

Volume 8

The Associates Newsletter

Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition

August Edition 2010



*“Go, and with what you have and receive
do all the good you can”*

St Emílie de Vialar

Greetings one and all

As can be gleaned from the various articles in this edition of the Associate Newsletter, much has taken place since the last edition:

- The opening and blessing of the new St Emilie de Vialar Parish Church in Canning Vale
- The closing of the Beaconsfield Community after 107 years of service by our Sisters
- The gathering of Sisters and Associates to celebrate the Feast of St Emilie.

The next big event on the calendar is the launch of *“The Klong Lan Community Education Project Thailand”* on the 15 August. This will be a great opportunity to gather and learn more about the Project and more about the SJA Associates in Australia.

I am looking forward to meeting you all at the launch on the 15th August.

From Sister Jeanette Hevron



All Associates are invited to attend a light afternoon tea
with the Sisters to celebrate our 20th Anniversary
and to launch our Commemorative Project

“The Klong Lan Community Education Project
Thailand”

on

August 15th at 2.30pm

at

Christ the King Parish Hall (behind the church)
Cnr Lefroy Rd & Moran St
Beaconsfield

Please bring a small plate

NOTE: Associates are drawn from friends, relatives, colleagues
and past students of the Sisters.

This will be the perfect occasion to bring along friends from
school days who may be interested in finding out about the
Associates.

For organisation purposes please RSVP

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RSVP: TUESDAY 10 AUGUST 2010

Dear All

With some rather cold, wintery days upon us, it didn't deter numbers attending the Feast Day Mass of St Emile de Vialar on Sunday 20 June. Father Hugh Galloway, a long-time friend of the Sisters and Associates celebrated Eucharist for us at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Palmyra.



From the Editor

There were some very special moments throughout the Eucharist and thought provoking insight in Fr Hugh's Homily which I found challenging and very comforting.

The Sisters and Associates renewed their Vows and Commitment respectively, and after Communion we viewed a PowerPoint presentation paying tribute to the mission and history of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition.

Prior to the Final Blessing, Sister Margaret Anne Beech called upon Sister Noelline Haung Yan to come forward and receive a special blessing from Fr Hugh, who invited us all to join in, as Sister Noelline was soon to embark on



her new mission to Thailand (see picture below).

Following the celebration of Eucharist, we all enjoyed a lovely 'finger food' luncheon in the Parish Hall which allowed us to catch up with old friends of the Sisters and Associates, some of whom travelled from Albany.

On behalf of the Sisters and Associates, I extend our thanks to Fr Hugh for his time and presence in sharing his gifts and talents with all present at this special celebration of our Foundress, St Emilie de Vialar.

Our next 'big' event is to celebrate our 20th Anniversary with the launch of our Commemorative Project Thailand. (Details found on the previous page). Associates are asked to remind other Associates to keep this date free and are encouraged to bring along other family members and friends from their school days who may be interested in finding out about the Associates movement.

Please pray for the Sisters, Associates and family and friends who may be unwell, that the Healing Hand of Jesus will comfort and heal them, and give them peace.

Regina Barnett

Beaconsfield and beyond

Sister Margaret Anne Beech

On Friday the 25 June the Sisters gathered with the Parishioners of Christ the King Parish Beaconsfield to celebrate and mark 107 years of the Sisters presence and ministry in the Parish. During the Eucharist, celebrated by Fr Liam Keating, and afterwards in the Parish Hall, there was much reminiscing, appreciation and laughter as stories were shared and memories rekindled.

The early history of our Beaconsfield community states:

'The Sisters' school in Beaconsfield was established as an outstation of Fremantle Convent on the 20 January 1903. The Sisters walked each day from Fremantle and the school was opened with 75 pupils.'

In the early years, the Sisters established the school, met the challenges of overflowing classrooms and the migrant influx of the 50's. They taught music to hundreds of pupils and were consistent in visitation of families, parish activities and assisting those in need. The Beaconsfield home of the Sisters became *'a gathering place'* where all were welcomed and many celebrations occurred.

The decision to close this community has been slowly creeping up on us over the last few years. As of the 16 June 2010, the community completed its task and mission, and Sisters Gemma Grant, Juliana Rattigan and Bernadette Casey moved to other communities.

