



## FROM OUR CHAIRMAN ...

Dear GFS members,  
I imagine by the time this newsletter reaches all the ends of Australia, we will all have felt the touches of Winter. Certainly, we have where I am. Interestingly it was whilst attending the Episcopal Ordination of our very own Sonia Roulston that I became aware that winter was on its way. So as we enter this winter season may we take the time to begin to work together, using new knowledge gathered at our National Council to build new systems to help us further the ministry of GFS here in Australia. After a delay beyond our control, Sonia has stepped in to and offered to gather up the information and forward to me the final notes from our consultation in Newcastle and we will call together those interested in working together to find new and fresh ways to response to needs indicated. May Winter offer you personally time to gather warmth around you, maybe old friends, new acquaintances and to seek God's Justice, to love God's mercy and to Walk humbly with your God, maybe scattering a few coloured leaves along the way.



*Introducing newly ordained Bishop Sonia and Bishop Charlie to the gathering.*

*GFS supporters—(back) Janet, Jenny, Tania, Sonia, Elaine, Lyn, (front) Cheryl S, Gail and Cheryl B.... enjoying all the delights of Newcastle after travelling from far and wide to join Sonia for her special night.*



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## SONIA'S EPISCOPAL ORDINATION



As we gathered on that Thursday eve marking “The Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord”, the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018 I felt no sign of cooling. In fact, as we gathered in the gravelled area outside Christ Church Cathedral in Newcastle there was a warm glow of friendship and a rising fervour of the crowd. I was privileged to have been invited to assist in the presentation of Sonia. I had kindly been met by Nicole Baldwin (our previous National Secretary) earlier in the day as I flew in from Brisbane. I had then had the pleasure of travelling with Nicole and her daughter along with the gathered crowd from Nicole’s formation parish, from Cessnock into the Cathedral by bus. There was plenty of activity, as we arrived, and we began our transformation, robing into our ‘penguin outfits’.

As I was in the second procession I was left to introduce myself and make reacquaintances with many from all over Australia. As Charlie Murry was also to be ordained as Bishop, and originally came from Queensland there were moments when I had to check myself that I was indeed visiting. As dusk faded into night, and we had our first glances of the Bishops elect we moved into formation and processed into the magnificent Cathedral. As I made my way up the aisle I noted familiar teal uniform shirts and many smiling faces of those who had travelled from Cairns, Brisbane, Sydney and Newcastle to support Sonia as her GFS family of friends.

I was assisting with the presentation and so I was afforded the honour of sitting beside Sonia, in the front row, for the duration of the service. At one stage I felt moved to lean over and say to her, “I can’t believe I am here!” she assured me, nor could she. About halfway through the service as my duty had been dispensed I was able to relax and soak up all the wonder and true sense of hope that abounded.



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I noted that in a Diocese which has been significantly affected by the recent Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, there was now a sense that they may be on the cusp of change. Many of you will remember my comments as I introduced my theme at Australian Council, we need to work with our Church to Seek Justice, Love Mercy and Walk humbly with our Lord. I had a very real sense of that happening here, in Newcastle, even as I felt that change since our meeting there in January. I know Sonia along with the team has been working hard in ministry to assist in this very process. I encourage you all to not only pray for Sonia in her new role in the Newcastle Diocese, but to hold all Diocese in prayer as they attempt to respond to the many needs that have been raised through these investigations. Help us all to recognise the opportunity that lies before us as a church organisation to not only act in Justice but to actively seek justice for all through newly established systems.



*Bishop Sonia with her new crozier presented by GFS Australia.*

The following morning, all those who had gathered from GFS were invited to a BBQ breakfast at the Diocesan Offices. That was when we realised winter was on its way! Looking much more informal



*Breakfast bubbles to celebrate with GFS friends on Friday morning.*

we again had the privilege of sharing precious moments of celebration with the new Bishop Sonia, who had managed to rise to the occasion despite no one having indicated to us that the 'moon boot' (due to a broken foot just a week prior to this big event) was now part of the Bishop's clobber.

As you can see the winds of change were upon us and again we were able to shower Sonia with a number of gifts and greetings from near and far. GFS Australia was pleased to be able to present Sonia with a personalised crozier I had crafted from Queensland Maple by artists from the Mt Gravatt Men's Shed (within my local parish).

