

# MIA mia

ANGLICAN  
MOTHERS UNION  
AUSTRALIA

*Spring 2019*

*Kindness*

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## ANGLICAN MOTHERS UNION AUSTRALIA

### Vision:

Our vision is of a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful, and flourishing relationships.

### Aim & Purpose:

To demonstrate the Christian faith in action by the transformation of communities worldwide through the nurture of family in its many forms.

### Objectives:

1. To promote and support married life
2. To encourage parents in their role to develop the faith of their children
3. To maintain a worldwide fellowship of Christians united in prayer, worship and service
4. To promote conditions in society favourable to stable family life and the protection of children
5. To help those whose family life has met with adversity

from MU Australia Handbook  
Dec 2009

## Mia Mia

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# THE LAND OF A THOUSAND HILLS

**Rev'd Anne Kennedy**

The Land of a Thousand Hills – this is a description of Rwanda, a small country in East Africa. This is where the recent Worldwide Provincial President's gathering was held. I didn't see any overweight people in Rwanda – everyone walks up and down the aforementioned hills! Plastic bags are banned, and the streets are very clean. There is a lot of road construction and building of new housing developments happening in the Capital, Kigali, and its suburbs. Cited as the most stable country in the continent, tourism is being encouraged and sight-seeing and safari companies are growing.

This year is also the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Genocide of the Tutsi people by the Hutus. It's frightening to read the history of how such a tragedy was carefully planned and sanctioned by the government and which led to the deaths of around one million people. Friends turned on friends, children turned on each other, resulting in the butchering that lasted over 100 days with the outside world largely ignorant of what was happening.

Today the community stands together, aware of their past, but focused on their future. Reference to tribal names is banned. People work together, and the churches have played a large part in the reconciliation process. The future looks bright for the Rwandan nation.

Solace Ministries, where we gathered, was created through Jean Gakwandi's concern for traumatized widows of the Genocide. Over time, more physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally damaged people found their way to Solace where they received treatment for their injuries. But what has had a greater impact is the comfort and kindness they have experienced there, through healing, hope and dignity. Many hundreds have recovered and moved back into community life, while some have remained at Solace as employees to provide comfort to others who continue to arrive seeking help.

While in Rwanda, I met some wonderful people, both MU and others, who showed me how important it is to be kind to each other through working together, listening to each other and sharing our stories. Only by sharing can we hope to understand what others are going through – take the opportunity to listen and share wherever you are. This is the gateway to repairing broken relationships.

# The Healing Power of Kindness

Christine Brain

Once upon a time the sun and the wind began arguing about which of them was the strongest. 'I'll prove it once and for all,' boasted the wind. 'See that man in the street? I'll show you I am stronger than you by blowing so hard the man cannot keep his coat on.' 'Very well,' agreed the sun. 'Do your worst. Then I will show you I can make the man remove his coat and so prove I am stronger than you.' So the wind blew and blew, but the man only buttoned up his coat tighter. The wind tried even harder, blasting his icy breath at the man as he hurried along the street. But it was to no avail. The man simply turned up his collar and huddled more deeply into his warm coat. 'Ah!' said the sun, 'no success so far. Let me have a try.' So the sun shone and shone, ever more warmly. First the man turned down his collar, then he undid the buttons on his coat, and before long he shrugged it off altogether. Flinging it over his shoulder, he walked cheerily down the street, whistling as he went. 'I see that you are the stronger,' admitted the wind. 'Your warmth did what my cold breath couldn't do.'

As you are aware, our Overseas Project for this year is support for training in peace and reconciliation within the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. At the recent gathering of South Sudanese Mothers Union leaders wanting to learn strategies which they could share with others in their diocese, many came having suffered much and so carried burdens and long-held antagonisms which initially kept them apart from each other. Facilitators from Mary Sumner House helped them to listen to each other, to pray together and to express themselves through art workshops. Gradually, participants discovered that they had more in common than they had initially believed, and began to reach out in love and forgiveness. Here is what some of them said about this experience:



*A lady lost her sister during the workshop, she shared during the 'sharing circle' activity and her whole family group prayed for her and comforted her. The sharing circles help me to see I am not the only one suffering, others have burdens. I was able to share whatever was burdening me with each and every member of my group. This sharing helped me a lot because I carried this heavy burden in my heart all this time. When I shared with them, I feel light.*

We can all remember times when someone has shown us kindness- perhaps a friendly word, or practical help when we were in need. My Oxford dictionary includes the words *gentle*, *benevolent* and *friendly* in its definition of *kind*. As the story of the wind and the sun shows, the warmth of kindness has a much more beneficial effect than the icy blast of criticism or the coldness of disinterest. For these Mothers Union members from South Sudan, the warmth of kindness overcame barriers of distrust and unforgiveness.

It's not only our brothers and sisters in South Sudan who carry burdens. All of us at some time feel hurt, lonely, unwell, worried or sad. As we show kindness to one another we can experience the miracle of forgiveness where there is hurt and distrust, and comfort where there is sadness or pain in our families, churches and communities. Kindness is, after all, one facet of love (1 Corinthians 13:4). As we show kindness to others we reflect God's character and so glorify him. Paul says in Ephesians 4: 31-32, 'Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and slander be put away from you, with all malice, **and be kind to one another**, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.' We all want to make a difference in the world; showing kindness to others in word and action is a sure-fire way to do that.

# OUR NEXT FIVE YEARS!

Rev'd Anne Kennedy

Rwanda – the Land of a Thousand Hills! What an amazing place to finalize the **MULO**A process (**M**others' **U**nion – **L**istening, **O**bserving, **A**cting). Now we have a Global Framework to guide us in our MU work for the next five years which has been produced through consultation with grassroots members all over the world.

Seventy people – Provincial Presidents, observers, translators and Community Development Coordinators from eleven Zones, Trustees, past and current Worldwide Presidents, Staff members from Mary Sumner House and our Facilitator – met at Solace House in Kigali to draw together two years of input into MULO in five solid working days. And we did it!

Through MULO we have discerned that MU's unique identity and role is grounded in our Christian faith, working through Church and MU leaders. Our focus is on vulnerable and stigmatized women and girls, and orphans and vulnerable children. We work through families, including men and boys, and look to our local communities for support.

Our hope is to achieve change people's lives through **RESTORED RELATIONSHIPS** – with each other, with God, with the stigmatized and with the environment.

## OUR MU GLOBAL FOCUS HAS THREE MAIN AREAS

1. Gender Justice – working to empower women and girls, to give them voice and influence
2. Peace and Reconciliation – decreased Gender Based Violence, safety from harmful practices, reconciliation and conflict resolution



3. Self-Reliance – skills for life, literate and educated, stable livelihoods

### HOW DO WE ACHIEVE THIS?

***Listening in safe spaces:*** breaking down barriers, with dialogue and analysis, and thoughtful responses

***Equipping people to use skills and resources:*** problem solving tools, active training, awareness raising, livelihood and literacy

***Mobilizing and partnering:*** mobilizing churches and leaders, collaborating and connecting, involving youth

***Advocating:*** lobbying, negotiating, linking to services, campaigning

***Accompanying for the long-term:*** relationships, walking alongside, peer support, using groups and structures

### HOW DO WE APPROACH THIS?

**Learning and sharing** – supporting each other; communicating; monitoring; learning together; documenting

**Living out our faith** – worship and praise; discipleship; bible study; listening to God; role models

### WHAT MU QUALITIES WILL HELP US ACHIEVE THIS?

**We believe that, globally, MU members are - bold and open to change; non-judgmental; persevering; loving and compassionate; working for all faiths and none.**

**This is our Global Framework for the next five years, and everything that we do should be held up against the Framework to ensure that we are focusing on issues that affect MU work around the world.**

#### **Some examples:**

Get involved locally in the 16 Days of Activism between November 25 and December 10, which focuses on Gender Based Violence.

Make gatherings *plastic-free* events – focus on sustainability of the environment.

