

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SANDHURST

2025

*Year in Review*







## *Acknowledgement of Country*

The Diocese of Sandhurst recognises the traditional custodians of the lands upon which we live, serve and worship. We acknowledge the people of the Northeastern regions of our Diocese, Djilmathang, Minjambuta, Duduroa and Waywurru. We acknowledge the people of the Southern regions of our Diocese, the Dja Dja Wurrung and the Taungerung. We acknowledge the people of the Northern regions of our Diocese, the Yorta Yorta and Bangerang. We acknowledge the people of the Western regions of our Diocese, the Baraparapa and Wemba Wemba peoples.

We respectfully honour and acknowledge their ongoing custodianship and their connections to the land, waters and animals. We pay our respects to their culture, their Elders, past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of their peoples. We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and commit ourselves to actively working alongside First Nations People for healing, reconciliation and justice.



---

**Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst**  
[www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au](http://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au)  
[chancery@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:chancery@sandhurst.catholic.org.au)  
172-174 McCrae Street Bendigo VIC 3550  
PO Box 201 Bendigo VIC 3552  
T: 03 5445 3600

---

**Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd**  
[www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au](http://www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au)  
[director@ceosand.catholic.edu.au](mailto:director@ceosand.catholic.edu.au)

**Bendigo Office**  
120 Hargreaves Street Bendigo Victoria 3550  
PO Box 477 Bendigo VIC 3552  
T: 03 5443 2377

**Tatura Office**  
74 Hogan Street Tatura VIC 3616  
T: 03 5831 3811

**Wangaratta Office**  
71 Ryley Street Wangaratta Victoria 3677  
PO Box 1181 Wangaratta VIC 3677  
T: 03 5723 0000

---

**CatholicCare Victoria**  
[www.catholiccarevic.org.au](http://www.catholiccarevic.org.au)

**Bendigo Office**  
176 McCrae Street Bendigo Victoria 3550  
PO Box 255 Bendigo VIC 3552  
T: 03 5438 1300

**Shepparton Office**  
**Family Relationship Centre**  
68 Wyndham Street Shepparton VIC 3630  
T: 03 5820 0444

---

**Diocesan Development Fund**  
[www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au/ddfsandhurst](http://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au/ddfsandhurst)  
[ddf@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:ddf@sandhurst.catholic.org.au)  
172-174 McCrae Street Bendigo VIC 3550  
PO Box 201 Bendigo VIC 3552  
T: 03 5445 3606

# CONTENTS

*Year in Review*



INSTALLATION MASS OF ARCHBISHOP SHANE MACKINLAY

## OUR ORGANISATION

- 4 Our Diocese
- 5 Ministries of the Church

## REPORTS

- 7 Most Rev. Shane Mackinlay
- 13 Very Rev. Brian Boyle
- 14 Mick Chalkley  
SMPC Chair
- 16 Dr Chris Cotter  
Mission and Pastoral Life
- 21 Greg Westbrook  
CDOS Acting Business Manager
- 22 Kate Fogarty, CES Ltd
- 24 Rev. Jake Mudge  
Clergy Life and Ministry
- 25 Rev. Nathan Verallo, Vocations
- 26 Claire Spinelli  
Sandhurst Youth Ministry
- 30 Agnes Sheehan  
CatholicCare Victoria

## COMMUNITY & MISSION

- 32 A Year of Hope
- 36 A New Pope
- 37 150 Anniversaries
- 39 Parish Visitation Program
- 40 Laudato Si'
- 41 Season of Creation
- 42 Social Justice
- 44 2025 Jubilarian
- 45 In Memoriam
- 48 Financial Performance
- 52 Prayer for a New Bishop



The Diocese of Sandhurst was established in 1874. It represents the Catholic Church in a region in Victoria bounded on the north and east by the Murray River, extending from Kerang to Corryong and as far inland as Euroa and Bright, covering 45,196 square kilometres.

A diocese is simply a community of Christ's faithful – it represents a portion of the people of God in a particular area, which is entrusted to a bishop. In the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst, Bishop Shane Mackinlay is the pastoral leader of more than 84,000 Catholics. He is assisted by priests who minister in 38 parishes within the Diocese. The parishes are grouped into three Deaneries, the Western, Goulburn Valley and North Eastern.

The Sandhurst Diocese's vision and mission is "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). We welcome all who would like to join our communities or be guided by the principles and teachings of Christ.

409,994	Total Population
84,607	Catholics in region
48	Clergy
9	Religious Congregations
34	Religious
38	Parishes
55	Catholic Schools
19,902	Students in Catholic Schools
6	Preschool and Day Care Centres
550	Children in Preschool and Day Care Centres
1	Catholic Hospital
6	Catholic Aged Care Facilities



- Bishop's Office
- Caritas Australia
- Catholic Charismatic Renewal
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd
- Catholic Mission
- CatholicCare Victoria
- Clergy Life and Ministry
- Communications
- Council of Priests
- Diocesan Archives
- Diocesan Consultors
- Diocesan Development Fund
- Diocesan Finance Council
- Diocesan Social Justice Committee
- Diocesan Vocations Ministry
- Mission and Pastoral Life
- Priests Retirement Foundation
- RCIA Forum
- Roman Catholic Trusts Corporation for the Diocese of Sandhurst
- Safeguarding
- Sandhurst Clergy Health and Wellbeing
- Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council
- Sandhurst Publications
- Sandhurst Youth Ministry
- Teams of Our Lady (*Equipos Notre Dame*)



**BISHOP SHANE SPEAKING TO STUDENTS FROM SACRED HEART PRIMARY SCHOOL TATURA DURING HIS WEEK-LONG STAY AT THE TATURA PARISH AS PART OF THE BISHOP'S VISITATION PROGRAM WHICH, IN 2025, INCLUDED THE PARISHES OF BENALLA, KYABRAM AND TATURA.**



# ARCHBISHOP SHANE MACKINLAY

*“The time I spent with parishioners, school students, their pastors, the sick and the elderly was extremely fruitful. I was heartened to see the faithful and generous involvement of these communities.”*

I am writing this at some distance from Sandhurst; the Archbishop's Office at St Stephen's Cathedral in Brisbane. As you are aware, 2025 was a year of profound change for me, for the Diocese of Sandhurst and for the Archdiocese of Brisbane. But, while I may now be geographically distant, I continue to have strong affection for Sandhurst and feel closely connected to the people and activity of the Diocese.

The first part of this year was overshadowed by momentous changes in the life of the universal Church. In March and April, people around the world prayerfully accompanied Pope Francis on what was to be the final stage of his long struggle with frailty and ill health. After his extraordinary return to St Peter's Square on Easter Sunday, his death the next morning led to an enormous outpouring of grief, which spoke profoundly of his impact as a beloved global figure. He was rightly mourned as a compassionate and visionary leader, determined to speak out for the dignity and needs of the poor, the marginalised and the forgotten.

His call for us to become a more synodal, listening Church was transformative and has ignited a great spirit of collaboration, understanding and renewed mission among all the baptised. Only a short time after its commencement, the Conclave to elect a new pope gave us Leo XIV, the first pope from North America, and a man who is committed to continuing Francis' legacy. In a few short months, Pope Leo has shown how much he has been shaped by his time as a missionary in Peru and his international experience as the Augustinian Prior General. He has endeared himself to many through his warmth, humour and humility. It is clear that, like Pope Francis, Pope Leo is not afraid to speak for those without a voice, calling for justice and generosity in a world where communities are increasingly self-interested.

The Jubilee Year, with its theme 'Pilgrims of Hope', was marked in the Diocese by a number of initiatives. Many

individuals and groups have undertaken pilgrimages to our five Jubilee sites. As a Diocese, we have focused especially on the continuing formation of the people of God. I am glad that I was able to formalise this priority as part of the Diocese's Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals before the commencement of my time in Brisbane. Formation is also embedded in the new Formation Support Plan, which was released in June, and which identifies key actions and initiatives to be undertaken over 2025–26 to implement our goals. I was pleased to hear of the success of the Diocesan Formation Gathering in Shepparton in October, and I am confident that related initiatives will continue in the future.

In keeping with the theme of the year, I undertook a pilgrimage of sorts in July to attend the annual commemoration of St Liborius in Paderborn, Germany, along with Fr Stephen Bolling (Parish Priest of St Liborius, Eaglehawk) and Fr Nathan Verallo, who was already in Europe. Our pioneer priest, Dr Henry Backhaus, came from that Archdiocese. I was honoured to be the main speaker at the Festival's Opening and to preside and preach at one of the Festival Masses in Paderborn's Cathedral. The challenge of doing this in another language renewed my respect and gratitude for those priests who serve us from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

We saw a number of changes in the Diocese's clergy during 2025. In February, after only a year as Parish Priest of Shepparton South, Fr René Ramirez RCJ was ordained as an auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. I was privileged to act as a co-consecrator, and was deeply moved by the warmth of the welcome given to Bishop René. I am very grateful for the continuing commitment to Sandhurst of the Rogationist community, who sent Fr Ronald Masilang RCJ from the Philippines as Fr René's successor. Since then, there has been further significant change for the Goulburn

Valley with the retirement of two long-serving and beloved priests. Monsignor Peter Jeffrey retired as Parish Priest of St Mary's, Mooroopna, after a distinguished career in Sandhurst and as a seminary rector in three different countries. More recently, Fr Joe Taylor retired as Parish Priest of St Brendan's, Shepparton, after 51 years' service as a priest of the Diocese. With the help of an additional Rogationist priest, the parishes in this area are now being served together by the Rogationist community and Fr Adi Indra. The three Rogationist priests are living together in the St Brendan's presbytery in community, as required by their congregation, and Fr Adi is based at St Mel's.

A further retirement occurred in November, when Fr Dennis Cramer reached the age of seventy-five. Fr Dennis is a much-loved priest who has served across many parishes, and who has been undertaking a ministry of hospitality and contemplation in recent years.

In January, we lost one of our older priests, Fr John Ryan, who was a pioneer in developing ongoing formation and support of clergy across Australia. Many of the programs and structures he introduced are still in use today.

The start of the year also brought further hope for flourishing priestly ministry into the future, with two young men from the Diocese commencing as seminarians: Aaron Baulch from Kerang and Mason Crosier from Mooroopna. They joined the other two seminarians for the Diocese in undertaking various pastoral placements in our parishes during the year. Another young man, Anil Madanu from India, who arrived in Australia in August, is participating in our vocation discernment program: Come and See.

The Bishop's Visitation Program to Parishes continued this year with visitations to Benalla, Kyabram and Tatura

parishes. Once again, I was impressed by the thorough preparation undertaken by the parishes in the lead-up to my visits. The time I spent with parishioners, school students, their pastors, the sick and the elderly was extremely fruitful. I was heartened to see the faithful and generous involvement of these communities as they face a range of challenges. I am also glad to hear that other parishes in the Diocese have chosen to continue using the discernment and reflection tools provided by the Program, despite my appointment to Brisbane requiring the suspension of the actual visitations.

Parishes and schools across the Diocese showed great commitment in working with the Diocesan Youth Office to prepare for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in December. Although I attended with young people from Brisbane, I was very pleased also to reconnect with the youth of Sandhurst in this faith-filled and faith-enriching experience.

