

The miraculous story of baby Angeer



Left to right: Bishop Daniel Abot; Elizabeth, a “foster” carer; Adhieu, Angeer’s “foster” carer; Roda, a “foster carer”; Angeer holding an image of herself at her Prep graduation; and, The Rev’d Mary Ajook who oversees the care of the South Sudanese orphans when Bishop Daniel is absent from Uganda (image taken in Uganda in April 2024)

Please be aware that this reflection may be distressing for some readers.

I am dictating this as I sit under a tree outside my parents’ home in Shrikat, a new suburb of Juba, the capital of South Sudan. I am visiting my mother because she is unwell, suffering paralysis on one side of body from a suspected stroke.

It is hard to get a wheelchair in South Sudan. They are also very expensive. So while I was in Kampala, the capital of Uganda, visiting South Sudanese orphans whom our Diocese supports, I bought her a wheelchair.

There are currently 13 South Sudanese orphans in Uganda and 11 orphans in South Sudan – both boys and girls – ranging in age from seven to school graduate age. Some of these orphans live in a children’s home and some live in the homes of “foster” families.

I am grateful to Anglican Aid Abroad in Brisbane, The Parish of Dalby, the Anglican Men’s Society and individual parishioners, as well as HumeRidge Church of Christ in Toowoomba, for their ongoing support of the orphans.

Most of the parents of these children died in civil war in my country.

The money generously given pays for their school fees, accommodation, food, clothing and other basic needs.

I started caring for the orphans in 2016 when I was serving as the honorary Bishop for the Diocese of Duk.

After decades of war there are thousands of orphans, including thousands in the Diocese of Duk alone.

I remember speaking to Bishop Cam about the situation in 2015. I shared that I had to do something, but felt so overwhelmed. Bishop Cam said, "Let's pray about it."

Then in 2016 I took a first step after much prayer and Bishop Cam's support.

I decided to start with 10 children, choosing kids from the most disadvantaged communities.

Then on 28 November 2017, 56 women and children were killed and 53 were abducted, leaving more than 10 children without parents.

Two of these orphans are girls now living with "foster" families – one in Uganda and one in South Sudan.

I found these two girls as babies, one four months of age and one six months of age, lying next to their dead mothers in a village that was attacked.

I visited the village as soon as I could the same day, at around 6am, after I found out its people had been attacked.

I found these baby girls two hours after their mothers had been shot.

One of these babies, six-month-old Angeer, had been shot in the arm. She was conscious, but unresponsive.

Because I had been flown from Juba in a Mission Aviation Fellowship plane, I was able to arrange for baby Angeer to be airlifted to a hospital in Juba.

She was held lovingly in the aircraft on the way.

It was miraculous Angeer did not die from dehydration because it was summer and well over 30 degrees.

We arrived in Juba at 6pm, 12 hours after I found her.

She was rushed into the surgical theatre where the doctors operated and put a cast on her arm.

She awoke at 11 o'clock the next morning.

Every time a woman walked into the ward, Angeer would look hopefully and then start crying when she did not see her mother.

This was too much for me to bear and I had to leave the ward at least three times because I was crying.

Even now as I dictate this story, I start crying at this memory. It has really affected me.

Angeer was discharged after a month in hospital and lived with her father for two years until he died by suicide.

He was unable to cope with the tragic loss of his young wife and caring for Angeer and her three older siblings.

After she was discharged, I bought her father a cow so Angeer could be given milk.

I checked in on Angeer, seeing her in her home monthly while I did my pastoral visits.

After her father died, Angeer ended up in a camp in Uganda, where I visited her as often as I could.

In 2018, I was invited to speak in Toowoomba at a Mothers Union conference – I was asked to share about what I did as Bishop for the Diocese of Duk.

I explained to Mothers Union members that what I had to share would be confronting.

After I told my story, a Mothers Union leader approached me offering to privately sponsor Angeer's care and education.

Because of this generous offer I was able to arrange for Angeer to move from a camp and live with a "foster" family.

Angeer is now eight years old and in Year 1 in Kampala.

When I visited her in Kampala recently, she excitedly ran around telling the other students, "My dad is here."

She is happy and doing well. She is easy going and funny – always making people laugh.

I need help from an *anglican focus* reader with governance experience to assist me with setting up a registered charity so the orphans I am helping care for can be better supported.

Editor's note: If you are able to assist Bishop Daniel, please contact the *anglican focus* editor, Michelle McDonald, via focus@anglicanchurchsq.org.au.

Called to flourish?



"However, two constants that have helped in much of my life's journey are the ongoing sense that I am profoundly known and loved by God; and that I am called by God to use my little abilities, collaboratively with others, to make a difference for good," (Bishop Cam Venables)

In February each year the bishops gather for a few days with Anglican school principals in what has become known as "The Heads Retreat". It is a wonderful time of shared prayer and conversation in which each participant can be encouraged and challenged in life, faith, and leadership. Four sessions of small-group discussion unpack a book that has been read before we arrive, and I found this year's book filled with insight for both schools and parishes.

The book is titled, *Flourishing Together: A Christian vision for students, educators and schools*. It was jointly written by Andy Wolfe, who is the Executive Director for Education in the Church of England, and Dr Lynn E. Swaner, who is the Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer for the Association of Christian Schools International.

Early in the book the writers suggest that schools and individuals can be "called", "connected" and "committed" and each of these terms were unpacked with a constant reference to human "flourishing". I found the affirmation that we are each called by God to flourish to be provocative because "calling" evokes Jesus calling fishermen on a beach to follow him and make disciples. Jesus did not say, "Follow me...and flourish!" That invitation to follow is described in each of the Gospels ([Mark 1.16-20](#); [Matthew 4.18-22](#); [Luke 5.1-11](#); and, [John 1.35-42](#)) and I think God continues to call all of humanity to follow Jesus. But why do we "follow"?

The writer of Acts remembers Paul talking to a group of curious Athenians and affirming that "in God we live and move and have our being..."([Acts 17.28](#)). This is a present tense affirmation and expresses an understanding and experience of life with God now, not just a future life with God after death. Do you and I have that same sense that in God we live and move and have our being?

In contrast, John's Gospel remembers Jesus saying that he had come for people to "have life, and have it abundantly" ([John 10.10](#)), and I think abundant life suggests human flourishing. After water, food, shelter and love...what do you think is needed to flourish as a human being?

My initial thoughts focus on "identity" and "purpose" and some of these can shift through time, while others remain constant. The things that shift can sometimes be easy to acknowledge, while others are harder.

An easy thing to acknowledge would be that I grew up in the UK and used to support the Welsh Rugby Union team in international competitions, but I left the UK 38 years ago and am now an Australian who barracks for the Wallabies! A harder thing to acknowledge is the reality of my children now being adults and living away from home. As a father I used to be their advocate, encourager, protector, taxi driver, and more – but, now they rarely need any of these things from me.

Many retired friends have suggested that life can be a challenge in retirement because human identity and purpose can be deeply grounded in work. I think this is sufficiently true to reinterpret Descartes' assertion, "I think, therefore I am!" (*Cogito ergo sum!*) to, "I work, therefore I am!" (*Laboro ergo sum!*). When this is true, and we are no longer able to work, then who are we?

However, two constants that have helped in much of my life's journey are the ongoing sense that I am profoundly known and loved by God; and that I am called by God to use my little abilities, collaboratively with others, to make a difference for good...and I hope that these resonate with you.

On the last evening of The Heads Retreat I journalled with the discipline of alliteration to explore some elements of Christian faith that I think enable human flourishing. I'd love to hear your thoughts about what I have omitted as I suggest we are each called: to be **kind** ([Galatians 5.22](#)); to be **compassionate** ([Luke 10.29-37](#)); to be **curious** ([Matthew 22.37](#)); to be **creative** ([Genesis 1.26-27](#)); to be **collaborative** ([1 Corinthians 12.12-26](#)); and, to be **courageous** and **committed** ([Luke 9.23-24](#)).

What do you think?

“I knew a simple soldier boy”



Image of Siegfried Sassoon by George Charles Beresford (1915) (George Charles Beresford, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

Please be aware that this reflection may be distressing for some readers.

I knew a simple soldier boy
Who grinned at life in empty joy,
Slept soundly through the lonesome dark,
And whistled early with the lark.

In winter trenches, cowed and glum,
With crumps and lice and lack of rum,
He put a bullet through his brain.
No one spoke of him again.

You smug-faced crowds with kindling eye
Who cheer when soldier lads march by,
Sneak home and pray you'll never know
The hell where youth and laughter go.

“Suicide In The Trenches” by Siegfried Sassoon,
The Bishop tells us: ‘When the boys come back
‘They will not be the same; for they’ll have fought
‘In a just cause: they lead the last attack
‘On Anti-Christ; their comrades’ blood has bought
‘New right to breed an honourable race,
‘They have challenged Death and dared him face to face.’

'We're none of us the same!' the boys reply.
'For George lost both his legs; and Bill's stone blind;
'Poor Jim's shot through the lungs and like to die;
'And Bert's gone syphilitic: you'll not find
'A chap who's served that hasn't found some change.
'And the Bishop said: 'The ways of God are strange!'

"They" by Siegfried Sassoon

Siegfried Sassoon was an English soldier during World War I. Born into a wealthy Jewish family, before the war Siegfried lived the life of a member of the landed gentry: fox-hunting, playing cricket and golf, and writing romantic verse.

While fighting the war he was decorated for bravery because of his actions on the Western Front. He also became severely depressed as he came to terms with what war was like in actuality compared to the jingoistic descriptions that were being peddled back home. In 1917 he wrote a [Soldier's Declaration](#) that called for an end to the war. The authorities responded by placing him in a hospital for the mentally ill.

His poetry not only describes the horrors of what he saw in the trenches, but also uses satire to bring to the light the disconnect between what he was observing and the romanticised versions of the war that were peddled at home. To this end, in "Suicide in the Trenches" he takes aim at the smug-faced crowds who attend military parades and in "They", the bishops of the Church of England who used religious language to justify and glorify the war and made no efforts to bring it to an end.

When I was young, the main speaker at Anzac Day commemorations in my hometown was a World War I veteran who told us that the day had two purposes. Firstly, it was day for him to remember his mates and for us to support him in that process. And secondly, it was a day for the rest of us to heed his call that there should never be another war. It was a day for promoting peace-making because war was too costly an affair to consider as an option.

For the first half of my life our nation heeded the Anzac Day call to be peacemakers and more often than not our soldiers went into theatres of war to be part of peace-keeping missions.

Since the turn of the century, however, it seems to me, our behaviour has pivoted and we have become one of the first nations, and are often among the only nation to turn up to a number of wars.

It also seems to me that Anzac commemorations have become more jingoistic and have been used to promote nationalism instead of peace-making.

