

ASSOCIATE NEWSLETTER
NOVEMBER 2006
Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition



This year – 2006 – has been another year of celebration for us, The Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition. It marks 150 years since the death of our Foundress, St Emilie de Vialar. As you will read in the newsletter there have been celebrations throughout the world to commemorate this event. Here in Australia we celebrated with Mass at Saints John and Paul Church in Willetton on Sunday 27th August. It was lovely to see so many of our Associates present at the Mass and luncheon and participating in the social event afterwards. It was especially significant that the Celebrant at Mass was Dom Placid Spearrit Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery in New Norcia. From the early days since their arrival in Australia the Sisters have been associated with the Benedictine Fathers. It was Dom Serra OSB who first invited the Sisters to Western Australia. Therefore we retain strong ties with the Benedictine Order. It was just after their arrival that the first four sisters received the news of St Emilie's death

This year has also been special for us in that our Provincial Chapter was held during the month of October. This was a special time of sharing, of looking back, and of looking forward to the future with Hope. We do this with the support of our Associates who, for so many years have always affirmed us in all our projects. We take this opportunity to thank you for your prayers for our Chapter, and to assure you that our Associates will always hold a special place in our prayers. I would like also at this time to extend blessings to all of you for the coming Christmas Season.

*May the Peace that belongs to Christmas be in all our hearts and
throughout the whole world.*

Sister Angela Basile (Provincial Superior)



Our Associates Write

Thank you for sending the newsletters to us.

Sincerely: *Ray and Merle Bayfield*

Your prayers for all of us are very much appreciated.

Joyce Mahoney, Rita Mahoney, Maureen Robertson



Many thanks for the Associate Newsletter and invitation to the special Mass to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the death of St Emilie de Vialar on 27th August. I will be very pleased to attend. I found the article in the newsletter very interesting and Sister Alma moving on soon after for Kyriat Yearim. May Sister Alma find the mission fulfilling, and we pray for her well-being; also for the sisters in the community. Kyriat Yearim sounds a beautiful holy place. Also I very much liked reading the articles from Sister Irene and Sister Monica. May God bless you all..

Love and prayers *Vee Appleton.*

I am a very delinquent member. I retain, however, a great respect for, and interest in, the fine things you do – and your newsletter. Thank you for all received. I would like to attend the special Mass on 27th August at Saints John and Paul, Willetton.

Yours faithfully, *Mary Carmichael (Sander)*

I would like to attend the Mass on Sunday 27th August and look forward to the fellowship afterwards. I always feel so proud to read my newsletters; it makes you feel the memories of an upbringing at St Joseph's Fremantle, always the wonderful years. Look forward to seeing you.

Love, *Lois Bracewell (Williams)*

Thank you for the Associate Newsletter over the years. I have always enjoyed reading them and look forward to each delivery as they bring back so many memories. Although I have lost Sister Raymond and Sister Leo, I still feel part of St Joseph's. Best wishes to all:

Peg Woodward (O'Flaherty)

Please may I ask the Sisters and Associates to pray for my brother Phillip Martin Anderson who died 15th August 2006. God bless you. Love to all.

Fay Golding (Anderson)

It is a great honour and privilege to have been invited to celebrate the special Mass to commemorate the death of St Emilie

We admire the works of love and service the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition are contributing in building the community of people in Australia and various parts of the world regardless of their age. You indeed make the huge difference and impact in the world we live in today. We pray and support you in any way we can to make the world a better place to live in. Thank you once again for your loving and caring friendship. Take good care of yourselves. God bless you with his choicest blessings.

Love *Lorraine and Alfred Netto.*

Thank you for my June Newsletter, interesting as usual. I was so pleased to catch up on the latest news of my two friends Sisters Irene and Monica and on their positive robust outlook on life. I think Sister Irene was in the novitiate when I was a boarder. Sister Monica is a Northam girl and that makes her special. I was sad to



read of Brian McKenzie's death; he was at Northam St Joseph's school with me, and I have written to Sister Aloysius at Kalamunda. With every good wish to all our Sisters.

Yours sincerely *Audrey Walsh (Chidlow)*

To our dearest Sisters. Thank you for your kind invitation to attend Mass to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the death of St Emilie de Vialar on the 27th August. Once again the "Presence" of Our Lord who brought St Emilie into Kwinana, made it possible and blessed us through you our dear sisters. Thank you all. Our love and prayers as always.

