



Seek



Love



Walk



President's Chat

Dear GFS member,

Well, I want firstly to thank all who were able to attend our National AGM in January in Brisbane. A special thanks to the whole Brisbane team who came together and supported us all in planning, delivery and hospitality during the whole event. Thank you also to The executive who gave of their time, talents and treasure to be together and worked so hard to continue to move our vision and purpose forward.



I am happy to say from all the evaluation we received, it would appear the decision to 'try something new' was a success and as always offered opportunity for improving the whole experience. Very encouraging as we look to plan future events. You will have been receiving the fruits of that time.

I have just returned from a wonderful family break over in Japan. During the time we were there we were able to also meet my niece, who is often there and travel to Hiroshima. Whilst confronting I found the whole experience a very positive one and have been doing lots of reflection on the experience. What struck me the most was despite the devastation that the whole place had experienced, the general sense was one of learning and not wanting this, or similar, to ever have to happen to any-

one again. Which left me thinking about Mercy. Which of course I don't have to remind you all is part of our current National Theme.

Mercy by definition is a feeling of compassion with someone's suffering and needs, along with a desire or readiness to help them according to one's possibilities. It is therefore more than a merely emotional sentiment that does not lead to action.

Mercy must come from true charity toward our neighbour, a bearing of our neighbours burden and must be entirely subject

to the guidance of reason, the judgment of the intelligence, and the dictates of justice. In turn I was taken to reflect on the quote from Thomas Aquinas, "*Mercy without justice is the mother of dissolution; justice without mercy is cruelty.*"

When we take a look at our world today and ask, "What can we do?" There is much especially as part of GFS. I ask you all to take a good look at all the information that comes to you through GFS (Prayer for our own members, Orange Day, Environmental Projects, Education for all....) and consider what you and your GFS group can act upon to bring more Mercy into this broken world as we embark on our Lenten Journey.

Love and prayers,





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Chaplain's Chat

Dear friends,

As I write this reflection it is Ash Wednesday. I have just been to an Ash Wednesday service at our Cathedral where we were each marked with ashes by our bishop, accompanied by the Ash Wednesday words, "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Now in the office the staff are intrigued by the "smudge" on the three bishops' foreheads. For me, the ash reminds me of my place in God's creation and of my complete dependence on God. And so I am thankful for this gift of ash and of Lent.

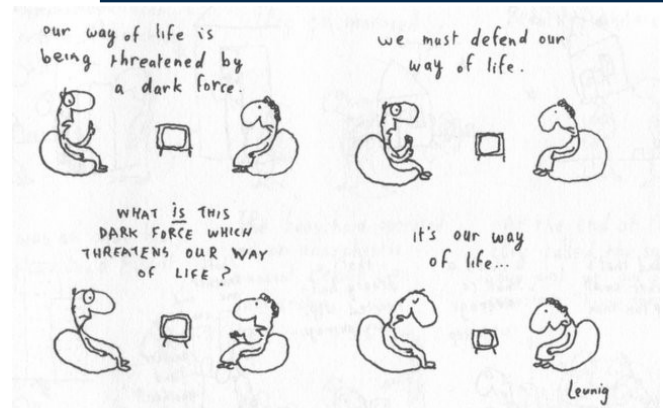
Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of Lent, sets the tone for our next 40 days (plus Sundays), as a season of humility and of turning anew to God.

Some people do this by giving things up. One of my friends who was at the Cathedral this morning told me that she was eating a Magnum (ice cream) at 10.30 last night. When I asked why she reminded me that it was because she gives up sweet things for Lent ... and she didn't want the temptation left in her freezer! Perhaps in Lent there is something you give up. For some this is a very helpful Lenten discipline.

Some use Lent as intentional time to renew their prayer and faith, and so include some intentional spiritual reading or Bible Study in Lent – either individually or in groups.

Still others remember in Lent our call to a life of service of God and others, and so use the opportunities of Lent to engage in acts of service and mission.

For us perhaps we can be encouraged to let Lent be a season in which we focus on how we might live daily into our theme for these three years: *"To do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God."* Micah 5.2



AGM Brisbane 2019

With every blessing, *Sonia*

We would have to say it was a great time for over 30 of us to gather together as one in our GFS family. We had many positive responses from those who were able to attend. The opportunity to meet with our friends, catch up on our news and share just a short time together was relished and thoroughly enjoyed. Saturday morning was spent touring along the Brisbane River before joining the Executive members for the AGM after lunch. A delightful meal was enjoyed at Ribs and Rumps before gathering again at St Francis College chapel for Holy Communion on Sunday morning. Read more about our discussions on the Open Spaces (our new Vision) and changes to the Junior Delegate role further in this issue.





