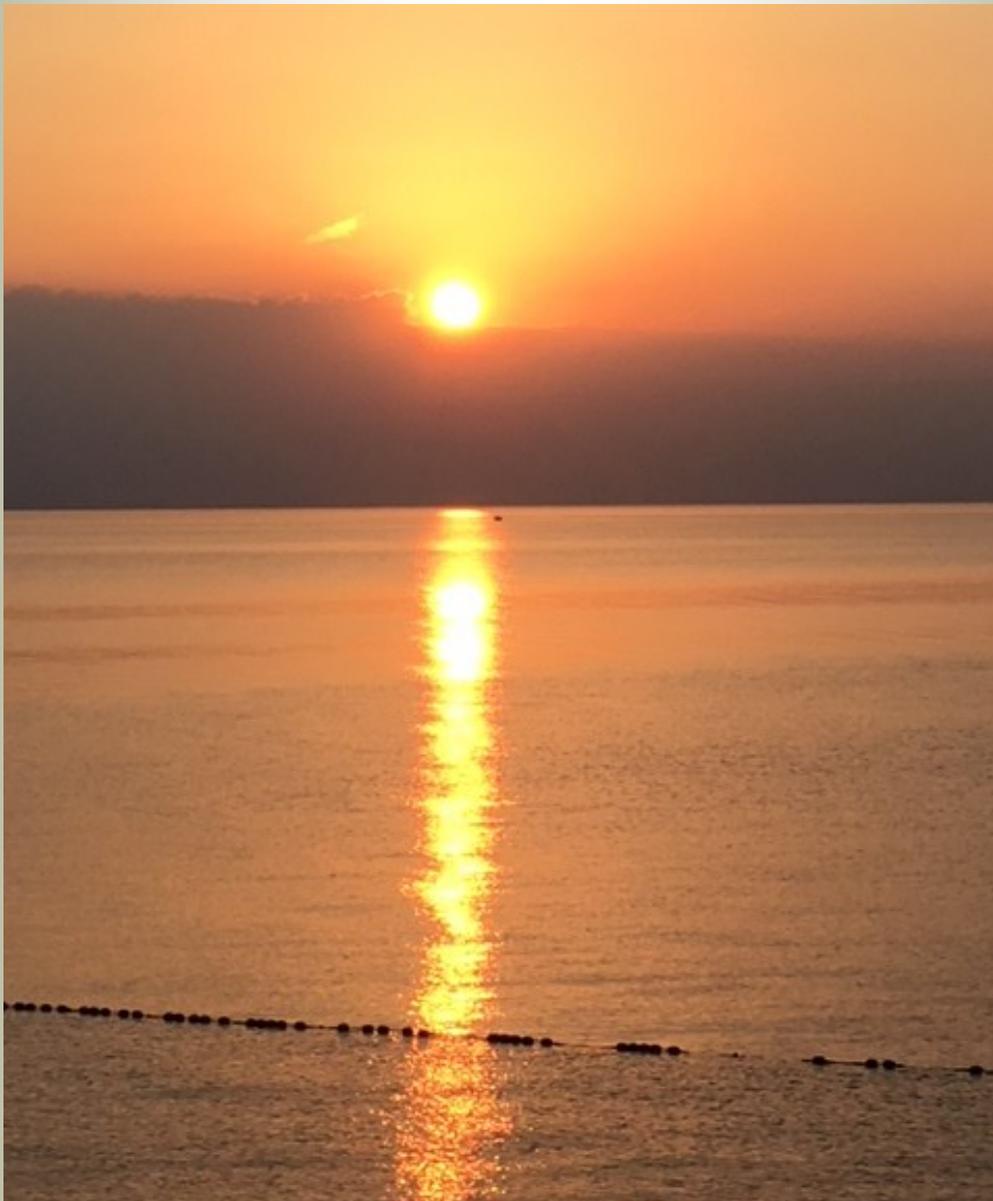


# The Monica September 2018



Sunrise over the Sea of Galilee  
Feast of the Transfiguration

## St. Monica's Parish Moonee Ponds

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## From the Editorial Team

Spring is a significant season for Christians, as it symbolises new life. In the Northern Hemisphere, it coincides with Easter, a celebration of Jesus returning to life after death.