The Willson Family.

My prayers and thoughts are with you all in the sad loss of Sister Clotilde. Shall always remember Sister Clotilde as she was one of my teachers at St Joseph's Fremantle many years ago.

Love Bernadette McKie (Roberts)



WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS

Quite often we receive requests for special prayers for our relatives and Associates who do not keep good health. We would like you to know that we do respond to these requests and we ask you all to join us for the many people who rely on us to pray for them. Very often we receive a positive response from people which confirms that our prayers are answered. Thank you all for being part of this exercise with us



LIVING THE CHARISM

St Emilie's School in Canning Vale is the first school in Australia to be named after St Emilie de Vialar
The following article was presented in the Catholic Education Circular earlier in the year.

A relationship developed between St Emilie's Catholic Primary School in Canning Vale and the St John of God Hospital, Murdoch Community Hospice helping the students live the charism of St Emilie de Vialar Foundress of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition and Patron Saint of the school.

OUTREACH PROGRAM

An integral component of the school's outreach program, the relationship also emulates the particular affinity to working within hospitals and schools that St Emilie displayed during her life time. The significance of the relationship was illustrated recently when five of the Year 4/5 students were invited to participate in the

opening of the 2006 Palliative Care Conference



Meaningful Messages: The St Emilie's students and the leaves they created for the conference.

The students contributed to the impressive backdrop for the conference by creating leaves that were spread over it. Words such as 'hope', 'care', 'life', 'creativity', and 'love' were written on the leaves to represent the students' thoughts about how best to describe the patients and carers of the hospice.

During the official opening ceremony the students sat against the backdrop, standing to share their thoughts (words) with accompaniment from a didgeridoo.



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Circular 2006



AN ASSOCIATE STORY *Leonie Chidlow*



My association with the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition began the day I was born. In the old school room at St Joseph's Northam, hung a large picture of St Rita, Patron of Hopeless cases. Many years later, Mother de Sales who became my religious Superior in Albany told me that she said to St Rita: "I'll turn your face to the wall if you let Mrs Chidlow die." The threat worked and my mother and I both survived, thank God.

When I was six, I joined Sister Agnes's class in the "Bubs!" No pre-primary in 1930. Sister Agnes, I remember as a kind and gentle teacher.

Also a memory of those early years were times at dusk when Audrey, my cousin, and I went out to rescue the convent cow when it strayed from its moorings. In those days it was not unusual to own a cow. Both Audrey and I lived close to the school and the Convent and often saw the Sisters. We enjoyed the occasional hunts for "Daisy"

My primary school years were interrupted by a rheumatic heart condition which kept me bedridden for months and away from school for about three years. After I recovered, I was nearing secondary classes. In the light of current problems and conflicting ideas about education, I consider we received a wonderful education from Sister Leonard who was someone quite special in her teaching and in the values she instilled. She made learning interesting and enjoyable.

Sister Marie Louise, our language teacher, spoke French and Italian fluently and I enjoyed the study of languages.

As Sister Leonard grew up with several brothers she was well equipped to deal with our sporting activities. Also she taught us Folk Dancing and formed a school choir which we enjoyed.

I completed my secondary education at St Joseph's College in Fremantle (with my Leaving Certificate) where I met other sisters whose names will be well remembered by many Associates. – Sister Emmanuel, still with us, Sister Marie Therese, Sister Maurice, later to be known as Sister Sheila, Sister Imelda and many others.

I remember exactly where I was when I heard about the bombing of Pearl Harbour. I was sitting on the edge of a desk in Sister Imelda's classroom. Sister Maurice brought us the news. I had no idea where Pearl Harbour was, nor that most of the American Fleet was located there. As Geography was one of my leaving subjects, it was as well for me that Sister Maurice didn't know that I didn't know.

After a twelve month's teaching monitorship in Meckering in 1942, I was faced with the decision of a three year bond with the Department or following a vocation to join the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition. I made the latter decision which at that time seemed to be God's will for me. After completing my Novitiate in Fremantle and changing my name from Leonie to Sister Leonide, I was transferred to Albany where I spent the next nineteen years.