GFS AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER

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Matters from the AGM

G | God's love

F | Friendship

S | Service

After much deliberation we are now able to show you our completed Vision and Purpose. We were encouraged by the reception of this at the recent AGM. We now invite you to use the PowerPoint (see Julie to send it to you) in your own diocese and see where you fit within the new definition of GFS. This shouldn't be an onerous task, instead we see it being completed within 15 minutes. We hope it will give your diocese a new sense of fulfilment to see where you are going, what is working well and perhaps some areas upon which you can improve or give a greater focus. It should affirm what you are involved in and in how your diocese is travelling. We would also love to see your responses—please send these back to the Executive with a brief outline of your responses. A new post-card size version of the Vision will be made available by June for Dioceses to use.

WHY? (Purpose)

GFS is a place of friendship and belonging where God's love is shared.

HOW WE DO THIS (Mission)

Encourage Growth Share Serve Care Inspire

WHAT WE DO

Ministry of serving and teaching

Gather together

THE SMALL PRINT *GFS is a ministry that serves the Anglican and wider community locally, nationally and globally, through our motto, "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the Law of Christ" (Gal 6.2).*



We are a very generous group here in Australia and we are grateful always for this generosity. Just a reminder if you have any money for **World Project**, donations to **World Travel** or the **World Emergency** funds, it is always time to send it to Noeleen (GFS Australia Treasurer) who will forward it on your behalf.

Safe Ministry changes—

We have some changes to our requirements in light of recommendations from the Royal Commission. We seek some new information on our registration and renewal forms, and will be looking at a program such as *Childsafe* for everyone to complete.

Badges

We have many of our oval shaped badge in stock and in an effort to clear some of our stock we are having a sale!

Get in now for only \$1 a badge (Plus postage)
Contact Deb Wadeson (email)



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A Lenten Plea from Thembeke

Peace be with you all. As we are all affected by Climate Change in different ways, we are blessed to receive the information from Reverend Dr Rachel Marsh through GFS worldwide partnership with Green Anglican in the spirit of Togetherness. Please circulate to your networks and communities. We must action it! If we each do just a little effort in our own little corners of the world we will make a big difference in the World.



I know in Kigali Rwanda plastics are not acceptable and Kigali is clean, there must be other countries like Rwanda and we applaud them and are willing to learn from them. Through prayers and continuing we will all get there!

Love to all, Be honest,

Thembeke Pama

World GFS President

(The whole Lenten calendar of reducing our use of plastics is attached to this Newsletter)

Junior Delegate

Do you know anyone aged 16—30 who could represent Australia at our next World Council?

If so, apply through your Diocese Chairman right now!

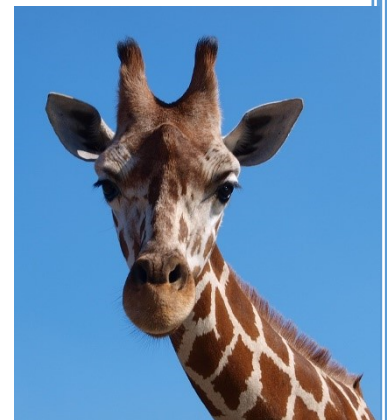
We are asking for a one year commitment—the successful applicant will be commissioned in January 2020, represent Australia alongside our Senior Delegate (Cheryl) and then present a report at the National Council in January, 2021.

Applications should be with your Diocesan Chairman by the 14th April, 2019.

World Council South Africa

**July 9th—
19th 2020**

We have been given a costing of \$13500 Rand (around \$1400 Australian but could change with exchange rates)



The conference will be held at Klein-Kariba Lodge around one hour from Pretoria and 1.5 hrs from Johannesburg, South Africa.

If you are interested, please let Julie know (julie679233@gmail.com) so that you can receive the registration and information forms which are now available. All Australian registrations will go through GFS Australia before going on to South Africa. Registration forms and a deposit due by October 31st 2019.



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Orange Day is 25th of each month...

What can you do to make a difference?

Violence against women occurs in many ways—

- Domestic, relationships that break down
- Workplace—bullying, sexual advances, intimidation etc
- Violence in open spaces—street attacks, feeling safe at night
- Trafficking—slavery, prostitution
- Female genital mutilation
- Early marriage, child marriages

And many other harmful practices

Here are some ideas for you to try to raise the profile and show your concern ...

- * Bake some orange based recipes (orange cakes, muffins, marmalade, pumpkin scones) to sell to raise some funds for a local women's shelter
- * Invite a guest speaker from an agency dealing with domestic violence, or empowering women



- * Wear orange clothing (perhaps a scarf, a hat, a t-shirt, or some socks)

(pictured GFS Tasmania ladies frolicking at the beach ... perhaps not?)

- * use some orange paper or orange pens to write some prayers or words of encouragement to anyone dealing with trauma/violence
- * Hand out oranges to your local area, to your town's council members, to the police station with a message (or be ready to tell others what it is all about)
- * Check out the UN website for some further ideas and information

www.un.org/en/events/endviolenceday