Brisbane GFS presented Sonia with a silver and amethyst pectoral cross. The amethyst maybe significant as I am well informed that historically it was chosen as the purplish colour of the amethyst was supposed to prevent drunkenness and bring a sense of peace and devotion. It was Pliny who thought the Greek name Amethysos, "not drunken," or Amethyein, "to be immune from it," was so called because of the similarity to the colour of wine. Most of you will know Sonia worked in the lab at Tyrrell's Vineyards prior to entering St John's College. There were a number of other written GFS greetings presented by various Diocese around the country. Cheryl reporting from Newcastle

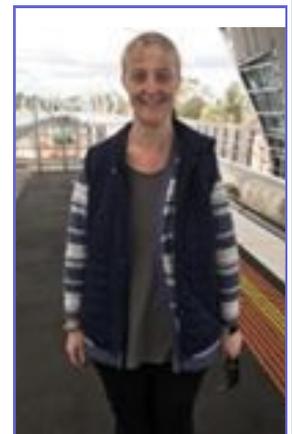
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## ANNUAL MEETINGS AND GATHERINGS... TAS AND VIC



**GFS TASMANIA** met in April to vote in their next executive and to agree to a most exciting new initiative. We are proudly supporting Tegan Gillie with a Traineeship for youth and children's ministry in the parish of Sorell, Richmond and Tasman. The diocese writes .. *"The Traineeship program is an important way that we develop young leaders, and it is wonderful to see a young woman such as Tegan who has already had significant ministry development through GFS being supported to grow further as a young leader. This grant will enable Tegan to have many more opportunities to be trained and to experience a variety of ministries, which will be invaluable for her future development."* Tegan and Joel started working in January in their new roles.

And in **VICTORIA** this fine group of people met from all around the State to discuss GFS and their future actions. You can see from the smiles that this was a very happy group to be meeting up with one another. Abouk Majuk (Junior Delegate) was the guest speaker for the day and shared her insights. We wish her well as she takes up her nursing studies this year.



*(and the photographer—who is looking wonderful especially after we saw her in Newcastle—a great update!)*

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## REMEMBERING EV BECKENHAM

Mrs Ev Beckenham was fondly remembered on Saturday, .... By her Sydney friends with a gathering at Dawn's home. A huge thank you to this tireless worker (who is also 91 !)

There were 27 friends there to share memories. The guests were served by Dawn's friend (dressed in her finest maid's clothing) and a few willing granddaughters.

The tables were groaning with food as everyone had time to chat and reminisce about Ev with an area set up to share mementoes from Ev's time in GFS. All money raised on the day will go to the Christian Blind Mission, one of Ev's favourite charities.

If you have any special memories or memorabilia (photos of these items) you are kindly requested to share them with Lyn Vaak to be compiled into

their "Memory Book of Ev". Please send photos or memories by the end of June please.

Lyn Vaak [l.vaa93@gmail.com](mailto:l.vaa93@gmail.com) or Tania Brown on [taniabrown.gfs@gmail.com](mailto:taniabrown.gfs@gmail.com)

Thanks!



*A sumptuous spread for those who met together to remember our dear Ev.*



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## BRISBANE, NEWCASTLE AND PERTH NEWS



**GFS PERTH** is proud to announce that at our 130<sup>th</sup> Gala Dinner we are partnering with two other groups here in Perth, Parkerville Children & Youth Care and St Bartholomew's House. We are offering to them for their carer's (Parkerville) and residents (St Bart's) complimentary tickets to attend the dinner.

We have also been blessed to have an announcer at 98.5FM (the local Christian radio station) and a local newspaper journo get behind it 100%. The Good Sammies are also helping out by providing dresses and suits to those from these groups who may not have any "glad rags" to come in. We are also seeking out hairdressers/barbers and make up artists to come and give "make overs" on the day as well. It is so exciting that we can give back to the community and share our special night with our Perth community as well as GFS members and families. We also have a local member of parliament getting behind this too.