So as Anzac Day rolls around once more I pray that the day will reflect the desire of that War World I guy who used to address our hometown commemorations. And I pray that those who turn out to honour Anzac Day will also find themselves at the rallies and events that are calling for peace in our time.

First published in the Cathedral Precinct eNews on 22 April 2024.

Immediate support is available for those who may be distressed by phoning Lifeline 13 11 14; for Veterans and Families from Open Arms 1800 011 046; and, in a crisis call 000.

Appointment of Assistant Bishop



"Sarah is well known across the Diocese. She has been active in the Diocese of Brisbane throughout her life. As a young person, her faith was nurtured in the Parish of Nambour and she went on to graduate from St Margaret's Anglican Girls School," says Archbishop Jeremy Greaves (The Rev'd Canon Sarah Plowman is pictured at St Francis College on 9 April 2024)

Dear sisters and brothers,

Following considerable prayer and with the concurrence of the Diocesan Council I am pleased to announce that the Reverend Canon Sarah Plowman has accepted my invitation to be an Assistant Bishop in the Diocese of Brisbane and to serve as Bishop for the Northern Region.

Sarah has a Bachelor of Applied Science QUT (1993), a Graduate Diploma of Education QUT (1996), and a Bachelor of Theology CSU (2010). Sarah studied at St Francis College and was ordained deacon in 2004 and priest in 2005.

Since her ordination Sarah has served in the following ministries:

- Chaplain All Saints' Anglican School 2004-06;
- PTO Wynnum 2006-08;
- Associate Chaplain, Anglican Church Grammar School 2008-09;
- Chaplain, Cannon Hill Anglican College 2009-19;
- Honorary Canon, St John's Cathedral 2014-18;
- Residentiary Canon, St John's Cathedral 2018-20;
- Mission Chaplain — Director of Ordinands and Vocations 2020-21;
- Mission Chaplain, Director of Discernment and Formation from September 2021; and
- Honorary Canon, St John's Cathedral from 2021.

Sarah is well known across the Diocese. She has been active in the Diocese of Brisbane throughout her life. As a young person, her faith was nurtured in the Parish of Nambour and she went on to graduate from St Margaret's Anglican Girls School, where the Sisters of the SSA had a lasting impact on her life. As a young adult, she was involved in leading Diocesan youth ministry activities, including Youth Synod and The Gathering. She also led a local youth group, ran a deanery camp and was elected to Diocesan Council.

Sarah studied science (physics and mathematics) at QUT before training and working as a teacher. This experience as an educator well prepared Sarah for ministry in schools.

After studying theology at St Francis College, Sarah was ordained a deacon in 2004 and ordained priest in 2005. While Sarah has worked as a Chaplain throughout much of her ordained ministry, she has remained actively engaged in her local parishes throughout that time. She has been a Canon of the Cathedral since 2014 and her most recent role has given her a good sense of a variety of parishes from across the breadth of the tradition in the Diocese.

As well as serving on Diocesan Council for a time, Sarah was instrumental in bringing the Chaplain's role at Cannon Hill Anglican College into the Senior Leadership team — both have given her experience in governance at a senior level.

Sarah brings knowledge of and experience in schools, which continue to be a vital part of the Diocesan mission. Her knowledge and passion in this space will be very helpful as we seek to work creatively with our schools in mission, and as the regulatory landscape for schools continues to shift and change.

During her time as Director of Discernment and Formation, Sarah has brought fresh ideas, new systems and rigorous processes to the selection and formation of clergy for the Diocese. This has included excellent work with candidates for whom English is not a first language. She has demonstrated creative and strategic thinking as well as maintaining a good working relationship with the episcopal team. She has also developed good relationships with parish clergy across the Diocese and across the breadth of Anglican expressions in the Anglican Church Southern Queensland.

I am grateful to Sarah for answering the call to serve the clergy and people of the Diocese in this new way and to apply her insights gained through ministry in varied contexts. I gladly welcome her to the episcopal team.

It is my intention, God willing, to consecrate Sarah as a Bishop in the Church of God at the opening Eucharist of the Diocesan Synod on Friday 21 June 2024, at 7.00pm. We will observe the Feast of St Alban (22 June) at that Synod Eucharist.

Please join me in praying for Sarah and her family as she prepares for this important new ministry in the life of the Diocese.

Yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend Jeremy Greaves KCSJ
Archbishop of Brisbane

Addressing Church stereotypes, silence, blaming and lack of recognition



"While this is a hard story to read, the increasing willingness of people in the Church and in the wider community to speak openly about domestic and family violence, its presence and its consequences, is helping to address the stereotypes, silence, blaming and lack of recognition for those suffering in abusive relationships, including children," (The Ven. Dr Lucy Morris)

Please be aware that this reflection may be distressing for some readers.

"Sometimes it's really hard to say the words and accept the reality that domestic and family violence is really happening in a relationship. Sometimes, the awareness comes out of the blue, the 'knowingness' about what is happening. Sometimes, what someone has lived with all their life is so normal, it's hard to get that it's actually unacceptable." These are the words from a survivor of domestic and family violence, who never saw herself as a victim, nor as someone who was a survivor.

*Jan was a bit older than her husband. They had two children and they'd moved interstate three times to try fresh starts. Her husband had experienced a bad accident and his behaviour consequently worsened. He hadn't been well since. He'd always made complaints that she was not good enough, and she was constantly reminded she was never good enough, but it became worse. He told her that she was a useless mother, wife and home-maker, and that she was letting the family down by working as a cleaner. His income stopped when he wasn't well enough to keep working and she became the sole income earner. He enquired about what she was doing all the time going to church, about whom she was she talking to and what about. Their friends drifted away because it was always so uncomfortable with him; he was either over friendly, over patronising or over critical. The children started home schooling. People were concerned because they never answered the phone and their home became unkempt and chaotic.

Jan finally disclosed her unhappiness to her parish priest, while (at that stage) unable to accept there was any domestic and family violence, saying her husband was mentally ill, and nothing else. The Department of Child Safety became involved, and the children were taken into care. Jan's fear of her husband's violence became more pronounced and a "protection order" was given by the court. She made him leave home and tried to keep herself safe. But the terms of the protection order were not kept by the husband, with Jan also remaining in contact with him. His counselling fell over because he refused mental health treatment believing there was nothing wrong with him and that he was being wrongly accused. The violence escalated and the coercive control was punishing and relentless. Her parents became frightened. Jan's father had a heart attack from the stress.

The parish priest established their own system of support to assist, while alerting the appropriate authorities, liaising with the police as appropriate, providing parish resources and offering practical support with emergency relief, bill paying and checking on Jan and the children and those in her parish support group (support network with other women was set up with her consent, to make sure she was safe and coping).

The priest also worked with the local Anglican school and its chaplain and managed to have the children attend the school at special rates to enable them to go to school. They were traumatised and didn't find it easy to settle in and belong. Jan regularly attended church for a place to pray and worship and to be with others who might become friends.

In Jan's story, the domestic and family violence encompassed mental and emotional abuse, with consistent and strongly controlling behaviour. Jan was isolated from friends and family members, her phone was checked and she was not allowed to take cleaning work if her husband objected. He also frequently forced her to change jobs and took her money.

Jan's husband was also violent in other ways, with shouting and abusive language, threatening behaviour, and he sexually and physically assaulted her. There was also financial and spiritual abuse. He would regularly demand his rights with a Biblical justification.

Did it "work out" in the end?

Jan eventually had her children restored to her care. Her husband left her, returning to his family of origin in another state.

Jan's grief around her marriage "being broken" and her beliefs that she had "betrayed" her marriage vows and "broken her promises" to God were profoundly influential in her initial inability to accept the priest's help offered to her. These beliefs were grounded in what some parts of the Church espoused regarding the role of the Church, the Bible, the "sanctity of marriage" and family.

While this is a hard story to read, the increasing willingness of people in the Church and in the wider community to speak openly about domestic and family violence, its presence and its consequences, is helping to address the stereotypes, silence, blaming and lack of recognition for those suffering in abusive relationships, including children. Like all complex matters, there is no "quick fix". However, our Diocese is committed to implementing the ["Ten Commitments for Prevention and Response to Domestic and Family Violence in the Anglican Church of Australia"](#) in parishes, and educating, supporting, enabling and encouraging victims-survivors to share their stories, break free of any "assumed stigma" and to flourish.

Our writings, sermons, prayers and liturgies, our practical ministries and our welcome to all who come looking for safety from all sorts of violence should always be clear and consistent. We expect our Church to be clear, too, in its expectation of ensuring ongoing preventative actions, training for people involved in our parishes, and for safety and policy development to be fit for purpose.

* Pseudonym used for privacy reasons.

Author's notes: Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month is commemorated annually to raise awareness of the impacts of domestic and family violence and the support available to those affected. To mark the start of Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) Prevention Month, join in a candlelight vigil on Wednesday 1 May between 6pm and 8pm at St Francis College in remembrance of those who have lost their lives as a result of domestic abuse. Keep an eye on the *anglican focus* [Events page](#) for other events.

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland is committed to the implementation of the "[Ten Commitments for Prevention and Response to Domestic and Family Violence in the Anglican Church of Australia](#)" as our Church's response to domestic and family violence.

The following 24/7 telephone services have a long track record responding to people experiencing domestic and family violence:

DV Connect 1800 811 811 helps Queenslanders wanting to leave an abusive relationship.

1800RESPECT is a national service providing information, referrals, and counselling.

If you, or the person you are assisting, are in immediate danger, call the Police on 000.

Editor's note 29/04/2024: Text amended.

Archbishop on way to Torres Strait Islands to witness climate change impacts



Archbishop-elect Jeremy Greaves being greeted by senior Saibai elder Aunty Dr Rose Elu in Kalaw Kawaw Ya at the entrance of St John's Anglican Cathedral in Brisbane on Saturday 16 December 2023 when he was installed as the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Province of Queensland

Archbishop Jeremy Greaves has today embarked on a tour of low-lying Torres Strait Islands to witness the impacts of climate change, with senior Saibai elder and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council executive member Aunty Dr Rose Elu accompanying him as a guide.

Archbishop Jeremy said that the first legs of his visit will involve meeting with locals on low-lying Poruma and Masig.

"I have been anticipating this trip for some time and will be hearing from Torres Strait Islander peoples and seeing the impacts of climate change on their lives and livelihoods," Archbishop Jeremy said.

"Climate change disproportionately impacts nations and people who are already most disadvantaged.

"When we think about climate refugees, and those at risk of becoming climate refugees in the future, we tend to think of people from places far from Australia.

"The Torres Strait Islands are part of our own country and it is important that all Australians know just how close to home these impacts are and to understand that Torres Strait Islander peoples have the solutions."

