does this text ask of me? Try this with other short texts of scripture as a daily exercise.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing...he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love! He destined us for adoption as his children...(Ephesians 1:3)

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. (Isaiah 43:1-2)

Understanding and Coping with Grief

FREE ADMISSION

**Immaculate Conception Parish Centre
2 Preston Point Road, EAST FREMANTLE**

**Wednesday 2nd July 2008
7.30 – 9 p.m.**

**Sponsored by
Catholic Mental Health Group**

Facilitator: Gerry Smith

(Director of Grief Management Educational Services and a respected grief counsellor for more than 25 years)

**Gerry will cover issues relating to life-changing situations of self or others
e.g. divorce, loss of employment, children leaving home, getting old, or
diagnosis of an illness (e.g. mental illness).**

**For more information, contact Barbara from the Emmanuel Centre, on
9328 8113.**

**1
SELF**

THREE

2 SABOTAGING

3 BELIEFS ...

What causes us to go and go and give until we're emotionally and physically exhausted? I believe that there are three mental culprits behind the development of such crippling fatigue:

1. That's just what good caring (mums, dads, daughters, sons, wives, husbands, doctors, therapists, etc) do.

Spend a moment to reflect on your definition of a "good (fill in the blank)". Hopefully, definition contains the seeds of the character traits and behaviours to which you aspire. However, any one of those aspirations, taken to the extreme to become a perfectionist expectation, can absolutely wear you out.

I remember the seven years in which I was caring for my beloved mother, who died with Alzheimer's Disease. I could never have asked for a better mother throughout my life. A single parent after my father died at the age of 38 with cancer, she struggled to make ends meet, standing by me lovingly through all my mistakes and ups and downs. I resolved to be the daughter in this time of need that she deserved. A futile quest. I could never prove that to myself. In my eyes, no matter what I did, it was never enough. I never quite measured up to what a "good daughter" should do.

Another complicating factor is that we have the highest of standards for ourselves in multiple roles. Even things you reasonably "should" be able to do in a single role become unrealistic when you are juggling several "full-time" roles. The work is absolutely never done- and certainly never done the way a "good" would do it.

2. Every need (or want) is my responsibility.

If you carry this belief into your home and your work, you'll be doomed to a chronic sense of failure and a life of frustration. At first, you simply try harder. Then, you begin to get more resentful. Soon, you find

yourself filled with cynicism, hostility or debilitating guilt. You wake up and realise, you have become someone your not.

Here's the truth. Happiness is an inside job, and your best efforts can't impose it on others. And, you definitely can't please everyone. Even the greatest of leaders in history understood this principle. If you wait until everyone is happy and well to take care of yourself, you'll be sadly neglected. Both your body and psyche will suffer for it.

3. It's selfish to take care of yourself.

Listen, there are plenty of people, who are truly selfish. They are self absorbed and egotistical. It's all about them. They look out only for their own needs and wants, ignoring the perspectives and feelings of others. That's what selfish means. If you took the time to read this article, I doubt that this describes you. On the other hand, if you are a person in danger of burning out, that's evidence right there that you are probably not a selfish person. In fact, the research on burnout shows it's only the most compassionate and committed people who burn out. (Slackers and selfish people don't burn out. They don't care enough to!)

Think about your vehicle. What if you never stopped to refuel, change the oil, get a tune up? Soon, the car would be non-functional, no use to anyone. And so it is with you. If you don't pull away to refuel your energy, renew your spirit, and reconnect with the people and things that matter to you- you'll soon be non-functional, no use to anyone.

If you want to last in order to be of service to others, using your talents to make a difference to people over the long haul, you must take care of yourself. Can you see that it is not being selfish to make your personal mental, emotional, and physical health a priority? Taking care of yourself provides you the energy and the perspective you need in order to keep giving. That, my friend, is unselfish indeed.

Article by Dr Bev Smallwood, courtesy of Kalparrin Cares March 2008 edition.

Auslan rocks!

Auslan rocks!

Up to 44 young people have been learning Auslan in the lead up to World Youth Day 2008. The (Perth) Catholic Youth Ministry (CYM) WYD2008 group have around 50 people who have registered to go to Sydney in July, and some of the group members are deaf or hard of hearing. So, a very enthusiastic bunch of young people have been meeting once a week, under the excellent tutelage of Ms Emma Chevron and Ms Ally Gunnell, members of the group, to learn Auslan.

After five weeks, with three more lessons to go before the group leave for WYD2008, the teacher and tutors have been astounded at the level of talent in the group, and feel that there are many prospective future interpreters in the group, for when a young deaf person may want to join any of the youth activities on offer in Perth.

One of the fun activities was to learn the signs for the different countries from where pilgrims will come from to attend WYD, or countries where many of the pilgrims have connections to. It was very interesting learning the signs for "Australia". Australian's themselves use a sign which is likely a derivative of two possible symbols; that of the place where convicts were 'dumped', and the jumping action of kangaroos. The international sign for Australia, used by Deaf people overseas, is that of the shape of the Anzac Diggers hat, where the brim on one side is bent upwards.