We have also had a few of our members celebrate significant birthdays here in Perth:

Josie – turned 60 in May      Lillian – turned 80 in May      Pat – is turning 80 in June

To each of them we wish them all of God's blessings as we also pray for our GFS Perth friends! *Noeleen*



*The NEWCASTLE TOWNSEND group*

*and friends were out and about at Kurri Kurri TAFE for their annual Townsend lunch together—with their special guest, Bishop Sonia! This is a lovely day when they can enjoy fellowship and also raise some money for the GFS World Project each year.*

*Gail Orchard*

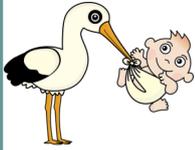
**GFS BRISBANE** Outreach Group—On the 31<sup>st</sup> May we held our first GFS Outreach event of the year for past and present GFS members. We had 18 people join us as we went to visit the McArthur Centre Museum in Brisbane. What an interesting place it was. General McArthur, the American Commander in Chief here in Australia during the Second World War, set up his headquarters in Brisbane where he ran all the U.S.A. military operations from. As well as a lot of memorabilia from the war, his office has been left exactly as it was when he occupied it. As well as a lot of memorabilia from the war, his office has been left exactly as it was when he occupied it. We also saw some news reels from the era, and were told a lot of interesting facts about the war by a very knowledgeable volunteer. I'm obviously not born and bred in Australia, but even those who were found out some facts that they were previously unaware of.

After visiting the Museum we went to a lovely little café in the Brisbane Arcade called 'Room with Roses'. It was rather 'old worldly', so fit in well with the theme for the day. We all thoroughly enjoyed a delicious lunch before going our separate ways until the next Outreach event in September. *Lesley Briggs*



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# PRAYER POINTS



\*We send our love and congratulations to Lauren (our former Junior Delegate) and Scott as they prepare to welcome a new little one into their family later in the year.

\*We pray for Bishop Sonia who is recovering from a broken foot (and made moon boots fashionable for Ordination days). We give thanks for her call to life as a Bishop as she serves in this new way and pray for blessings to be upon all her decision making and actions.

\*We pray for Cheryl, Sue and Val as they travel to PNG for a training visit in July. We pray for the GFS members in PNG and give thanks for their work to bring glory to God.

\*We pray for all Dioceses as they grapple with the need to seek justice and mercy in their response to the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse and the impacts this has on all within the dioceses. May we apply God's love as the healer for everyone.



\*We pray for Nicole Baldwin as she prepares for ordination as a Deacon soon in the Newcastle diocese.

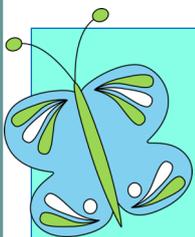
\*We pray for Thembeke Pama, our World President, as she visits England, Ireland and Wales and gave thanks for the wonderful warm reception received and insights gained by Thembeke.

\*We pray for GFS in Perth as they join together to celebrate 130 glorious years honouring God in bringing girls into His love. We pray for those gathering for Dinner on 23rd June.

\*We pray for the new directions for GFS as we discussed in Newcastle. We pray for a time to embrace the enthusiasm

from the meetings, to move into some new ways to "be" as we look to our future.

\*We pray for our members who are unwell at this time, for those in hospitals, the lonely and those struggling with life. We pray for God's peace and healing in their lives.



*Dear Cheryl,  
I am writing to thank GFS Australia, through you of a beautiful gift of a crozier. It is really lovely, the men's shed have done a great job. Thank you to GFS Australia for your generosity and thoughtfulness,  
Every blessing,  
Sonia*



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## CONTACT US ...

### How to contact your National Executive



#### **President**

Reverend Canon Cheryl Selvage  
olytrans2@hotmail.com

#### **Vice President**

Lyn Vaak  
l.vaak93@gmail.com

#### **Treasurer**

Noeleen Stewart  
noeleen.stewart1@bigpond.com

#### **Secretary**

Julie Smith  
julie679233@gmail.com

#### **National Chaplain**

Right Reverend Bishop Sonia Roulston  
soniaroulston@bigpond.com

#### **Junior Delegate**

Abuok Majok  
2015abuok@gmail.com

#### **Executive Members**

Val Gribble ML  
valgribble1@bigpond.com

Leanne Kapetanovski  
gfsmelbourne@hotmail.com

*Do you have a Diocesan newsletter?  
Would you be willing to share some of the  
details with other GFS members?*



*I would love to receive  
your newsletters so  
that I can share some  
of your prayer points,  
news, achievements,  
highlights and coming  
events with GFS  
around Australia.*

*Would you be able to include me in your  
mailing list?*

*My email is [julie679233@gmail.com](mailto:julie679233@gmail.com)*

*I am happy to be directed for any items that you  
don't want to share also.*



Don't forget to send your registration  
details to the Secretary and your fees as  
soon as possible—you don't want to be  
late!!!

Please let me know if you will be later, so  
I know when to expect it!