Sister Pat Bottriell has returned to Thailand and is at present visiting the two Sisters who live in a small village close to the Myanmar border. Sister Noelline Haung Yan has joined the Bangkok community and is at present learning some basic Thai and preparing to work with Refugees from Myanmar.

Recently, Sister Chalmersri Meesri from Thailand joined the Canning Vale community and is attending an International English School. In August she will spend three weeks as a volunteer worker in Our Lady of Mt Carmel School in Hilton. Sister will be present at the launch of *"The Klong Lan Community Education Project"* being organised by the Associate Committee for the 15 August 2010. Hope to see many of you at this event.

The Opening and Dedication of St Emilie de Vialar Parish Church Canning Vale, Western Australia

by Sister Anne-Marie Hughes

Among the nine hundred plus Parishioners and well wishers at the above Ceremony were twenty six very proud and grateful Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition, whose hearts were overflowing with joy, as this first parish in the world was dedicated to St. Emilie de Vialar. It was Pentecost Sunday, the 23rd of May, the day before the one hundred and fifty-fifth Anniversary of the arrival of the first four Sisters on the boat the “Lady *Amherst*”. Coincidentally, the Church is located in *Amherst* Street and the large, beautiful stained glass window of St. Emilie, in its third location, is for the first time visible, not only within the church, as it was in former chapels, but also to passersby from the street.

For Father Robert Carrillo, Sr. Margaret Mary Gannon, S.J.A., Pastoral Assistant and the hardworking, generous and dedicated Parishioners it was the highpoint of ten years of Community Building, fundraising and all the ups and downs associated with the building of their first Parish Church.

Fr. Robert Carrillo, having worked with our Sisters in the Northam Parish, was attracted to the charism of St. Emilie because of her Incarnational spirituality and love and care for the poor. Consequently, with Sr. Margaret Mary as his Pastoral Assistant, the Spirituality of St Emilie was promoted in the Parish. A proof of this formation was the hymn sung during the deposition of the relics of St. Emilie, which was composed by one of the Parishioners, the words of the Refrain reading:

***“St Emilie we pray that like you we can share
God’s love, compassion and care.”***

The Church was solemnly opened and dedicated by the Most Reverend Barry James Hickey, DD, Archbishop of Perth in the presence of Auxiliary Bishop Don Sproxton, Vicar General Brian O’Loughlin, Fr. Michael Moore, SM, Rector of Redemptor Mater Seminary, a large number of concelebrating priests, civic leaders, religious sisters and brothers and the overflowing congregation. The joy, pride, faith, gratitude and unity of the gathering was tangible.

A booklet explaining each step of the Ceremony, a well prepared choir, acolytes, altar servers and the Archbishop’s homily in which he explained simply and fully the significance and meaning of each liturgical action, e.g. The solemn entry, the sprinkling of the walls and assembly with holy water, the covering of the altar with chrism, the placing of the relics etc. enabled each one of us to participate fully in the solemn and beautiful ceremony.

The Archbishop also paid tribute to our Sisters, saying that it was their example and that of St. Emilie which had been the inspiration of the naming of the parish.

During Fr. Carrillo's own comments at the conclusion of the Mass, he thanked all who had helped in anyway, among whom he mentioned the Sisters of St. Joseph of the Apparition for their humble assistance in many, many different ways. He especially mentioned Sr. Margaret Mary Gannon, S.J.A., who had served as Pastoral Assistant since the inception of the parish. She had, he said, been a pillar of St. Emilie's from the beginning. His comments about her were followed by warm applause.

The Ceremony was followed by a sumptuous afternoon tea in the undercover of St. Emilie's School where we all enjoyed fellowship and refreshments.



Deposition of the relic of St Emilie
In the Altar



The Eucharistic celebration

The stained glass window
depicting St Emile.