The classes will finish with a shared meal where voices will be 'turned off' for the night, and participants will have to order their meal using non-verbal communication methods. Many are looking forward to meeting the deaf pilgrims coming to WYD2008, and continuing the course after World Youth Day.



Special thanks to Robert Hinii, coordinator of Catholic Youth Ministry (CYM) Perth, for organising the publicity and the venue before the course started, and providing drinks and nibbles, amongst many other jobs that have helped the course to get started. Thanks also to the teacher and tutor, Emma and Ally, who volunteer their time to provide a wonderful experience. And most of all, to all the great young people, who give of their time and energy to come and learn a new language, that will have many practical benefits.

[For further information, contact Susan on 9328 9571 or send sms 0432 952 074.]

PARISH PRACTICE

NIKKI DHILLON KEANE

Out of the great silence

Catholic Deaf Awareness Week, 11-18 May, offers a chance to think about the issues faced by deaf people and to consider more deeply what 'Catholic' philosophy mean

Recently I approached a parish priest to offer the support of our deaf service and I was met with the bemused reply that there were no deaf people in his parish. Imagine his surprise when I introduced a family of five deaf people living around the corner who, while being fully committed to their faith and the Catholic upbringing of their children, had never set foot inside their own parish church.

There was nothing particularly unusual about this priest's response; many people are unaware of the deaf population living in their parish because most deaf people do not attend services that they cannot access or understand. They seek out instead signed or interpreted Masses such as the ones offered monthly in Westminster Diocese for deaf people, or they go to parishes where the Mass is signed. What was unusual in this case was what happened next. The parish priest and a group of parishioners asked to learn British Sign Language (BSL) - and the result was that the deaf family (together with other deaf people from that parish and other nearby parishes) began to attend Mass in their own parish.

The way this priest and parish community welcomed - or included - these deaf people in their community is sadly, but understandably, rare. BSL is a complex language and it takes several years for a person to become fluent, demanding a big commitment of time and energy. There are several priests across Westminster Diocese who have made the effort to become proficient (to varying degrees) in BSL; but, unfortunately, priests sometimes learn to sign and then they are moved to another parish where the skill is not needed.

Signing at Mass is not the only way we need to communicate with deaf people. I work as a counsellor with the deaf, through "Signs of Hope" - a deaf counselling service which is part of the Westminster Diocese Deaf Service. Referrals come from social workers, doctors or other professionals who work with the deaf - or from individuals who saw the service advertised in their local

deaf club. Curiously, the referrals rarely come from a parish - a place where deaf people so often feel alienated, because it is inaccessible to them.

Although the aim of counselling is not to help them make contact with the Church, occasionally the by-product of our contact introduces them into - or renews their relationship with - the Church. Some make contact with the Diocesan Deaf Service, which trains catechists, lay ministers, readers and pastoral visitors to minister to other deaf people.

The vast majority of my clients are profoundly deaf BSL users, and most of them were brought up by families who never learned to sign or communicate with them any other way than orally. Sadly, this is a reflection of the advice that used to be given (and sometimes still is) to parents of deaf children - that they should never use sign language with them. They are also told to discourage the child from signing for fear that this will prevent them from ever being able to communicate in the "normal" way - that is, like hearing people. As a result of this kind of advice, generations of deaf people have been alienated from their families because they were unable to communicate with one another. Many of my clients *suffer* from a sense of worthlessness because they feel that their families did not realise how important it is to be able to communicate with them.

Because of this alienation deaf people feel, many of them form close relationships with people they meet in deaf schools, in deaf clubs and in deaf friendship groups and the deaf community takes on the role of family. It is not unusual to see deaf people talking about the "deaf world" and "hearing world" as worlds apart from each other - and this is because so many of us are ignorant of the issues of deafness.

Each year, Catholic Deaf Awareness Week offers us the opportunity to think about these issues - challenging us perhaps to consider what our "Catholic" philosophy is. The etymology of the word "Catholic" comes from the Greek *kata holos* meaning "welcoming everyone": As members of a universal family, we need to think about what we do to welcome deaf people - so many of whom feel alienated from the Church. Although there may not be any profoundly deaf BSL users living in your parish, without a doubt there will be many in your parish with some level of impaired hearing.

The Equalities Review in February last year supported RNID (Royal National Institute for Deaf People) research, which highlighted the deep inequalities and disadvantages experienced by deaf (and disabled) people in areas of employment and education. The Catholic bishops of England and Wales published a document in 1998 to promote participation of people with disabilities in the life of the Church. Entitled "Valuing Difference; the booklet outlines practical ways that access and inclusion in church activities can be improved. The vision statement at the beginning of the document says that "all of us

are called to express God's love in our daily life, valuing the difference and equal dignity of every person". It goes on to say that "our task, as members of the Church, is to translate Christ's message of inclusion into practical action, so that the contribution of each member is respected and nurtured".

Perhaps the best way forward is for us to think about what deaf people need if they are going to share in the life of the Church - and what prevents those needs from being met. The most important barriers are those of attitude - where people with disabilities are regarded as those whom the Church serves rather than those who want to be fully involved in the life of the Church. Without deaf people, hearing people are missing out; without them, the body of Christ is incomplete. For our own sake (indeed, for Christ's sake), we must do whatever we can to be an inclusive Church welcoming all people.