Aunty Dr Rose is currently part of the seminal class action, led by Uncles Pabai Pabai and Paul Kabai, arguing the Commonwealth owes a duty of care to Torres Strait Islander peoples to take reasonable steps to protect them from the harms caused by climate change.

Aunty Dr Rose has been assisting the legal team as they argue that the court should require the Commonwealth to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to a level that will protect Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The final hearings and the closing arguments for the landmark case were held in Cairns last week.

Aunty Dr Rose said that she looks forward to introducing Archbishop Jeremy to people on the islands so he can hear firsthand about climate change's impacts.

"Archbishop Jeremy has a deep sense of the cultures and protocols of Torres Strait Islander peoples," Aunty Dr Rose said.

"He cares about us and has demonstrated that he is our friend.

"I have shared with the Archbishop how rising sea levels are severely impacting our low-lying islands and asked him early last year if he would accompany me to the Torres Strait Islands so he can see the impacts himself."

Archbishop Jeremy will also be accompanied by his midwife spouse, Josie Greaves, and the Anglican Church Southern Queensland's Justice Unit coordinator, Peter Branjerdporn.

Archbishop Jeremy has a strong background in social justice having worked closely with refugees and First Nations community members for decades, particularly during his time serving as a priest in the Northern Territory.

Archbishop Jeremy's grandfather, Bishop Walter Baddeley, served as the Bishop of Melanesia between 1932 and 1947.

The tour has been funded in part by a grant provided by the Anglican Board of Mission in support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mission.

Archbishop Jeremy will arrive on Poruma on Wednesday 8 May, on Masig on Friday 10 May and on Thursday Island on Saturday 11 May.

During his visit, the Archbishop will also meet and worship with Anglicans on the islands.

Editor's note: This year's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) [theme](#) is "Now more than ever". Visit the [Reconciliation Australia website](#) for [posters and resources](#) and to [register](#) your NRW events. Keep an eye on the *anglican focus* "[Events](#)" page for forthcoming Anglican Church Southern Queensland NRW events.

Anglicare given the green light for \$13 million youth homeless accommodation



The property will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and include 24 studio apartments and six one-bedroom apartments for couples or small families. Ms Cooke said the property will incorporate best-practice design and management modelling

Anglicare Southern Queensland has received Development Approval for a \$13 million specialist youth homeless accommodation service in Logan that aims to address the escalating housing crisis.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Chief Executive Officer Sue Cooke, said that the 30-unit accommodation project on Manila St, Beenleigh is designed to support young people aged 16-25, who are either homeless or at significant risk of homelessness.

“Sadly, nearly a quarter of Australians experiencing homelessness are aged between 12 and 24. In particular, the South Brisbane-Logan corridor has a significant shortage of immediate need accommodation for young people facing homelessness,” Ms Cooke said.

“Anglicare Southern Queensland is committed to doing all that we can to help alleviate the housing crisis. We are pleased to commit to this significant project, that will support both the immediate need and the long-term success for vulnerable young people.”

Anglicare Southern Queensland is a significant provider of youth homeless accommodation and services in Southeast Queensland, providing specialised services in Beenleigh, Cleveland and Mt Gravatt, including 46,511 hours of support for women and young people experiencing homelessness in 2022-23.

The property will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and include 24 studio apartments and six one-bedroom apartments for couples or small families.

Ms Cooke said the property will incorporate best-practice design and management modelling.

“The location has been chosen as it’s close to public amenities including shopping centres, business and civic centres, a local sports centre, public green spaces, and has convenient access to public transport,” Ms Cooke said.

“In addition to accommodation, residents will also receive a suite of wrap-around support services to help improve life skills and increase independence, while providing the care and connections these young people need, through a case-planned process.

“We know that with stable housing and the right support network, young people can positively change their life trajectory by securing employment, education, and long-term housing.

“At Anglicare, we’re here to help those at risk to find a home, but we know we can’t do it alone. We are seeking corporate donors and partners to help realise this important community project and welcome in-kind or financial contributions of any size.”

Construction is due to commence in late 2024, creating several local jobs and an economic boost for the area, and is expected to be completed in late 2025.

Editor’s note: For more information on this exciting project, visit the [Anglicare Southern Queensland website](#).

Housing crisis worsens for most vulnerable — Rental Affordability Snapshot released today



"Anglicare Southern Queensland's Chief Executive Officer Sue Cooke said the data captured all rental properties available across the region over the weekend of 16 - 17 March 2024, with the outlook for southern Queensland painting a grim picture"

Anglicare Southern Queensland's latest *Rental Affordability Snapshot*, released today, reveals a deepening crisis that leaves the most vulnerable individuals and families across the whole of southern Queensland without viable housing options.

For the first time, the *Snapshot* includes rental affordability data from across the broader southern Queensland region — and the results are dire.

Anglicare Southern Queensland's Chief Executive Officer Sue Cooke said the data captured all rental properties available across the region over the weekend of 16 - 17 March 2024, with the outlook for southern Queensland painting a grim picture.

"From the 8553 rental properties available across southern Queensland, only 45 (**0.5%**) were affordable and appropriate for households on income support and a total of 759 (**8.9%**) were affordable and appropriate for those on minimum wage," Ms Cooke said.

"Our *Snapshot* shows in some areas households are spending up to and over 80 per cent of their total household income on rent, meaning they are forced to make untenable choices between paying rent or putting food on the table or going to the doctor or to school — all fundamental needs.

"While there was a slight increase in the number of available rentals in the **Brisbane metro area** compared to last year, the number of those properties that were affordable and appropriate for households on income support and minimum wage basically halved compared to 2023.

“The situation is even worse in coastal areas, with **the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, Moreton Bay, and Wide Bay** offering few to no affordable properties.

“For example, on the Gold Coast, there were zero houses available for households on income support, and only four available to households on the minimum wage. It’s a similar situation on the Sunshine Coast.

“Away from the coast, there is almost no availability, or the limited affordable properties in a region may be hundreds of kilometres away in a different town.

“Unfortunately, these figures highlight the stark reality of the cost-of-living crisis on the most vulnerable in our communities. They show there is a pressing need for comprehensive policy reforms at all levels to address the widening gap in rental affordability.”

Anglicare Southern Queensland provides crisis and transitional accommodation for people who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of experiencing homeless and assists more than 48,000 Queenslanders every year.

Ms Cooke said while the housing crisis is being addressed at state and federal level, including the \$2 billion Queensland Housing Investment Fund and the Queensland Housing and Homeless Action Plan, more needs to be done to manage the chronic undersupply of housing and to provide the means for people to obtain safe and secure homes.

“We join the chorus of others calling for the Australian Government to step up and increase Jobseeker Youth Allowance and related payments and for both federal and state governments to invest further in social and affordable housing projects,” she said.

“With the Federal Budget announcement on the horizon, the time for decisive action is now. It is imperative that our national and state policies reflect the basic human right to housing, ensuring that no one is left behind.”

Editor’s note: Read the [2024 Anglicare Rental Affordability Snapshot](#) on the Anglicare Southern Queensland website.

Anglican Church Southern Queensland's SRC opposes "dangerously flawed" and "Trump-like" Bill



"We are especially concerned about the impacts of this Bill on our South Sudanese congregation members who have rebuilt their lives in freedom and safety and actively serve their local communities. We are inspired daily by their resilience, generosity, courage and graciousness, as we are by other refugees within our wider diocesan community," (The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt)

The Migration Amendment (Removals and Other Measures) Bill 2024 has passed the House of Representatives and has been referred to a Senate legal committee, which will hand down a report by 7 May 2024. Read the Senate inquiry submission by the Social Responsibilities Committee (SRC) and find out how you can help.

Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee
Department of the Senate
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Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

The Social Responsibilities Committee
Anglican Church Southern Queensland (Diocese of Brisbane)

Migration Amendment (Removals and Other Measures) Bill 2024

11 April 2024

Dear Members,

This submission is made on behalf of the Social Responsibilities Committee of the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (Diocese of Brisbane).

We are grateful to the members of the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee for the opportunity to respond to the Migration Amendment (Removals and Other Measures) Bill 2024 (the Bill).

We strongly oppose the Bill in its entirety.

It is clear that there is no need for the Bill — the Minister for Immigration already holds the power to remove people and the capacity to facilitate deportations.

It is gravely concerning that the Labor Government is pursuing policy 'on the run' by dropping a dangerously flawed Bill on the opposition and crossbench instead of constructively and collaboratively seeking humane solutions.

The Bill has been rightly and widely criticised for its "God-like" powers and "Trump-like" line by banning citizens of entire countries from applying for Australian visas, including study, travel and business visas. For Christians the term "God-like" connotes compassion rather than such unprecedented race-to-the-bottom callousness.

It is an indictment of the Australian Labor Party that they have sought to rush this Bill while simultaneously reneging on their election promises to treat refugees and people seeking safety more fairly and compassionately.

In [2021 Labor](#) committed to reinstating "an independent Refugee Review Tribunal" and to abolishing "the Immigration Assessment Authority", with the Tribunal "to allow for procedurally fair, simple, affordable and accessible processes and procedures, including in relation to adverse credibility findings, for the review of refugee related decisions" (p.124). While we welcomed the recent announcement of the forthcoming Administrative Review Tribunal, the associated legislation fails to provide procedural fairness. For example, the legislation fails to provide any recourse for the thousands who have received unfair decisions by the Immigration Assessment Authority. The current Migration Amendment (Removals and Other Measures) Bill 2024 will adversely impact many of these vulnerable people. The Labor Government's Bill clearly exposes people, whose protection claims Labor acknowledges have not been fairly assessed by the Immigration Assessment Authority, to refoulement and persecution.

A significant number of people who will be impacted by this Bill if it becomes law are those currently in indefinite detention who have had their claims refused through the so-called "Fast-Track" asylum assessment process, which was implemented by the Coalition Government in 2013. The Bill is widely regarded by organisations supporting refugees and their human rights as a knee-jerk reaction to the case of an Iranian man, known as "ASF17", who is at the centre of a new High Court challenge. This human being has been detained for over a decade after his claim for safety was rejected under "Fast Track", with the Bill conveniently introduced just weeks before the High Court hears his case. The [2021 Australian Labor Party National Platform](#) describes the Fast Track process as one that "does not provide a fair, thorough and robust assessment process for persons seeking asylum" (p.124). We are compelled to ask why the Labor Government is further penalising vulnerable people whose claims are yet to be justly assessed, which the Australian Labor Party formally recognised at a national level in

2021. We call upon the Labor Government to instead introduce or support legislation that upholds its election promises for fairer and more humane treatment of refugees and people seeking asylum.

It is also an indictment of the Labor Government that it would so grievously breach the Refugee Convention; for example, its international obligations under Article 33 by forcing a non-citizen to apply for a passport from their persecuting country of origin and coercing them to return (known as “refoulement”). In its [2021 Australian Labor Party National Platform](#), Labor, under now Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, committed to “procedural fairness ensuring our international human rights obligations are met” (p.123), and we hold Labor to account for this promise.