I close with a sense of sadness but a strong feeling of hope and confidence. I was certainly sad to leave the Diocese of Sandhurst, where I have been so warmly welcomed for nearly six years. But, as I leave, I am heartened by what we have been able to commence together across so many areas – in education, mission, formation and synodality. I thank all of you who assisted me in my ministry as shepherd of the Church in Sandhurst. I am encouraged that the Diocese is being cared for so faithfully by the new Diocesan Administrator, Fr Brian Boyle. I pray that the next bishop is appointed soon, and that the Diocese and its communities flourish, continuing our shared mission to build up the kingdom of God among us.

**Most Rev. Shane Mackinlay DD**  
**Archbishop of Brisbane**



ARCHBISHOP MACKINLAY, BISHOP RAMIREZ AND BISHOP LES TOMLINSON AT THE FUNERAL OF MONSIGNOR FRANCIS MARRIOTT

*Farewell Mass*  
**HOMILY FROM BISHOP SHANE MACKINLAY**

*Sacred Heart Cathedral Bendigo 7 September 2025*



It's hard to believe that it's been almost six years since I first stood at this lectern in October 2019. The time since then has been full of lots of activity, which always makes it hard to notice how long it's been going on. It's been an extraordinary privilege and variety of experiences for me, as I have been welcomed into the life of this Diocese and have come to know the people, the priests, and the communities who belong here. I'm very grateful that so many of those communities are represented today, and I appreciate the effort that each of you has made to be part of this celebration. I'm also looking forward to the opportunity to gather with the priests and seminarians of the Diocese tomorrow evening for Mass and a farewell dinner.

With your help, during my time in the Diocese I have received rich insights into the many different aspects of a bishop's ministry. As well as being entrusted with leadership and guidance across the Diocese, I have also had the opportunity to be involved in a wide range of activities outside the Diocese, including the various activities that the Sandhurst Diocese contributes to at a Victorian level, the

regular meetings and gatherings of the Australian bishops, the Australian Plenary Council, the two sessions of the Synod for a Synodal Church in Rome, and the annual meetings of the international commission for dialogue between the Catholic Church and the members of the World Methodist Council (which includes the Uniting Church of Australia).

So, in some ways it feels like a lot more than six years too: I'm familiar with all of our parishes and schools, and feel quite at home in our presbyteries, where I've received such warm hospitality from priests and parishioners as I've travelled around the Diocese; I've been to India and the Philippines to visit the families of our priests who come from those countries; I can find my way to most parts of the Diocese without needing to use the GPS – though I have to admit that I still struggle with some of the twisted streets around Bendigo! I'm not even a 'young' bishop anymore; there's a dozen others in Australia who have been ordained as bishop since me!

Some of the experiences of the last six years are starting to feel like a long time ago. Less than six months after I became

Bishop, we had to suspend the normal gatherings in our churches and schools as we entered the cycle of COVID lockdowns. For a long time, my big outing for the week was driving to St Kilian's on Sunday for the live-streamed Mass, with only a handful of people in the church. Of course, that was also a time of connecting in different and surprising ways, as people spoke of the importance of joining in with our weekly diocesan Mass from their homes and parishes, and as so many of our parishes set up new ways of nurturing the faith and relationships in our communities.

During that time, we also conducted the initial consultations that led to a 2-year process of establishing our Mission and Pastoral Council, which has in turn played a critical role in



developing our new program for using the bishops' parish visitations to help parishes review their current situation and plan for the future, and to a set of Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals that will help guide decision making and priorities for our parishes, schools and diocesan activities over the coming five years, as we seek to respond to Pope Francis' legacy of calling us to be more synodal in the way we together live out our mission as Christ's Church. I'm enormously grateful to all those who have contributed to these processes, and particularly to those who have been directly involved as Council members, Chancery staff, and through taking up responsibilities in their local parishes.

Alongside the consultation about leadership structures in the Diocese, we also investigated options for establishing a governance arrangement for our schools that didn't rely just on the particular skills and experience of individual priests. That led to a decision to operate our schools at a diocesan level through Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd, which is now in its fifth year as a company and, under the very professional leadership of its board and executive, is making a significant impact in formalising mutual cooperation and support between our parishes and their schools, and in using its diocesan reach to provide enhanced resources and coordination for improving the opportunities for learning for each of the young people who are enrolled in our schools and early learning centres.

I think the readings that the liturgy offers us today are very helpful as we look back and look forward. The second reading is a poignant moment of farewell, as Paul, who tells us that he is 'an old man now', comes to the end of his missionary journeys and from prison sends Philemon a former slave, Onesimus, who has become Christian and has become Paul's beloved

companion. Paul feels great sadness at saying goodbye to Onesimus, but recognises that their time together has come to a conclusion. As at any time of farewell, including the end of my ministry as Bishop here in Sandhurst, it is clear that while there is much to celebrate, there are also beginnings that have not been concluded and new possibilities that have not begun. However, rather than lingering on regrets and 'what ifs', Paul recognises that he needs to entrust Onesimus and his future possibilities to God's care and to the grace that he is confident that Onesimus will receive from others.

In the gospel, Jesus speaks of the commitment that is needed to be one of his followers. He puts this in very dramatic terms, of being prepared to leave behind family, friends, and all that

matters to us. I'm not feeling that my going to Brisbane is quite such an absolute rupture as that, but certainly it is a moment of moving further away from places, communities and relationships that I am very connected to, as part of living out my particular call to discipleship in a new place and a new role. And it's good to be reminded that being open to that call is a characteristic of following after Jesus.

Finally, in the first reading, Solomon prays for wisdom. As David's son, he is King of Israel at the time when it is at the peak of its power and wealth, securely established in the citadel city of Jerusalem that David had captured, and with riches enough to build a temple worthy of the Ark of the Covenant. Yet in the midst of all this success and prosperity, he acknowledges the limits of his own insight and knowledge, and recognises that all that he seeks to do only finds its place as part of God's plan and God's path, which he knows that he does not see. In my own life, and for most people that I have known, it's never worked out too well to try and have things completely planned out in advance. We certainly need to discern carefully about what we commit ourselves to, and then give ourselves wholeheartedly to whatever that might be. But, at the same time, we need to be open to the surprises and unexpected possibilities that God opens before us along the way. Being Jesus' disciples means following along his way, rather than our own, and being ready to hear and respond to his call along the way, to things we might never have imagined, and new paths that lead us into his future. We are always part of something that is much bigger than what we can see around us in our immediate experience. To be people of faith means taking God seriously, taking seriously that we are building God's kingdom rather than our own, and being open to serve in the way that he calls us, confident that he promises always to walk faithfully with us.

As we look back in thanksgiving today and acknowledge the sadness of this time of farewell, I invite you to join me in looking forward with hope and confidence in the God who continues to call us along his paths and to shape us as his people.

# *Farewell Speech by Fr Brian* **BISHOP SHANE'S FAREWELL MASS**

*Fr Brian Boyle, Administrator of Sacred Heart Cathedral and friend of Archbishop Shane Mackinlay spoke at Archbishop Shane Mackinlay's Farewell Mass on 7 September 2025*

Good afternoon. My name is Fr Brian Boyle. I am the Administrator of Sacred Heart Cathedral. It is my duty – indeed my honour – to offer some words of farewell to Bishop Shane as he leaves this Diocese to be installed later this week as Metropolitan Archbishop of Brisbane. I speak on behalf of the Cathedral parish. I also speak on behalf of the Diocese of Sandhurst, the mighty Diocese of Sandhurst!

I remember standing at this same lectern some seven years ago to farewell another Bishop of Sandhurst, Bishop Les Tomlinson (present with us today). I hope that farewelling bishops of Sandhurst does not become a habit for me! Shane Mackinlay and I have known each other for some twenty years now. I first met Shane at Catholic Theological College in East Melbourne in 2005. He was a lecturer in Philosophy; I was a lecturer in Sacred Scripture. Shane subsequently became Master of the College; I became the Academic Dean. Over the years, we worked closely together professionally. We also became friends.

We discovered a mutual interest in music and culture. Gradually, we built up quite a list of subscriptions to theatre, symphony concerts and quartets. Without much exaggeration, we must have attended literally hundreds of concerts over the years. Shane is an erudite and cultured man. Sadly, however, that does not extend to opera; conversely, he could say my culture is limited because it does not encompass ballet!

Much of Shane's legacy will be identified in the area of synodality, the way of being Church in the world so fruitfully explored, and presented to us, by Pope Francis during the years of his pontificate. Synodality is not just a "buzz word" or a novelty but a return to the scriptures and the traditions of the Church to prayerfully discern, through deep listening and dialogue, the presence of the Holy Spirit leading us all forward, as missionary disciples of Christ, on a pilgrimage of

hope, for our Church and for our world.

Bishop Shane understood synodality in his own Diocese. He attended both sessions – in October 2023 and again in October 2024 – of the now famous Synod for a Synodal Church in Rome, as an elected member of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference (ACBC), and was further elected as a member of the oversight committee drafting the final document, which was then approved by Pope Francis.

Shane understood and lived what being a synodal Church means. This legacy is identified, not only on the world stage – the two sessions held in Rome 2023-2024, but also on the national and local stages. Bishop Shane played a key role in the 5th Plenary Council of Australia, held in Sydney in July 2022. It was also on the local diocesan level that this expertise for, and commitment to, synodality was apparent. In February 2023 a Diocesan Assembly was held in Kialla, to explore what synodality might mean for our Sandhurst diocesan mission and life. It was an historic gathering which Shane joyfully led.

In terms of his legacy, mention can also be made of his leadership in the celebration of 150 years of our Sandhurst Diocese (1874-2024), of his visionary plan for the new Chancery building on the Cathedral Site (the beginnings of which will be undertaken in the next few months), and his care for the significant number of overseas priests now generously and effectively ministering in our parishes (he visited the homes of their families in India and the Philippines). Shane Mackinlay brought significant gifts of intellect, faith, administrative skill and vision to our Diocese of Sandhurst as our Bishop. He was also personable and engaging in his interactions with parishioners. We thank him sincerely and wish him well in his new role as Archbishop of Brisbane. I now invite you to stand and acknowledge with me: Shane Anthony Mackinlay, eighth Bishop of Sandhurst!





**BISHOP SHANE'S FAREWELL MASS WITH THE SANDHURST DIOCESE CLERGY**



## Diocesan Administrator

# VERY REV. DR BRIAN BOYLE

### *A Room with a View*

One of the more significant events to occur in our Diocese in 2025 was the translation of our Bishop, Shane Mackinlay, to Brisbane. He was installed as Metropolitan Archbishop of Brisbane in a wonderful liturgical ceremony in St Stephen's Cathedral there on 11 September, 2025. I attended the ceremony, as did a number of other priests and laity from the Sandhurst Diocese. Shane was our Bishop 2019-2025 and leaves a great legacy to us, especially in the era of synodality.

The waiting time for the appointment of a new Bishop of Sandhurst by Pope Leo is typically some 12-15 months. A careful process of consultation and investigation is undertaken by the Apostolic Nuncio of potential candidates and, eventually, a list of three such candidates is sent to Rome for the Pope's consideration. In the waiting time, an Administrator is elected and appointed for the Diocese, basically to keep the machines running until the new Bishop arrives.