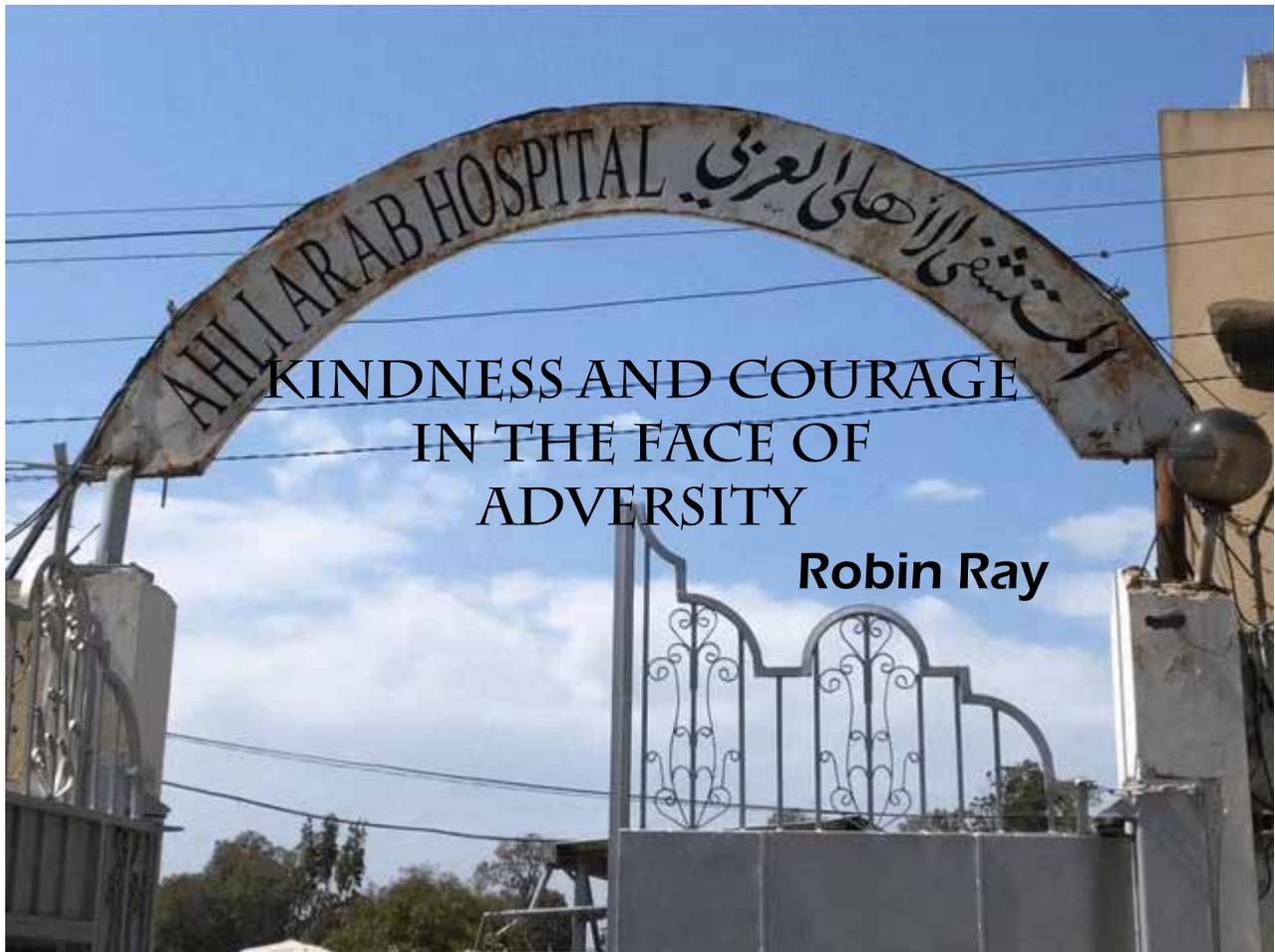
Support the Peace and Reconciliation Workshops by raising money for the Special Project Fund.

Learn about Female Genital Mutilation (Cutting) – and make people aware of the illegality and health repercussions of this custom, especially if you are working with refugees and migrants.

Advocate for the stigmatized and marginalized in your local area, who are they and learn from them about what they need – write as an individual or talk to local Members of Parliament, raise issues you are passionate about (and are in line with the Global Framework), and enlist other members to join you.

This is an exciting new outlook for MU globally, and for AMUA. I hope you will embrace the Framework and apply it to your programs and activities for the coming five years as we all work together.





**KINDNESS AND COURAGE  
IN THE FACE OF  
ADVERSITY**

**Robin Ray**

**DURING A RECENT ANGLICAN OVERSEAS AID BOARD TRIP (SEE AUTUMN MIAMIA), WE TRAVELED TO THE MIDDLE EAST TO VISIT TWO PROGRAMS IN THE DIOCESE OF JERUSALEM, ONE IN EAST JERUSALEM AND THE OTHER IN GAZA. WHILE ALL AOA PROGRAMS ARE INSPIRED BY THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST, BOTH THESE PROGRAMS EXEMPLIFY THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT (GALATIANS 5: 22-23). GIVEN THIS MONTH'S THEME OF KINDNESS I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE SOMETHING OF THIS INSPIRATIONAL WORK WITH YOU.**

***Caring for traumatised children in Jerusalem***

Spafford Children's Centre provides a range of therapies and learning support for the vulnerable and disadvantaged children of Jerusalem. Children in Jerusalem regularly encounter harassment from soldiers as well as the continual threats of discrimination, dispossession and trauma associated with military activity. In poor areas children as young as 10 are being arrested, often with little justification. Children may be pressured to inform on their parents. Consequently these children suffer psychological, physical and emotional disorders often accompanied by delays in learning.

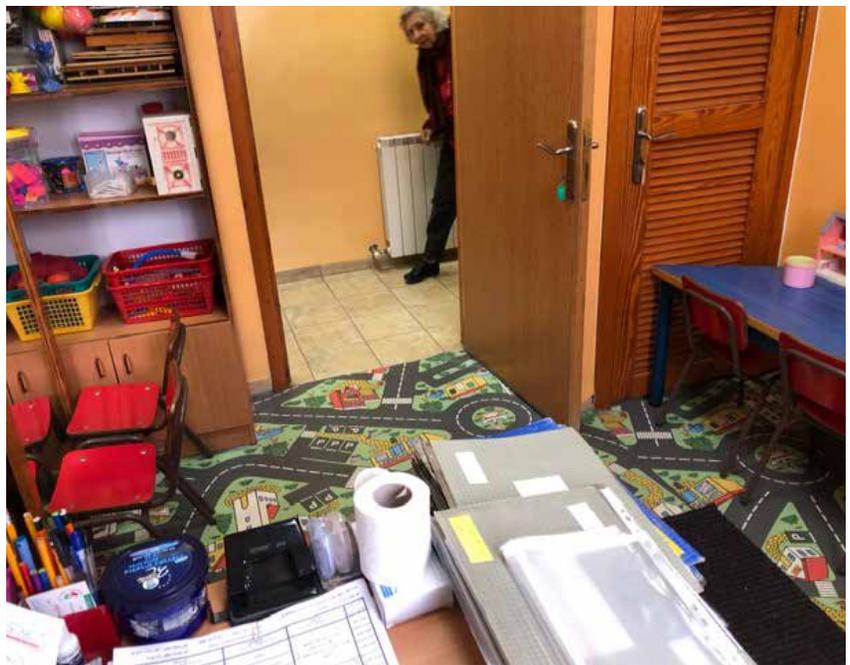
The buildings that make up the Spafford Centre are nestled against the wall of Jerusalem with the courtyards visible to those walking that part of the wall. The property was the home of the Spafford

family who then left it to the Diocese of Jerusalem to provide children's health and welfare services. Kindness, patience, self-control and courage are the hallmark of everyday life for the staff of the Centre. They minister to about 600 families and liaise with other organisations including the Ministry of Education to give children a chance to develop their potential in the context of an unpredictable political situation. Clinical and behavioral psychologists assess the children and then develop individual treatment programs. The Centre provides a range of therapies including play, art, psychodrama, music and speech (financially supported by Anglican Overseas Aid), special education and cultural activities. Kindness and capacity building are also extended to the mothers who have an opportunity to participate in the women's' empowerment program.

Practising kindness is not always easy when dealing with a range of ideologies. While kindness is about the warm generous feelings between people it is also about showing consideration for the unique complexities that make up the lives of these children and their families. Kindness in some situations also requires a degree of self control and courage to deal with the difficult interactions amidst political and social instability.