I Nikki Dhillon Keane was director of the Westminster Deaf Service; she now works as a counsellor with the deaf counselling service supervised by the Westminster Diocese Deaf Service (www.rcdow.org.uk/deafservice). "Valuing Difference" is available on www.catholicchurch.org.uk.

TO DO

**Contact Fr Paul, Chaplain for
Perth Diocese for Deaf and
Hearing Impaired People
At
Emmanuel Centre**

**9328 8113 (Voice)
9328 9571 (TTY0)**

[emmanuelcentre@westnet.com.](mailto:emmanuelcentre@westnet.com.au)

[au](http://www.catholicchurch.org.uk)

**to find out whether you have any
deaf parishioners**

**Find out if anyone in your
community knows Auslan
(Australian Sign Language) or if
anyone would like to learn. You
can learn at Emmanuel Centre.**

**Ask yourself how welcoming your
parish is of all people?**

Submitted by Br Tony Hackett

Taken from the 17 May 2008 1 THE TABLET 1 17

A Mother's Love A story from China

When rescuers found her, she was already dead, crushed by the collapsed house. Through gaps in the rubble, they could see her posture. Kneeling on both knees, her entire upper body bent forward, held up by her two hands pressed against the ground, as if performing the ceremonial bow in an ancient ritual. Except, her body had been compressed out of shape and looked somewhat eerie.

A rescuer extended his hand through a gap and confirmed her death. He called out to her, and tapped on the bricks with his shaft, but received no response.

As the team walked toward next building, the squad leader suddenly turned back, yelling as he ran, "Come quick!" He came to her remains, laboured to manoeuvre his hand under her body, searching.

He called out following some rummaging, "There's someone, a child, still alive."

With some effort, rescuers carefully removed the debris burying her, found her child lying beneath her, bundled in a little red blanket decorated with yellow flower prints. He was about 3-4 months old.

Shielded by his mother's body, he was totally unharmed, sleeping peacefully as he was brought out. His soundly asleep face warmed the hearts of all rescuers on the scene.

As the rescue team's doctor unbundled the blanket to examine the baby, he discovered a mobile phone tucked into the blanket. He subconsciously looked at the display; found there was a SMS message.

"My Dear Baby, If you were to stay alive, you must remember that I love you." No stranger to the pain and sorrow brought by death, the doctor nonetheless wept at this moment. The cell phone was passed around, every person who read the message wept.



It is all only temporary!

Some of you personally know the feeling of being pushed out of a hospital room faster than you would like to have been. But, while there are a lot of adjectives that the Bible uses to describe heaven -- incorruptible, undefiled, glorious -- adjectives never used are "temporary," "fleeting," "uncertain," and "hurried."



As I look back over my life, there have been some wonderful moments that I wished would never end.

However, everything we experience in this life is temporary. No matter how much we enjoy doing something, going somewhere, or being with someone, it is all only temporary. In heaven, on the other hand, we have the opportunity to be with God and His redeemed for all eternity!

"So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands." (2 Corinthians 4:18-5:1)

I hope you've made your reservations for the party that will never end!

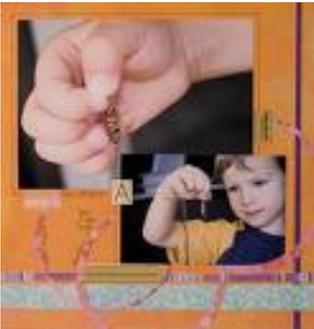


DROP YOUR NEWSPAPERS OFF AT EMMANUEL CENTRE, 25 WINDSOR ST, PERTH ANY TIME DAY OR NIGHT. PLEASE PUT THEM ON THE VERANDAH. RECYCLING NEWSPAPERS SAVES TREES AND KEEPS EMMANUEL FUNCTIONING

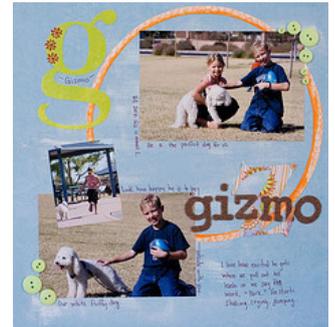
SCRAPBOOKING DATES 2008

It is on again at Emmanuel Centre.

FREE



You do not have to feel **creative**.
These classes will show you
how to do it
with
style.



Tuesday	29 th July	11 am – 1.00 pm
Tuesday	26 th Aug	11 am – 1.00 pm
Tuesday	23 rd Sept	11 am – 1.00 pm
Tuesday	21 st Oct	11 am – 1.00 pm
Tuesday	25 th Nov	11 am – 1.00 pm

At Emmanuel Centre, 25 Windsor Street, Perth
Bring 6-8 photos for making your scrap book page..

Come along, and bring a friend.
This is for experienced as well as very new scrapbookers.

A Sign Language interpreter will be there.

Contact:

Barbara or Andrea at Emmanuel Centre

9328 9571

(Voice and TTY)