During these post-war years many European migrant children came to our schools – Polish, Italian, Czechoslovakian, Hungarian and Dutch. These were years of experience both rewarding and enriching. Something which especially interested me, soon after I arrived, was to see the name of my Great-Grandfather Lawrence Mooney on the side of the altar in St Joseph's Church. I find in my own collection of family history that he contributed to the building of the altar. He was one of the first Catholic pioneers in Albany arriving there in 1836.

By 1964 I was back in Fremantle teaching in Parry Street, St Joseph's College. Later at De Vialar and then at St Patrick's.

The move from St Joseph's to De Vialar, the new convent and college was in every way a memorable experience for all of us who took part in it. To pack up and move from one hundred years of living memories and accumulation of all the things that can be collected in one hundred years! Believe me it was a challenge. But together we did it, and I think it bonded us together in a special way, seeing families, things and surroundings disappear. St Joseph's as we had known it, had gone, and the new horizons of De Vialar opened up.

The 1970's found me back in Northam once more where we were teaching Co-Ed with the Marist Brothers. I realized I was at times in the building and the very room where I was born. Fermoy Hospital it had been then. Later St John of God Hospital; now the home of the Marist Brothers. So for me, the wheel had swung a full circle.

Some years later it was from St Joseph's in Northam that I decided to ask for a period of Leave of Absence which seemed to be the way God's Will was leading me. Problems with my health and the advice of my doctor indicated that this was the wisest way to go. Parting from the Sisters and the life I had shared with them for over thirty years was traumatic to say the least. I reckon I cried all the way from Northam to Perth. Guinness Book of Records!

Sister Gabriel and Sister Camille helped me and gave me their support in changing to a different way of life and I was able to find a temporary secretarial position at Parliament House which later became permanent. Over the years the Sisters have kept in touch with me and made me welcome at all times. The close relationship with them all has never changed.



I have been especially blessed in the love and care I received from my own wonderful three sisters who were then living in Perth.

The love of my family is something for which I can never be thankful enough. In later years when my sisters became ill and died, I am so glad I was there to care for them as best I could. Certainly I believe that is how God meant it to be.

With the Sisters of St Joseph, I made lasting friendships over a period of nearly thirty five years and they hold a very special place in my life.

Leonie Childow.



*O come, O come, Emmanuel
come forth from deep within me
with Christmas luminous beauty/
For my heart has become the
sacred crib, the birthing place
of God-among-us.*

*Peace on earth and justice for all
will only become manifest in
our lives when enough of y our
daughters and sons awaken to
your divine design that hasmade
each of us an emerging
Emmanuel*



Our Deceased Sisters, Associates Relatives and Friends

Eternal Rest grant to them O Lord.

Sister Clotilde Crogan : *Niece of Sister Peter Morrissey (Decd)*

ASSOCIATES

Denise Porter

Mary Diggins

Mrs Talbot

Mother of Noel and Merle
Aunt of Sister Zoe. and Kevin Milne

Mary Basile

Mother of Gloria and
Sister Angela

Jack Toohey

Husband of Min:
Brother-in-Law of Sr Olivera

Michael Croll

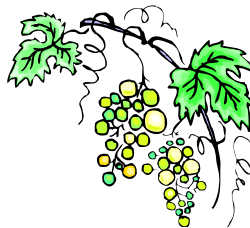
Son of Ruth and Leo.

Tess Yates



REST IN PEACE

Tess Yates died in Fremantle Hospital just as the Newsletter was going to print. Tess was well known to the Sisters involved in the schools in Fremantle. For many years she helped with the various projects on hand. It is interesting to note that Tess came from a family who had been great benefactors of the Sisters in the early days of the establishment of St Joseph's Convent in Fremantle.



A Special Tribute

Mary Basile – 21st April 1911 – 2nd October 2006

Among our deceased Associates mentioned in the Newsletter this month we see the death of Mary Basile, a lady who was known to so many of us. Mary was our oldest Associate and we are privileged to have known such a great lady.



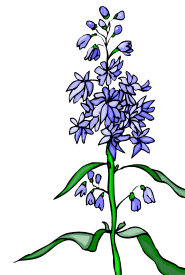
Mary became an associate of the Sisters many years ago. She was born in Fremantle on 21st April 1911, and when her mother died, Mary was 12 years old. Her father asked the Sisters of St Joseph in Fremantle to look after her as a boarder. She remained with the Sisters throughout her school life and became familiar with all of them at that time. Mary had lots of tales to tell of her early connections with the Sisters of St Joseph. She became a well known identity in the Fremantle area and with her beloved husband Tony, ran a mixed business – a landmark for most of us who came from Fremantle.!