*Dr Ghanty who has devoted 44 years to work of Spafford Centre - (above) standing outside the music room and (below) inside the speech therapy room.*



## ***An oasis of kindness and care in the chaos and destruction of Gaza City.***

The wall around Gaza forces people to live a prison camp existence, experiencing chronic shortages of supplies of every kind, including 12 to 16 hours of electricity outages per day. Around 65%



of the population are unemployed, with many more under-employed resulting in 80% living on food parcels supplied by non-government organisations. In response to the health needs of this under-served population, the Diocese of Jerusalem established the Al Ahli hospital in Gaza City to provide affordable or free treatment. Apart from the usual workload of care needs found in any hospital, Ahli contends with military induced trauma and the challenges of unpredictable or unattainable supplies.

When considering this leg of our tour, we sought advice from the Diocese of Jerusalem to ensure we would not add to the burden of the staff. We were encouraged to visit with the assurance that the staff would welcome the opportunity to engage with us and share their work as they have little contact with the world outside of Gaza. The Israeli and Egyptian Governments control the walled borders and the sea border of Gaza. Consequently the movement of people and goods is subject to border restrictions and periods of complete closure.

At the hospital, the Director Ms Suhaila Tarazi describes their work in this way: living day by day with hands of God above our hands. God is leading our way, he opens the way to enable us to meet the needs with the love of Jesus. Speaking with Suhaila, it was clear to me that she constantly lives in a state of being kind.

The kindness of financial donors to Anglican Overseas Aid (AOA) and Australian Board Mission (ABM) enables both organizations to support the work of the Ahli hospital. ABM funds focus on the emergency department that is currently in need of a rebuilding following the collapse that occurred late last year (you may have heard about this in your churches).

Through AOA's partnership with the Diocese of Jerusalem, AOA has worked with the Ahli hospital for 31 years. During our visit we were privileged to witness the signing of the next stage of the ongoing agreement to continue the partnership between AOA and Ahli hospital. Since 2012 AOA's focus has been on the breast cancer program. Funding assists with raising breast cancer awareness, screening and treatment as well as education programs for men and boys and empowerment programs for women and girls. At this hospital breast cancer is being diagnosed at a rate of about 300 cases each year. Mastectomy and chemotherapy are available here (supply dependent). Yet vital radiation therapy can only be obtained in Israel and Egypt - often an insurmountable problem given the importance of therapy timeframes and the border restrictions. If you think about the people you know who have been treated for breast cancer, you will realise how important radiation therapy is to breast cancer management.

Out of the kindness of your hearts and your AMUA commitment to families, I ask for your prayers for the people involved in these two programs. Keeping the MULO framework, I challenge you personally and in your branches to engage in ways to promote justice and kindness.



# HEALING IN THE COMMUNITIES

In the middle of 2016 the ladies of Groote Eylandt and Rev'd Kate Beer, our Diocesan Ministry Development Officer, were sitting on the beach at Umbakumba and the ladies asked Kate what to do because of all the pain caused by the severe fighting where men on the island had been killed in November 2015. It was not the first fight the communities had witnessed, but rather was like a 'last straw' for these faithful women. The church leaders requested the Diocese to do something to help the because of the pain they were suffering from these troubles.

Kate worked with Liz McCoy to research options and they found a community-based psychological first aid program from a Christian perspective, which aims to help members of communities to help each other. The program, which is based on oral story-telling, is called 'Healing the Wounds of Trauma' and comes from the



American Bible Society. It is based on the principle that people must ask for help – it must come from them.

The Program is run in small discussion groups. There are five core sessions:

- if God Loves us, why do we suffer?
- how can the wounds of our hearts be healed?
- what happens when someone is grieving?
- taking your pain to the cross
- how can we forgive others?

Then there are many other elective lessons that can be added, depending on the needs of each group. These extra lessons are about topics like Domestic Violence, suicide, care for caregivers, laments and living as Christians in the midst of conflict.

Here in the NT, because of language and cultural differences, they use the oral storytelling version of the course. So each lesson comprises a story from the world and a story from the Bible. The discussion arising from these two stories is facilitated to include psychological principles that help communities help each other heal from the wounds of trauma. Each lesson also gives participants the chance to write a song or create some artwork to respond to the teaching also.

The program doesn't aim to replace professionals, but to help communities help each other. Intercessors are critical during the delivery of a program – so that there is prayer for both participants and facilitators.

The program was first run at Groote and Bickerton Islands. Since the delivery of the first few programs, two Indigenous ladies came forward wanting to be trained to deliver the program too. They have now begun leading sessions in other communities with support. They are now running the program in the women's prison and at Ngukurr community also, with very positive feedback.

Please remember this wonderful ministry in your prayers.

Pat Williams *from information supplied by Kate Beer*

I was sitting in a school hall recently, watching an endless stream of children dancing in a competition. On the wall behind the stage there were three words which summarised the values of the school –

**‘respect’, ‘responsibility’ and ‘doing your best’.**

Well, they were two words and a phrase. Possibly the staff had tired of trying to find a word starting with ‘r’ for that third value.

# Learning to be Kind

Christine Jensen



I was trying to think of a possible word starting with 'r' to express 'doing your best' -say 'resolve', when my mind went to a deeper question: Why choose these as the values which the school hoped to fix in the hearts of the students? Who do we want our children to be?

Now this is not something you can legislate. Governments cannot pass laws about the sort of people we are meant to be. Our society is a lot more than laws made in Canberra. But can we really teach values at school, and if so, are these the best values to aspire to?

They are not bad ones – respect for others, responsibility for your obligations, hard work as you resolve to do your best. But are there values which we as Christians may suggest?

I suppose the word that comes to mind at once is 'love', since the Lord Jesus emphasised our duty to love our neighbour. Love is clearly stronger than respect, though love will teach you to respect others. But I wonder whether 'love' is such an abused word that it would be better to suggest 'kindness' as a school value.

As 1 Corinthians 13, the great love chapter in the Bible tells us, 'love is kind' (v4). And kindness is more active, more caring, than 'respect'.

Kindness is one of those words which is hard to define but easy to recognise. It is that attitude which does not judge or turn away empty, but reaches out in generosity and practical care. The Good Samaritan was filled with kindness.

Love often needs to organise itself in

order to bring blessing to those who are in need. But kindness is love which is more personal. It sees the other, and cares. As Mothers Union members we have many opportunities to show kindness in the community perhaps simply by making that cup of tea for the distressed parent waiting for their child to face the magistrate, visiting new mothers in those often anxious days of a new baby, providing meals in all sorts of circumstances, spending time with victims of domestic abuse and knitting and sewing gifts for those you don't know.

If governments can't legislate for kindness, or any other virtue, can schools inculcate it? Can we really teach respect, responsibility and doing your best? To some extent, it can be so, although surely we learn far more about character in the home, than in school.

But in the end, the virtues of life, things like self-control and love and joy and kindness are the fruit of the Holy Spirit. They arise out of a relationship with God himself, who is infinitely kind. His kindness is another word for his grace.

That is why it is so important that the faith is taught alongside the other subjects in the school curriculum and our children learn kindness by experiencing it from God. Out of that experience comes an ethos of respect, responsibility and resolve. Can you pray for SRE (Special Religious Instruction) in the government schools across the nation? Pray for those faithful volunteers who each week go into the schools that as they teach the Scriptures the children may come to know the God who is kindness.

**Therefore, as God's  
chosen people, holy  
and dearly loved,  
clothe yourselves  
with compassion,  
kindness, humility,  
gentleness and  
patience.**

(Colossians 3:12)

# TRY A LITTLE KINDNESS



Rev'd Lesley McLean

If you want to learn about other worlds try picking up magazines in the waiting room at the doctor or hairdresser. I thought I had had enough of glam – houses, stars with big lips, furniture – so I picked up a copy of *The Big Issue*. I had absolutely no idea what it was. I read a couple of interesting articles which aroused curiosity. I discovered that the not-trashy mag was sold to homeless/unemployed people who then sold them on for a small profit. I decided that this was a venture worth supporting. What has surprised is that I now have a worthwhile magazine AND a worthwhile, occasional encounter with a person on the street. Their pride in a job well done is combined with my openness to a social encounter. I feel we are all kinder people for the exercise. Kindness works extremely well when mutuality is involved.