*"...if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old has gone, the new has come!"*

2 Corinthians 5:5:17

A reminder that all new life; the budding blossoms and hatching birds, spring from Jesus Christ, who gives new life to all who respond to Him.

This Spring, we give thanks for the wonders of nature and beauty that surrounds us each day through God's love.

Featured in this Edition, our Year 3 Students celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in preparation for their First Holy Communion and we reflect on the Parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joachim and St. Anne as we celebrate the wonderful Grandparents in our Community on Grandparent's Day.

We report on the recent fundraiser for the Shalom Orphanage in Nepal, Fr. Daryl writes poignantly about the Feast of the Assumption, we reflect on the remarkable life of St. Monica and we give thanks to all Fathers, spiritual and familial. There's also plenty of news from our Tennis Club. All this, and more, awaits you, dear readers.

We hope you enjoy this Spring Edition and the sunshine that's to come!

## A Pastoral Letter

Did you know: Every month, Fr. Daryl and I take it in turn to celebrate Mass in two of the retirement homes in our Parish?

We gather. A dozen or so men and woman shuffle into the sitting room, walkers and wheelchairs aiding them on their way. Most are Catholic and some are not. It doesn't matter to us, nor them, because all are welcome.

As Fr. Daryl or I approach the makeshift altar, a table decorated with a white cloth and an electric candle, to prepare the bread and the wine and proceed to put on our vestments, our elderly friends watch on with a mixture of interest and expectation. Something is about to happen. By some mix of presence and intention — theirs and ours — the space in which we have gathered becomes a sanctuary; a place ready to greet the One who comes.

For me, during these times, the busyness of a week of running around; meetings and appointments, fades away into the background, as I pause to enjoy this opportunity to be still with my friends and eagerly await the Lord's coming to us in Word and Sacrament.

One resident always reads and Fr. Daryl or I read the Gospel. Our message to those assembled is simple: no matter how old we are, however infirm, however lonely, we can always love someone and even if we cannot love, we can pray for the grace to love, to forgive and to let go any hurt(s) we carry. In our prayer of the faithful, we always pray for the needs of the residents present and those who might be sick in their rooms or have died since we last gathered to pray the Mass.

Yes, this is what matters, God's great love for us, which we are reminded of again and again, as we hear the powerful words of Consecration: This is my Body given for you... This is my Blood poured for you. As I hold up the Body of Christ, I look beyond the Host and see His body in those gathered — bodies grown old after years of sickness and the business of living. As I hold up the Blood of Christ, I see Him in the bodies of those who have poured out their lives in loving of others.

When the time for the sign of peace arrives, a warm chatter fills the room, as all start turning to one another, extending and receiving the gift of the Lord's peace.

Did I mention that nobody stands or kneels during the Mass? Everyone, even the fittest septuagenarian, stays seated in solidarity with those whose bodies are less able.

Yes, for me, the Mass I celebrate in our residential homes is always a special celebration of faith, hope and love, as I encounter the Lord coming to me in the Bodies of those gathered as well as in the Word and the Body and Blood of the Lord blessed, broken and shared.

Fr. Tony Feeney



### Parish Holy Land Pilgrimage in 2019

The Parish Holy Land Pilgrimage will be leaving Melbourne on Monday 6th of May 2019 and will return on Thursday 23rd of May 2019. Watch this space for more details!



Parish Profile: **St. Vincent de Paul Society**

Written by: Eleanor Colonico

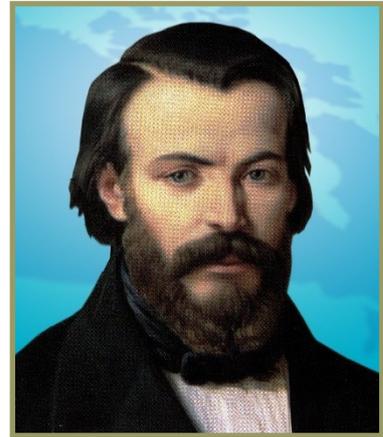
**Spotlight on Vinnies.**

It is hard to think of a religious organisation that has touched the lives of so many people around the world and in Australia as much as the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

“Vinnies”, as it is colloquially known here, was founded in Paris in the 1830s by the Blessed Frederic Ozanam, a humble 20 year old student moved by the plight of Parisian families who had lost their breadwinners following an outbreak of Cholera in the city.