Mary remained connected with the Sisters, and eventually her two daughters – Gloria and Angela – attended school in Fremantle, and that contact strengthened the bonds she had with the Sisters and which continued to the end of her life. She was a woman of deep prayer and could turn many of her difficulties into prayer. She had many illnesses during her life time and eventually went to Hubery House five years ago and remained there until her death on 2nd October this year.

. The large attendance at her Mass was indicative of the lives she had touched during her lifetime. She will be remembered by all of us and the Sisters will always be grateful for her contribution to the many projects undertaken by them. To Sister Angela and Gloria – her dedicated daughters – we offer our sympathy and prayers. May Mary now enjoy peace with the God she loved so much.

**"The stars shine joyfully at their set times:
When he calls them they answer, 'Here we are',
They gladly shine for their Creator"**

(Baruch 3: 34-36)



MEETING OF SJA ASSOCIATES IVANHOE – SUNDAY 15TH OCTOBER 2006

The day began at the 9.30am Mass in St Bernadette's Church where Sister Anastasia and I were welcomed by Father John Cunningham

It was a special occasion for the parish as children from St Bernadette's School were there to receive their First Holy Communion, which added to the joy of our day's Mass. We gathered with the Associates in the parish hall where Eileen Sexton, her sister Kathleen, Marie Butler and others had prepared a morning tea, during which we had the pleasure of sharing greetings with one another. When all were seated the meeting began formally,



The theme of the day was the .

CELEBRATION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF ST EMILIE DE VIALAR 1856 – 2006

Reference was made to the Shrine of St Emilie de Vialar in St Peter's Church in Giallac and the sharing of the letter written by Sister Baptistine Vigouroux in Marseilles dated 7th September, 1856, in which she writes that *"I cannot get used to the idea that she is no longer in the house ... I seek her everywhere and do not find her"*. She goes on to say that she had given the direction that St Emilie's heart be embalmed and that: *"We often pray to God before this charitable heart, who loved God and her neighbour so deeply."* We then listened to the Irish Traditional Melody "Be Thou My Vision", which to me has become -almost - *St Emilie's anthem*

This was followed by Sister Anastasia giving an account of her recent visits to England, Ireland and Spain. In England she stayed with our SJA Sisters in Bowden, In Ireland she had the pleasure of being with her sister and family members, and in Spain with her brother and sister-in-law. She shared with us many of the Irish jokes that threw the assembly into gales of laughter.

After this, Eileen, Kathleen, Marie and volunteers served us with a very satisfying luncheon. Around 2pm the gathering began to disperse.

On the following Monday Sister Anastasia and I were invited to visit St Bernadette's Primary School, where the school Principal led us into each classroom to meet the teachers and children. W.A. was represented by Christine (nee Wilson, ex St Joseph's or De Vialar College). We felt welcomed and privileged by the visit. From there Geraldine McKinley drove us to the Mother of God Parish School and the Mary Immaculate School where, in each, the SJA Sister had been the foundational teachers. We offer our thanks to Geraldine for her time and graciousness.

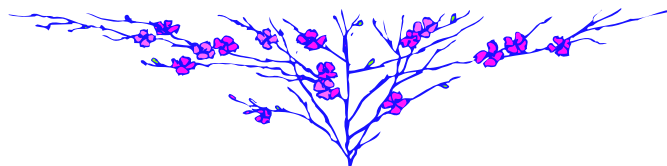
Sister Helen Giles

An Offering of Thanks

Our thanks go to Eileen Sexton

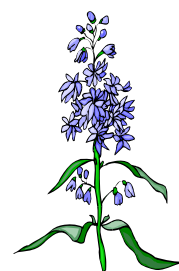
and her team

*who organized our day:
the food and photographs
from which
you see our faces*



Sister Clotilde Crogan will be remembered by many who knew her in the various schools where she was active throughout her life as a Sister of St Joseph of the Apparition.