I have tried smiling at random people, trying to engender kindness in myself, as an exercise in reminding myself that we are ALL God's creatures and not always in circumstances we could have controlled. It's 45 years since Glen Campbell hit the airwaves with his song *You got to try a little kindness*. The 1970s was a time when LOVE tried to overcome hate, selfishness, and greed and war. Half a decade later and we're frightened, defensive, and protective of our wealth and easy living. Time then to think again about kindness. Glen Campbell saw kindness as a light. We know Jesus as the Light of World.

God created Light and one of God's 'attributes' is Loving-kindness. This is a very special English word, invented by Myles Coverdale when he translated the Bible into English in 1535. He was a scholar and went back to the Hebrew and Greek. He translated the Hebrew *chesed* or *hesed* – *loving kindness*. When Cranmer and others put together the *Book of Common Prayer* (1549 and 1552) they chose Coverdale's version of the Psalms. For four hundred years these psalms were read and sung all over the English-speaking world. Coverdale left behind a treasured expression of the quality of God's care for his creation, Loving-kindness.

God's loving-kindness is described in scripture as steadfast, persistent and sure. Scripture tells us we can rely on it. But we need to ask ourselves how our kindness rates. And there is an even more challenging question: how does kindness in our society rate? It seems to me that great literature often reflects or critiques the values of the society of the day. What was Shakespeare saying about the men and women of his day in his play *Macbeth*? Three hags/witches tempt Macbeth with ideas above his station which he knew could be achieved by murder. He and his wife, Lady Macbeth, are spurred on by greed and ambition. She, though, has doubts about him. 'I fear thy nature. It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness'. Shakespeare draws a picture of kindness being a hindrance to wealth and social position. When such an attitude is the social norm, the consequences for our human existence is a serious one indeed.



My children loved a recording of Hans Christian Andersen's *Thumbelina*. Tiny Thumbelina looks after an injured swallow throughout the winter in defiance

of the horrible mole. When spring comes the rejuvenated swallow flies away, his BBC voice ringing out, 'Goodbye, you kind, pretty girl'. Thumbelina is kind in the face personal danger; she characterises Christ's self-giving love, the Father's *hesed*. Coverdale, Shakespeare, Andersen – all use 'kindness' to describe the quality of mercy, forgiveness and love. *Kind* is a four-letter word that is used and abused. It can become shabby with misuse, much like the Velveteen Rabbit, so that we can ignore the meaning and set aside any obligation to let KINDNESS be a principal mode of thought and action in our lives. Our writers do not take the word lightly, nor should we. They all used the word in the light of the Gospels. Jesus' teaching of loving your neighbour, forgiving your enemies, holding possessions lightly, giving away money and time even for the undeserving. These teachings are antithetical to the common order of our modern society.

Consider this: are we kinder to animals than we are to the undeserving poor, the losers, the lost, the sinners, cheats and depraved? Jesus said that when you are kind to one of these you are being kind to HIM. How can He expect that? Surely society would break down and we would all be murdered in our beds?

Perhaps we think kindness is like cake with pink icing? Yet Our Lord and Saviour subjected himself to ridicule and torture to show the path to loving kindness. One of our favourite parables, the Prodigal Son, assures us of God's loving kindness. The scallywag came back all overcome with his misdeeds and the uncomfortable results of his gross insult to his father.

We do understand how he felt. We have erred and strayed from his ways like lost sheep and he has brought us home snuggled in the kindness of his tender, forgiving arms. But we forget the grossness of our insults, our lack of kindness to sinful others, our haughty looks, the secret criticisms that flood our minds or our pretence of kindness when the task is merely a show.

Jesus told the parable to remind his listeners of the LOVING KINDNESS, the *chesed*, of GOD even in the face of unfaithfulness. Remember the Father RUNS to greet the Prodigal Son AND throws a party!! This, Jesus tells us, is what the Kingdom of God looks like. This is our WAY, these are the precepts we follow, no matter how strong the tide of opinion is against HIM, to whom we have pledged our life.

#### **A few references for further contemplation:**

In its positive *hesed* used of mutual benevolence, mercy or pity between people, of piety of people towards God, as well as grace, favour or mercy of God towards people. It occurs 248 times in the *Hebrew Bible*. The translation of *loving kindness* in KJV (1611) is derived from the Coverdale *Bible* of 1535.' *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* edited by Alan Richardson.

#### **Hymns**

*My song is love unknown.* TiS 341, AHB 257

'Love to the loveless shown,  
That they might lovely be.'

Samuel Crossman 1624-84

*Let us with a glad some mind.* TiS 83, AHB 11

'Praise the Lord for he is kind  
For his mercies shall endure  
Ever faithful, ever sure.'

John Milton, blind poet, 1623

Have a look at the Hymn Ancient and Modern Revised, No. 377 for three verses, omitted in TiS, which expand the praise of God the creator of light, sun, moon and stars as Milton puts Genesis 1 into verse.

*There's a wideness in God's mercy* TiS 136, AHB 72

'There's a kindness in God's justice,  
which is more than liberty.'  
'And the heart of the Eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.'

Frederick Faber 1862

See AHB for a first verse omitted in TiS

Forward 100 years to 1970 for Glen Campbell's  
*Try A Little Kindness*

'And the kindness that you show every day  
Will help someone along their way.'

All hymns may be found on the internet and in other hymn books.



***Proverbs 3:3 Do not let kindness and truth leave you, bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.***

When I first saw the theme KINDNESS it reminded me of a hit song from the 1970's written and recorded by Glen Campbell called *Try A Little Kindness* which I am sure it will be familiar to many. The lyrics call upon us to help our brothers and sisters by showing kindness and suggest we should 'shine your light for everyone to see.' Glen himself went through very bad and low times in his life. He not only found God's love and kindness but saw it shine through the members of the Church he attended. This led him to write and sing Gospel and spiritual songs.

Sometimes it doesn't take much to show kindness whether we know a person or not. We have all experienced opening a door for someone, helping a stranger to their feet when they had a fall, picked up something after it has been dropped, given someone spare coins for a parking meter, sent a card or note to tell someone they are being thought of, even prayed for. Small acts like this can give a warm feeling that someone has cared. For many who show kindness, it may just part of their everyday life, for others something that wasn't so easy to do. Often people don't reach out in time of need, it could be difficult for them or even embarrassing. Somehow it is seen by others as there is often a helping hand waiting.

Kindness is showing affection, sympathy, patience, gentleness and being pleasant, all simple acts. Kindness is universal and allows each one of us to use our God given talents in acts of good will. Kindness is love and helps us to be at our best by choosing to do something to make things better.

Not everyone knows how to show kindness! Sometimes during conversations, maybe our own, it has been said *we had to be cruel to be kind* especially when a family member, friend or colleague believes it is for the good of the person. It could even be seen as a way of encouraging them to do better, knowing they have the potential to succeed.

Our Bible stories taught us about the kindness of Jesus, and how touching the lives of people can make a difference. Mary Sumner walked in the pathway of His kindness and love and as Mothers Union members we continue the journey.

A kind heart is a happy heart! God bless.

# SYDNEY PHOTO GALLERY



1



2

1. MULOA exercise at Bowral Area Day  
2. Archbishop and Mama Okoh from Nigeria visit the MU shop. Julia Williams on the right



3

3. Mama Gloria Kwashi from Nigeria with Christine Jensen & Dianne Davies, MU Sydney Patron and wife of our Archbishop



5

4. WWF Sarah Condie (left) spoke at Wentworth Falls Area Day



6

5. Wendy Maher with Kristy Bucknell who spoke on *Resilience in Family Life* at Wentworth Falls.



4

6. Members from Camden travelled to Bowral



7

7. Members from The Oaks travelled to Bowral.

8. Christine Jensen explained the process of MULOA



8

# Congratulations Jan

## 50 years of Service



Jan Livingstone OAM was presented with her 50-year MU service badge at the Southern Highlands Area Day on 2 May this year by current Sydney Diocesan President Wendy Mayer. It is very appropriate that she receives a service badge as her time in MU has been spent serving in so many different levels of the MU community.

Jan has led MU at Branch level, as Sydney Diocesan President and as President of MU Australia which included the role of Provincial President.