The Bill callously criminalises the seeking of safety by giving the Minister for Immigration the power to intimidate a person to comply with being deported. Even if the person cannot comply they will be criminally charged and be served with a mandatory minimum one-year jail sentence — serving up to five years imprisonment — as well as a possible fine in excess of \$90,000. We understand that this applies to people who cannot comply because they have legitimate claims for protection from persecution or have grave medical grounds.

A devastating upshot of this is that if the Bill becomes law, it would likely mean indefinite detention, following mandatory imprisonment, for those who are unable to return to their country of origin because of the threat of harm or being medically too unwell.

It is the role of the judicial system, not the government, to punish people who commit crimes. This ‘separation of powers’ exists for a reason, and seeking asylum is legal — it is shameful that the Labor Government needs to be reminded of these two very elementary facts in a Senate inquiry submission.

If it becomes law, the Bill would also impact some of those who have been transferred from Nauru or Papua New Guinea to Australia. It is unconscionable that people who have been forced to endure Australia’s notorious offshore processing regime for up to a decade now face the possibility of being refouled to severe persecution, and possibly torture or death.

If it becomes law, this Bill would also permit refugees to be deported to third-party countries, including countries where they have no connection, leaving them at risk of harm and destitution.

It is also egregious that if it becomes law the Bill would permanently rip families apart, with the Minister being able to intimidate a person to comply with being deported regardless of the impact it would have on their spouse or children. Families would also be separated through what has been widely called a “Trump-like” travel ban.

We argue that the Bill is racially prejudicial and xenophobic, targeting countries such as Iran, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Russia and South Sudan through its “Trump-like” ban. These nations are among other countries, yet to be named by the Labor Government, that do not accept the forcible removal of people, for example, due to an agreement with the United Nations.

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland is blessed with hundreds of South Sudanese Anglicans who are former refugees, including beloved Bishop Daniel Abot who [bravely served](#) with the United Nations in an honorary capacity to help broker peace in South Sudan, as well as priests, deacons and parishioners. As [Bishop Daniel](#) so eloquently puts it:

“I found safety after three long desert journeys and 15 years in refugee camps. Others seek safety by sea or by airplane. However, our plight is the same. Our right to live in safety, freedom and peace is

the same. Our need to rebuild our lives is the same...People have fled their homelands to live in peace and freedom for millennia. As a Christian, I have read in the Gospel of Matthew (Chapter 2) about how even Mary and Joseph fled Bethlehem for Egypt to protect their son, Jesus, from persecution. I am grateful for the generosity, warmth and kindness Rachel and I received when we came here. The many good people I have met in my new Queensland homeland want refugees to be treated with respect and compassion.”

We are especially concerned about the impacts of this Bill on our South Sudanese congregation members who have rebuilt their lives in freedom and safety and actively serve their local communities. We are inspired daily by their resilience, generosity, courage and graciousness, as we are by other refugees within our wider diocesan community, whose freedom and safety the Bill jeopardises.

These folk include people whom our Diocesan community supports and who contribute to our Church, and wider community, in a plethora of ways through their God-given gifts and talents, such as two women who have fled their home country after peacefully and bravely defending basic gender rights.

We call upon the Labor Government to withdraw this rushed, unnecessary, flawed, callous and discriminatory Bill, and we commend all those in Parliament who support the same. We call upon the Labor Government to provide humane pathways for all those whom the Bill, if it becomes law, would persecute, and instead introduce and support legislation that upholds its National Platform and election promises.

Yours sincerely,

The Very Rev'd Dr Peter Catt
Chair
Social Responsibilities Committee
Anglican Church Southern Queensland

Social Responsibilities Committee chair note: Please [contact your Senators today](#) expressing your concern about the Bill and its impacts on our community, especially our South Sudanese brothers and sisters.

Please visit the [Parliament of Australia website](#) for more information on the Bill and to read other submissions.

CHAC community members share their Palm Sunday insights and learnings



Year 9 Cannon Hill Anglican College students Isaac Boyle, Kieran Hammond and Ben Bradshaw making palm crosses for the St Stephen's, Coorparoo community in 2024

Leading up to Holy Week this year, Year 9 Cannon Hill Anglican College students made palm crosses for St Stephen's, Coorparoo and studied the gospels as part of their Palm Sunday studies.

Maria Thompson — Head of Faculty, Life and Faith, Cannon Hill Anglican College

In one lesson students interacted with the four gospel accounts of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, comparing and contrasting them. The students had previously completed a hermeneutical analysis of a parable of their choice, so they had developed their skills understanding biblical texts. Students investigated contextual themes in the gospel readings, including the donkey, the palms, the cloaks, the Old Testament references and the meaning of "Hosanna". They also explored the politics, both Jewish and Roman, to more deeply understand how the people witnessing Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey would have been understood.

We also discussed how the Church today incorporates this into Palm Sunday commemorations and the tradition of the palm cross. This included learning how to make palm crosses so they could be gifted to St Stephen's Anglican Church in Coorparoo for their Palm Sunday services.

The Rev'd Kesh and The Rev'd Catherine Govan from St Stephen's sent us this thoughtful message after receiving the palm crosses:

“Thank you so much to the staff and students for arranging to make the palm crosses for our Sunday Service. They were gratefully received and made such an impact. We appreciate all the time and effort that went into the work and are so thankful you could support us in this way. We wish you all the blessing of Easter and a wonderful start to Term 2.”

Ben Bradshaw — Year 9 student, Cannon Hill Anglican College

I enjoyed making palm crosses and learning about the symbolism related to Palm Sunday. In the picture, I am teaching my friend to make the palm crosses. I am proud to have helped make palm crosses for St Stephen’s and I hope that those who received them at the Palm Sunday service enjoyed them.



Year 9 Cannon Hill Anglican College students Madeleine James, Isla Mulquiney and Charlotte Kim making palm crosses for the St Stephen’s, Coorparoo community in 2024

Charlotte Kim — Year 9 student, Cannon Hill Anglican College

Palm crosses are symbolic of victory and eternal life and were waved high with pride as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. To be able to make these crosses now and distribute them to churches for our community and Christians to keep is an honour and reminds people to welcome Jesus into their hearts and willingly follow him. It was a fun task alongside friends, and a little competitiveness slid into who made the most palm crosses, resulting in many, many crosses.

Isla Mulquiney — Year 9 student, Cannon Hill Anglican College

It was great to have been able to do something practical that benefits our community. It was interesting to learn about the significance of the tradition and the history behind palm crosses. Whilst making the crosses we learnt about how important this custom is to Christians, which made the experience even more memorable. I loved hearing that the church community appreciated the gesture, and it was lovely to have been able to contribute in this small way.

Isaac Boyle Vazquez — Year 9 student, Cannon Hill Anglican College

I felt making these crosses was calming and fun.

Reflections • Tuesday 7 May 2024 • By The Rev'd Sr Gillian Moses SSA

Advisory Council on Anglican Religious Life in Australia meets in Melbourne



Advisory Council on Anglican Religious Life in Australia members meeting in Melbourne in February 2024

Each year Anglican religious communities from around Australia, together with invited orders from other traditions, gather in Melbourne for the Advisory Council on Anglican Religious Life in Australia (ACARLA) Conference. This year, Brisbane was represented by the Society of the Sacred Advent (SSA), the Oratory of the Good Shepherd and the Society of St Francis.

The February conference is a valuable opportunity for religious communities to meet together, pray, socialise and support one another. It is heartening to see the diversity of orders and communities represented, including the Community of Saints Barnabas and Cecilia, Anglican Benedictines from Camperdown Abbey, the Society of the Sacred Mission (SSM), the Community of the Sisters of the Church (CSC) and the Community of the Holy Name (CHN). This year we were joined by representatives of the Melanesian Brotherhood and the Catholic observer from the Family Care

Sisters. Representatives from the Bishops' Meeting are also present. While Bishop Garry Weatherill from Ballarat usually chairs the meeting, he was unable to attend this year, Bishop Kate Wilmot from Perth chaired in his absence.

Anglican Religious Communities have been operating within the Anglican Church for well over a century as Anglican dioceses sought to respond to some of the social challenges of the time. Here in Queensland the SSA began in 1892 responding to an invitation to provide spiritual support to the women and children of the diocese, and especially to work in the field of education for girls. CHN began as the Mission to the Streets and Lanes in Melbourne. Religious Communities also came to Australia from elsewhere, including the Franciscans and the Sisters of the Church. While these communities flourished, particularly in the period between the two World Wars, most have seen a gradual decline in numbers, though not in influence, since then.

Orders such as the SSA and CSC continue to exercise an important ministry through their schools, while CHN offers the hospitality of its Spirituality Centre to the people of Melbourne and beyond. The Franciscans are a visible presence in the Diocese of Brisbane through Cannon Hill Anglican College and the work of the Annerley friary with refugees.

It is a challenging time for many of our religious communities in a context where organised religion is often regarded with suspicion, yet people still identify as spiritual. While some communities like the SSA and SSM are looking at new ways of being a religious community, others are making plans to ensure that the charism and work of their community can continue in the absence of new professions. These challenges require not only great faith, but creativity, as we discern where the Spirit is moving today.

ACARLA is also considering how to support and encourage Christians who feel called to live as single consecrated people and a great deal of work has been done in this area. Increasingly, people are expressing a call to live in this way as professed religious, but not part of a community.

We resolved to ask General Synod to reinstate Religious Life Sunday as a time in the church calendar when vocations to religious life might be prayed for and talked about in parishes and faith communities nationally.

As the members of ACARLA returned home from the conference to our various communities, we left with renewed friendships, a strengthened commitment to one another, and a shared joy in the call to religious life in the Anglican Church.

With the SSA, I am reminded of the need to return to our original charism when we seek to discern ways forward. We are always called to care for the spiritual welfare of women and children and to encourage and develop women's leadership in the Church. Please pray for your local religious communities as we pray for the wider Church.

Courage, creativity and collaboration to dream



Tammy Preston and Michael Stalley recording the Engage All Ages podcast in 2024

I sometimes find myself finishing an intense, and admittedly, one-sided, conversation with the words “Here ends the sermon!” It is a recognition that a conversation, which started off friendly, has become somewhat “preachy”.

It is not hard for me to find that “Sunday morning mode” at other times. The preaching part of my role is in many ways the most visible of what I do and it can feel like much hangs on being good at it. There is some sense of satisfaction in feeling like you have been able to draw people’s attention and lead them to some new understanding. My “party trick” seems to be preaching without notes, which sometimes draws a level of admiration that, if I took time to reflect on it, should be directed elsewhere. I wonder if my use of “Here ends the sermon” might reflect a “dropped mic moment” as if there is nothing more to add!