Sister was born on 27th February 1914 in W.A. She was educated by the Sisters of St Joseph in Fremantle and became a member of the Congregation from 1935. Her Aunt, Sister Peter Morrissey, was already a member of the Congregation and taught for many years in Fremantle – Parry Street.



After her Novitiate Training, Sister Clotilde was assigned to St Anne's school in North Fremantle – her first ministry as a teacher. In the following years she spent time in the schools at : Beaconsfield, Spearwood, Northam, Cunderdin, Mundaring, Kalamunda, Medina, West Ivanhoe until 1977 when she was transferred to Hilton where she became Assistant Librarian. In 1984 she was transferred to St Joseph's Hospital in Bicton where she helped with various duties within the hospital. In 1993 Sister left Bicton and went to Kalamunda to settle into her retirement. She was always a great lover of the garden and Kalamunda was ideal for her to wander through the gardens seeing to various plants and shrubs. She was always very happy in this activity and had a great knowledge of flowers and shrubs of all kinds.

In November 2005, Sister Clotilde left Kalamunda to go to Hubery House in Rossmoyne. She settled in to life at Hubery and lived as she had done all her life – very prayerfully, quietly enjoying the good things that happened to her and accepting the not-so-good things gracefully.

May she rest in peace.!



THANK YOU FOR YOUR KINDNESS

From our Sisters

- "How can I thank you enough for the generous gift that you sent.... to buy the new refrigerator..."
Sr May Rose - Formation House Mandalay
- "I Will send the pictures to your student who helped our children. At present I am taking the opportunity to repair the children's bathroom..."
Sr Mary Win. St Joseph's Orphanage, Zawgyi
- Thank you to Betty Tulloch and the people in Albany who collected \$800 which was sent to the Novitiate House in Pyin Oo Lwin. The money will help to improve the conditions under which the novices and school children are living.
Sr Rita. St Joseph's Novitiate Compound.
- JOHN PAUL QUILT RAFFLE. The winner is Sylvia Nazareth. Congratulations on your win and a big thanks to all who contributed. It will make a big difference to some orphans in Burma. Sister Helen assures me the money is needed and will be used for the orphanage. A total of \$1155.40 was raised, so thanks to my quilter friends and the volunteers who sold the tickets. Pat Bonser.
Willetton Parish.
- Thanks also, to all the Associates and friends who contributed so generously to the appeal made in the March 2006 Newsletter.

Thank you from all the Sisters in Burma



150th Anniversary of the death of St Emilie



To celebrate the 150th anniversary of St Emilie's death, 50 representatives of the Congregation from 47 countries around the world, gathered together in Gaillac, where St Emilie was born and where she founded her congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition. Sister Margaret Anne and I were privileged to represent the Australian province at these celebrations.

The overall theme of the celebration was *"You will be my witnesses"*. The activities of each of the four days of celebration were based around a particular aspect of this theme.

24th August: Theme: *The Spirit of St Emilie*

We began this day with a gathering of the participants in the foundation house, where we were welcomed by Sister Bernadette Galea (Superior General). The national flags of each country were arranged in one place, with the exception of the flag of Lebanon which was given a special place of honour to remind us of our Sisters in that province who were not able to be represented at the celebrations because of the war being waged in Lebanon at that time.

Immediately after this meeting we went to the family home of St Emilie for the official blessing and opening of the Emilie de Vialar Centre which has been set up as a museum containing memorabilia and historical records of St Emilie and the de Vialar family. A guided tour of the home followed the ceremony.

In the afternoon we were taken on a conducted tour of Gaillac, visiting those places which were significant landmarks in Emilie's life.

At 6.30pm, we gathered in the newly decorated chapel in the foundation house for first Eucharistic celebration of the 150th anniversary. The chief celebrant at this Mass was Father Jean-Pierre Rey, who is Vicar for Religious in the diocese of Albi, in which Gaillac is situated.

25th August: Theme : *The Love of God for all people.*



The focus of the morning activities was the devotion of St Emilie to the Blessed Eucharist. We began with the celebration of the Eucharist in the Church of St Peter. The main celebrant was Father Paul de Cassagnac, who is the parish priest of Gaillac and is responsible for the promotion of Vocations in the Diocese. Mass was followed by a period of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament exposed. Our personal reflection was based on the them : Emilie de Vialar and the Eucharist.