Jan says that as a young Curate's wife working in an economically depressed area of Sydney she found great resources and encouragement from the leaders of MU. Over the years she has been able to pass on that encouragement and help through her work in MU branches, including establishing several in areas where she and husband, Rev Canon John, were living and ministering.

Jan has always served graciously and humbly wherever her commitment to her Lord and to MU has led her. We were delighted to be able to surprise her by acknowledging her MU service with the badge presentation.

Pictured above Wendy, Jan, Kathy and Elizabeth

The lifeblood of Mothers' Union is the commitment, faith and compassion of its members and friends.

Generations of women and men have invested in Mothers' Union, so that today it is healthy, alive and growing. Now the future is in our hands



'like a tree planted by water, with roots that reach deep by the stream...' Jeremiah 17.8

**Legacies can make a lasting difference to MU Australia's future. To find out how you can include us in your Will, you can contact:**

**MU Australia,**

Marilyn Robey,  
Australia Council Secretary,  
8 Darwin Drive,  
Bathurst NSW 2795  
email [muaustsecretary@telstra.com](mailto:muaustsecretary@telstra.com)



# PERTH MU LEARNS ABOUT SRI LANKAN MU ACTIVITIES

The Lynwood Branch had a very special new member from Sri Lanka. Tamara came to Perth to help to settle her twin children at University in Western Australia.

Tamara attends St. Luke's Church in Colombo, Sri Lanka and spoke to us about her home branch of Mothers Union and the amazing work they do, helping other groups in the area. They have thirty six Mothers Union members in her branch and the Church has two hundred members in the Youth Fellowship alone which is amazing.

- ❖ Two Saturdays each month MU provides tea for visitors in the Children's' Hospital
- ❖ They help at the Medical Clinic
- ❖ They provide extra classes at Church for students in Mathematics, English and Science every Friday
- ❖ On the first Sunday of each month they provide breakfast after morning service for Church members
- ❖ They provide home visits at St. Luke's Elders Home every month taking food delicacies with them for the patients
- ❖ On Maundy Thursday they make dinner of bread and curry for Church Members
- ❖ They help at Lady Ridgeway Hospital Montessori School every day and at Christmas they take gifts, sing carols and perform a Nativity for the children
- ❖ They visit prison every Christmas taking presents, singing Carols and performing a Nativity
- ❖ They take Christmas Lunch to approximately sixty housebound people every year
- ❖ They do refreshments for all Church activities

It is really astounding how much they do to help members of their Church, the elderly and orphaned children within their community.

It is sad that since the violence at Easter they cannot meet in the Church, they meet in small groups in people's homes and the Minister gets round to them all in turn.

Tamara was returning to Sri Lanka in May but will be returning to her children in WA several times each year and will then attend Lynwood St Augustine's Church.



## FRIENDS

*Just as water reflects the face, so one human heart reflects another.*

*Proverbs 27:19*

Dear Heavenly Father,

There are no words to express my gratitude for the circle of friends You've given me. Each one is different, like a rare gemstone fashioned to best reflect Your light in a uniquely beautiful way. Thank you for both smiles and tears we've shared and for the wonderful moments of friendship that are yet to come.

Lord I also pray that You will help me to be honest with my friends and open to the truth when they are honest with me. Teach me to appreciate confrontation born of love and give You thanks for friends who don't run away from uncomfortable situations. Bless them for all the wonderful things they bring to my life.

Amen

*I always pray for you, and I make requests with a heart full of Joy.*

*Phillipians 1: 3*

Written by Nola Collins  
First published in 'Befriend'  
booklet for AMUA Brisbane

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, GWEN!



A special morning Eucharist service to mark Gwyneth Clarke's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday was celebrated by Rev'd Cameron Smith at St Cuthbert's Anglican Church, Tweed Heads in January. Cameron is a former RAAF Chaplain and also a former Assisting Priest at the Parish of Coolangatta/Palm Beach where he first met Gwyneth Clarke and her late husband Reverend Ben Clarke about twenty years ago.



Gwyn's grandson and his family and granddaughter Sarah and three nieces attended and were joined by Mothers Union members from the Coolangatta/Palm Beach branch where Gwyn was President for many years. Gwyn was especially happy to see the Gold Coast Deanery President and former Brisbane Diocesan President Marilyn Dunning with whom Gwyn had served for many years.

Rev'd Cameron acknowledged the faithful support many women have given to upholding the Christian faith in their homes and the wider community over many decades. He paid special tribute to Gwyn who supported her husband in his ministry, providing both physical and spiritual help to him and members of his congregations. Wherever their Christian journey has taken them, Gwyn has been a blessing not just to Ben but to all whose lives she has touched in her gentle, loving and unassuming way. In her dedication to the outreach of the Mothers Union she has found great spiritual satisfaction and has enjoyed all the special ways in which she has served her Lord.

Rev'd Sue Woodcock was invited to come forward and pray a blessing over Gwyn and to pay tribute to this very special lady whom she loved and admired greatly.

# LIVING PLASTIC-FREE

Jenny MacRobb

Members of Mothers' Union and friends gathered for the annual June Join In at Newborough on 12 June to learn more of living plastic-free in response to the diocesan booklet *Building a Better Relationship with our World*.



Fr Sathi Anthony used as his text Genesis 1:26-28 to remind us that when God said we were to 'rule over' the earth he gave us a responsibility. 'It's been said that the line between childhood and adulthood is crossed when we move from saying *It got lost* to *I lost it*.

Indeed, being accountable – and understanding and accepting the role our choices play in the things that happen – are crucial signs of emotional and moral maturity. That's why responsibility is one of the main pillars of good character. '

Hannah Alquier shared her ways of living plastic-free as well as pointing out how much plastic is in everyday use and that we have a responsibility to protect our world for future generations. She reminded us that if we are in doubt about how to do something without using plastic, we need to think how our mothers or grandmothers did it.

One participant, Maryann Ashton, later commented that the talk was very interesting and had led her to many interesting websites. One was the local *gippslandunwrapped.com* which she found well presented, with lots of ideas. Maryann also said, 'I have to pay for my rubbish to be collected and if I wish to recycle, make trips to the tip. So instead of saying I can't do anything, I am starting small. A visit to The Source store in Traralgon on Monday to buy some vegetables with no plastic is my starting point '.

## CENTRAL GOULBURN CELEBRATES 60 YEARS

The Seymour Mother's Union (MU) branch began in 1959 with Mrs Wiedemann leading the group. Muriel Andrea, who turned 93 on 19 June was one of the original members. Nagambie had their own MU group and Avenel a Caritas one. They merged when the parish became known as Central Goulburn in the early 2000's.

Members from Avenel, Nagambie and Seymour gathered together on 20 June to celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> birthday. The Christ Church hall sported church and MU photo albums and wall displays of pictorial records collected from the 1950's to now. Guests brought photos of weddings, 21<sup>st</sup> birthdays, debutante ball pics, and other memorabilia to share with other guests.

Muriel Andrea had the honour of cutting the birthday cake with MU friends and family around her(see photo).



Mary Muntz, the Anglican Diocese of Wangaratta Executive Convenor from Nathalia and Judy James attended the special day which was also the annual fundraiser for overseas and outreach and MU projects. For many decades the branch has held this event to support the work of the Mother's Union around the world and in Australia.

# NEWS FROM BRISBANE DIOCESE

## BUNDABERG CELEBRATES 80 YEARS

Records show that Mothers Union commenced in Bundaberg 31<sup>st</sup> May 1939 with Mrs. Cordelia Osborn the wife of Revd. Osborn, as enrolling member. In the early days there were four Branches in Bundaberg. Each Wednesday there was a meeting in one of the branches and on the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month a 11am Corporate Communion held at Christ Church followed by a quarterly Mothers Union Meeting.



After the war with more cars and better transport the suburban branches closed, and MU became one branch at Christ Church Bundaberg. The Bundaberg Branch continued to grow and reached its peak in membership in the late 50's and early 60's. Deanery Days were a great source of encouragement to our early branches. Maryborough, Pialba, Howard, Torbanlea, Childers and later Gayndah and Biggenden, with members hiring the railmotor or local bus to travel to Deanery Day. Memories are of 300 members sitting down to a luncheon served on white starched tablecloths.

