

Prayer for the New Year

Give us the kindness to hear with compassion,
to offer support, loving comfort, and care.
Give us the courage to do what is needed,
the wisdom to choose what is right and most fair.
Give us the vision to see what is possible.
Give us the faith that will help pave the way
for a present that's hopeful, a future that's peaceful
give us the heart to bring joy to each day. Romans 15:13

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AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN NSW STATE UNIT INC.

NEWSLETTE

From the President . . .

Lamentations 3: 22 -24
*Because of the Lord's great
love we are not consumed, for
his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
I say to myself, "The Lord is my
portion; Therefore I will wait for
him."*

The Christmas decorations that sparkled and gave hope, are well packed away. Carols have been placed in order for future reference; the 12 days of Christmas are behind us. For some of us it was a great adventure; for others a relief when it was all completed and filed away for another year.

Have our circumstances really altered that much? What impact has the Christmas message of hope had on our everyday living for this year? Do we still hear echoes of the angels' messages and singing, encouraging us to continue in the faith?

How does the story of Christ coming to earth resonate in our daily living? Have we been reminded that God is faithful as we have come rushing headlong over the threshold of another year?

For so many years there was the promise of God coming into our human story.

Then as we have recently celebrated, God fulfilled that promise and lived among us. Now we have the promise that one day he will return again. Is this not a great encouragement for each of us as we tread this human journey?

Through all the circumstances of life that we face, we are assured that God is faithful and his purposes will continue to be worked out in our lives.

My desire for you is that you will continue to know the peace and love and joy given by the Father through Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me leave you with a verse from a hymn by Annie Johnson Flint:

His love has no limits, his
grace has no measure,
His power no boundary
known unto men;
For out of his infinite
riches in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth,
and giveth again.

Continue into this year, assured of His presence with you in every circumstance of life.

May God richly bless you,

Pamela Freeman

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Meet Peg McEntee OAM, our President-Elect

Peg brings a wealth of experience to her forthcoming role as President of ACW NSW State Unit Inc. The Catholic Women's League positions she has held range from parish to international levels and these have taken her to Jakarta, The Philippines, Rome, Israel, Papua New Guinea, New York and Beijing. Peg has attended meetings related to Church, Governmental, and the Status of Women, including the 4th United National Conference of Women held in Beijing.

Not only has CWLA benefited from Peg's involvement. She is a member and was State President 1998-2000 of National Council of Women NSW. She has been Director on the Board of two Aged Care facilities, with a three year term as Chairman for one of them. To mark her contribution to the local community Peg was awarded the Citizen of the Year Wollondilly Shire in 1992. This was followed by recognition for Service to Women particularly through the Catholic Women's League with the award of the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 1996.



Pamela Freeman with Peg McEntee

This was followed by the award of the Order of Australia Medal (OAM) in 1996 in recognition of Service to Women particularly through the Catholic Women's League.

The only daughter of Thomas and Beryl Devitt who resided in the Illawarra District, Peg attended St Joseph Primary School Port Kembla, and St Mary's College Wollongong for secondary.

She married Ronald McEntee 1961. They moved to The Oaks in 1966 where they raised their four children – 1 daughter, 3 sons, and are blessed with 11 grandchildren and 2 great-grandsons. Both Peg and Ron were very involved in the local church, community, school and sporting groups.

For the diary

Service of Installation
Thursday 31 May 2018 at 11.00 am
St Francis Xavier Cathedral,
Harbour Street Wollongong

As we come once again to Lent and Easter and consider the death and resurrection of Jesus. . .

let us celebrate our countless gifts from the Lord of Life –
in days and nights, in rainbows and rain

in touch, dream and smile, in partners who love, in kids
who cuddle, in grannies who listen, in friends who care
in dogs that lick, in hands that sew, in food on the table. . .

yet above all in Christ's coming among us, walking our
roads, calling our names, enfolding our lives, inviting us
home.

AT EASTER

In the global turbulence we pause
to be silent, to speak from deep places.
And so - no calm acceptance
of homeless millions,
of a planet in tears,
of shock politics,
of the trajectories of hate.

We have seen further and the vision holds, -
for the truths of faith remain true,
confirming the joyful fact
that all is not degraded in our human story.
In each new day, rich in surprise,
we recapture the possibility
of reaching out in love,
of rejecting fake news,
of belonging together.

Look and see!

The Easter story celebrates REAL NEWS,
that hatreds fail,
that healings happen,
that barriers are broken,
that the arc bends toward justice.

Truly our days are infused with Light
and Goodness and Mercy shine brightly within them.

After Peter Millar, Iona Community
Member, Edinburgh, 2017

WINIFRED KIEK SCHOLARSHIP

2018 Scholars details from National Convener, Margaret Florence:

Lauren Kate England (QLD): Lauren has Degrees in Special Education, Arts and Ministry. She is the Youth Pastor at Hume Ridge Church of Christ in Toowoomba.

She wants to study full time for a Masters Degree at Fuller Theological Seminary (US), to become a Christian Leader in Ministry and Service.

"I have felt God's call on my life to Vocational ministry in Australia."

Elise Nicole Ruthenbeck (SA): Elise has studied Biochemistry, Theology, and has a MPhil in English Studies. She has also done a Counselling Course with Living Hope and has worked as a volunteer phone counsellor.

She is a member of the Uniting Church at Strathalbyn.

Her WK Scholarship is for a PhD at Flinders University.