During the afternoon we continued the organized tour of Gaillac which took us to the Abbey Church of St Michael and the chateau d'Huteau, with its beautiful gardens and where there is a memorial bust of Baron de Portal, the grandfather of St Emilie, a renowned physician in France at that time.

In the evening we attended a Rock Concert in the Church of St Peter. The concert had been organized by the youth of the Diocese and the Seminarians and was advertised as a "spiritual concert" and "an evening of prayer". The star of the rock Band "En Plenitude" was a newly ordained priest and the band was part of his ministry with young people. The proceeds from the concert went to the refugees in Lebanon.

26th August: Theme *To the ends of the world*

This was a day of pilgrimage to those places near Gaillac where St Emilie first began her missionary activity among the people. We began with a Eucharistic celebration in the Church of St John. the main celebrant was a great-grand nephew of St Emilie – Father Francois Delpit. Concelebrating priests included Father Claude Ferret assistant priest in the parish of Gaillac. Father Antoine Hardy, who is the parish priest of Ars and is the great nephew of Monsignor Dupuch, Bishop of Algiers when Emilie made her foundation there.



Sr Bernadette Galea : Father Francois Delpit

Immediately after Mass, we traveled by bus to Montaban, Toulouse and Albi. All of these places were very significant in the life of Emilie. It was there that she experienced both the joy of seeing her Congregation flourish, and great pain and suffering caused by the treachery of those she trusted.

27th August The highlight of this day was the celebration of Mass in the Abbey Church of St Michael by Monsignor Pierre-Marie Carre, the Archbishop of Albi. He was assisted by priests from the surrounding parishes. The Abbey Church was filled to capacity and the celebration was a very joyous one. At the end of Mass, the children were given balloons, to which were attached sayings of St Emilie. Letting these balloons go up into the sky symbolized the spread of Emilie's missionary spirit throughout the whole world. Following this Mass, was a celebratory luncheon for the sisters and invited guests, including many members of St Emilie's family, was held at the foundation house.

This experience in Gaillac, left me with deep and Lasting impressions. Foremost among these were:

- *a deeper awareness of the internationality of the Congregation and the ease of relationships, between the Sisters who came from very different nationalities and cultures. In this interaction the vitality of the charism and missionary spirit left to us by St Emilie and her founding companions was very evident.*
- *the opportunity to walk the streets of Gaillac, to visit the places frequented by St Emilie, to pray in the Churches where she prayed, all of which brought her more intensely to life as a real person. Being able to meet with descendents of Emilie's family strengthened this sense of a person loved and respected within the family circle and by her own townspeople.*
- *the involvement of the townspeople of Gaillac in the preparation and participation in all the celebrations and their generosity in billeting so many of the sisters in their homes. Their pride in having their "own saint" and their very close relationship with the Sisters were most marked. Truly they are called "friends of St Emilie:.. It is important to mention, also, the support given by all the priests of the parish who were involved in every aspect of the celebratory events.*

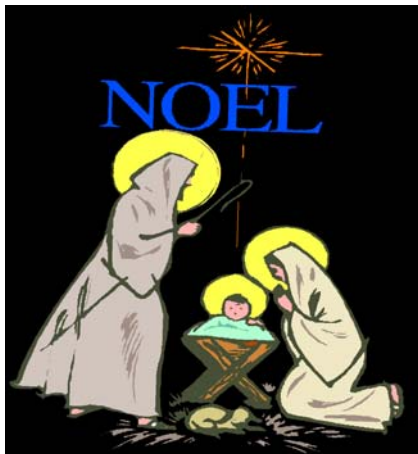
The celebrations concluded on Sunday evening when all the Sisters gathered in the chapel of the foundation house to pray Vespers, in honour of St Joseph. At the gathering, Sister Bernadette Galea presented a final message to the Congregation. This message is taken from a letter written by Monsignor de Gauly, the Archbishop of Albi, in 1839 and I would like to share it with **you.:**



It is wonderful that the little Congregation of St Joseph, which only left the cradle such a short time ago, has already seen such a big development.. I don't know if I am wrong, but I believe that the astonishing success which seems such a marvel, come above all, from the spirit of simplicity and humility which animates the Congregation; it does not seek notice, it does not look for works, nor does it refuse them; it awaits the moment of Providence in which it places complete trust. It does not grow proud, nor boast of its success; it does good in secret and leaves to others the task of proclaiming the success that God gives these works...Fr Mercier has told me that the prelate you were waiting for has given the veil to a few sisters. "What a wonderful future for Africa! Are we not permitted to **HOPE**