Diocesan President Bev Perry concluded by looking at Bundaberg MU today with its 43 members and its hopes and vision for the future. A birthday cake was cut by Mr Tony Osborn the son of Rev. and Mrs. Osborn who with his daughters Margaret and Kay joined the celebration. A great day of memories shared and with a hope for the future.

Bev Perry awarded several other awards around the diocese.

At Pittsworth Friendship Day, (pictured at Right) Beris Shelley (centre) received a 60 year long service award. Beris is an inaugural member of Milmerran Branch and came to Pittsworth when that branch closed. Awards were also given to Romona Postle pictured on the left (25 years) and Sue Wilkes on the right (10 years).



At St. Thomas Beaudesert Margaret Haden received a (50year) badge and scroll.

On 27 June, Gold Coast North celebrated the 10th Birthday of their branch. It was a wonderful day of celebration and 10 year scrolls were presented to Marjory Fieldus, Elaine Gramm, Rev'd Ron Bundy and Shirley Morris (see picture at right)



Also on 27 June Marilyn Dunning (Past President) represented Bev at Ipswich's Overseas Day and Outreach Day and presented Betty McCulloch with a (50year) badge and scroll. Susan Skowronski presented Wendy McMahon with her 25 year badge and Velda Chaplin and Margaret Hertweck with their 40 year scrolls.

# CELEBRATING 80 YEARS OF MU IN DIOCESE of WANGARATTA

DIANE GRANT



Just over 80 years ago, the Diocese of Wangaratta Mother's Union was formed with a couple of newly organised branches from outlying districts attending a meeting at Wangaratta with the intention of forming a Diocesan Council and other branches around the district. The small group to larger proportions and on 5 August, current MU members celebrated 80 years of their Executive Council. The 80<sup>th</sup> celebration also recalled the MU founder Mary Sumner.

Guests from the Diocese MU branches were joined by some lone members and visitors from the Parish of Central Goulburn MU branch from Seymour and Nagambie. After communion, MU President Mary Muntz presented Bishop John with a certificate of appreciation and a farewell gift as he retires soon. A birthday cake was cut by Aylean Baker, MU member for 65 years from Rutherglen.

Special visitor was Mrs Joy Freier who gave a colourful power point presentation on her visit with Archbishop Philip and Denise and Alan Nicolls in 2013 to Myanmar and congratulated the Diocesan MU on their 80 years of support for their branches and marriage and family life.

## BABY BUNDLES - DIOCESE of NEWCASTLE

Members of Day and Evening Groups at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Kotara South recently pooled their talents in making up Baby Bundles for our local Area Health Authority. Parishioners kindly donated money / fabric/ wool for us to use in making bunny rugs, jackets, beanies, preemie baby gowns and hearts, buying singlets etc. for the Bundles. We set aside one Monday to make up the sewn articles, some ladies cut fabric. Some ironed, some folded and packed. Others kept us well supplied with tea, coffee and nibbles for morning tea. We knew it would be a long day so we all packed our lunch boxes.

The following Sunday these articles were on display in the Sanctuary and Blessed by Father Chris Bullock. This gave us the opportunity to say thanks to our parishioners and let them see how their kind donations had been turned into lovingly made gifts.

We know God's Blessings are in abundance when we see these acts of kindness in our society and Church life. The articles were taken to John Hunter Hospital where they will be distributed to those families in need.

*Barbara Warland, Evening President, Cheryl Stoddart, Day President and Freda Bowdler, Contributor*



## NEWS FROM ROCKHAMPTON DIOCESE

On May 11, we held a hugely successful Multi Cultural evening to highlight the work of MU overseas and closer to home.

Many of our members dressed in costumes from other counties and so did many guests. About 50 adults and 10 children attended. Food from many nations was also brought and shared. The evening began, after welcome and prayer by our Bishop David Robinson, who is our chaplain, too, with Welcome to Country and 3 short aboriginal dances.



MU members read pages from our *Families Worldwide* magazines to tell about what is happening in MU internationally, especially in our Link Dioceses (our Wave of Prayer was 25th to 27th May).

We also invited guest speakers from the Multicultural Development Office and Multi-cultural Association (CQMA) who are possible links for our work through MU. Many commented that they did not realise what tremendous work MU does. Members participated enthusiastically in this wonderful event, prompted by MULOA discussions and the need to promote AMUA.

Bishop David and Jan Robinson are going to Kenya in September, and will meet up with Mothers Union groups there. Jan is wearing a Kenyan uniform in the picture. Bishop David's shirt is from Bangladesh.

## NEWS FROM BENDIGO

The Caritas ladies of SE Bendigo have been busy making rugs and beanies to be presented to Teen Challenge in Kyabram. They will be presented at the Winter Gathering in Kyabram.

-Lois Morrissey.



*Ask rain from the LORD  
in the season of the spring rain,  
from the LORD who makes the storm clouds,  
and he will give them showers of rain,  
to everyone the vegetation in the field.*

*Zechariah 10.1.*



# MU AT WORK IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

MU in New Zealand are ar work in the scattered rura Far North where unemployment is rife. MU is rowing food for the poor and offer practical support where when and what is needed.



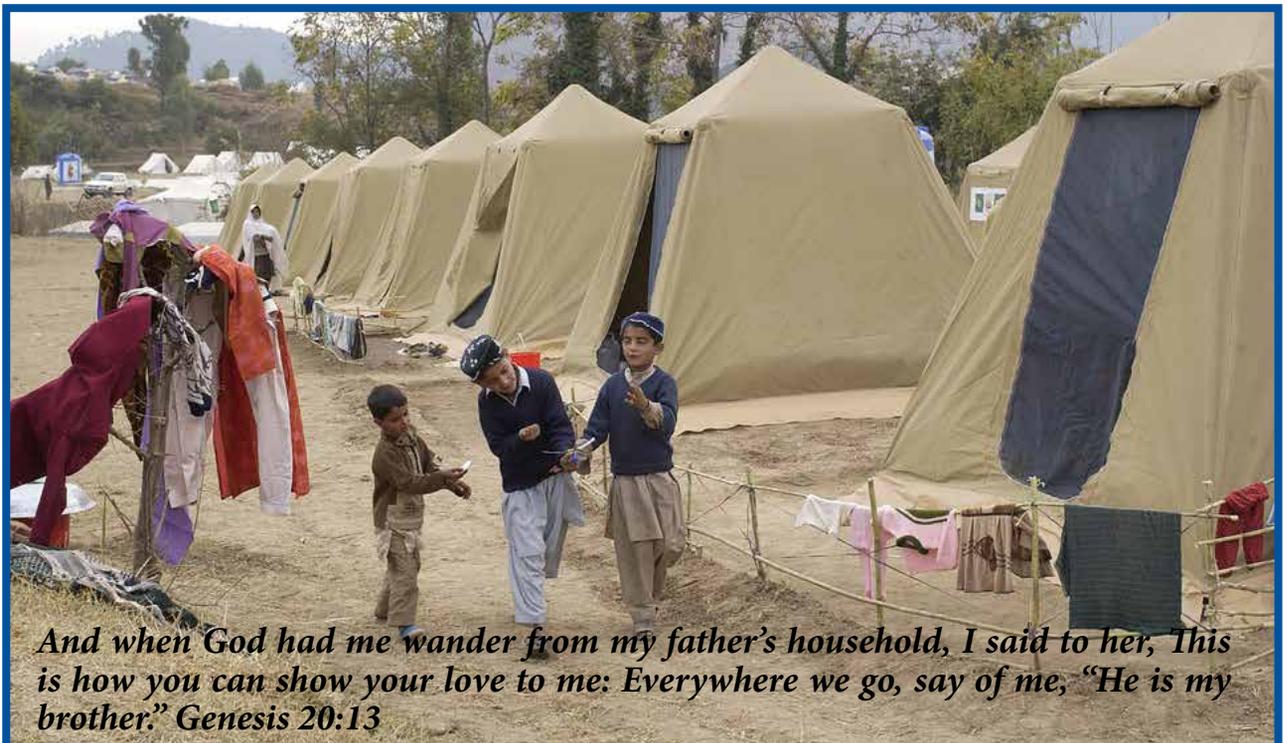
Here is the story of that HUGE garden that Aunty Aggie put down for the Mothers' Union. After talking with her over the phone, I thought it was going to be a planter box. Mistake! Without me knowing any more, she went ahead and said to her grandson, 'Wiremu, Norma and I are going to do a kumera garden for the Mothers' Union'.