Dave Csinos is an Associate Professor of Practical Theology at the Atlantic School of Theology in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He writes and speaks on topics such as children and youth, faith formation, intercultural ministry, social justice, and ministry innovation. In his book, *A Gospel for All Ages: Teaching and Preaching with the Whole Church* (2022), Dave Csinos sets out to bring into dialogue the missional disciplines of preaching and intergenerational ministry — to wonder what benefit might come from the engagement of those who practise these disciplines “To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God”.

In some ways, Dave’s intent to bring these disciplines into dialogue mirrors my ministry as someone who preaches and has taken a deep interest in intergenerational ministry. I am aware of the ways we continue to reinforce models of preaching that tend to be one-sided and practised by specially chosen and trained people. I am aware of my desire to be part of a faith community that is more participatory and values the potential for a greater diversity of voices to proclaim the Good News.

I recognise in an ever-increasing complex and uncertain world the benefits of collaboration in forming community greater than I can on my own. I am coming to understand that I cannot make someone learn, but instead can be part of drawing learning out of others. And, that what is learnt should not be determined by my agenda, but by encouraging others to take responsibility for their next step as followers of Christ Jesus through the dynamic action of the Holy Spirit. The following are some of the things that reading Csinos' book and collaborating with others in its content have stood out for me.

"Intergenerational" is not code for a "Children's talk"! My sense of the discussion among those who are practitioners and thinkers in this area is that *being intergenerational* is much wider than this. It is not merely the simplifying of adult material to make it palatable for a younger audience that the rest of us have to endure for the sake of attracting families, children and youth. It is the much harder work of taking seriously the needs of everyone in the room and those who are yet to be in the room — to wonder how we do community, worship and faith formation together. This means that many a practitioner in this area, while recognising the generational differences as significant, also recognises a much wider group of ways difference is expressed in community and that this needs to be part of our consideration.

There is also an important distinction to be made between preaching and proclamation. Again I tend to hold tightly to the Anglican Communion [Mark of Mission](#), "The mission of the Church is the mission of Jesus Christ: to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom." I understand some of the institutional need to licence suitably selected and trained people for the practice of preaching in our churches. I wonder if we were able to reclaim the idea of "proclamation" as a shared responsibility of those who are baptised, that we might indeed go a long way to taking seriously the value and contribution of each and every member of our faith communities.

It will take courage from practitioners like myself, and the communities we preach in, to be open to ways that lead into encounters with God through Christ Jesus. Courage to let go of what sometimes makes us feel good about ourselves as preachers who have honed our craft. Courage for congregations to be open to ways of being that do not prioritise one group over another or the comfort of leaving the proclamation to the "professionals".

It will also take creativity and collaboration to dream of and live into these communities — to being willing to recognise that in our own following of Christ Jesus there is always more to be said, or experienced or known to create both certainty and trust in the faithfulness of God that we have met in Jesus Christ.

Check out series three of the [Intergenerate Australia and NZ](#) podcast [Engage All Ages](#), which follows the material in Dave Csinos' 2022 book *A Gospel for All Ages: Teaching and Preaching with the Whole Church*.

“The gifts of knowledge, of community and of connection”



"I wholeheartedly know I am the person and educator I am today because of the opportunities that St Francis College has offered me, and I eagerly await the personal and professional growth that will occur whilst on my ongoing study journey," (Taryn Hirst in the Roscoe Library on 8 May 2024)

The gifts of knowledge, of community and of connection — these are some of the many gifts that the staff, students and wider community of our Anglican schools are blessed to share. I began my journey in the Anglican school system as a primary teacher at Canterbury College in 2015. During this time, I was deeply aware of the gift that staff in Anglican schools offer their students — the opportunity to study faith and religion to help them become kind, culturally literate, big-hearted and open-minded people.

With the support of colleagues and Vanessa Gamack, Director of Anglican Identity, as well as the entirety of the Anglican Schools Commission, who walk alongside to support Anglican schools in their mission, I began to formally write and develop programs to support effective teaching and learning in the school's religious education and service-learning space.

However, as a teacher, balancing the ongoing need to *do* more and *be* more can become all consuming. So, what is a solution? For me, this was further formal and informal study.

When I recommend undertaking study in the area of divinity or theology, I often receive one of three responses. Firstly, "what if I am judged because my theology or academic language isn't up to scratch?" Secondly, "there are no subjects relevant to me because I don't intend on becoming a chaplain and am not called to ordained ministry." Lastly, "study is just not my thing." Initially, I faced the same challenges, particularly the first two concerns. However, I was quickly and happily proven otherwise.

In 2021, I began my Graduate Certificate in Divinity with St Francis Theological College with the intention of bettering my theological understanding to support staff and students to personally engage in and teach critical and reflective thinking about faith. It took a single lecture for me realise that I was being offered much more than that. I have had, and continue to have, the blessing of working with people of all ages from all walks of life and denominations that are on various pathways and callings.

While I successfully completed my Graduate Certificate in Divinity in 2023, I knew my journey of learning was not “done and dusted”. I started missing the sense of community and the opportunity to engage in regular rich and life-giving discussions that I engaged in during my postgraduate study. While I was not in a position to continue formal study; thankfully, I was able to continue studying in an auditing capacity.

Auditing allows for the full experience of learning and collaborating without the pressure to complete assessment and also at less expense. Yes, I occasionally fall off the bandwagon and there are some weeks when the looming student report cards and additional tasks take priority, and that’s okay. This is because auditing allows for additional flexibility when it comes to study because all sessions are recorded and can be accessed at any time and all questions and concerns are respected. I have been, and know I always will be, supported by the staff and students of St Francis College. Even though I am not currently completing formal study, I am able to model lifelong learning to colleagues and students and it is through these weekly auditing sessions that I have particularly witnessed myself and others flourish. Consequently, I leave each session with an overwhelming sense of awe. It is through this that I have found greater joy and deep satisfaction in the work I do.

There are many subjects taught at St Francis College that are specifically designed to support those working in schools and with other young people. This study has allowed me to further develop the ethos of the school, to be nourished and to connect with the faith community and engage deeply, both with the content and the shared lived experiences uniting us a Christian community.

Regardless of whether you are formally writing Religious Education curriculum or other curriculum, every staff member in an Anglican school has a responsibility to encourage the development of values and reasoning within an Anglican framework and to understand how religious beliefs and practices inform behaviour and influence personal and social decision making.

Regardless of whether or not you work within a school environment, the staff at St Francis College work tirelessly to ensure all their students feel safe, supported and able to succeed. Formal study and auditing are available and achievable for people of all different learning styles, ages, interests and goals to grow in a supportive community of practice. I wholeheartedly know I am the person and educator I am today because of the opportunities that St Francis College has offered me, and I eagerly await the personal and professional growth that will occur whilst on my ongoing study journey.

In the words of [Proverbs 1.5](#) “Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance”. Take the leap into study — it’s certainly worth it!

Editor’s note: If you found this feature interesting and you are keen to explore theological education, then please join in the following Open Days:

St Francis College Open Day: Saturday 25 May 2023, 9.30am-12.30pm. For more information and registration details please visit the [St Francis College website](#).

Seekers Day: Saturday 25 May 2023, 12:30pm-3.00pm (also at St Francis College). For more information about exploring vocation and registration details, please visit [St Francis College website](#).

For semester two subject information, please visit the [St Francis College website](#) or contact the Registrar, Linda Burridge, on (07) 3514 7424 or via registrar@ministryeducation.org.au.

Justice & Advocacy • Wednesday 8 May 2024 • By Sarah Gover

Successful Rwandan goat programme funded by ACSQ Anglicans



Sarah Gover and an Anglican goat owner from The Parish of Kawangire in December 2023

During the COVID lockdowns, I received a letter from a friend in Rwanda asking for help supporting some people in their local communities. She was the president of the Diocesan Mothers Union, Mumma Dianna, and was concerned about the impact of the pandemic on the most vulnerable families in their communities. The Government of Rwanda was helping with short-term needs, but donations for more substantive projects ran out without visitors.

We talked, and she told me that one of the projects they were keen to implement was a goat programme. I spoke to the then-chair of Brisbane-based Anglican Aid Abroad (AAA), The Rev'd Bruce Sligo, who encouraged me to help the Diocese of Gahini submit a grant application. AAA's secretary, Marilyn Wright, helped guide me in the process, offering invaluable support and insight. AAA graciously granted the Diocese of Gahini \$5,000 to buy goats, noting that the project fit well into their remit of assisting our partners in developing local skills and self-sufficiency. The money was sent over, but that is not where the story ends.

My husband, Dave, and I were privileged to attend the wedding of the eldest daughter of the Bishop of Gahini in Rwanda. You don't get many opportunities to attend a traditional Rwandan wedding, so

we saved some money and went. The wedding was epic. And after a few days, the Mumma Dianna said, "Now it's time to see the goats."



A woman with her grandson, from The Parish of Rukara, and their goats in Rwanda in December 2023

First I was informed about the programme. Mothers Union purchased 53 healthy adult goats with the grant. The goats were given to people from churches closest to the Cathedral. They didn't want the vulnerable families to worry about paying for expensive transport for the goats, so by choosing local churches, all the goats could be walked or carried home (up to 10km) or taken on a bicycle or motorbike.

The local churches appointed a goat project manager who worked with the church and community leadership to identify the recipients. The poorest women in the community were selected, even if they didn't have a connection to the church. Teen mums, families with disabled dads, grandparents raising grandkids and widows were the kinds of families the project focused on.

The primary help the goat gives a family is increasing garden production by providing improved fertiliser. Excess crops are sold at the local markets. Mothers Union and the Diocese supported horticulture improvements with regular farming classes to enhance the increased farm production.

Dairy goats also provide a precious protein source in the way of milk for families.

The women accepted the goats on the agreement they give the first kid to another vulnerable family. Most goats in the first group had twins, so they could give one and keep one. After this initial gifting, all subsequent baby goats are theirs to keep if they want. The family has the right to sell any of future baby goats, especially billy goats. A large goat can sell for \$75 to \$100, which is the equivalent of two

to three weeks' salary — or two semesters of school fees. Representatives of the Diocese told me how being in this programme changed how they ran other programmes.

After hearing all about the programme, the Mothers Union President said, "Enough of the talking, it's time to visit the goats." It took us two days to visit just two thirds of the families involved in the programme. We drove from village to village. Our first stop in each village was the church to meet the parish project manager who explained more specifics about their goats. In most parishes two or three of the initial goats died in the first year due to sickness or dog attacks; however, most survived.

As soon as the summary was finished, often with a song, we would head back into the car and start visiting the goat owners. The recent rains had filled the potholes and turned the dirt roads to mud, making many of them impassable. We usually only got two to three kilometres beyond the church before we started walking down the muddy tracks in our "Sunday best".