Our deceased Sisters, Associates, Relatives and Friends

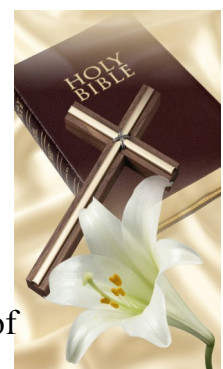
“Eternal Rest Grant to them O Lord”

Anne (Nancy) Hevron
(nee Murrar)

Fay Golding (nee Anderson)

Connie Travia

Wife of Denis (dec'd). Sister-in-law of
Sister Jeanette



***We pray for all our sick Sisters, Associates, relatives and friends,
and for all who have asked our prayers at this time.***

***The Anniversary
of the death of
Emilie de Vialar 24 August 1856***

from Wendy Cronin

Emilie was 58 years of age and very active. Her death was unexpected by those around her. The following is an excerpt of a letter from Sister Clotilde Delas, of the Marseilles community to Sister Francoise Pezet, the Superior of the House in Montans.

J.M.J Marseilles.

25th August, Monday, 1856

My dear Sister Francoise

As Sister Baptistine Vigouroux feels unable to tell you of the fatal blow which has so unexpectedly struck us, she has asked me to write to you on her behalf.

Yesterday, Sunday, 24th August, at about 6 o'clock in the evening, death came and took from us our dear Mother General. What a blow it was for us, dear Sister, to realize that her illness gave us no time to make it known before she died. As recently as Wednesday, 20th August, she sat down to supper with us, and afterwards went up to her room. But it was not until Friday evening, the octave of the Assumption, that she was confined to bed. The doctor thought she had cholera, though there had not been a case in the town.

It was a strangulation of the hernia that she had had for a long time, and it is said that this illness shows all the signs of cholera. It was not until after her death that her real illness was diagnosed, it was too late then to apply a remedy.....

The hernia was caused by the effort Emilie made to carry a heavy sack of flour for distribution to her beloved poor when she was only a young girl. Now many years later, death came to her as a direct consequence of her devotedness and charity. Her passing was so swift that her poor Sisters could not believe she had gone. But throughout the city of Marseilles the reverent word was spread. *"the saint is dead!"*

Following is an excerpt from the reply of Sister Baptistine Vigouroux, to Sister. Francois.

J.M.J.

7th September, 1856

My very dear Sister Francois

It is very painful for me to write when I should much rather talk to you. After the terrible blow which has so recently come upon us, I feel the need of talking to you for a while, dear Sister. It is impossible for me to describe to you in writing all I have gone through since the death of our greatly revered Mother Superior. A sadness has taken hold of me and I can find no consolation except in speaking about her sublime virtues.

Dear Sister, I cannot get used to the idea that she is no longer in the house. Everything reminds me of her. I seek her everywhere and cannot find her. She is no longer here, she who was so necessary to us, who supplied all our needsand further.....I have had the heart of our regretted Foundress embalmed; We shall make a small monument in the chapel beside that of her dear mother. We often pray to God for this charitable heart, who loved God and her neighbour so deeply, and generously pardoned the wrongs done to her. I do not doubt, dear Sister, that already she has received the reward of her good works and that she is watching over us from heaven her congregation and her daughters.....”

If the Sisters in France were feeling desolate, imagine how those in the far flung missionary foundations felt. At the time of her death Emilie de Vialar had set up forty two houses. Australia would be the last foundation in her lifetime. The four Sisters sent to Fremantle were the last that Emilie personally sent out with her words which were always the same:

‘Go, Sisters! And with whatever you have or receive do all the good you can. Do not loose sight of the object for which we came together; God and His greater glory, the service of our neighbour and the earnest desire to be useful to Him.’

It would be many weeks before the news reached Fremantle by sailing ship. The Sisters had only been here a little more than fifteen months. They must have felt very alone even abandoned so far from home in this fledgeling settlement.

One of the four founding Sisters was Mother Julie Cabagniol who later went to Albany. Following is a quote from the document “Mother Julie Cabagniol” by an unnamed Sister:

“One day while she (Sister Zoe) and Sister Emilie ... were alone in the house, they distinctly saw a Sister passing down the corridor. They were astonished, as they knew that it was impossible for the other Sisters to have returned; but on searching the house they found no-one. Later on, letters announced the death of the Mother Foundress, and it was ascertained that at the time of her death (Sunday 24th August, 1856, towards 6pm) coincided exactly with the time they had seen the mysterious religious....”

Emilie's funeral took place on Tuesday, 26th August in the Church of Notre Dame du Mont Marseilles. Her heart was embalmed and placed in a small pyramid shaped urn, now placed in the Generalate House in Rome.