Next, I get a call from Aunty Aggie saying, 'Girl, I have started on the garden, and well, there is only us two to do the garden.' Then I found myself standing in the garden talking to the 'Guy above' (ie God Almighty) saying 'what and how do we manage this garden?'

That's when it came to me to go and meet with Norm Popata, Kaitaia Correction Supervisor. From there he approved for us to have PD workers, looking to complete their community hours, to help us take care of our garden. Even Norm got a fright to see what two old ladies can do. He said that next time we start another huge project like this let him know first and he can help us.. So that is the story about the Kumera garden.

*Told by Norma Evans*



*And when God had me wander from my father's household, I said to her, This is how you can show your love to me: Everywhere we go, say of me, "He is my brother." Genesis 20:13*

John Cronshaw

I am always amazed that so many ladies (usually ladies but men in their sheds also) are constantly 'doing' something such as knitting or sewing at meetings or when travelling. The finished product is often for their own family, but just as often I find people are working with their hands for a charitable or missionary organization such as Samaritan's Purse.

Dorcas is mentioned in Acts 9:32-43 in the very early stages of the fledgling Christian church. She was a disciple, and we read that 'she was always doing good and helping the poor.' She died and local widows gathered to mourn the loss of their dear friend, and they brought with them the 'robes and other clothing Dorcas had made while she was still with them.'

You may think one should focus on the miracle by Peter when he raised her from death. I want you to focus on the fact that this lady spent a lot of her time sewing and making garments (probably spinning and weaving rather than knitting) and in so doing, acted out the exhortation (not written at this stage) of James (James 1:27). 'Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction'. How did she help? By using her skills and talents in the best way she knew – by handiwork. How did she get her skills and talents?

Dorcas may be a familiar story to you. Have you heard of Bezalel and Oholiab? In the early stages of the Exodus, the Israelites were camped around Mount Sinai – God's Holy Mountain. Here God affirmed they were to be a holy nation as He had promised to Abraham nearly 500 years earlier. It was here that God gave Moses The Ten Commandments, (Exodus 20). In Exodus 20 to 30, you will read a very detailed description of how God wanted the Tent of Meeting and the Tabernacle constructed. This was to be a mobile sign to the Israelites of God's continued presence with them, and the meticulous detail and rules were also a means of establishing the need to maintain some awe and reverence towards their Holy God.

But what of Bezalel and Oholiab? How do they fit with the story of a seamstress called Dorcas? God has delegated a job to us – his created and beloved people. That job? To show His love to the world so they might turn to Him. In Exodus Chapter 31, we read that it was The Lord who selected these two people (and others) to be responsible for weaving the cloth and constructing the wooden and bronze structures. It is important to notice that for a tradesman's job they were 'filled with the Spirit of God' and God also gave them 'wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills.'

An experienced builder will tell you the most important thing in building is to *measure twice – cut once*. All skills require honing and improving through practice. I have no doubt Dorcas had a natural affinity to handiwork, but she probably learned the skills at her mother's or grandmother's knee.



I find it interesting that when the early disciples needed assistance in waiting on tables to serve the widows (Acts 6:1-7) they did not look for good waiters but chose from among themselves 'seven men ... who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.' In serving our Lord, well might we ask *what can I do?* Look around and you will soon identify a role you can play in spreading the love of God. Your first requirement is to be at one with God's Spirit, and tackle the task knowing the Lord will provide you with the skills, talents and means to undertake His role for you in your life. Mothers' Union provides the forum and the organization for this type of service but the organization is composed of individuals, and in Exodus it was skilled workers who made everything that needed to be made.

CS Lewis wrote: He seems to do nothing of Himself which He can possibly delegate to His creatures. He commands us to do slowly and blunderingly what He could do perfectly and in the twinkling of an eye.

Lord, what can I do?

## THINKING ABOUT

# PEACE AND RECONCILIATION CLOSE TO HOME

CHRISTINE BRAIN

Sometimes it's easier to think about peace and reconciliation when it's over there than when it challenges us. Here are some Bible passages and some questions for reflection to help us think about whether we need to do some work making peace and being kind to people nearer home.

### Matthew 22:37-40

<sup>37</sup>Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup>This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup>And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' <sup>40</sup>All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.' (NIV)

**Q. 1. What do you think it means to love your neighbour?** (Make a list)

**Q.2. Look at the following verses and list what (if any) additional ideas about loving your neighbour you find in them.**

### Matthew 5:7 and 9

<sup>7</sup>Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

<sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. (NIV)

### Romans 12:17-21

<sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup>Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to

avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. <sup>20</sup>On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.' <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (NIV)

### 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

<sup>4</sup>Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup>It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. <sup>6</sup>Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. <sup>7</sup>It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (NIV)

### Colossians 3:12-15

<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup>And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. <sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. (NIV)

**Q3. Are there people in your life whom you do not love as Jesus calls us to do? Think about just one (or perhaps two) in particular. What can you do to change this?**

**Commit this plan of action to God in prayer.**



# SPRING TRIVIA – PLANTS OF THE BIBLE

- 1) A burning bush caught this man's attention
- 2) Adam and Eve made clothes using this plants' leaves
- 3) Cedars in the Bible are said to come from this place
- 4) Noah's ark was made out of this type of wood
- 5) This plant provided Jonah with shade (for a while)
- 6) Jesus condemned this plant because it had no fruit
- 7) This man climbed a tree in order to see Jesus
- 8) The Israelites sent spies into the land of Canaan, who brought back samples of this fruit, so heavy that two men had to carry it.
- 9) This judge of Israel is said to have dwelt under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel
- 10) Aaron's rod that budded brought forth this type of fruit
- 11) Eve ate of this fruit in the garden of Eden
- 12) Noah sent out a dove from the ark which brought back a leaf plucked from this plant
- 13) Absalom was fleeing battle when he got his head caught in this type of plant
- 14) When Solomon reigned, it is said that every man dwelt in safety, under a vine and this tree
- 15) Jotham uttered a parable concerning the trees. In the parable, which tree agrees to be king?
- 16) When Elijah fled from Jezebel and asked God that he might die, he did so under this tree
- 17) Where did God plant a garden?
- 18) This man had a vineyard next to the king's palace
- 19) According to Jesus, in order to move a mountain, we need an amount of faith comparable to this
- 20) Jesus wore a crown made of ...



Answers on Page 31

## ATTENTION

DIOCESAN AND BRANCH PRESIDENTS

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*K*eeping all in the love of Christ  
*I*n a sacred place where  
*N*o-one feels separated.  
*D*eemed to be joined together  
*N*ew and aging; those in need and those who serve.  
*E*ncouragement, friendship, listening and comfort  
*S*ends the message that we care.  
*S*it in silence for a little while,  
contemplating, welcoming the beauty.

*Evie Rennick 20.7.2019*

## SUN'S PATTERNS

In the afternoon  
the sunlight plays on  
my neighbour's curtains,  
as concentric geometric  
patterns swirl slowly,  
expanding and contracting  
with imagery reminding  
me of agate rock -  
I watch as a witness  
to time, to illusion  
and to memories of  
my childhood collecting  
precious stones, fossils  
and sea shells  
whispering of home

*Sarah Muller(c) 2019*



## FARM SUNRISE

The rising sun  
breaks through morning mist  
warming the valley below.

Shrouded shapes take form –  
a shed, a wooden gate  
spreading fig and tall straight pine  
passionfruit vine on a barbed wire fence.

Young cockerel calls a greeting,  
bids the farmyard, 'Awake!'  
Cattle stir beneath the fig  
and a stock horse nickers gently.

Butcherbird on the strainer post  
enjoys the warming rays  
sips refreshing dew drops  
and sings praises to the day.

*Susan Skowronski © 2019*

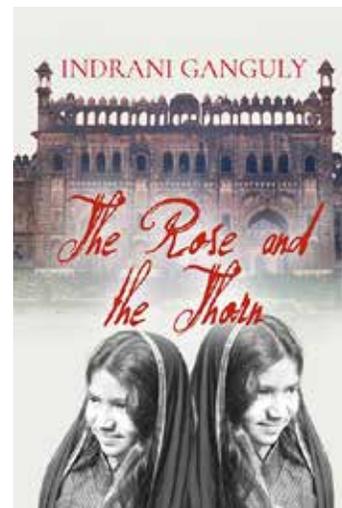
# BOOK REVIEW

## *The Rose and The Thorn*

by *Indrani Ganguly*

ISBN 978-0-6484072-0-1

Review by Trudy Graham, Queensland author, Goodreads



We live in a world that is multicultural, rich in culture, customs and diversity. This is especially true in Australia today, and I find it helpful to have some perspective and understanding of these varied cultures and the people I meet and connect with. How better for a bookworm like me to do this than to read?