Every now and then a friendly face would stand outside the house welcoming us onto their property. We would be ushered into their backyard and invariably found two to eight goats happily munching away next to the goat owner, waiting to give us her heartfelt thanks. They thanked the local Mothers Union that helped think of her, while also thanking the Australian Anglicans who gave the money for the goats.

Every Rwandan goat owner shared a similar story about how their life was better now that they had the goats — their farm was producing more, they could pay school fees for their children, and they had dreams for other improvements. They had hope, and they were so very thankful. I accepted their thanks, but it didn't belong to me. It belongs to Southern Queensland Anglicans who have given money to Brisbane-based Anglican Aid Abroad and made this grant possible.

So, thank you to the many in Southern Queensland who have given to this grant fund and other funds like it. I hope these photos show you the faces of the goat owners who now hope and dream of improving their lives, thanks to you.

Editor's note: If you are able, please [donate](#) to Anglican Aid Abroad, which is a registered Brisbane-based charity. Visit the [Anglican Aid Abroad website](#) for more information.

The book I have given away most and why: Susan Pietsch



"Hurry-sickness is something I have battled throughout my life, getting caught up in the unspoken demand of 'faster, faster'. Remembering to slow down and as Richard Rohr says 'fall in love with [my] life' (p.82) places my relationship with God first," (Susan Pietsch from Holy Hermits Online in 2024)

I was lucky enough to win a book voucher for St Paul's Book Centre on Elizabeth St, Brisbane, and one of the books I gained that day was Joyce Rupp's *Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self*. What appealed to me was the author's use of the metaphor of the door. When unwelcome changes occur in our lives we often refer to the saying "when one door closes, another opens" as a way of looking ahead to the future with hope. Rupp's book, however, uses the image of a door to invite the reader to look within — to open the door of their heart. One of the people she quotes is writer and recipient of the President's Medal for Social Justice Clarissa Pinkola Estés:

"Asking the proper question is the central action of transformation...Questions are the keys that cause the secret doors of the psyche to swing open."

Each chapter is a week-long invitation to pause, reflect and respond to the questions posed with daily readings, a meditation, prayer, question and scripture quote to carry with you into the rest of the day. A six-week framework is suggested, and I always start with good intentions to follow this timeline, but tend to wander off. Some of Rupp's questions need a bit more time to ponder and life can be so distracting, but it is always a joy to return to.

The problem with timelines for me, however, is that I can end up expecting something to happen within that set period! Rupp reminds me that "opening the door to our inmost self entails ample amounts of patience" (p.82). Surrendering to the slow unfurling of spiritual growth is at odds with our current instant satisfaction culture. Gunilla Norris is quoted in the book as describing it like this:

"If we do not have immediate and recognizable progress we feel like quitting. Here is where many of us give up. We shut the door. We say, What's the use? I don't see anything different. This is not adding up to anything. I don't feel any better, and I'm not able to do this." (p.82-83)

The author encourages me to stop yanking and shoving on the door to spiritual growth, and instead wait patiently for it to open. Thus, allowing my progress through the book to go beyond six weeks is not failure, but a true response to the questions posed. Hurry-sickness is something I have battled throughout my life, getting caught up in the unspoken demand of "faster, faster". Remembering to slow down and as Richard Rohr says "fall in love with [my] life" (p.82) places my relationship with God first.

It's a book I have recommended to a number of people to help them also pause, slow down and stop yanking on doors.

Joyce Rupp, 2008. [*Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self*](#). Sorin Books, Notre Dame USA.

Editor's note: Susan Pietsch is a coordinator of 3D Dialogue, an exciting Holy Hermits Online deep dive into the Divine, drawing upon multiple resources. Visit the [Holy Hermits Online website](#) to find out more about 3D Dialogue, including upcoming Zoom meeting dates.

If you would like to share with other readers what faith-related book, including those with theological, spiritual, ministry, Church history or justice themes, you have given away (or referred) the most and why, please [email](#) the *anglican focus* editor, and Michelle will let you know what is needed.

Q&A with NATSIAC executive member, liturgical assistant, musician and former commando, Uncle Milton Walit



"The secret skills I have come from my cultural traditions, which I can't talk about publicly. They were passed down to me by my male elders. I now pass these onto my nephews" (Uncle Milton Walit, pictured at GOMA during the 140th commemoration of the Coming of The Light in 2017)

Where do you currently live and where do you worship?

I have been worshipping at St Saviour's in Laidley since 2010. On the last Sunday of the month, I gather with other Torres Strait Islander Anglicans for a special service at Holy Trinity, Fortitude Valley where close family member Aunty Dr Rose Elu is a Synod Rep.

How long have you been involved in the Anglican Church and in what roles?

I have been involved in the Anglican Church since my childhood. I started altar serving from the age of nine at Holy Trinity Church on my island of Saibai. By 17 years of age I started doing readings. I then started conducting Morning and Evening Prayers on a roster. We only had a priest come to the island for a Sunday service once a month.

My current volunteer roles are liturgical assistant, Synod Rep and work place health and safety officer at St Saviour's. I am also an executive member of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglican Council (NATSIAC) and a General Synod member.



Uncle Milton Walit is a liturgical assistant at St Saviour's in Laidley (image taken on 4 April 2024)

What do your roles involve?

As a liturgical assistant I help prepare the services — organising the readings and hymns, preparing the altar and laying out liturgical items for the priest.

As a local Synod rep, I represent my parish at Diocesan Synod. And as a General Synod rep, I represent NATSIAC, along with Aunty Dr Rose and First Nations Bishop Chris McLeod.

NATSIAC is an official body of the Anglican Church of Australia and the primary voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglicans. It seeks to promote mission and ministry, while also helping to generate resources so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Anglicans may walk with the wider Church and share their spiritualities with other Anglicans. This is encouraged by the Church of England.

What projects or activities are you currently working on in your roles?

NATSIAC will next meet in September in Cairns. We last met in October in NSW following the referendum on constitutional recognition of our people through a Voice to Parliament. The referendum result was very hurtful and we discussed at the meeting how we can move forward from here.

What has been one of the highlights of your time in your role so far?

Late last year I met two non-Anglican people at the motel near the Brisbane airport while traveling to the annual NATSIAC meeting. I was sitting outside the motel looking up at the planes and this couple visiting from overseas approached me and said "Good evening, may we sit in the courtyard with you." They invited me to join in their conversation, politely asking "Where are you from?" I said, "I am from the Torres Strait Islands, but I live west of Brisbane." They then asked me, "Where in the west of Brisbane?" So I explained that I lived at the bottom of the Toowoomba ranges in a place called the Lockyer Valley where much of the nation's vegetables are grown, and that I was on the way to Sydney for a meeting. From there we started talking about the big book — the Bible. After chatting to them about a Gospel passage, they said to me "Our burdens have been lightened." Looking back now, I can see that God was working with me to share his message with this brother and sister.

Can you tell us a little about your Christian faith journey?

I was baptised in the Church of England as a baby at All Souls' and St Bartholomew's Church on Thursday Island. I was then confirmed in the same church at the age of 12. My ancestors accepted the gospel in 1871. I love being an Anglican because I carry on my ancestors' faith and tradition.

How does your Christian faith inspire you and shape your outlook, life choices and character?

It guides me to respect and love others.

Why did you decide to serve in the Australian Army?

I have many relatives who served in World War I, World War II and the Vietnam War. I joined the Army to carry on my relatives' tradition and for the discipline and mateship and to learn a trade. I served in the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, which is a type of commando battalion.

Why is it important to commemorate Anzac Day and Remembrance Day annually?

It's important to me so I can remember my relatives who served in war and to remember all those who have died. The last two Torres Strait Islander men who served in World War II died late last year.

What is a primary strength of the Church and what is the best way to make the most of this for the benefit of our communities?

We are leaders in Reconciliation. National Reconciliation Week was originally an initiative of the Churches. Our Diocese needs to keep being leaders.

What is your favourite Bible scripture and why?

I love all the scriptures. One of my favourites is [Matthew 6.10](#) — the "Your will be done part" of "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done."

This is because it reminds me to do God's work and not mine. When speaking about the Bible I try not to waffle.

What person of faith inspires you the most and why?

My uncle, who was a bishop, because he was my cultural mentor as an uncle and a spiritual leader. He was my role model. When he preached about the culture and the Gospel he did so with all his heart. He used to read the Prayer Book and the Bible with his eyes closed because he knew them by heart.

Why is it important for Christians to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards Reconciliation?

The New Testament calls us to reconcile with each other. Jesus offered himself on the cross as a ransom for our redemption to forgive our sins so we are reconciled to each other through him.

Why is it important for Anglicans to commemorate National Reconciliation Week?

So Anglicans understand the spiritualities of First Nations Anglicans and how they practise their faith.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received and who gave you this advice?

I had a dream when I was a teenager that a lot of different people were climbing up a hill. Some of the people were sliding down and getting crushed. An old man in my dream told me to keep climbing towards the light and not to give up. I kept climbing. I then woke up feeling scared. I later asked my mentor uncle about the dream and he explained that it was about the resurrection and to always keep going towards the resurrection.

What do you do in your free time to recharge and relax?

Meditate, play guitar, look up at the clouds.

If you found yourself on a deserted island, what three things would you choose to have with you?

Coconut tree, a Bible and water. Water would be needed so I have strength to climb the tree.

Where do you do your best thinking?

Now I live in the country, I go the creek and sit there and think. But if I'm near salt water, I will dip my feet into the water and feel the sea breeze on me for wider thinking.

What song do you like to sing on the guitar?

"Dream a Little Dream of Me", both the 1930s and the 1960s versions. I also like to sing Frank Sinatra songs, especially "My way" and "Fly me to the moon".

What is your earliest memory?

Gathering together with my family to sing some songs and church hymns and tell stories on Saibai when I was three or four years old. Young parents don't do this as much anymore.

If you are having a bad day, what do you do to cheer yourself up?

I hum the hymn lyrics, "Be still, and know that I am Lord".

What is the funniest thing that happened to you recently?

Recently my daughter and grandchildren did "A pinch and a punch for the first day of the month" as I stepped out of the bathroom. I was so surprised, I nearly dropped my towel. I think they must have been hiding and waiting for me to enter the hallway.

What is your secret skill?

The secret skills I have come from my cultural traditions, which I can't talk about publicly. They were passed down to me by my male elders. I now pass these onto my nephews.

If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would that be?

Traditional food, such as yam or taro with fish.

Editor's note: This year's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) [theme](#) is "Now more than ever". Visit the [Reconciliation Australia website](#) for [posters and resources](#) and to [register](#) your NRW events. Keep an eye on the *anglican focus* "[Events](#)" page for forthcoming Anglican Church Southern Queensland NRW events.