Along with seven friends, Ozanam’s first charitable act was to deliver some wood supplies to a widow. His group became known as a “Conference” and this terminology is still used today to describe the groups within St. Vincent de Paul, most often connected to Parishes such as St. Monica’s, who deliver essentials and lend a hand or an ear to those in need.

Today, there are 58,000 Vinnies members across Australia, who assist more than 2 million people every year, whether it be through the works of Conferences, Special Works or Vinnies shops.



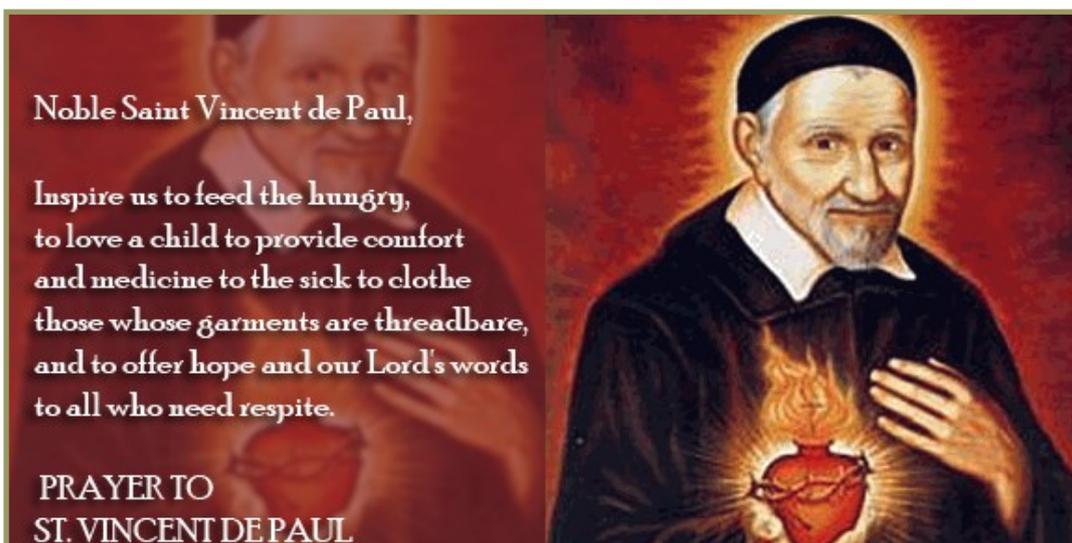
**Frederic Ozanam**  
**Founder of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul**



The Moonee Ponds Conference has been operating continuously since 1919, almost a century! Five members from our Parish respond to calls for those in need; visiting homes in the local area and always taking a food parcel, no matter what that type of assistance they have been called on to provide. Anecdotally, they are one of the few Conferences who still always take a parcel!

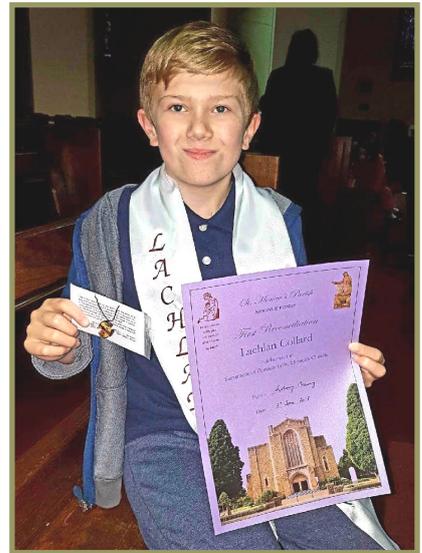
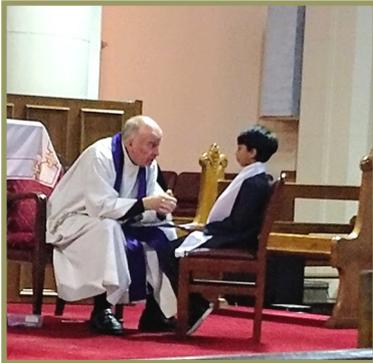
Moonee Ponds also assists its associate Conference in Footscray, who run a soup van there. The group is very thankful of the support provided by the St. Monica’s Parish Community, particularly the school, who ensure, through donations, their non-perishable food items are well stocked.

Should you have an interest in getting involved with the Moonee Ponds Conference, please phone the St. Monica’s Parish Office on 03 9370 5035.