In the law of the Church, this right and responsibility of electing and appointing an Administrator belongs to the group called the College of Consultors. This group met at Shepparton to fulfil this specific task on 15 September. I was elected Administrator of the Diocese, on the first ballot. The Administrator then assumes some of the administrative and governance duties and responsibilities of a diocesan Bishop, in a caretaker role. This period is what we call *sede vacante*, with the (bishop's) chair being vacant. This situation is now dramatically represented in our Sacred Heart Cathedral with an empty bishop's chair.

A key principle the Administrator must clearly work on is no innovation! He cannot introduce anything into the life and ministry of the Diocese which is contrary to the policies and governance of the previous Bishop, nor can he abandon or substantially change any of the programs or initiatives of the previous Bishop. And so, as far as Sandhurst Diocese is concerned, such initiatives and programs of Bishop Shane, which will continue during the *sede vacante* period, include the following:

- implementation of the Sandhurst Mission & Pastoral Goals
- development of Cathedral Square
- formation support plan.

The Administrator is not the captain of the ship; his task is to keep the ship on course. In this responsibility, he is aided, advised and assisted by the College of Consultors, which continues in the *sede vacante* period while other diocesan groups, for example: the Council of Priests, go into abeyance.

One of the perks of the Administrator role is occupancy of the Bishop's Office in the Chancery. This office becomes a room with a view, both literally and metaphorically. Literally in the sense of an unrestricted vista over the lush Chancery lawns and gardens and, metaphorically, in the sense that all important decisions about the life and mission of the Diocese are discussed, considered and acted upon in that room. This simple office affords the occupant a privileged view over the life of the Diocese. A perspective on diocesan life – people, celebrations, policies, events – is given to the occupant of this room as decisions related to financial, strategic and pastoral issues are reflected on and decided. It is a privilege, but also a responsibility.

Construction work of the new Chancery on the Cathedral site has now begun and it is anticipated the work will be completed within two years. The current Chancery staff and offices will then move to the new building, in what will be known as Cathedral Square. It is an ambitious project and one which will greatly enhance the site of Bendigo's iconic Sacred Heart Cathedral. One of the offices in the new Chancery building will be the Bishop's Office which will, naturally, have a commanding view over the developed cathedral precinct. This office, too, will be a room with a view, a view of the Cathedral Square and a view over the life and mission of the Diocese. Occupied by the new Bishop, this room/office will be one of the key places where he exercises care, oversight, governance and encouragement in the Diocese, aided by those who occupy adjacent offices, working in collaboration with him. A room with a view seems to be an apt way of describing leadership in the Diocese – a privileged view of oversight, but a commanding view which also carries accountability and responsibility.

**Very Rev. Dr Brian Boyle**

**Diocesan Administrator Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst**



## Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council

# MICK CHALKLEY

*“Ongoing formation has been a feature of the Council’s meetings this year. Members have continued to draw on the teachings of the XVIth Ordinary Synod for a Synodal Church.”*

In this Jubilee Year for the Universal Church, “Pilgrims of Hope”, the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) gathered in Shepparton for meetings in February and May. The members of the Council also gathered for a day of formation in August and the meeting scheduled for November was cancelled, due to the appointment of Bishop Shane as the Archbishop of Brisbane. Our work plan for the year included: providing advice in the elaboration of plans relating to the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals, which included contributing to the development of a Diocesan Formation Support Plan; ongoing listening and learning about the structures; safeguarding practices and the Diocesan commitment to redress for victims of abuse; and the general financial situation of the Diocese, as well as providing advice regarding the development of programs, events and the exercise of various diocesan ministries, especially with young people through our schools and parishes.

In terms of SMPC membership, a casual vacancy was created by Fr Jackson Saunders’ appointment as Assistant Priest to the Cathedral Cluster of Parishes in Bendigo in January 2025. At the February meeting, Fr Jackson was farewelled and thanked via video call and Bishop Shane invited Fr Ronald Masilang RCJ (Shepparton South) to attend the February and May meetings of the Council as a member of the clergy from the Goulburn Valley Deanery.

The Council’s February meeting was largely dedicated to a series of activities facilitated by Mr Geoff Gowdie, the Sandhurst Assistant Director of Mission and Pastoral Life. These activities invited members of the Council to advise and recommend the steps for a plan to operationalise Strategic Direction 3 of the Mission and Pastoral Goals, “Life Giving

and Empowering Formation” and the goals in the other two Strategic Directions. After seeking feedback from the Council of Priests, Geoff presented the draft of a Diocesan Formation Support Plan at the May meeting, which was endorsed by the Council and released by Bishop Shane in June. Personally, I was pleased to be one of the 127 attendees at the Diocesan Formation Gathering at Notre Dame College on 11 October, which was Project 4 of the Formation Support Plan. It was a great day of hope and encouragement for our diocesan community.

Ongoing formation has been a feature of the Council’s meetings this year. Members have continued to draw on the teachings of the XVIth Ordinary Synod for a Synodal Church. We have spent time reflecting on the Final Document of the Synod, as well as Bishop Shane’s first-hand experience as a member of the Synod, and through videos of the retreat talks given in October 2024 by Fr Timothy Radcliffe OP, Cardinal of the Church and spiritual advisor to the Synod.

I was blessed with the opportunity to attend the Mission One Heart Many Voices Conference in Sydney in early May, along with four other members of the Council, Bishop Shane, members of the Mission and Pastoral Life Team and Fr Boniface Kumulgeya PP (White Hills). The Conference itself was excellent, and to share the experience with others from the Diocese made it even more impactful. Fr Richard Lennan was one of the keynote speakers and one of his observations, “Pilgrims on a journey don’t need to be perfect”, has really stayed with me. Fr Richard also quoted the Final Synod Document par.141: “Unless accompanied by focused formational processes, the Synodal Church will remain unrealised.” This gives me hope that the SMPC and our

## Members of the 2025 SANDHURST MISSION AND PASTORAL COUNCIL

Most Rev. Shane Mackinlay, Bishop of Sandhurst  
 Rev. Joe Taylor VG  
 Ms Kate Fogarty, Bishop's Appointment CES  
 Mr Jean-Marie Mupenda, Bishop's Appointment  
 Rev. Stephen Bolling, Western Deanery  
 Mr Mick Chalkley, Western Deanery  
 Mrs Christine Sebire, Western Deanery  
 Mr Miggy Podosky, Western Deanery

Rev. Vijay Bandanadam ALCP/OSS, Northeast Deanery  
 Mrs Libby Dowling, Northeast Deanery  
 Mr Stephen McKinley, Northeast Deanery  
 Mr Michael McLinden, Northeast Deanery  
 Rev. Ronald Masilang RCJ, Goulburn Valley Deanery  
 Mrs Angela Finn, Goulburn Valley Deanery  
 Mrs Jobelle Collier, Goulburn Valley Deanery  
 Mrs Alana Brennan, Goulburn Valley Deanery

OFFICERS: Dr Chris Cotter, Executive Officer

Mrs Leslie Cooper, Minute Secretary and Administrative Support.

Ms Josie Cortese, Administrative Support

Diocese are on the right path. We need ongoing formation, and we should try something to move our parishes to a mission-focused church. It may not be perfect, but we all learn and benefit as we grow.

Through his commitment to acting synodally, Archbishop Shane has left a great legacy for our Diocese. Under his leadership, the Council was established through synodal practices and, as a Council, we have striven to act synodally by learning the art of prayerful listening, dialogue and discernment. Archbishop Shane joined us via video call during the SMPC Formation Day in August. It was an opportunity to thank him for the gift of his leadership and his service to the people of God in Sandhurst. In his response, Archbishop Shane encouraged the members of the Council to continue to take up the baptismal call to co-responsible leadership of the Church and to continue to act synodally. Following the video call, members of the Council moved to write a request to the College of Consultors to present to the Diocesan Administrator when elected, asking him to use the

members of the lapsed Council as advisors in matters relating to the mission and pastoral life of the Diocese. I was very gratified to hear that Fr Brian Boyle accepted this request when he was elected Administrator in September. I look forward to working with Fr Brian in 2026.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank Archbishop Shane for his leadership, and members of the Council for their valued and dedicated service in 2025. As Chair, I also acknowledge the dedicated service of Fr Joe Taylor who retired in September after fifty-one years as a priest of the Diocese, and a member of the Council as Vicar General. My thanks also go to our dedicated officers, Mrs Leslie Cooper and Dr Chris Cotter, for their tireless administrative and organisational support during and between meetings.

**Mick Chalkley**  
 Chair

**Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council**





## Director Mission and Pastoral Life

# DR CHRIS COTTER

*“Synodality calls us to, and models, a way of learning from and being enriched by the people around us, including those who may be most different and most distant from us.”* Most Rev. Shane Mackinlay, 8th Bishop of Sandhurst, 22 April 2025

For me (and I imagine for many others), the most significant events in the life of the Diocese in 2025, aside from the death of Pope Francis and the election of Pope Leo, were the announcement of the appointment of Bishop Shane as the Archbishop of Brisbane in June, the election of Father Brian Boyle as Diocesan Administrator and the death of Monsignor Frank Marriott OAM.

Archbishop Shane appointed me as the Sandhurst Director of Mission and Pastoral Life in July 2021. He preached and lived an intentionally synodal style of leadership and it was an honour and a joy to learn from and collaborate with him, and many others, in the task of renewing our diocesan strategies, structures and practices in response to Pope Francis' call to become a truly synodal Church. I shall miss Archbishop Shane's leadership and companionship, and I pray for him as he shepherds the people of God in Brisbane.

Over the last four and a half years I have also worked closely with Father Brian Boyle, so I was pleased when he was elected by his brother Consultors as Diocesan Administrator. I was also pleased when Father Brian announced that he intended to remain faithful to Archbishop Shane's leadership and act in continuity with the priorities and direction set by him. It is worth noting that, during our diocesan consultations in 2022, many of the people we met expressed their concern that the initiatives begun by Bishop Shane would stop and be forgotten or dismissed if he ceased to be Bishop of Sandhurst (see Sandhurst Mission and Council: Preparation and Consultation Meetings Final Report, p. 28). I am delighted to report that, under Father Brian's care, the development of plans and the activation of projects and events that are making steps towards achieving the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals promulgated in November 2024, have continued in 2025 and after the See became vacant on 11 September.

I came to know Monsignor Frank Marriott when he was

parish priest in Wodonga. Monsignor Frank held out a bold and inspiring vision for the people of God which, in my experience, he always proposed and never presumed to impose. On the way, he wanted collaborators and not servants, and I felt honoured that he recognised my gifts and encouraged me as a fellow pilgrim and a lay-leader co-responsible for the mission. And, whilst Monsignor Frank was willing to learn from others, he never wasted any of his time on what he saw as unsatisfactory ideas, flawed solutions or programmatic responses to complex problems. He wasn't always right, but Monsignor Frank's vision for who we are becoming was pure gold. Looking back, he reminds me a little of the portrayal of Jesus in Mark's Gospel, always on the move and busy preaching God's Kingdom, fiercely compassionate, humble, prayerful and occasionally annoyed with his co-labourers. I shall miss Monsignor Frank, a holy and wholly visionary and practical priest and human being.