As a child of the forties and fifties, my view of Indian culture and history was greatly influenced by my elders. At school, I was indoctrinated with romanticised Colonial History. India was peopled by warring factions, and when the English arrived, they soon sorted this out. When they departed in 1947, we were taught that they left a functioning democracy.

‘The Rose and The Thorn’, by Indrani Ganguly, informs and educates as it entertains. While it’s set against a backdrop of history, it’s about love - family, sisterly and romantic love. We read about women from India’s multifaceted society working together to fight for independence, and to improve conditions for women. To do this, they have to go against the men they love, who sometimes oppose, sometimes support them. There are also complex relationships with the English men, women and children and prominent and not so prominent Indians.

The first line of this novel - ‘Today is the eighty-fifth birthday of my two mothers.’ – heralds a mystery. This hooked me and kept me puzzling over its meaning until towards the end of the book. As twins Mukti and Lila grow to adulthood and marriage, their sheltered life begins to change, paralleling what is happening to the political climate and of the social reforms of India during the early to mid-20th century. When it came time for the twins to marry, Mukti asked her mother (page 110): ‘Why are mothers-in-law often so mean?’ Her mother replied: ‘They were often badly treated themselves and this is their way of getting back.’ As in many societies of the time, women had no standing without a good husband, (as Mukti’s Aunt Molly declares on page 115).

Lila, the twin who was born a dreamer, wanted nothing more than to settle into a life like her mother’s but this is denied her. Mukti, on the other hand, wants adventure. As both struggle to achieve their aims, as they are torn like plants from the soil they know, their love and loyalty are tested over and over again. Mukti’s husband, Krishna, tell her (page 315): ‘Before you tear down something, you must think through what you will put in its place.’ Something India was struggling to do as it reached towards independence.

By the time I reached the final words, the challenge thrown to the reader in the last sentence of the blurb was answered. But you’ll have to read the book to discover your own answer to this question. For those who would like to get a taste of the book and where they may get it click on <https://www.book2look.com/book/cNyQZS...> And if you would like to see Indrani in conversation click on <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSQAYvTMZ5mEoXYePZ6jeXw>

## Trivia Answers

1. Moses (Ex 3: 2); 2. Fig (Gen 3:7); 3. Lebanon (1Ki 5:6, 2Ki 14:9, 2Ch 2:8, Psa 92:12,); 4. Gopher (Gen 6:14); 5. A gourd (Jonah 4:6); 6. Fig (Mat 21:19); 7. Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2-4); 8. Grapes (Num 13:23); 9. Deborah (Judges 4:4,5); 10. Almonds (Num 17:8); 11. It is not known (Gen 3:6); 12. Olive (Gen 8:11); 13. Oak (2 Sam 18:9); 14. Fig (1 Kings 4:25); 15. Thornbush (Judges 9:15); 16. Broom (1 Kings 19:4); 17. Eden (Gen 2:8); 18. Naboth (1 Kings 21:1); 19. A mustard seed (Mat 17:20); 20. Thorns (Mat 27:29)

# RECIPES

## APRICOT LOAF.

60gm softened butter,  
1 cup chopped apricots,  
2 cups self-raising flour or wholemeal flour,  
1 cup boiling water.

Put butter and apricots in a saucepan with boiling water, bring back to boil, reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes, then stand until cool. Add flour and mix, adding a little extra water if needed. Bake at 180 degrees {160 degrees fan forced oven} 45 minutes. May be iced with lemon icing or press almonds into top before cooking.

## SPICED ORANGE ALMOND & COCONUT CAKES

2 oranges  
4 large eggs  
200g caster sugar  
3/4 tsp bicarbonate of soda  
1tsp gf baking powder  
280g almond meal  
100g shredded coconut  
1/2 tsp ground cardamom  
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

Place whole oranges in a saucepan and cover with water and boil until soft to touch (30-40mins).

Blitz the cooled whole oranges in a food processor and process until smooth.

Add the eggs and sugar process until creamy.

Add all the other ingredients and process until well combined.

Divide among small cardboard (straight sided) cake cups.

Cook 170° fans forced oven for about 35mins until slightly browned on top then ice with orange icing or dust with icing sugar.

Contributed by Faye Land

## APPLE CRISP

200gm butter,  
2cups plain flour or wholemeal flour,  
1/2 cup brown sugar,  
grated rind of 1-2 oranges  
6-8 apples peeled and thinly sliced, sprinkled with orange juice.

Beat butter until creamy, mix in flour, orange rind and sugar. Keep 2/3rds cup of mixture. Press remaining mixture into a greased and lined 20x30cm baking tray. Bake at 180 degrees C {160 degrees fan forced} for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and spread evenly with apples. Mix remaining base with cup oats and sprinkle over apples. Bake for further 15-20 minutes until apples are soft and topping crisp. Cool and cut into squares. If apples are moist, sprinkle custard powder lightly over base before spreading apples. [Absorbs moisture.]

Substitute 1/3 cup Splenda for sugar for diabetic friendly food.

## GLUTEN FREE DATE LOAF

1 cup boiling water  
180g chopped dates  
2 TS butter  
3/4 cup brown sugar

Put in saucepan and bring to the boil  
Then add 1 ts carb soda and let cool

When cool add

1 egg  
1/3 cup walnuts  
1 1/2 cups GF SR flour

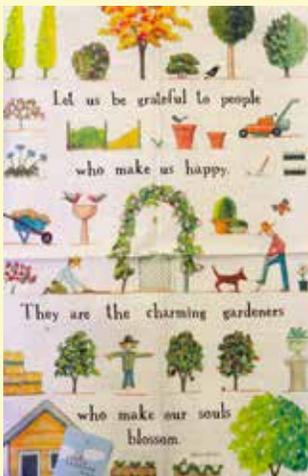
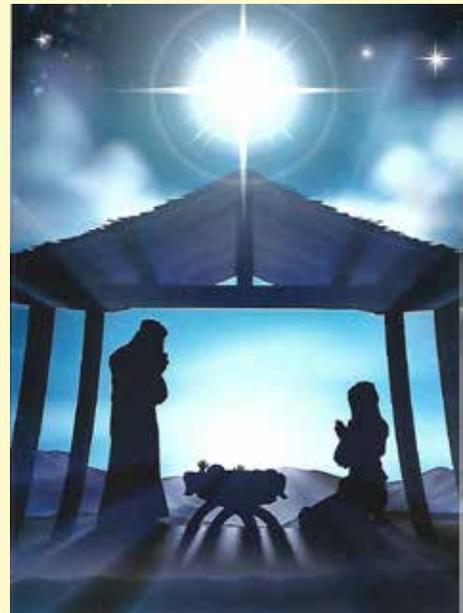
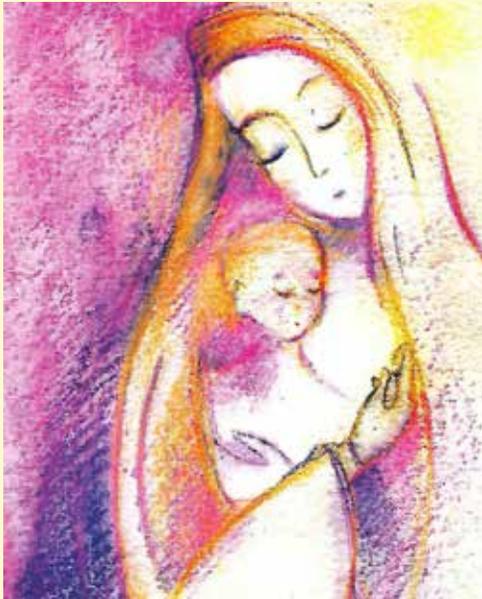
Pour into a ring tin and bake moderate oven 25-30mins.

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Contributions to this page  
would be greatly appreciated.

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