Sister Gemma Grant



*May the star of Bethlehem which shone
brightly over the first crib stand guard
over our home, filling it and all the earth with
light and peace.*

*We adore You, O Christ, and we bless you
because by Your Holy Birth You give Hope to
all the world.*

A JOURNEY REMEMBERED - 1856



SCHOOL.
Built in
1853,
extended in
1871
Demolished in
1984

From 12th – 17th October, 2006, I was privileged to attend the celebrations to remember 150 years of St Brigid's school in Gisborne. Victoria where I had spent nearly nine years teaching

In 1950. the pioneer Sisters – Sister Marie Therese, Sister Rita and Sister Leo were warmly welcomed by the small community and set up school again – it had been closed for three years after the retirement of an elderly lady who was the sole teacher for many years. From small beginnings, the number quickly grew and the school gained in reputation.

During our time spent in the school at Gisborne, Sisters Cecilia, Xavier and Damian followed those who left Gisborne to return to Western Australia.

I arrived in Gisborne on Christmas Eve, 1954, and loved the country atmosphere and friendliness of the people. In January 1955, Sister Marie Therese and Sister Rita returned to W.A. leaving Sister Leo, Sister Madeline and me to carry on the good work begun. Since my return in 1963 Gisborne has grown from a country village to a busy outer suburb of Melbourne! There are now two Catholic schools with about 400 pupils, the local Government school's numbers have increased dramatically, and a large High School has been built!

During my few days away in October, I was the guest of a couple I had taught, and met again many others who had been pupils of the Sisters. My host and hostess could not do enough for me and as a result I was taken on a tour of the township which, when I was there, was a little village, and I had to visit the homes of their three children to meet them and their families.

A JOURNEY CONTINUES

2006

*With Faith
We grow
and
Learn.*



For the main function, a huge marquee was set up on the spot where our convent had been. It was there that a huge crowd attended a concelebrated Mass on Sunday 15th October, Monsignor Tims who grew up in the area spoke of his happy childhood, catching rabbits, fishing in the creek etc. and many ex-students identified with this exploits!

After Mass a barbeque lunch was provided in the school grounds (800 had been catered for). It was here that many friendships were renewed; and exchanges of "Do you remember the day...?" were the topic of conversation. In the parish hall and in some classrooms photographic displays, dating from 1920, were set up. This was a source of great interest, and memories were revived. The earlier photos depicted grandparents of many of those in attendance. To commemorate this event a calendar of photographs was printed and a D.V.D. made by one of the teachers of a hymn she composed for the Mass.

On Monday I was a guest at the school assembly where I was plied with questions, some very interesting, even from six year olds. Four of the senior students, (Year 6) took me on a tour of the grounds and the classrooms and it was not difficult to answer their questions, which, to say the least were dramatic. Celebrations ended by having

*Amidst the sounds of Christmas
– the ringing of bells and the
– singing of carols –
we recall that Christ was
born at a moment when all
things were in stillness.
While our hearts are full of the sounds
and the excitement of
Christmas,
help us to create in them small silent
places for Christ to be born
again in us.*

Sister Monica Kirby



*O Little Town of
Bethlehem, remind us to be
like you if we desire'
to make the miracle of
Christmas appear in our
busy and noisy world.*

'Tis the season for all to rejoice

There is
a Child
born for us
A Son given
to us,
Prince
of
Peace



Wondrous is the magic of love and light in these days of Christmas, when the darkness of night has become as bright as day the glow of countless coloured lights. Evergreen trees, clothed with star-glittering, decorations urge each one of us to robe ourselves in luminous love. Christmas music, in its ageless beauty, calls us to become living melodies of the mystery of the Emmanuel, God-among-us. Christmas gifts invite each of us to become like Christ, the Gift of God, to our family, friends and neighbours.

*Rejoice and sing, O you People of the Promise, for
greater than any Gift of the Magi is the Gift of Yourself given to those you love and to the World.*



*May the Peace and Joy of Christmas
be with you always.*