December 2024 saw the close of the special Jubilee to celebrate 150 years of the Diocese of Sandhurst and the opening of the Jubilee Year for the Universal Church "Pilgrims of Hope". Archbishop Shane nominated five pilgrimage sites across the Diocese and many local pilgrimages to those sites have been undertaken using the resources developed by the Mission and Pastoral Life Team: the Mass Tree in Wahgunyah, the grave of Rev. George Galen in Wangaratta, the Mary MacKillop Indigenous Garden and History Trail in Numurkah, the grave of Dr Henry Backhaus at St Kilian's, and Sacred Heart Cathedral in Bendigo.

The Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) met three times during 2025 and, as you have read in the report by the Chair, Mr Mick Chalkley, this participatory body has been very active throughout the year. Whilst the Council is no longer meeting, due to the absence of a Bishop, all of the members have remained active in the life of their parishes and



Staff from the Office of Mission and Pastoral Life embarked on a pilgrimage to Wahgunyah, where they were hosted by Fr Peter Taylor PP (Chiltern and Rutherglen). *“Standing by the Mass Tree, I felt connected with generations of faithful who had walked this land before us. It reminded me that we are all part of the living Body of Christ.”* GEOFF GOWDIE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, MISSION AND PASTORAL LIFE



MEMORIAL TO POPE FRANCIS: PARISH VISITATION PROGRAM  
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL

in the broader diocesan missionary endeavours and activities.

The SMPC and Council of Priests were involved in a process that led to the development of a Diocesan Formation Support Plan. The plan was launched by Archbishop Shane in June and outlines ten projects across 2025 and 2026 that will assist parishes and faith communities to take steps towards the Sandhurst Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals (2024-2028). Project four of the plan, a Diocesan Formation Gathering was held at Notre Dame College in Shepparton on 11 October. The theme of the Gathering, “Building Communities of Belonging”, was drawn from Strategic Direction 2 of the Goals and drew more than one hundred and twenty participants from all over the Diocese. The program included a keynote, delivered by Dr Paul Sharkey, workshops, a significant time of prayer and opportunities for those present to participate in structured conversations with priests, professed religious and the lay faithful from their own parish and neighbouring parishes. The feedback from the day was overwhelmingly positive, with the majority of respondents to the formal participant survey stating that the most valuable part of the day was the opportunity to have focused conversations with the faithful from other parishes. The Mission and Pastoral Life Team, Chancery Staff and many volunteers made the day possible, and I am particularly grateful to Mr Geoff Gowdie (Assistant Director of Mission and Pastoral Life) and Mrs Leslie Cooper (Executive Assistant to the Director, Mission and Pastoral Life) for respectively taking the operational and logistical leads for this important event in the life of the Diocese.

With support from the Mission and Pastoral Life Team, Benalla Parish, and the Parishes of Tatura and Kyabram participated in the Bishop’s Parish Visitation Program in 2025. The Cathedral Cluster of Parishes in Bendigo also used the discernment and reflection tools provided in the Visitation Guide to present a comprehensive Report which will assist the parishes in their planning for the next five years. Members of the Mission and Pastoral Life Team have also provided follow-up support to the newly formed parish of Christ the King, which was established as a recommendation from the Bishop’s Visitation in 2024 to Moyhu, Wangaratta and Wangaratta South.

As Executive Officer to the Council of Priests, I have had the opportunity of working closely with the Chair, Father Adi Indra. I have also collaborated with Father Jake Mudge, Director of Clergy Life and Ministry in the establishment of an Implementation Framework for the policies that support the ongoing formation of priests in the Diocese.

It has been my privilege to lead the Mission and Pastoral Life Team in 2025. Mr Geoff Gowdie commenced in late January as Assistant Director, Mission and Pastoral Life. Geoff has worked swiftly and astutely to learn our context and facilitated the development of the Diocesan Formation Support Plan and is the operational lead for its implementation. Mrs Claire Spinelli, Sandhurst Youth Ministry Team Leader, also commenced in late January. With the support of the Youth Ministry Reference Group, Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd Office staff and members of the Mission and Pastoral Life Team, Claire coordinated a successful pilgrimage for young

people in our Diocese to the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Melbourne in early December. The pilgrimage event is part of a broader strategy to activate local leadership of ministry with young people in our Diocese, in partnership with our parishes and schools. Ms Jessan Tano was recruited mid-year as a Youth Ministry Officer and has provided valuable support to Claire as Team Leader. Ms Katrina Strong (Communications Coordinator) ensured that subscriptions to the Sandpiper e-News continued to grow, presented a well-received report on the status of communications in the Diocese to the SMPC in May and streamlined the submission and distribution of Chancery bulletin notices for parishes. Mrs Leslie Cooper (Executive Assistant to the Director), as well as being an indispensable organisational support to me, facilitated the digital transformation of the Parish Report for the Bishop’s Visitation and coordinated the logistics for the Diocesan Formation Gathering on 11 October in Shepparton. In September, we welcomed a temporary Administration Officer Kristy Margetts who has assisted Claire with preparations for the Youth Festival in Melbourne. Kerry Stone, Sandhurst Caritas-Justice Coordinator, helped the Care for Creation team finalise the Laudato Si’ Action Plan for the Diocese. The Plan was endorsed by Archbishop Shane in May. Kerry also coordinated the annual Season of Creation Mass with our diocesan community at the Huntly Streamside Reserve near Bendigo. The Mass was celebrated on 5 September by the Vicar General, Father Joe Taylor. Mary Pianta, Disability Contact Coordinator, has continued to offer information to parish communities about practical ways to foster understanding and inclusion. Assistance has also been provided by Miss Josie Cortese for diocesan events held in Shepparton.

Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd hosted a Dialogue Day for all priests and school principals in May. This day was a great success and provided the space and time for shared prayer, input by Mr Geoff Gowdie on the missionary aspirations of the Universal Church, conversation at tables and the review and updating of the Shared Mission Agreements between parishes and schools.

The Sandhurst Theology Scholarships have continued in 2025, providing to parishioners and those engaged in ministry access to financial support to study courses in post-graduate level academic theology, spiritual leadership and clinical pastoral education. An internal evaluation of the Scholarship system is currently underway, with a view to a revised suite of offerings aligned with the Strategic Mission and Pastoral Goals being launched in 2026.

Thank you to all who have contributed to the mission and pastoral life of our Diocese this year. We have learnt a lot about the challenges of putting the synodal way into practice and what it means to exercise co-responsibility for the mission. We have much to look forward to in 2026 as we continue our journey as the pilgrim people of God in Sandhurst.

**Dr Chris Cotter**  
Director  
Mission and Pastoral Life



CATHEDRAL SQUARE



## Acting Diocesan Business Manager Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst

# GREG WESTBROOK

In 2025 we said goodbye to Bishop Shane Mackinlay and congratulated him on his appointment as Archbishop of Brisbane. We welcomed Fr Brian Boyle as Administrator of the Diocese and commenced our period of waiting for the appointment of the ninth Bishop of Sandhurst.

Whilst Fr Brian is unable to make novel decisions as Administrator, there are still many matters to attend to.

**CATHOLIC RISK AND INSURANCE SERVICES (CRIS):** In order to provide CRIS with the necessary strategic leadership during its next phase of growth, Cameron Fraser was seconded to CRIS as its inaugural Chief Executive Officer. The year saw CRIS obtain an Australian Financial Services Licence (Wholesale Brokerage), attract Diocesan Bishops as additional members of the company, increase its subscriber base and commence the strategic work in respect to Alternative Risk Transfer models, all whilst successfully placing insurance for Catholic entities around the country.

**DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT FUND (DDF):** The DDF was established by the late Bishop Noel Daly in July 1980. Since that time, the operations of the fund have been undertaken by the Diocese of Sandhurst. To ensure that the CDF network continues to meet regulatory requirements, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference encouraged individual funds to partner with other funds to: reduce key person risk in individual dioceses; strengthen skills and experience in such joint funds; increase focus on regulation and governance; and, enhance the ability of funds to assist the wider Catholic community. With this in mind, prior to his installation as Archbishop of Brisbane, Most Rev. Shane Mackinlay signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Archbishop of Melbourne to outsource daily operations of the Sandhurst DDF to CDF Melbourne from 1 December 2025, while ensuring that the Diocese of Sandhurst retains ownership and governance of the Sandhurst DDF. This significant transition was achieved relatively smoothly with the considerable work of Peter Trendos and long-term DDF officer, Debbie Lambert.

**CHANCERY:** In 2025, the Chancery partnered with the Archdiocese of Melbourne to successfully recruit a Human Resources Partner. Kass Ritchie joined the Chancery in a partnership that allows Sandhurst to access the HR expertise of the larger Melbourne HR Team and, at the same time, ensures the in-person support of a skilled practitioner in Sandhurst. This appointment allowed Garry Dewhirst to step out of the HR role and into a new casual role, as he transitions into retirement. With a brief to establish a Risk framework and to increase risk education and awareness throughout the Diocese, Andrew Johnson joined the Diocese as our Safety, Risk and Compliance Officer.

**CATHEDRAL SQUARE:** As work ceases from the Christmas break, it's evident that 2026 will be a significant year for this project. This year we saw the finalisation of the design of the building and, following a comprehensive tender process, a building contract was entered into with regional builder AW Nicholson. Demolition of the old parish hall and paint shop swiftly followed, and the site is now clear and ready for piling to commence in 2026. Whilst it is very early in the construction program, all is on track for completion in October 2026.

In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge the passing of Monsignor Frank Marriott in 2025, and the 63 years of service he provided to the Diocese. Mons. Frank will be missed.

I would also like to acknowledge those who have contributed to life in the Diocese this year. The names are too plentiful to list here, but those contributions have played a significant part in the life of the Diocese in 2025. Thank you to everyone who has contributed in a positive way to life in the Diocese and to the mission of the Church.

**Greg Westbrook**

Acting Diocesan Business Manager  
Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst



## Executive Director Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd **KATE FOGARTY**

*2025 has been a year of bold initiatives and a commitment to renewed hope*

Guided by our diocesan theme, Pilgrims of Hope, we have journeyed together with purpose, strengthening our connections and embracing opportunities to enliven our mission. From system-wide learning programs to creative new platforms for engagement, this year has reminded us of what is possible in Catholic Education Sandhurst.

One of the most significant highlights was the official launch of Magnify Sandhurst. This initiative represents a transformative approach to learning and teaching, designed to empower educators and improve outcomes for every student. Magnify Sandhurst is grounded in the Science of Learning and designed to ensure every student thrives by bringing together key priorities; a structured literacy program, low-variance curriculums in English and Mathematics, a strong focus on instructional coaching for staff and calm classrooms. These elements work in harmony to create consistency, clarity and high-quality learning experiences across all CESL schools.

To deepen this work, we were privileged to spend three days with renowned educational neuroscientist, Dr Jared Cooney Horvath, whose expertise challenged and inspired every member of staff. Jared's insights into how the brain learns have been foundational to each of these initiatives, shaping the way we design curriculum, approach literacy, and support teachers through coaching.

Magnify Sandhurst is built on the principle of combining evidence-based practice with the passion and professionalism of our educators to deliver outstanding outcomes for every learner.

CESL also successfully developed and implemented a low-variance Religious Education programme grounded in the Source of Life framework. This initiative ensures that every student, across all year levels, engages with the knowledge and experiences identified in the curriculum with fidelity and consistency. To deepen this work, we expanded the professional learning programme Blessed, Broken and Shared, providing rich formation opportunities for all staff; both teaching and allied in Catholic Identity. Complementing these efforts, a common Staff Spirituality Day was held across

all schools, offering insight and reflection on the annual theme Pilgrims of Hope, with a special focus on the wisdom of the Christian mystics. Together, these initiatives strengthen our shared commitment to authentic Catholic education and formation.