Christmas Greetings were sent to 7 past scholars and these replies were received:

- Esline [Vanuatu/2016]: Gives thanks for prayer support and Christmas greetings. People of Ambae still needing prayer after effects of volcano.

- Yane [Humpty Doo/ NT/2015]: Yane is taking 12 months leave away from NT in 2018. Her husband has found work in Wyee (outer Sydney). She will continue writing up her Thesis and her children will start at local school. The change was needed and they are grateful God opened the way for them. She gives thanks for prayers and contact support.

- Christy Ferguson [Melb/2009]: Sent greetings ..."as we remember God's amazing gift to us."

- Leinamau [Vanuatu /2007]: After Graduation from Pacific Theological College Fiji, stayed on for Language Translation Workshop for her church, then home to Vanuatu. . . . with family and cleaning up her flower patch. "Next year, 2018, is in God's hands ...work or study ...it is to His glory."

- Nighat Gulzar [Philadelphia /1994]: sent a lovely Christmas card ..
" May you all be blessed with treasures of hope that are found through Jesus"

Please continue to partner with these amazing women.

Judith Cayzer,
Convener

SPECIAL DAYS

I would like to begin this first report for 2018 by wishing you each a Very Happy New Year!

It has been a joy to read your reports as they have come in of your observance of World Community Day last October. Since then we have celebrated our Saviour's birth and his promise of Hope for the future as we have moved into 2018.

As we prepare for our activities throughout 2018 it is my prayer that we will seek to make a priority of the fellowship we share at our Special day services in July and October. As we unite for worship with the various denominations within our communities it is an opportunity for women of faith to be truly one in Christ. It is also an opportunity to learn what each other is doing in ministry, to share resources, ideas and to identify gaps in ministry to the community that could perhaps be filled by a denomination or a shared group. It is a time for getting to know each other and for encouraging each other in the faith.

Speaking of *Encouragement*. The NSW State Unit of Australian Church Women has been asked to prepare the Order of Service for Fellowship Day 2018. The theme for this service is *Women of Encouragement* and comes under the overarching theme for 2018-2019 of *Women Serving Openheartedly*. As members of the NSW Unit meet together to prepare this service your prayerful support would be most appreciated.

My prayers will be with you as you prepare, plan and attend the Special Days in 2017. God Bless!

Lyn Middleton
Special Days Convener

Fellowship of the Least Coin

Greetings to all readers of *Newsette*. I am still learning the ropes, as it were, for the task of convener of Fellowship of the Least Coin, but I am very grateful to all who have supported us over the years. I am amazed at just how generous you all are. There are many organisations that are crying out for our donations and it is sometimes hard to decide which to support. I will endeavour to keep you informed throughout the year how those we support are doing.

Judy O'Hara
FLC Convener

MUMS' COTTAGE

Shirley Mitchell



Sister Helen Anne from the Sisters of St Joseph had long felt the urging of the Holy Spirit to establish a project to cater for young mothers in need of support. Sister Helen's long and often disappointing, wearying search for a suitable property eventually led her to Holmesville (a village on the outskirts of Newcastle NSW).

With buildings in need of TLC, though with potential, and grounds ideal for children and their games, negotiations were put in motion between the Uniting Church and the Sisters of St Joseph and the dream became a reality – MUMS' COTTAGE was born. The community, service clubs, church congregations, mums, dads – anyone willing and able helped transform property and buildings.

The project was brought to the attention of Australian Church Women and the Convener of Fellowship of the Least Coin (FLC), Major Lillian Hodges, supported an application for a grant for Mums' Cottage which resulted in a contribution from the International body of the FLC.

Sister Helen Anne was invited to speak of the project at the 2015 ACW Conference in Sydney. Again the Holy Spirit came into play, this time convicting a conference delegate from Western Australia, Kaye Seeber.



MIRACLE AT MANDURAH

For two weeks after the conference Kay wrestled with the idea, and after much prayer and discernment, could do no other than begin the journey to establish a Mums' Cottage in WA. Like Sister Helen, Kay experienced many setbacks, disappointments, frustrations which Sister Helen calls a "MacKillop journey".



In November 2016 the struggle to find a property resulted in locating an old house. Frenzied activity came from many sources – volunteers, locals, service clubs, local press, various denominations, painters, builders, gardeners – and the Cottage was opened on 2nd December 2016, the picture showing Sister Helen Anne with Kaye Seeber cutting the ribbon.

Kaye's profile in the area, (Chair of YouthCARE which supports chaplains in the local government schools) and expertise in other areas was the instrument God chose and used (and the 2015 Sydney Conference).

From December 2016 to April 2017 approximately 140 visitors have passed through the doors of Mums' Cottage (average 30/month) seeking help with issues such as domestic violence, relationship issues, family court and legal matters, accommodation and food, addictions, troubled children needing tender loving care.

And the last word from Sister Mary MacKillop...

Remember this, there is even on this earth, a day of bright rewards for all your prayers and faithful perseverance (1874)



Mum's Cottage
Mandurah Board
meeting

A thought for the New Year . . .

May God the creator of this wonderful world with its myriad paths and challenging crossroads grant you a firm sense of direction.

May the Son, who brings light to the darkest valley, heal your hurts and share your burdens.

May the Holy Spirit, who has always breathed life and hope where there is chaos and despair renew you in soul and spirit to meet the challenges of 2018.