Emilie was buried in the cemetery of St Charles, Marseilles and some years later her body was exhumed and placed in a tomb in the Church of St Pierre, Gaillac. Her body was found to be intact and incorrupt.



Above:
A wax image of St Emilie in the church
of St Pierre, Gaillac.



An adaptation from the booklet “A Way of Life” prepared for Associate members throughout the Congregation.

Sister Gemma Grant

Existing Organisation of the Lay Associate Movement in the Congregation

The lay people who are attracted by the Congregation and the Spirituality of St Emilie, for the most part are formed into local autonomous groups. In Australia, Sisters and Associates together undertake the direction of the groups. They are responsible for ensuring faithfulness to the Spirit of St Emilie. The Sisters are the link with the Provincial Superior of the Province. The local groups are very diverse in the way they function regarding the regularity of their meetings and the name chosen for the group. Often the Lay Members of the same country meet centrally on a regular basis. International meetings are organized by the Congregation's General Government.

Between 2002 and 2007 a Commission composed of laity and Sisters was set up by the General Government to coordinate the groups.

The Life of the Groups – Formation

The members of the local groups meet regularly according to the needs of each group. The regular participation in the various meetings of the local groups offers a general formation in the Spirituality of the Congregation and a deepening of their own life of faith to all the Associate Members who desire to belong to the SJA Family.

The Associate Members live the Charism of St Emilie in a new way which enriches both the Sisters and the entire Church. Through them the Mission develops. Their presence, experience and witness is greatly valued and cherished.

The group meetings take different forms:

Periods of reflection, recollection, prayer, and life- faith-sharing

Occasions for developing friendship and family bonds

Other suitable activities

The meetings enable the group members to:

Study more deeply the Word of God

Be initiated into the life and charism of St Emilie

Study Church documents

Foster commitments within Society, Church and the mission of the Congregation

In this SJA Family, it is true to say that there are many bonds of affection and friendship between the Sisters, Associate Members and amongst themselves. These bonds are strengthened by a deeper understanding of each other and lead to an enriched apostolate.

(continued overleaf)

Associate Commitments within the SJA Family

There are different forms of commitment:

- Some Associate Members, strongly attracted by the Charism and Spirituality of St Emilie, make promises, which they may renew each year.
- Others, well versed in the Charism of St Emilie, live their Christian and Missionary life close to the Sisters without making any special commitment.
- There are also members who, near and far, inspired by St Emilie, accompany the SJA Family by their friendship and their prayer.

All are encouraged to pray particularly to St Joseph, who was the first witness of the Revelation of the Incarnation, and, to St Emilie, the Foundress of the Congregation.

Sr Gemma Grant

Albany Associates write

On the 30 May we held an Associate meeting here in Albany at the Parish Centre and were pleased to welcome Sisters Gemma, Margaret Mary and Krystyna who brought us up to date with “The Klong Lan Community Education Project”. Sr Gemma spoke of the Mission, the plans for the project and the stages of progress to come to the fulfilment of the Mission. It was a pleasure to have Sr Krystyna at the meeting as she could give us her firsthand knowledge of the area and the communities, having spent some time there.

Associates attending the meeting each received a copy of the booklet ‘*Lay Members A Way of Life of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition*’. It is beautifully presented and clearly sets out the formation and spirituality for Lay Associates. We look forward to the possibility of exploring the booklet during our coming meetings in Albany.

On page 14 of the booklet it sets out the meeting in Gaillac in 1997. Rosemary Lorrimer and I attended with Sister Margaret Anne and Sister Helen. The 2001 Chapter the three Associates attending were Lina Chirop (Malta), Margaret Flanagan (England) and myself (Australia). I have kept in touch usually at Christmas with many of the Sisters and Associates I have met over the years and I received a card from Margaret Flanagan’s two daughters telling me of Margaret’s death R.I.P.

The new Early Childhood Learning Centre at St Joseph’s College Albany is to be named after Mother Julie Cabagniol. It is nearing completion and we look forward to its opening. Meanwhile we look forward to the launch of the Associate Klong Lan Project.

Betty Tulloch - Coordinator