This year also brought new perspectives through our UK study tour, which provided invaluable insights into system leadership and governance. These learnings will help shape the structure and function of our Central Team, ensuring we remain proactive, effective and responsive to the needs of our schools and communities.

We celebrated innovation in communication with the introduction of two podcast series: Catholic Education Matters and Magnify Sandhurst Matters. These platforms have opened new possibilities for engagement, allowing us to reach audiences in fresh and dynamic ways. Alongside this, our 'Choose Catholic Education' marketing campaign reminded families of the trust they place in us when making one of life's most important decisions, the education of their child. It is a responsibility we never take for granted, and we remain committed to providing the very best learning environments grounded in faith and excellence.

This year also saw important structural developments. We welcomed a second Deputy Director, with responsibility for Business Services, as part of our commitment to building a strong and efficient organisation. As more operational aspects become centralised, we will continue to look for ways to strengthen collaboration, streamline processes and deliver the highest standards of service to schools, because every improvement we make behind the scenes ultimately benefits our schools.

We acknowledge with both pride and sadness the departure of Bishop Shane, whose leadership and pastoral care have been a blessing to our Diocese. His staunch support of Catholic education has left an indelible mark and we wish him every success in his new chapter as Archbishop of Brisbane.

Our governance remains in excellent hands through the Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited and Sandhurst



MAGNIFY SANDHURST 100 DAYS

Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care Limited Boards, chaired by Pam Betts and Julie Cobbledick respectively. We are deeply grateful to the extraordinary individuals who serve on our boards and committees; their wisdom and commitment underpin everything we do, ensuring that every decision we make is aligned with our values and focused on delivering the best outcomes for students, families and communities across the Diocese.

The inaugural Sandhurst Awards were launched at the end of 2025, a celebration of the educators and students who light the way in Catholic education. The awards honour individuals and teams who embody the heart of our mission and the values expressed in CESL's Guiding Lights. They celebrate those who teach, lead, support and serve with faith, compassion and excellence. With categories spanning Catholic Mission and Formation, Curriculum, Literacy, Professional Practice, Student Engagement, Allied Services, Early Childhood

Education and Student Awards, the Sandhurst Awards reflect the breadth and depth of excellence across our system.

As we close the year, I extend my thanks to every member of our community. Your dedication, faith and collaboration make Catholic Education Sandhurst exceptional. Together, we have achieved so much and together, we will continue to magnify the possibilities for every student, every teacher, every school, every day!

**Kate Fogarty**  
Executive Director  
Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd





## Director Clergy Life and Ministry Sandhurst **REV. DR JAKE MUDGE**

The office of Clergy Life and Ministry (CLM) supports clergy of the Diocese in their day-to-day ministry and responsibilities of pastoral care. Such support ranges from assisting clergy to obtain appropriate spiritual, ministerial and medical care through collaboration with local spiritual directors, pastoral mentors, clergy health/wellbeing coordinators and chancery communities, to coordinating annual retreats and conferences that assist with ongoing formation and wellbeing of clergy.

This year the office of CLM has been significantly supported by the work of Leslie Cooper, Dr Chris Cotter, Geoff Gowdie, and the Mission and Pastoral Life team. Together we have sought ways to engage the strategic directions of the Diocese promulgated by Bishop Shane and the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Council (SMPC) in late 2024. The strong sentiment among diocesan communities is that these directions provide a very relevant and Spirit-led approach to shaping the pastoral planning for the Diocese well into the future.

### **CREATION OF A FORMATION REFERENCE GROUP:**

One of the fruits of the collaboration between CLM and the SMPC has been joint discernment regarding the ongoing formation of both clergy and the lay ministry in the Diocese. Given that the strategic plan directly relates to all members of the Diocese, it was thought that by keeping the wider diocesan community informed of the topics and urgencies of ongoing formation for clergy (and non-ordained), parishes and other diocesan communities could be positioned to work more collaboratively and creatively with clergy, and vice versa. This insight led to the establishment in 2025 of a “Formation Reference Group”. This group, consisting of women and men from across the Diocese, meets regularly to collaborate and discern topics for formation that relate to both clergy and lay ministers. The benefit of this collaboration and discernment is that the entire Diocese works collaboratively and in dialogue: a call of the synodal Church, emphasised so strongly in the pontificate of Pope Francis.

### **CLERGY LIFE AND MINISTRY 2025 AND 2026: CONFERENCES AND RETREATS:**

Each year, CLM Sandhurst is responsible for organising the annual clergy conference/in-service. By chance, in 2025 the conference fell at the same time as the installation of Bishop Shane as the new Archbishop of Brisbane, so the conference was postponed until February 2026. The conference topic – an emerging and timely theme for the Australian church – is that of “interculturality”. Interculturality reminds us that a universal Church has the opportunity to exchange ideas, customs and traditions related to religious practice for the mutual benefit, flourishing and dialogue of the whole community. In February 2026, Mr Patrick Fox, representing Catholic Mission Australia, led the clergy of the Diocese in their seminar and workshop on this topic.

In June 2025, Fr Brendan Byrne SJ, internationally known and respected biblical scholar, led the 2025 clergy retreat at Corpus Christi Carlton. In his typically gentle, wise and pastoral style, Fr Brendan led the clergy through a 4-day retreat, relating to the Jubilee Year of Hope, on the topic of St Paul’s letters. Brendan led us carefully through the ways that the Pauline Letters remind the People of God of an abiding, compassionate and loving God who leads us in hope.

### **LOOKING AHEAD: 2026 AND BEYOND:**

As this Year in Review is going to print, CLM Sandhurst is planning for the conferences and retreats for 2026 and 2027. These will include an emphasis on the ongoing formation and support of priests preparing to retire, those joining the Diocese from overseas, and those who are newly ordained.

The office of CLM wishes to thank the Diocese for your support of priests, both active and retired, and assure you of our prayerful thanks. Happy 2026 to all.

**Rev. Dr Jacob Mudge**  
Director  
Clergy Life and Ministry



## Vocations Director

# REV. NATHAN VERALLO

Allow me first to express my heartfelt gratitude to two former Bishops of Sandhurst. Thank you to Bishop Les Tomlinson, who entrusted me with this role even in the early years of my priesthood. Bishop Les appointed me as Vocations Director shortly after my ordination in November 2018. I am also grateful to Archbishop Shane Mackinlay, who allowed me to continue in this ministry during his time with us in Sandhurst. I sincerely thank both Bishop Les and Archbishop Shane for their trust and confidence in me to carry out this mission in our Diocese.

I would also like to extend my deep gratitude to my brother priests, who have welcomed me and made me feel that I truly belong to our mighty Diocese of Sandhurst. Thank you for your friendship and shared ministry. I likewise thank those with whom I closely collaborate in the discernment program – Fr Adi Indra, Fr Jackson Saunders, and Fr Ruel Desamparado. Your support and contribution to the vocation ministry are greatly appreciated.

In my almost six years serving as Vocations Director, I often recall the early part of the Ordination Rite for the Diaconate and Priesthood, when the principal celebrant asks the rector or presenting priest, “Do you judge him worthy?” The Roman Rite responds: “After inquiry among the people of God and those responsible for his formation, I judge him worthy.”

This Consultation carries great depth. Consultation may take the form of gathering survey responses, creating spaces for dialogue and discernment, or listening attentively to comments and feedback. These are concrete expressions of consultation. This process has helped me appreciate the essential role of the voices of those entrusted with forming candidates for ordination. I believe my brother priests will agree that the people in our communities play a significant and ongoing role in seminary formation and, indeed, in our own continued formation as priests.

In this year-end report, I highlight that consultation, especially through listening, is a vital part of the formation process. It is necessary not only for assessing candidates for ordination but also as a valuable element of ongoing formation for priests.

Careful listening has helped me accompany our candidates as they journey towards becoming seminarians for our Diocese. It has guided me in offering thoughtful and gentle recommendations for each candidate’s application to the Bishop or Diocesan Administrator.

This experience encourages me to invite my brother priests to remain open to consultative feedback—not as criticism or interrogation, but as an opportunity for growth. Scripture reminds us to bear with one another and correct one another. Fraternal correction, when given with charity, strengthens our bonds. Feedback need not always be a list of faults; expressing appreciation is equally vital for ongoing formation and fraternity.

This dynamic of listening and offering feedback is also true in marriage. Spouses grow in their vocation when they listen to each other, give way to one another, and nurture mutual appreciation. Families flourish when parents take time to hear their children. By listening to them, we create a home that accompanies rather than dictates, and parents who grow in maturity with their children through discernment rather than imposition.

I hope these reflections inspire renewed vigour in our family life and encourage our clergy to foster fraternity within our diocesan home – the Diocese of Sandhurst. May we all be blessed in 2026. *Adelante!*

**Rev. Nathan Verallo**  
Vocations Director  
Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst



## Team Leader Sandhurst Youth Ministry **CLAIRE SPINELLI**

**I**n 2025, Youth Ministry across the Diocese of Sandhurst was characterised by growth, hope and a deep commitment to planting seeds, sparking and developing community connections and accompanying young people in their journey with Jesus.

The year also marked important moments of transition and renewal within the diocesan Youth Ministry Team. In January, I was appointed as Youth Ministry Team Leader, hoping to bring a renewed energy and focus to youth in the Diocese and the vision of the established Sandhurst Youth Ministry Reference Group to life. In July, the team was blessed and strengthened with the appointment of Jessan Tano as Youth Ministry Officer, expanding the capacity of Sandhurst Youth Ministry (SYM) to support young people, leaders and communities.

With the support of Archbishop Shane before his departure to Brisbane, senior chancery leadership, and the Office of Mission and Pastoral Life, Youth Ministry has continued to be closely aligned with the Sandhurst Mission and Pastoral Goals. The strategy of SYM recognises that bringing our young people into relationship with Jesus and with each other needs to move beyond providing programs and events, to walking with young people as they grow in faith, discover belonging, and learn to live as missionary disciples in their everyday lives.

### **SANDHURST PILGRIMAGE TO THE AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL (ACYF):**

One of the most significant moments of the year, and a key opportunity for SYM, was the Sandhurst Pilgrimage to the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in Melbourne, starting in late November. The pilgrimage was planned and coordinated with clear intentions that ACYF would be more than a 'mountain-top' experience for a delegation of youth. The commitment to the Pilgrimage was part of the much wider vision for youth ministry to form young disciples, to foster a sense of belonging and to nurture the spiritual growth of each person.

From the start of planning, we wanted to ensure genuine

connection and relationship through small groups; intentional formation in the lead-up, during and following the Festival, and the intention of forming of missionary disciples whose journey towards Jesus would continue on their return to daily life among their peers, in their schools, workplaces, parishes and communities. Coordinated by SYM and led by Fr Junray Rayna, the Pilgrimage included chaplains Fr Jackson Saunders, Fr Adi Indra and Fr Nathan Verallo. Supported through strong partnership and collaboration between the Chancery, Sandhurst Catholic Education Office, schools, parishes and clergy, the pilgrimage reflected a shared commitment to providing young people with deeply formative experiences of faith.