## St. Monica's Parish Primary School: Reconciliation

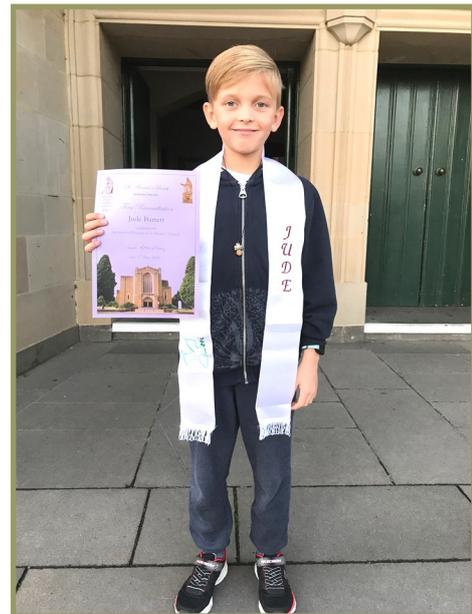
### Year 3 Student Reflections



#### My First Reconciliation by Jon D'Cruz

During my First Reconciliation, I was aware not to sin as much as I used to, and that God forgives my sins. After the blessing from Father, I felt happy that Jesus came into my heart.

Lachlan Collard



Lucia Condello

#### My First Reconciliation By Jude Barrett

Before my First Reconciliation I felt a bit nervous and happy at the same time. After my First Reconciliation I felt happy and good that my sins were gone. A special moment was when I said the Lord's Prayer (Our Father) with my mum.

The word 'Reconciliation' means forgiveness and a change of heart. Reconciliation is important to me because it makes my sins go away, so we can follow Jesus again. I can be more like Jesus when I do the right thing or help someone or play with someone that does not have a friend, so he/she will feel happy.



Madeleine Smith

# STRONGER COMMUNITIES, SAFER CHILDREN

## WHAT ROLE DO YOU PLAY?



"The eye represents the elders' watchful eyes on our children, for they are our future. The boomerang shows that our kids will always come home to the community because that's where the family will always be. Mum and dad sitting around watching over the kids in the community walking together having fun like kids should be doing."

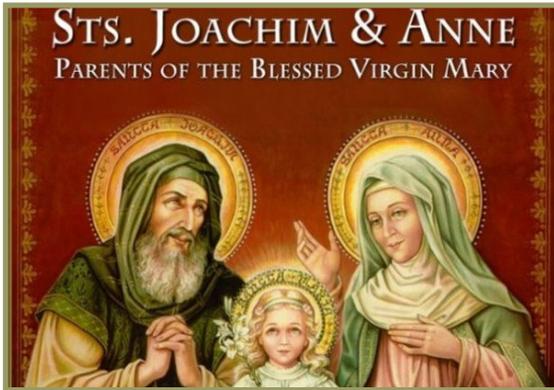
*Artist: Shirleen Campbell,  
Alice Springs*

LAUNCHED IN 2018  
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Memorial: Sts. Joachim & Anne: 26th July 2018 Written by: Paula Theocharides



Saints Joachim and Anne are the parents of the Virgin Mary. They serve as role models for parents and both deserve to be honoured and emulated for their devotion to God and Our Lady Mary, the Mother of God.

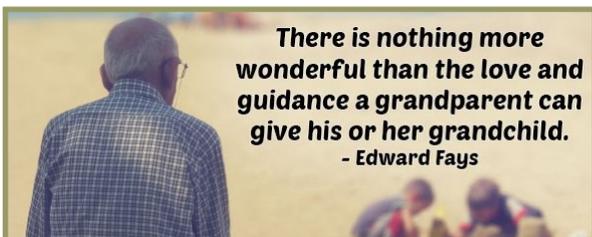
The strong character of Mary in making decisions, her continuous practice of prayer, her devotion to her faith, her steadiness at moments of crisis — all indicate a close-knit, loving family that looked forward to the next generation even while retaining the best of the past.

Saints Joachim and Anne represent that entire quiet series of generations who faithfully perform their duties, practice their faith and establish an atmosphere for the coming of the Messiah, but remain obscure.



It is therefore fitting that we celebrate the “feast of grandparents” on a day that we remember Saints Joachim and Anne, as it reminds grandparents of their responsibility to establish a tone for generations to come.