Reflections • Wednesday 8 May 2024 • By The Rev'd Charlie Lacey

Tough Questions: How can we be sure that Jesus rose from the dead?



"The claim of Christianity is that Jesus is alive today and knowable on a personal level," says The Rev'd Charlie Lacey

The validity of Christianity hinges on the historicity of Jesus' literal, bodily resurrection. If Jesus rose from the dead, Christianity is true — if he didn't, it isn't. There is a lot at stake! So, how can we be sure that Jesus' resurrection is a historical fact?

A detailed account of Jesus' resurrection is given by all four Gospel writers, all of whom saw Jesus post resurrection, or spent time with those who did. Not to mention the other twenty-three books of the New Testament, all of which attest to the same remarkable event. The New Testament books are historical documents and cannot be discounted simply because they are unashamedly Christian in their perspective. However, there are also extrabiblical sources that point, not just to Jesus' existence, but also his resurrection. For example, the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus, who had no vested interest in Christianity, wrote a detailed account of the resurrection that is entirely consistent with that found in the Gospels.

Unsurprisingly, the most compelling evidence for the historicity of the resurrection is to be found in the Gospels themselves. There is much evidence to be gleaned from these accounts, but in the interest of brevity, let us focus on three key facets.

Firstly, the tomb was found empty on the third day. Nobody denies this. Matthew tells us that the religious authorities propagated a rumour that the disciples had stolen the body in order to explain this embarrassing fact. However, if the disciples stole the body, they would have known that they were peddling a lie. It seems unlikely that they would dedicate their lives to proclaiming a falsehood and be willing to die in their efforts to uphold it.

Secondly, all four Gospel writers affirm that the first to discover the empty tomb were a small group of women. In first century Jewish (and Roman) culture, women were not permitted to give evidence in a court of law. If Jesus' followers had made up the story of his resurrection, a group of peasant women would be an odd choice of primary witnesses. The only reason for the Gospel writers to have included this detail, which was potentially damaging to their case, is that they were simply reporting the events as they happened.

Thirdly, we must consider the disciples themselves. When Jesus was arrested, they scattered into the night. During his sham of a trial, Peter vehemently denied knowing him. At the crucifixion, they were nowhere to be seen. Presumably they were in hiding, fearing for their lives, dejected and despondent. Yet this same group of men were soon to risk everything in their efforts to proclaim that Jesus had risen from the dead. What brought about this tremendous change of heart? By far the most plausible explanation is that they personally encountered the risen Christ.

Finally, it is important to stress that the evidence for Jesus' resurrection does not all lie in antiquity. Jesus did not have any political or military power; the influential Jewish religious leaders hated him; his public ministry lasted just three years, and he never wrote anything down — yet he is the most influential person in all of human history. The claim of Christianity is that Jesus is alive today and knowable on a personal level. Moreover, the lived experience for millions, if not billions, of Christians, past and present, is that of having a personal relationship with Jesus. This suggests that Jesus not only rose from the dead but is still very much alive today.

First published on the [St Andrew's, Springfield website](#) in April 2024.

“Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, the day when the Church began”



"The Holy Spirit leads us, guides us, and gives us courage to proclaim Jesus as a Saviour to the world, says The Rev'd Daniel Jayaraj

While growing up in India, I knew only a little about Pentecost Sunday, and what happened in the life of the disciples on Pentecost. It was in 1998 while I was in Germany that I first saw people celebrating Pentecost as a festival and proclaiming the following Monday a national public holiday. I was with an evangelical Lutheran Church, and the service really brought me to the light of Pentecost, which is the day the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the disciples in a room in Jerusalem. The church service was very special, with a great party after the Eucharist.

The Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost as a fulfilment of prophecy and as the answer to the community's expectant prayers. This was the clear sign of God's faithfulness. God's Spirit was poured out upon the community of believers. As described in [Acts 2.1-12](#), the presence of the Holy Spirit in the community's life was indicated first by the miracle of speaking in unknown foreign languages. It was a real show of God working in collaboration with real people. The Galilean disciples were filled with the Spirit to work on God's behalf in their own land. The people, who were in fear, were strengthened by the Spirit and started standing for justice. The Jesus Movement, the Church, started.

Pentecost changed the lives of Jesus' followers. After Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension, they were fearful, scared, broken and very confused. The coming of the Holy Spirit gave them courage to witness to Christ as their Lord and Saviour. They sold their belongings and shared the proceeds with everyone, so there were no rich or poor — all were equal ([Acts 4. 34-37](#)). The disciples also shared their money with others who needed it ([Acts 11.29-30](#)).

St Philip preached and reportedly performed miracles in Samaria. The Spirit of God then took him to the wilderness to spread the gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch, just to one special person, so there is no gender issue in the Jesus Movement ([Acts 8.26-39](#)).

The disciples, who were agitated when Jesus connected with Gentiles — people who were not Jewish — were now seeking them and making them disciples, including Cornelius the Centurion who is considered to be the first Gentile to convert to the faith ([Acts 10](#)).

Looking at the way the disciples led through the Jesus Movement, I am always challenged whenever I read the book of Acts. St Luke, who is believed to be the author of Acts, clearly describes how the good news spread throughout the world, which started on the day of Pentecost.

Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, the day when the Church began, the day when the disciples were empowered with the Holy Spirit. We celebrate Christmas because it commemorates Jesus' birth, Easter for the victory of Christ our Saviour, and Pentecost for the pouring out of the Holy Spirit. In celebrating Pentecost we need to take the way of the disciples as a model for our Church.

The Holy Spirit leads us, guides us, and gives us courage to proclaim Jesus as a Saviour to the world. This means that where justice and love are poured out like rain, everyone sees an image of God in the stranger, where there is no hunger and love is the only language of the people. Only the Holy Spirit can bring that change in human hearts.

In our denominational churches, including the one where I serve as Rector, the Holy Spirit is often kept to interior individual devotion. However, looking at many of the non-denominational churches, they appear to embrace the Holy Spirit more communally. I strongly feel we need to do more learning, growing and talking about the Holy Spirit, who unites us all.

We are hosting a Pentecost Convention in our parish this weekend to explore more about the Holy Spirit and to be encouraged and strengthened, just like the early disciples, to move the world. Our prayer is that people's lives can be changed through this weekend's convention.

Editor's note: Gather at The Parish of Chermside between 5pm Friday 17 May 2024 and 10am Sunday 19 May 2024 for an exciting weekend dedicated to the Holy Spirit to celebrate Pentecost. Guest speaker is Bishop Devasahayam, with activities and talks, hearty soup and curry meals, Indian and African choirs, and a Sunday Eucharist with Bishop Devasahayam as guest preacher. RSVP by 12 noon Friday 17 May via office@allsaintschermside.org.au.

Historic Halse Lodge soon to re-open doors after major refurb



Historic Noosa accommodation facility Halse Lodge will re-open by the end of 2024 following extensive renovation and refurbishment works

Historic Noosa holiday accommodation site Halse Lodge will re-open to local and international guests by the end of the year after the new tenant completes renovations and refurbishments.

Halse Lodge Backpackers Noosa submitted the winning bid following a nation-wide expressions of interest campaign run by property owner, the Anglican Church Southern Queensland, in 2020 through Knight Frank.

Halse Lodge Backpackers Noosa director Michael Tozer said that he and his team are prioritising the site's preservation and historic value and look forward to re-opening the facility's doors by the end of 2024.

"Current refreshment works at Halse Lodge include refitting the accommodation and renovating the commercial kitchen and bar while maintaining the suitability for short-term affordable accommodation," Mr Tozer said.

"Noosa & District Landcare has been engaged to protect and enhance the ecologically important areas.

"We are mindful about preserving this site's heritage significance and accentuating the old-time appeal.

“And, we are very much looking forward to welcoming back the Noosa community to Halse Lodge later this year to socially interact with the young transit worker, international student and holiday guest clientele.”

The 7,989 square-metre property is positioned just 150 metres from the world-famous Noosa Main Beach, nestled on a hill behind Noosa National Park.

Halse Lodge is the last remaining timber accommodation building in Noosa and is the longest continuously operating guest house in south east Queensland.

The building is on the State Heritage Register under the *Queensland Heritage Act 1992*.

Locum Bishop for the Anglican Church Southern Queensland’s Northern Region, The Right Rev’d Bill Ray, said that Halse Lodge is culturally and historically significant to the people of the Sunshine Coast and the Anglican Church.

“Halse Lodge is an important property for the Anglican Church, which has owned it since 1959,” Bishop Ray said.

“In 2020, our property team sought ideas from the market to better utilise Halse Lodge within the context of the Noosa Shire Council’s expectations.

“There have been a lot of evaluations and consultations in determining the right option, and we are happy to have found a great partner to refresh Halse Lodge before it is reopened soon.

“We are also happy to continue being custodians of this property, which has cultural significance to the local Noosa community, the Anglican Church community and the wider Queensland community.

“The ongoing income from the property will continue to contribute to the mission of the Anglican Church.”

Bishop Ray has been fulfilling the role of Bishop for the Northern Region as a locum since the former bishop for this region, Jeremy Greaves, was installed as Archbishop of Brisbane in December.

Archbishop Jeremy recently announced that Nambour-raised The Rev’d Canon Sarah Plowman will be the new Bishop for the Northern Region, with her consecration as bishop to take place on Friday 21 June 2024 at 7.00pm in St John’s Anglican Cathedral, Brisbane.

Anglicare Southern Queensland today welcomes the Bishop of London and former Chief Nursing Officer for England



The Right Rev'd and Right Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE is the Church of England Lead Bishop on Health and Social Care, sits in the House of Lords as one of the Lords Spiritual and is a member of the Privy Council

Anglicare Southern Queensland is today welcoming the Bishop of London and former Chief Nursing Officer for England as she commences her tour of Anglicare services across our Diocese.

The Right Rev'd and Right Hon Dame Sarah Mullally DBE is the Church of England Lead Bishop on Health and Social Care, sits in the House of Lords as one of the Lords Spiritual and is a member of the Privy Council.

Bishop Sarah Mullally said that she has eagerly anticipated her visit, which has already included meeting the Archbishop and preaching at a Cathedral service.

"My main focus will be on visiting and talking to those involved with the work of Anglicare in Australia," Bishop Sarah said.

"This seemed like an ideal opportunity to visit during my Study Leave."

During her two-day tour, Bishop Sarah will visit Anglicare team members and services in Fortitude Valley, Gympie, Southport, Taigum and Caboolture, along with Archbishop Jeremy and the Chief Executive Officer of Anglicare Australia, Kasy Chambers.

During this special visit Archbishop Jeremy and Anglicare team members will showcase Anglicare's achievements and the diverse programs and services that support clients, including young people, families and residents.

These outcomes are achieved within a fairly unique corporate framework that covers all our Diocese's geographical regions.