In the lead up to the Festival, pilgrims were prepared through resourced formation modules that supported both the formation of small group leaders and the deepening of relationships and connections within small groups; fostering trust, shared reflection and a sense of walking together. In Melbourne, our young people further experienced what it means to be Church together.

The experience in Melbourne began with a gathering of the Sandhurst pilgrims at Queen's College, which set the tone for the rest of the pilgrimage. Our young people sang together, prayed together and reflected together under the energetic guidance of Gen Bryant, the GB Team and pilgrimage leaders. On our second day, we celebrated a beautiful Mass together. The theme of the first Sunday of Advent, 'Hope', was perfectly fitting for our journey together. The Junior Common Room at Queen's College was brimming with hope, and alive with faith as we celebrated the Eucharist.

The official events of ACYF kicked off with a pilgrimage walk, and any doubts that the young Church is alive in Australia were quashed. The sheer magnitude of the walking pilgrims was awe-inspiring; a veritable army of faith and hope that stretched over a kilometre. The rain could not dampen the spirit of that crowd, and the small statue of St Carlo Acutis joyfully bobbed up and down along the way.

The days that followed offered faith-filled and life-giving

experiences for all who attended, even the ‘once young’ among us. Through plenary sessions with a balance of energy and stillness, workshops catering to every wondering, Adoration, Reconciliation and large-scale liturgies, our young people experienced the Church in a new way.

Our Sandhurst theme Hope is Alive and the ACYF and Jubilee theme, Pilgrims of Hope resonated strongly, helping pilgrims recognise that they are not alone in their faith. The impact of ACYF was evident in a strengthened sense of belonging to the Sandhurst diocesan family; increased confidence in expressing faith openly; and a renewed desire to missionary discipleship on their return.

*The part of ACYF that impacted me the most was realising that faith isn't something I have to carry alone. Seeing thousands of young people my age praying, worshipping, and openly seeking God made me feel less isolated in my own faith journey. The talks and moments of prayer reminded me that even with doubts, struggles and questions, God still meets me where I am. ACYF helped me understand that being Catholic isn't just about personal belief—it's about community, support, and walking together towards Christ.*

**Clyza Liceralde ACYF Pilgrim**

Catherine McAuley College Bendigo and St Kilian's Parish

### CARLO ACUTIS EXHIBITION AND GATHERING:

On 22 November, pilgrims marked the Feast of Christ the King with a “Hope is Alive” day. The afternoon began with prayer and reflection on the witness of St Carlo Acutis guided by Fr Stephen Bolling, and time with the Eucharistic Miracles Exhibition at Sacred Heart Cathedral. This was followed by a short pilgrimage walk to the community garden at St Kilian's where pilgrims enjoyed a sausage sizzle and had meaningful time together in small-group conversations about faith, belonging and hope, led by Fr Junray. The gathering concluded with a Youth Mass that challenged and encouraged young people to place Christ at the centre of their lives, before pilgrims were blessed, commissioned and sent forth with renewed faith and anticipation for the journey ahead.

### YOUTH MASSES:

Throughout 2025, it has been particularly wonderful to see the organic development of a small local group of young people between St Kilian's in Bendigo and Holy Rosary in White Hills, who share responsibility for the planning and leadership of regular Youth-led Masses across the two parishes with the support of the SYM Team. We are so pleased to see this youth-driven initiative come to life as our young people participate actively and responsibly in the life, mission and work of the Catholic faith community.

### PODCAST:

Catch the Flame: A Sandhurst Catholic Youth Podcast: It began with conversations in the SYM office, where we asked ourselves, “Why not bring this to platforms like podcasting, where we can still continue sharing reflections and ideas, but this time reach not just the walls around us but the young people out there as well?” That question led to a series of planning sessions and coordination with Fr Junray, who

developed an outline of topics and a list of possible guests to join us and share their insights. “Catch the Flame” is a space created for our young people in the Sandhurst Diocese to explore faith, life, stories and questions through honest and real conversations. The podcast was launched on 21 August 2025, and Season One, has already concluded with four episodes that explored themes leading up to the ACYF.

### LAUNCH OF THE NEW SOCIALS PAGES:

We created our new social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram in the last quarter of this year. This was necessary because we could no longer make major changes to the previous accounts, including authentication and security settings, as the phone number linked to them no longer exists. With the new accounts, we now can grant access to specific individuals for designated tasks. For example, we were able to provide Julie Moore with appropriate access when she served as our official photographer and videographer for ACYF 2025. The launch of these new pages was an important step in strengthening our youth ministry's digital presence and visibility. It allowed us to intentionally shape our online voice, storytelling, and outreach to better reflect the life, faith, and experiences of the young people we serve. These platforms now serve as a central space to communicate, celebrate milestones, and build ongoing connection with the wider youth community.

This year marked the beginning of something new for many young people and revitalised faith in others, as they discovered that faith isn't just something celebrated at church or big events, but something lived day by day. Through growing relationships and accompaniment across parishes, schools and diocesan life, young people recognise themselves as missionary disciples in their own lives. By sharing stories, asking honest questions and experiencing faith together, they are learning how their faith can be lived out in classrooms, workplaces, families and friendships.

As we look to what follows for youth ministry, these experiences affirm that Youth Ministry is most fruitful when it stays relational, Christ-centred and mission-focused. Building on the momentum of pilgrimage, festival experiences and local initiatives, the Diocese is well-placed to keep nurturing personal and spiritual growth, deepening participation in Church life, and empowering young people to live as missionary disciples. Grounded in hope and guided by the Spirit, Youth Ministry in Sandhurst continues to be a living sign that hope is alive among our young people.

**Claire Spinelli**

Youth Ministry Team Leader

Diocese of Sandhurst



# Sandhurst Youth Pilgrimage AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL



My classmates: Gamma, Anthea, Monica, Jazda, Elena, Rachel, Mary, Jessica

How kind & compassionate everyone is

Their utter devotion to making us miserable - St Pauls Moana

People

Having teachers that actually care about us & love to teach!!

Cultural diversity & inclusivity

Change in students behaviour through actively steering our choices as opposed to discipline. - Penola, Emily glenns NEN



The amazing teachers they are so supportive & always there for the moments

Careers & the amazing memories

I have made friends that I love and the teachers I met!

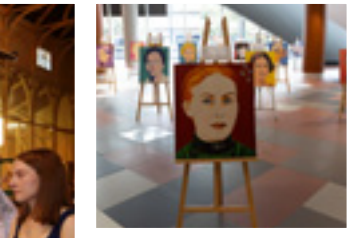
Sisterhood - Sateys in faith

My friend

I have made friends that I love and the teachers I met!

The supportive teachers

GROUP - ANA, Y, ENE, M, Z, P





## Chief Executive Officer CatholicCare Victoria

# AGNES SHEEHAN

*A year of walking with families, nurturing dignity, and strengthening hope*

As I look back on this year across the Diocese of Sandhurst, I am deeply moved by the courage and quiet resilience I have witnessed in the families and individuals who turned to CatholicCare Victoria for support. Each person we accompany reminds me of our shared calling to help others rediscover life in its fullness by honouring their dignity, nurturing connection and offering compassion in moments of vulnerability and change.

Across Bendigo, Shepparton, Wangaratta and surrounding communities, our teams continued to live our vision of thriving and inclusive communities where every person is recognised as created in the image of God. This past year, we walked alongside 3647 individuals in the Sandhurst region. Many were navigating overwhelming pressures including rising living costs, childhood wellbeing, housing insecurity, mental health concerns and family breakdown. Yet in the midst of these challenges, we witnessed powerful moments of healing, restoration and new beginnings, reminding us of the sacred strength within every person we serve.

In Bendigo, our Integrated Family Services team supported 67 families across the Loddon and Bendigo regions, always working to hear and elevate the voice of each child. One young person who had completely disengaged from school began returning through the steady, gentle support of our practitioners. Today, they attend daily. Their journey reflects how transformation often begins with the simple gift of being seen, understood and supported with patience and care.

The Homes First program continued to help families experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing housing to find safety and stability. Our Regional Parenting Services team reached more than 1,035 parents through screenings, seminars and workshops that strengthened family relationships and nurtured confident parenting across the Diocese. These programs help parents feel better equipped to support their children and create homes grounded in connection and hope.

In Shepparton, the Communities for Children initiative built strong local partnerships and supported more than 600

young children and their families. Our Family Wellbeing Support Service also walked alongside over 200 children and young people across more than 20 schools, offering guidance, encouragement and emotional support.

One story that continues to stay with me is Sam's. At eleven years old, he carried the weight of bullying in silence. His confidence faded and anxiety began to shadow his days. Through gentle and consistent counselling, Sam slowly rediscovered his voice. He joined the soccer team, picked up an instrument and began reconnecting with the things that spark joy in his life. His mother shared that it felt as though CatholicCare wrapped their arms around the whole family. Her words capture the heart of our mission to bring care, compassion and hope to each person who seeks our support.

We also witnessed important moments of healing through our Family Dispute Resolution services in Bendigo and Shepparton. Two parents who had not spoken for a long time were able to reconnect through mediation and find a healthier way forward for their children. In another case, a parent who had not seen her children for twelve months reached a parenting agreement that led to a joyful reunion. Her child embraced her and said, "I have missed you, Mum". Families frequently expressed gratitude for this support, sharing reflections such as "I have felt listened to throughout the process" and "The mediator was incredibly helpful and understanding". This year we also celebrated two staff members who completed postgraduate qualifications and became accredited mediators, strengthening our capacity to support families.

Across the Diocese, our counsellors, family support workers, youth justice practitioners and family dispute resolution specialists provided 23,945 hours of care across 16 different services. Family and relationship challenges, mental health concerns, family violence and child wellbeing were among the most common issues faced by clients. Each encounter represents a moment where someone reached out and received dignity, respect and love.

I am deeply grateful to the many parishes and Catholic

schools across the Diocese who welcomed our teams, supported our programs and partnered with us to respond to local needs. Your generosity and commitment to the Gospel in action help us build communities where people feel safe, valued and connected.

As we look towards the year ahead, may we continue walking together in the footsteps of Jesus with hearts open to compassion, courage and hope. It is a privilege to serve this community alongside you.

To learn more about CatholicCare Victoria and to support

CCV in building thriving communities, please visit our website: <https://www.catholiccarevic.org.au/>

**Agnes Sheehan**  
Chief Executive Officer  
CatholicCare Victoria



*Pilgrims of Hope*  
**JOURNEYING IN THE JUBILEE YEAR**

*Throughout the Diocese, people walked together in faith while honouring creation, strengthening community, and living our baptismal calling*



***In the 2025 Jubilee “Year of Hope”, Pope Francis called on Catholics to step forward in faith, deepen their relationship with God, and bring hope to the world. As part of this call, he encouraged Catholics to embark on pilgrimages to sacred sites, as a way to encounter God’s mercy and renew their hearts.***

Answering the call, Bishop Shane Mackinlay declared five pilgrimage sites in the Sandhurst Diocese.

1. Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo
2. Fr Henry Backhaus’ Grave at St Kilian’s Church grounds, Bendigo
3. The grave of Fr George Galen, inside St Patrick’s Church, Wangaratta
4. The Wahgunyah Mass Tree, Wahgunyah
5. St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Indigenous Garden and Heritage Trail, St John the Baptist Church grounds, Numurkah

*“Celebrating Mass under such a majestic and historic tree connected us to the spirit of the people who gathered for the first Mass there almost 150 years ago. It showed us that we can celebrate our faith together in community anywhere, and that is what keeps our faith alive.” Fr Junjun Amaya*



The most popular pilgrimage sites for parish groups were the St Mary MacKillop Indigenous Garden and Heritage Trail and the Wahgunyah Mass Tree.

At Numurkah, on Yorta Yorta Country, pilgrims explored the St Mary of the Cross MacKillop Indigenous Garden and Heritage Trail. Guided by local parish hosts, they prayed among native plantings, explored the history of St Mary MacKillop and the Josephite Sisters, and celebrated Mass together in the garden or at St John the Baptist Church.

At Wahgunyah, the 600-year old red river gum that hosted the first Mass in the area in 1869 welcomed pilgrims from across the Diocese. Groups celebrated Mass at its base, walked the Murray river trail and shared picnics. The pilgrimage to the Mass Tree inspired Yarrowonga parishioners' to journey to all five of the Sandhurst Pilgrimage Sites.

To support pilgrims, the Office of Mission and Pastoral Life prepared prayer cards and 'how to' guides, helping every pilgrimage become an intentional journey.

# SANDHURST JUBILEE PILGRIMAGE



**WAHGUNYAH MASS TREE** a 600-year-old red gum where Fr Dean William Tierney celebrated the first Wahgunyah Mass in 1869. A two-kilometre track winding along the Murray River starts near the tree. A plaque was placed at the site in 1946 by the Catholic Women's Guild.

**GRAVE OF REV. GEORGE GALEN** pioneer priest of north-east Victoria, inside St Patrick's Church, Wangaratta. Fr Galen founded the Wangaratta Mission in 1863.

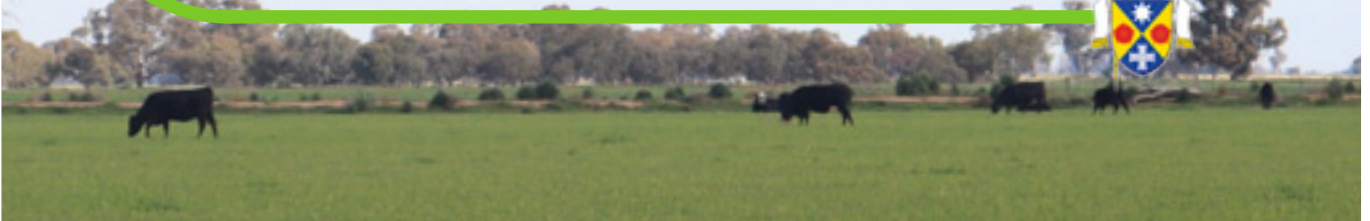


**MARY MACKILLOP INDIGENOUS GARDEN AND HISTORY TRAIL** on the grounds of St John the Baptist Church, Numurkah. Mary MacKillop is Australia's first Saint. A Co-founder of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, she founded the first Josephite school in Victoria 1890.

**GRAVE OF REV. DR HENRY BACKHAUS,** on the grounds of St Kilian's Church, Bendigo. Fr Backhaus was the first priest to serve on the Bendigo goldfields and celebrated the first Mass in May 1852.



**SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL, BENDIGO.** This gothic revival masterpiece is a testament to the devotion of the Sandhurst Diocese community and the vision of its founders.



# *Pilgrims of Hope* YOUNG PILGRIMS JUBILEE JOURNEY

*Inspired by the Vatican's Year of Hope Mascots, Luce and Friends,  
Chancery staff created our own mascot Sandy and her friends Goldie and Macky*

When Pope Francis invited Catholics to become Pilgrims of Hope for the Jubilee Year, Chancery staff set out to create engaging and accessible communication tools to help children step into the spirit of pilgrimage with a sense of purpose, curiosity and wonder. Sandy became an endearing and relatable diocesan mascot, to spark curiosity and bring a local flavour to this universal call to renewal.

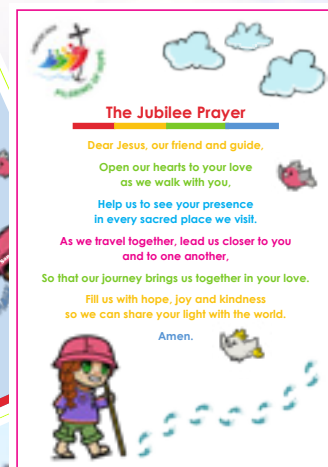
Armed with sunscreen, a prayer card and a smile, Sandy, named after our Diocese of Sandhurst, embodies the idea that the young can develop a prayer life and benefit from the Jubilee Pilgrimage of Hope. Sandy's two friends, Goldie (a sulphur-crested cockatoo) and Macky (the galah), show that while prayer and Christian witness are deeply important, God also invites us to find joy and awe in creation and the world around us. Knowing God has our back makes us feel more prepared and empowered for the adventures ahead.

Using Sandy and her friends as central features, downloadable resources were developed: a two-sided Pilgrimage and Prayer Card, a "How to Be a Pilgrim" flyer, Gospel readings and a

colouring page with Sandy's pilgrimage equipment checklist - hat, sunscreen, water bottle! These resources were designed not only to engage children, but also to help parents, guardians and teachers accompany children on their pilgrim journey, offering guidance, reflection and shared experience. Turning the Jubilee invitation into a faith journey with a sense of adventure — one that children can experience, with Sandy, Goldie and Macky leading the way.

## **SANDY, MACKY AND GOLDIE — MORE THAN JUST MASCOTS**

Sandy's name is a nod to the Diocese of Sandhurst. Macky, the galah, named in honour of Australia's first saint, Mary of the Cross MacKillop, and our then Bishop, Shane Mackinlay, along with all the 'Mcs' and 'Macs', who have contributed to the Diocese's rich history. Goldie represents the gold that has been so important in shaping Sandhurst — both the physical gold that drew people to the area, and the metaphorical "gold": the faithful people who have built and continue to make the Diocese of Sandhurst glow with warmth and generosity.



# *Pope Leo XIV.* A NEW POPE FOR THE WORLD

*A Charism Known to Our Diocese*



At dawn on 8 May, two women in Kyabram watched their televisions with quiet focus, eyes fixed on the balcony overlooking St Peter's Square. Like millions around the world, they waited for a name, a face, a sign of the Church's future. When the new Pope stepped into view, recognition came swiftly. A phone vibrated. "It's him."

"Peace be with all of you!" were the first words spoken by the newly elected 267th Bishop of Rome, Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost OSA, now Pope Leo XIV.

For Kyabram parishioner Alma Limbrick, the face on the balcony belonged to someone she had met years earlier through the Augustinian community. She first encountered the future Pope at an Augustinian conference for the laity, describing him as "very gentle, inspirational and authentic." Alma met him again in December 2005 when, as Prior General of the Augustinian Order, Fr Robert Prevost celebrated Mass at St Augustine's Church in Kyabram. The visit took place just weeks before the Augustinians concluded 103 years of ministry in the town. "I've been fortunate to be educated and challenged by the Augustinians and Brigidines," Alma said. "I'm very proud that an Augustinian is now our Pope. The Augustinians were good listeners, and their encouragement spurred me on to study and serve in the parish." Looking back, Alma recognises in Pope Leo XIV a charism long familiar to local communities. "The Augustinians talked a lot about synodality – but we didn't call it that back then," she said. Their emphasis on community is summed up in the phrase 'one mind and one heart, intent upon God'. For Augustinians, the Eucharist shapes both worship and life: in the transformation of bread and wine, the community itself is formed into one body, called to live in service and love.

That spirit was echoed at the Augustinians' farewell dinner in January 2006, when parishioner Maureen Atkins spoke on behalf of the Kyabram community. "For many years, the Augustinians have focused on the importance of collaboration

in ministry," she said. "We have been challenged to accept our baptismal responsibility, and we know we can move forward with confidence." As Pope Leo XIV begins his ministry as pastor of the universal Church, those same values resonate more broadly. Testimonies emerging from around the world point to a Pope shaped by the Augustinian tradition: attentive to community, committed to truth, and guided by a shepherd's care for the people of God.

Catholics recognise in Pope Leo XIV a leader who will encourage the faithful to live their baptismal calling together, building on Pope Francis' legacy — particularly the call to care for the poor and for our common home — through a commitment to peace, missionary outreach and leadership rooted in service.

The connection between the new Pope and the Diocese of Sandhurst is marked by his brief but meaningful visit twenty years ago, in December 2005. Vicki Arnel recalls that Fr Robert Prevost OSA was met at Tullamarine Airport by Fr Dave Austin OSA, parish priest of Kyabram at the time. Together they travelled to Bendigo, where the Augustinian story in the Diocese began with the appointment of Bishop Crane in 1874. After meeting Monsignor Frank Marriott, they visited Rochester to view the stained-glass windows depicting Augustinian saints, before continuing on to Kyabram.

On Sunday 11 December 2005, Fr Prevost celebrated Mass at St Augustine's, Kyabram. Later that day he visited Echuca and, on Monday, joined Bishop Joe Grech and Sandhurst clergy for lunch in Melbourne.

The Augustinians were pioneer priests in the Diocese of Sandhurst. Our first two bishops, Crane and Reville, were Augustinians, and the Order ministered in Kyabram, Echuca and Rochester for more than a century. With the election of Pope Leo XIV, that enduring Augustinian presence finds new expression in the life of the universal Church.



*Euroa and Echuca*  
**150 YEAR ANNIVERSARY**

*Celebrating 150 years of Catholic faith, community and service*

**A Day of Thanksgiving in Euroa**

On 2 March 2025, the Diocese of Sandhurst’s 150th anniversary was marked with a Day of Thanksgiving at St John the Evangelist, Euroa, bringing together the three Euroa parish communities in a joyful celebration of faith.

More than 75 people gathered for Mass celebrated by Bishop Shane Mackinlay, who reflected on the significant role the Euroa church communities have played in the life and development of the Diocese. Readers and ministers from across the parish’s three churches took part, expressing the shared history and unity of the diocesan community.

Historical displays and commemorative materials highlighted the Diocese’s early foundations, while the celebrations concluded with an informal gathering that allowed parishioners to share fellowship and gratitude. The day was marked by prayerful thanksgiving for the faith received from past generations, and a renewed commitment to carrying that legacy forward within the Diocese of Sandhurst.

**St Mary’s Parish, Echuca Celebrates**

In May, St Mary’s Parish, Echuca celebrated 150 years of Catholic faith, community and service.

Over the weekend, parishioners and visitors gathered for a series of commemorative events, including a pilgrimage to significant parish sites, a Vigil Mass, and opportunities for shared meals and storytelling. Sunday celebrations continued with a Family Mass and a parish carnival, reflecting the vitality and intergenerational spirit of the community.

More than a milestone of years or buildings, the anniversary honoured the people who have shaped and sustained the parish across generations. Reflections throughout the weekend highlighted the enduring legacy of faith, education and service at the heart of parish life.

The celebrations were made possible through the generous contribution of volunteers and the wider parish community, whose commitment — often behind the scenes — ensured the anniversary was marked with joy, dignity and gratitude.