But the feast has a message for the younger generation as well. It reminds the young that their elders’ greater perspective, depth of experience and appreciation for life are all part of a wisdom not to be taken lightly or ignored.



# Grandparent's Day Morning Tea: 26th July 2018

Photos: Paula Theocharides

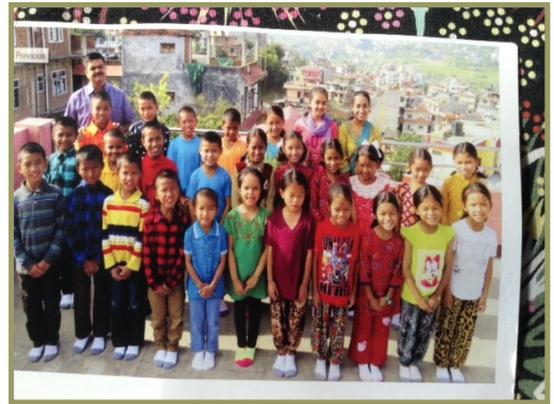


## Shalom Orphanage Fundraiser: 28th July 2018

Written by: Russell Mogg

On Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> July, a luncheon was held in the Symons Centre to raise funds for the Shalom Orphanage in Nepal. St. Monica's Charismatic Prayer Group kindly sponsored the gathering, where 50 people, together with Fr. Tony and Fr. Daryl, enjoyed a Chinese meal and were entertained by music and a guest speaker.

John Canavan, a man of faith and comedian, had the group in stitches with his amusing yarns. His sharp wit and talent would see him grace centre stage in any theatre. After his wonderful testimony, our resident musical Seminarian, Alec Chow, played his guitar and sang to the delight of all. A raffle was held with excellent prizes on offer, many of which were donated by St. Mark's Parish Fawkner, together with other donors.



Children from the Shalom Orphanage, Nepal

Other very generous cash donations were made by a number of people. The generosity shown towards the children in Nepal was greatly appreciated.

Adrian Commadeur, on behalf of the Charismatic Prayer Group, thanked all who helped make the day such a success both socially and financially; \$2000 will be of great assistance to the Shalom Orphanage.



John Canavan, Entertainer



Left to right — Adrian Commadeur, John Canavan, Russell Mogg, G Mullen, Joe and Tess Manicola, Roshan

# St. Monica's Tennis Club: Annual Trivia Night Written by: Margaret Mogg



**John Harms, The Quizmaster**

On Saturday 4th of August, the St. Monica's Tennis Club held their Annual Trivia Night in the Symons Centre. The evening was a great success with 100 members in attendance.

It was a fun night for young and old alike. While the parents were wonderfully entertained by Quizmaster, John Harms, the children were entertained by a Magician for two hours.

The Trivia Night is the St. Monica's Tennis Club's main annual fundraiser; Social Secretary, Christian Mooney, was well-rewarded for his efforts in putting together such a successful evening, raising valuable funds for the future running of the Club.



**Magician, Children's' Entertainer**

**THANK YOU**  
FOR YOUR  
**SUPPORT!**



## Feast of the Assumption: 15th August 2018

Written by: Fr. Daryl Montecillo

*She is fat! Fat with child. She's only young... and there's a baby on the way. Her friends call her Mazza; her boyfriend, Joe. They got hitched after the kid was already on the way. Both of them from nowhere... real poor. People whisper that she's delusional... sees fairies. She's a bit of a religious nutter... says she trusts completely in God. As for how she explains her pregnancy, the less said the better! You would have to say that this girl's life won't amount to much...*

*Well actually, she's the most famous woman in history. Her full name is Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, Mother of God, Mother of the Church, Seat of Wisdom, Queen of Angels, Queen of Patriarchs, of Prophets, of Apostles, of Martyrs, of Confessors, of Virgins, Queen of All Saints... or Mazza to her friends! Her life has more effect on the world than any other person (apart from her Son), before or since.*

These were the opening words of Archbishop Anthony Fisher at the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Sydney last year, and we recently celebrated the Glorious Assumption into heaven of that seeming nobody - 'Mazza.' : but what on earth (and heaven) is the Assumption?!

It's said that assumptions (of the psychological kind) can be dangerous. Henry Winkler, (otherwise known as the Fonz from Happy Days) once even said that they were "the termites of relationships", yet the Solemn Feast Day we celebrate each year on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August is certainly nothing to be afraid of. In short, we celebrate Mary's going to heaven, not just spiritually, but bodily as well.