Anglicare Southern Queensland Chief Executive Officer Sue Cooke, also a registered nurse, said that she is proud to welcome Bishop Sarah.

"Anglicare Southern Queensland is unique in Australia because its governance relationship with the Diocese means that it has a very close working relationship with the wider Church," Mrs Cooke said.

"Anglicare Southern Queensland has a long history of innovation going back to the 1870s.

"We pioneered community nursing in Brisbane in the early 1900s, and we were the only community nursing service willing to provide specialist care for people living with HIV/AIDS in Queensland in the mid-1980s.

"We continue to innovate and care in many areas today.

"Anglicare Southern Queensland is a service provider that also focuses on advocating for change to policies, funding and systems that impact social and health outcomes for those we serve."

The Anglican Church Southern Queensland is part of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Bishop Sarah said that caring for people who are marginalised is fundamental to the whole Communion's mission.

"Anglican leaders worldwide hold in common our commitment to work for God's Kingdom, including care for the most vulnerable and engagement with God's agenda of justice and peace," she said.

"We can learn so much from one another as we work for change and campaign for equity and justice."

Mrs Cooke said that she expects the learnings to be two-way and that collaboration, both locally and beyond, is important to achieve best-practice results in the delivery of care.

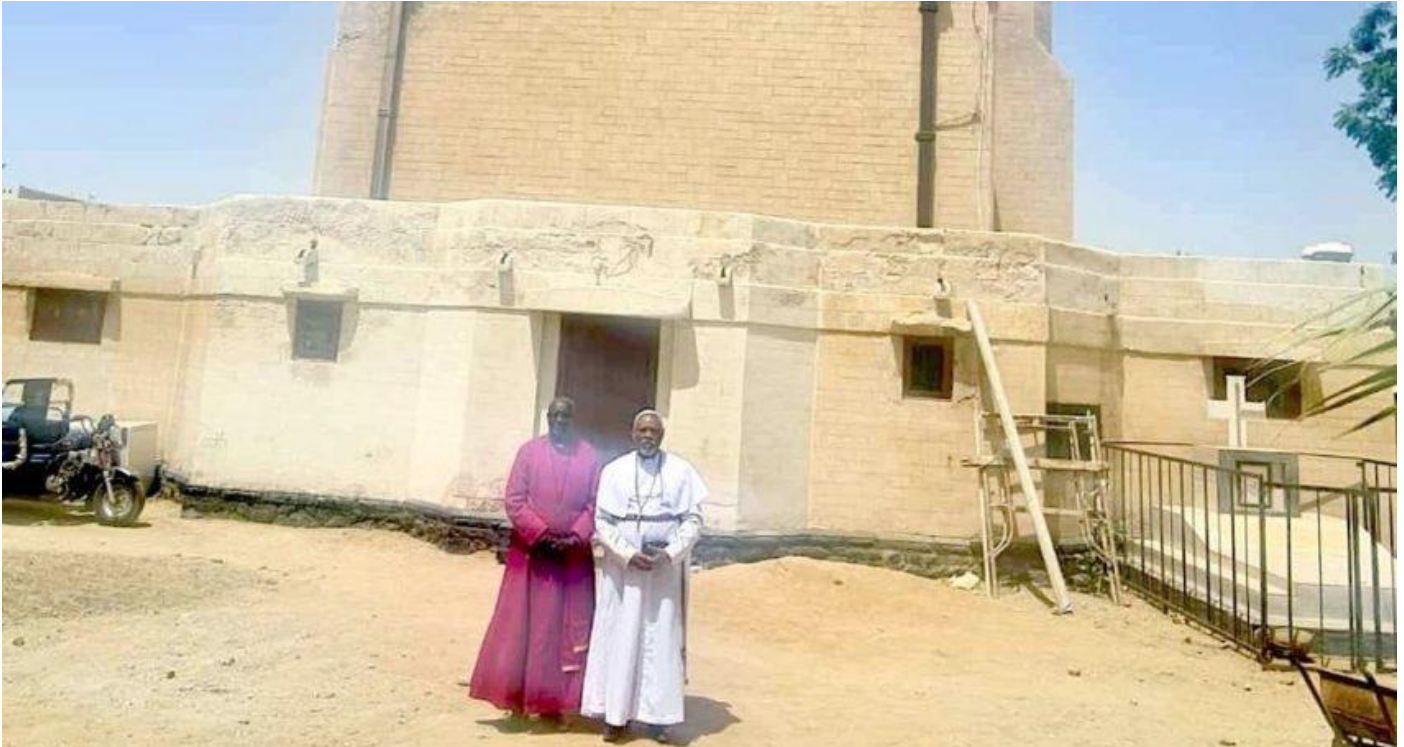
"There is much to learn from our international colleagues regarding different ways of doing things, innovation, productivity initiatives," she said.

"As a Church, we can look towards collective impact in the area of social services – collectively making a difference."

Bishop Sarah was made a Dame Commander of the British Empire in 2005 for her contribution to nursing and midwifery and was installed as the 133rd Bishop of London at St Paul's Cathedral in May 2018.

She has continued her interest in the health service and has served as a non-executive director at The Royal Marsden NHS Foundation Trust and then at Salisbury NHS Foundation Hospital.

Ecumenical solidarity: standing with Sudan in times of crisis



Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo and the WCC president from Africa The Most Rev'd Dr Rufus Okikiola Ositelu at the Cathedral of Christ, Province of Episcopal Church of Sudan (Photo: WCC)

Sudan, in a cycle of conflict and suffering, found a glimmer of hope through an international joint ecumenical solidarity visit from 18-23 April.

The World Council of Churches (WCC), All Africa Conference of Churches, Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa, ACT Alliance, and General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church united to support Sudan. This collaboration builds on previous efforts, including a solidarity visit in April 2022 and virtual ecumenical forums and prayer sessions.

One of the delegates, Jeannette Uwizeye, executive director, Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa, shared that, in Sudan, “the cost of living is high. However, the pressing needs, especially after visiting internally displaced persons, are basic needs: food and shelter. In one of the camps, they brought out the fact that they have pregnant women and they have no health facilities. Sexual and gender-based violence are some other issues.”

The solidarity visit purpose went beyond immediate relief to fostering long-term peace-building in Sudan and the surrounding area. A key concept was accompaniment, which meant supporting Sudanese people in their healing and reconciliation journey. By engaging with church leaders, women, youth, and various faith groups, the delegation aimed to grasp the challenges and amplify the voices of those impacted by the crisis.

Elizabeth Kisiigha Zimba, ACT Alliance regional representative for Africa, shared that, at one of the camps, the camp leader, a kind-hearted man, couldn't hold back his tears as he received the cash envelope. He was overwhelmed by the gesture, unable to believe such generosity. He remarked that the smiles on everyone's faces, despite their dire circumstances, reflected a resilient hope for peace to reignite in Sudan and for life to regain its usual rhythm.

Rev. Dr Jin Yang Kim, who represented the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church within the ecumenical delegation, said he understood the vital role of strengthening partnerships with local humanitarian groups. It became clear that international humanitarian channels often fail to adequately address the immediate needs of internally displaced persons.

Kim joined the delegation in visiting two shelters in Port Sudan: Red Sea School and Mayo Girls' School. The internally displaced persons live in tents within these shelters, enduring scorching heat during the day and freezing cold at night. The Red Sea School has 85 houses, whereas the Mayo Girls School has 47. Internally displaced persons, primarily from Khartoum, lack basic necessities such as blankets, kitchen sets, and healthcare access.

Kim stated: "The key message to the Sudanese government is to ensure the accessibility of humanitarian aid. We are informed that another pressing challenge is that international humanitarian aid often arrives late. Instead of relying solely on humanitarian channels like UNHCR, WPF, and UNICEF, direct funds are needed to address urgent needs promptly.

"Churches and the national council of churches in conflict areas can serve as reliable and respected partners within local communities, fostering partnerships with local humanitarian organizations. Besides immediate response efforts, another vital lesson learned is the imperative of nurturing and harnessing local faith-based agencies for sustained long-term engagement," said Kim.

The delegation's participation in a Sunday worship service, led by Archbishop Ezekiel Kondo, underscored the transformative impact of solidarity. A survivor of Rwanda's genocide highlighted the church's role in rebuilding, evoking tears of hope from attendees.

"Those attending the service shed tears upon hearing her story, not tears of pain from the war, genocide, or loss of their homes, but tears of hope, envisioning their own capacity to forge new paths amidst present challenges and pain. This moment stands as a testament to solidarity with sisters and brothers in Sudan, one that I will carry forward as I journey to the most vulnerable places and people," said Kim.

WCC president from Africa His Holiness Most Rev. Dr Rufus Okikiola Ositelu, of the Church of the Lord (Prayer Fellowship) Worldwide, also a member of the ecumenical delegation, said:

"As a result of our meetings with both the Christian and Muslim communities, it is very clear that the conflict in Sudan has nothing to do with religion, but politics, ethnicity, and power. The minister in charge of security informed us that extremists and fundamentalists exist, but are very few and that they have no role to play in Sudan, and that their actions are insignificant. The Sudan Christian Council is very grateful for the solidarity visit, particularly at this period when some Sudanese are fleeing the country because of the war; we decided to visit them. They are very grateful indeed. We were all invited to fellowship with them at the Anglican Church in Port-Sudan on 21 April, where I presented the homily. The theme of my message was: 'At a time like this.' "

Ositelu concluded: “WCC should help to make life more meaningful and enjoyable in Africa through diplomatic channels. For instance, Africans travelling within Africa should be able to travel without any need for visa (i.e travel visa-free), just like the European Union. It saddens my heart to see the consequences of man-caused sufferings in some African countries due to bad decisions. We as the WCC should get involved more in prevention than cure. We should invest more time and resources to engage any situation that might lead to war. Doing this will require less time, energy and resources—prevention is better than cure. Last but not the least, we should continue to be our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. God is love and He made us to care and be kind to others (Matthew 25:31-40).”

Since 15 April 2023, Sudan has faced a harrowing humanitarian emergency due to clashes between the Sudan Armed Forces and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The consequences have been dire: millions displaced, basic necessities scarce, healthcare inaccessible, and education disrupted. Over 7.4 million people are displaced, making it the largest internal displacement crisis globally.

[**In solidarity visit to Sudan, WCC strengthens foundations for peace \(WCC News release, 25 April 2024\)**](#)

[**WCC urges prayers—and action—for the plight of people in Sudan \(WCC Interview, 25 April 2024\)**](#)

[**WCC meets president of Sudan for discussion of roadmap to peace \(WCC News release, 26 April 2024\)**](#)

[**Photo gallery from the visit to Sudan**](#)

[**Latest ACT Appeal for Sudan**](#)

[**WCC member churches in Sudan**](#)

First published on the [**World Council of Churches website**](#) on 2 May 2024.