We hold in faith that Mary was without sin from the first moment of her existence and right throughout her life, so it follows fittingly that she who said yes to God's will, who gave birth to Jesus: The Way, the Truth and The LIFE, never knew death: separation of body and soul. Pope Pius XII put it simply in the solemn declaration: "Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory."

When we speak of Jesus going to heaven we use the words, 'Resurrection' and 'Ascension', whereas with His Mum, we speak of the 'Assumption'. It's a way to emphasise that Christ rose by his own power, but with Mary's going to heaven; as with anyone else, it is God's work! It's also a reminder that we do not place our faith in Mary; we worship God alone, but we do celebrate her beautiful example of humanity. As the British Poet Wordsworth called her, 'our tainted nature's solitary boast.'

So what of all this? What has it got to do with us?! The Assumption is the fulfilment of God's plan for Mary and his promise and offer for each of us: To be in heaven, fully alive with God, with his mother and with each other! We might also be tempted to think this is all just some overgrown piety or even a distraction, but let us not make that mistake...

You may have heard me say it before and you will likely hear me use it in a homily again, but it is so important for us to remember: Mary leads us to Jesus. Everything she is, and does, leads us to him. Think of her final recorded words in all of Scripture, at the Wedding in Cana: "Do whatever he tells you." So, if we want to know and love God and Jesus more, then love Mary. Let us not be afraid to love her too much: we will never love her as much as Jesus does!

Mary's "yes" to God's will changed the world. Her assumption into heaven is a continuation of God's great "yes" to the world. Only God knows what could be brought about when we also say "yes". Let us not make any assumptions, but what do you say?

Mary, Assumed into heaven: Pray for us!



**St. Monica's Tennis Club: Annual General Meeting**      Written by: Margaret Mogg

**Annual General Meeting**

The St. Monica's Tennis Club held their Annual General Meeting on Sunday 19th of August, electing the following Office Bearers:

- President:** Mark Lewis
- Vice President:** Bec Sicilia
- Secretary:** Cathy McNeill
- Treasurer:** Ben Rose
- Assistant Treasurer:** Peter Stevens

Five General Committee Members were also elected. Congratulations to retiring President, Peter Clark, for his three years of valuable service to the Club.

**Junior & Senior Tennis Team Openings**

There are still openings at the St. Monica's Tennis Club for prospective junior and senior tennis teams. The Club is a fun and welcoming environment for players of all abilities. For further enquiries, please contact the St. Monica's Tennis Club Secretary, Mrs Cathy McNeill, on 0414 375 357.



**Back row — left to right — Patrick Saundry, Mark Stevens, Liz Burgin, Bec Sicilia, Peter Clark, Christian Mooney, Loretta Joyce and Peter Stevens**

**Front row — left to right — Ben Rose, Mark Lewis, Cathy McNeill and Meghan Bourke**

## St. Monica's Parish Primary School: Year 6B Nursing Home Visit

### Year 6B Student Reflections

#### Nursing Home Visit

By James Smith and Lachlan Monger

On Monday 20th of August, the students of Year 6B visited The Strand Nursing Home. We spent time with the elderly residents, played games with them and read them stories.

We visited for one hour and spent time with almost every resident, bringing joy to their day. It is something most students in the class look forward to!

We hope to go back soon.



#### Nursing Home Visit

By Lucy and Caitlin

When we arrived at the nursing home, we were greeted by the resident's friendly faces.

We were asked to go in pairs, walk around and chat, play games with or read a book to the residents.

It was different to chat to people knowing they may not be able to respond.

We enjoyed bringing joy to the residents knowing that they don't get many visitors.



## St. Monica's Feast Day: 27th August 2018

Written by: Jo Barrett

Our Parish and School Community recently celebrated the feast day of our namesake, the mother of Augustine, St. Monica, on Monday 27th of August.

It is worth reflecting on the amazing life of a woman whose devotion to God saw the eventual conversion of a brilliant, but wayward son, a Pagan husband and mother-in-law, and many others so moved by her grace and piety.

### Saint Monica

The adage 'patience of a saint' could well have been coined in honour of St. Monica. Although a Christian, her parents gave her in marriage to a pagan, Patricius, who lived in her hometown of Tagaste, in North Africa. It was a marriage of great hardship for St. Monica, due to Patricius' violent temper and licentiousness, also due to her cantankerous mother-in-law. St. Monica's prayers and example finally converted her husband and mother-in-law to Christianity. Her husband died in 371, one year after his baptism.



**Tomb of Saint Monica in the Basilica of Saint Augustine in Rome**

St. Monica had at least three children who survived infancy. The oldest, Augustine, is the most famous. At the time of his father's death, Augustine was 17 and a rhetoric student in Carthage. St. Monica was distressed to learn that her son was living an immoral life. For a while, she refused to let him eat or sleep in her house. After receiving a vision, she stayed close to her son, praying and fasting for him. He attempted to escape her influence, fleeing to Rome, then Milan. His heartbroken mother followed him, enduring the difficult journey. The Milanese Bishop, Saint Ambrose, began to influence Augustine and became St. Monica's spiritual director. She humbly accepted his advice and had the humility to abandon practices that had become second nature to her. St. Monica became a leader of the devout women in Milan as she had been in Tagaste.

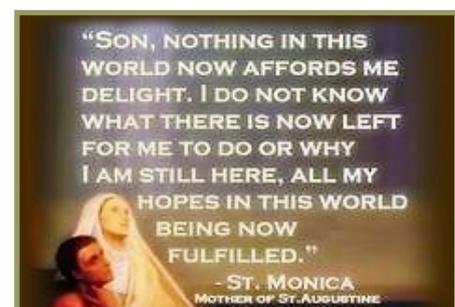
She continued her prayers for Augustine during his years of instruction. At Easter 387, Saint Ambrose baptised Augustine and several of his friends. Soon after, his party left for Africa.

Although no one else was aware of it, St. Monica knew her life was near the end. She told Augustine, "Son, nothing in this world now affords me delight. I do not know what there is now left for me to do or why I am still here, all my hopes in this world being now fulfilled." She became ill shortly after and suffered severely for nine days before her death.

Almost all that is known about St. Monica is in the writings of Saint Augustine, especially his *Confessions*.

### Saint Monica is the Patron Saint of:

Alcoholics, Conversion, Married Women and Mothers



## Father's Day: 2nd September 2018

Written by: Lisa Mammola

This year, we celebrated Father's Day on Sunday 2nd of September, and while most of you were busy deciding how best to thank your fathers, step-fathers, guardians, fathers-in-law, uncles and grandfathers for their love and support, I wondered how the tradition of Father's Day started.

Contrary to popular belief, Father's Day was not the brain child of the retailers, dedicated to the giving of brightly coloured socks and quirky ties.

Father's Day has been recognised in various forms for thousands of years, but Father's Day as we know today, only originated in 1910. It was developed in response to the celebration of Mothers. An American lady, Sonora Smart Dodd, sat listening to a Mother's Day sermon at church and decided in that moment, that her Father and potentially all fathers (and father figures) deserved a day of dedication too.

Not surprisingly, it was during World War II, a time when many fathers were away and their return uncertain, that the world truly embraced the concept of Father's Day. And, in 1966, America officially designated a day to the celebration; the third Sunday in June.

Although Father's Day is celebrated all around the world, many countries like Australia, do not celebrate this day with the US, in June. (Apparently that date did not fit nicely with our existing holiday calendar.)



Like most Australian families, our family gathered together on Father's Day to eat. Whilst some families celebrate with breakfasts, brunches or dinners; our family tradition is a very informal lunch on my parent's farm. But the location, and the food and wine, (whilst delicious) are not important, it is the coming together of family and friends that highlights this special day. The conversation, games and laughter went on well into the late afternoon. If our tummies had allowed, we probably would have hung around for dinner too!

I was recently listening to a beautiful young man as he praised his father. As he spoke, it became apparent that he was not talking about his biological father, but one that he had theoretically adopted over the years. It reminded me that families come in all shapes and sizes. And, fathers and grandfathers, biological or otherwise, play a very special role in all our lives.

We hope all the wonderful Fathers and Father figures of our Parish enjoyed a beautiful day, surrounded by their loved ones, feeling their love, respect, gratitude and appreciation!

### The Archbishop's Father's Day Collection...

It seems very appropriate that on a day dedicated to honouring Fathers, the Archdiocese of Melbourne asks us to stop and remember the sick and retired Priests; those who were our spiritual teachers and Fathers, who have guided and cared for us over many years. Now, in their time of need, it is hoped that we will show our appreciation for their service by donating to the Father's Day collection. This year, St. Monica's Parish has raised a little over \$3,500. (Should you wish to do so, it is not too late to make a donation; please phone St. Monica's Parish Office on 03 9370 5035 and they will happily assist you.)



## St. Monica's Tennis Club: Vale Alan Dobson

Written by: Margaret Mogg

Sadly, we report the passing of Honorary Life Member, Alan Dobson.

Alan was the President of the St. Monica's Tennis Club in 1947 and 1948 and Club Secretary for six years between 1941 and 1948. A handy tennis player, he was Club Singles Champion in 1943.

An active and tireless contributor to the Club, Alan's legacy was recognised by the Committee and he was awarded an Honorary Life Membership. Together with wife, Marie; daughter, Janet Dobson (a long time teacher at St. Monica's Parish Primary School); and nephew, Bernard; Alan attended the 100th Anniversary of the Club in 2014 as a VIP guest. Alan had the opportunity to enjoy reminiscences with old friends, inspect Club memorabilia and marvel at the modern facilities that post—dated his playing days.

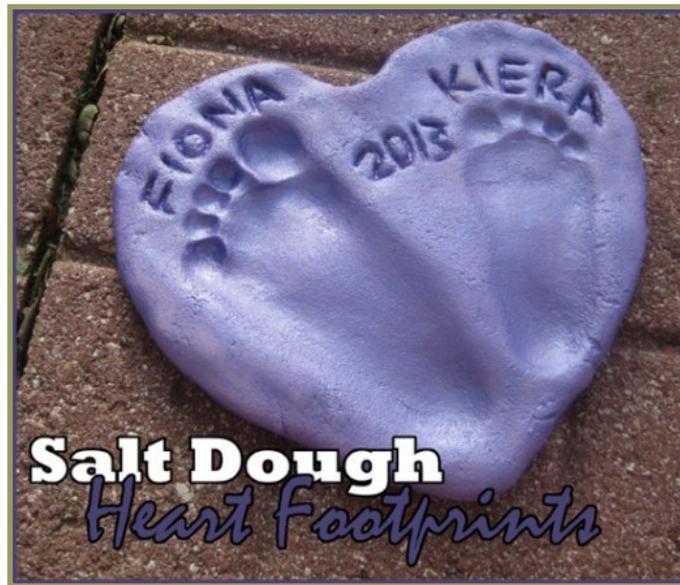
As a point of interest, Alan's older brother, Jack (deceased), was also an active member in the thirties and forties, as well as an Honorary Life Member of the Club. The Dobson family home was situated at the back of the tennis courts and is now occupied by flats.

Our sincere condolences to the Dobson family.



**Janet Dobson and her Father, Alan Dobson**

## Children's Activity Page



### Ingredients

- 1 cup of salt
- 1 cup of flour
- 1/2 cup water

### Instructions

1. Combine ingredients in a bowl and mix well with a fork.
2. As ingredients start to come together, use hands to form a ball. Judge whether a little more water is needed; it should be a similar consistency to play dough.
3. Work with the ball to make the shape of a heart. The picture shows one large heart shape, though you can make multiple smaller shapes instead.
4. If you wish to make the plaque for hanging on the wall, use a straw to add one or two holes near the top.
5. Place the dough shape directly on some baking paper and onto a baking tray.
6. Place the baking tray on the floor and have your child (or children; using one foot of each child) step on each side of the heart, while gently pressing down on their foot to make an impression in the dough shape.
7. Using the thin handle of a fork, carve their name above the footprints and the year in the centre.
8. Bake at approximately 100C for 3 hours.
9. After 3 hours, check to see if the plaque is dry. If you made multiple little shapes, they'll most likely be complete; however, if you made one big heart shape; it may require a little longer.

**NOTE:** The bottom may still be a little moist in the center; simply turn it upside down and bake for another hour.

10. Remove baked heart from the oven and allow to cool. Once fully cooled, you may paint it. Foam brushes are best.
11. If displaying the plaque outdoors, a sealant such as a craft spray sealer should be applied.

Taken from: <https://hubpages.com/family/salt-dough-footprint-heart>