As St Mary’s Parish reflects on its past, it looks forward with hope, continuing its mission as a welcoming and faith-filled community.



# *Communities of Faith* PARISH VISITATION PROGRAM

*The Parish Visitation Program continued in 2025, with Bishop Shane Mackinlay visiting Benalla, Kyabram and Tatura. The Program aims to strengthen parish life by fostering dialogue with the Bishop, Chancery and local communities, providing space to share experiences, reflect on challenges, and discern goals, while supporting renewal, collaboration and a synodal approach to vibrant, faith-filled parishes*



## **A SHEPHERD AMONGST HIS FLOCK**

When Bishop Shane visits a parish, classrooms and playgrounds are always part of the plan. At St Patrick's Primary in Tongala, he chatted with students in the playground and collected eggs from the school chooks. When the playtime bell rang, he joined Catholic Identity Leaders on a Catholic Identity Marker Walk, which led him to St Patrick's Church, where the entire school had mustered to surprise him with a choral performance which, by Bishop Shane's account, was one of the best he's heard.

## **BISHOP'S VISIT FORECAST:**

### **SHARED MEAL AND GOOD CHANCE OF CAKE**

On 2 July, at St Augustine's College, Kyabram, Bishop Shane cut into an enormous "Welcome Cake." Just days earlier, Tatura parishioners had surprised him with a belated birthday cake. Thankfully, Bishop Shane embraces this sweet side of ministry, following Jesus' example of feasting with purpose, where shared meals become moments of connection, joy and welcome.

# *Laudato Si'* DIOCESAN LAUDATO SI' ACTION PLAN



The Diocesan Chancery launched its Laudato Si' Action Plan on 16 May 2025, on the eve of Laudato Si' Week. The plan outlines concrete steps for the Chancery and its operations to take towards the seven Laudato Si' Goals. This action plan is the culmination of dedicated work by the Sandhurst Care for Creation Team, developed in close consultation with Chancery staff. It aligns with the Seven Laudato Si' Goals, the Australian Catholic Bishops' 2021–22 Social Justice Statement, 'Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor,' and Decree 8 of the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia, which calls for deep ecological conversion and action across all aspects of Church life.

Using the Catholic Earthcare framework, the Care for Creation Team followed a step-by-step guide to audit current practices and identify pathways for change. As part of this process, all Chancery staff actively participated in two reflective audit sessions, examining their work through a Laudato Si' lens, identifying opportunities for sustainability and care for creation within their roles.

The Diocese's commitment to Laudato Si' action began in November 2021, when then Bishop Shane Mackinlay registered Sandhurst on the Laudato Si' Action Platform. This commitment was publicly celebrated in May 2022 on the banks of Broken Creek in Nathalia, symbolising a deep connection to local ecology and the shared global mission of caring for our common home. Kerry Stone, Sandhurst Caritas and Social Justice Coordinator, said: "This Action Plan is an

important step forward in embedding Laudato Si' into the day-to-day life of our Diocese. By engaging Chancery staff and aligning with national and global Church commitments, we are responding meaningfully to Pope Francis' call to ecological conversion." The Diocese hopes this will encourage Sandhurst parishes to continue with their Catholic Earthcare journey and commit to a Laudato Si' Action Plan.

The Catholic Earthcare framework outlines a series of practical actions in areas such as energy use, procurement, waste reduction, ethical investment and ecological education. It serves as a model for how Church institutions can live out the message of Laudato Si' in both spirit and practice in an Australian context.

## **LAUDATO SI' WEEK (16–24 MAY 2025, AUSTRALIA)**

In Australia, Laudato Si' Week is celebrated earlier than the global dates to align with National Reconciliation Week. The week honours Pope Francis' encyclical Laudato Si', calling Catholics to care for creation and the poor, combining prayer, reflection, education and action, and reminding us that safeguarding our common home is an ongoing responsibility.

## **EARTHCARE PARISHES**

Of the 38 parishes in the Diocese, eighteen have registered as Earthcare parishes. Of these eighteen Earthcare Parishes, seven have completed the Audit, and one has already submitted a Laudato Si' Plan.

# *Season of Creation* WALKING TOGETHER IN HOPE

On 5 September, representatives of the Diocese gathered at Huntly Streamside Reserve for its annual Season of Creation Mass, giving thanks for God's gift of creation and renewing our shared responsibility to care for our common home. Celebrated outdoors among spring wattles and native grasses, the liturgy embodied a synodal Church — one that listens, gathers and walks together in faith, attentive to place, people and the cry of the earth.

The celebration began with a Welcome to Country by Troy Firebrace, honouring the enduring relationship of the Dja Dja Wurrung people with Djandak, the land and waterways on which the Diocese now lives and prays.

Presided over by Fr Joe Taylor EV, with Fr Boniface Kamulegeya and Fr Rom Hayes concelebrating, the Mass called the Diocese to deeper ecological conversion. In his homily, Fr Joe reflected on creation as gift rather than possession, inviting all to live their baptismal calling through reverence, restraint and care — a faith expressed not only in belief, but in how we live together in the world God has entrusted to us.

In a spirit of shared mission, parishes and schools were equipped with practical signs of hope. Each community

received a plant to nurture locally, symbolising the patient work of cultivating hope together. Communities were also entrusted with a Turn Debt into Hope candle, inviting participation in a diocesan relay in solidarity with Caritas Australia's call for debt justice, linking care for creation with care for the poor.

Now an established tradition, the Season of Creation Mass continues to form the Diocese in prayerful action, reminding us that caring for our common home is integral to our life as Church and to our synodal journey of listening, participation and mission.

The celebration was made possible through the leadership of the Care for Creation Team, with the support of clergy, parishioners, schools and volunteers who gathered to pray together under God's sky.

#### **SANDHURST CARE FOR CREATION TEAM**

**Kerry Stone**, NUMURKAH; **Lyn Breen**, CATHEDRAL CLUSTER;  
**Marie Bonne**, ST KILIAN'S; **Dr Chris Cotter**, CHANCERY;  
**Geoff Gowdie**, CHANCERY; **Katrina Strong**, CHANCERY;  
**Rev. Boniface Kamulegeya PP**, WHITE HILLS.



# Sandhurst Community SOCIAL JUSTICE

*The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace's Social Justice Statement 2025 - 2026, Signs of Hope on the Edge: Serving People Living in Homelessness and Mental Ill Health, called on Catholics and all Australians to respond to homelessness and mental ill health with compassion, practical support and advocacy; emphasising the dignity of every person and the need for community-based solutions and policies addressing the root causes of disadvantage. Parishes, schools and individuals were encouraged to engage in initiatives that provide hope, promote social inclusion, and reflect the Church's mission to serve those most vulnerable in society.*



## RECONCILIATION WEEK MASS FOR HEALING AND JUSTICE

On 30 May, Catholic Education Sandhurst hosted a Mass for Healing and Justice at FCJ College Benalla, celebrated by Bishop Shane Mackinlay and concelebrated by Fr Brian Boyle EV and Fr Vijay Bandanadam PP. The event was attended by students and staff from 12 schools across the Diocese, Kate Fogarty, Executive Director of Catholic Education Sandhurst; Michael Chisholm, Aboriginal Education Lead; and Yorta Yorta and Dja Dja Wurrung artist, Troy Firebrace. Beginning with a Smoking Ceremony, Welcome to Country led by Yorta Yorta Man, Billy Cooper, and FCJ College and St Joseph's Primary School choirs performed hymns accompanied by didgeridoo, creating a reflective and culturally respectful atmosphere. The Mass highlighted the Reconciliation Week

theme, *'Bridging Now to Next'*, emphasising truth-telling, acceptance and commitment to reconciliation.

The celebration affirmed the Diocese's shared responsibility in promoting healing, justice and Indigenous engagement. The Mass was livestreamed to classrooms across the Diocese, allowing broader participation.

*"I see reconciliation as acceptance. It's about facing the truth of our history and acknowledging the ongoing impacts."*

Sophie Hammond, Student, FCJ College



**UNITING AGAINST POVERTY: PROJECT COMPASSION IN THE DIOCESE:**

During Lent 2025, parishes and schools across the Sandhurst Diocese actively took part in Caritas Australia’s Project Compassion, joining thousands of communities nationwide to support the theme, Unite Against Poverty. The campaign was officially launched on Shrove Tuesday by Bishop Shane Mackinlay at Hargreaves Mall, Bendigo, who reflected on Lent as a time to recognise abundance and the capacity to help others. Across the Diocese, communities responded through prayer, fundraising, and practical initiatives such as The Long Walk for Water and Give it up for Lent. Through these efforts, students, parishioners and school communities demonstrated generosity, solidarity and a commitment to social justice. Their actions highlighted how the Diocese actively carries out its mission, fostering compassion and hope, and making a tangible difference in the lives of those who face poverty and disadvantage.

**SPIRIT OF CHARITY UNITES:** On 28 March, students at Notre Dame College, Shepparton, hosted an Iftar dinner to raise funds for Caritas’ Project Compassion. The initiative, led by a Cultural Diversity Leader at the College, brought together

the school community and local Muslim leaders in a demonstration of interfaith cooperation and charity. Kerry Stone, the Diocesan Caritas and Social Justice Coordinator, was invited to speak about Caritas’ work supporting communities worldwide, including partnerships with Muslim organisations in West Java and humanitarian responses in Gaza, Lebanon, Eritrea, Morocco, and for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The evening also featured a Welcome to Country, a Christian prayer, and the Muslim Call to Prayer, reflecting the inclusive and respectful nature of the gathering. Held during Ramadan, a period of fasting, prayer, charity and shared Iftar meals, the fundraiser exemplified how student leadership can foster social awareness and interfaith solidarity while supporting global humanitarian work.

**BIG WALK 4 REFUGEES 2025: SANDHURST PARISHES IN ACTION:**

In 2025, many parishioners from Sandhurst communities took part in the national Big Walk 4 Refugees, a virtual event connecting people across Australia, New Zealand and beyond, to show solidarity with refugees and people seeking asylum. Participants could join a local event or record their own steps online, contributing to the wider virtual route. Locally, walks took place in towns across the Diocese. In Bendigo, parishioners marked Palm Sunday with a community walk organised by local church groups. Many participants also wrote to their local Members of Parliament, advocating for permanent visas and compassionate immigration policies. Through these actions, Sandhurst parishioners contributed to a national campaign, combining practical support, advocacy and awareness-raising for refugees in Australia and overseas.



*Fr Michael Morley*  
**GOLDEN JUBILARIAN**

*Living Justly and Tenderly with God: 50 Years of Fr Mick's Gentle Witness*

On 23 May 2025, Fr Michael Morley marked his 50th Jubilee of priestly ordination – a milestone celebrating five decades of faithful, pastoral and joy-filled ministry. Fr Mick sees himself as part of the post-Vatican II ‘new wave’ of priests, a pastor who is as much a neighbour and listener as a spiritual guide. For him, the priesthood has always been about community: showing up at the kitchen table, by a hospital bed, or alongside those whom society often overlooks.

A trained electrician from Moonee Ponds, Fr Mick brought down-to-earth warmth and practical wisdom to his ministry. His journey has been one of companionship with parishioners, prisoners and prodigals alike.

*“You can’t be a priest in isolation. The people you serve end up forming you just as much as you hope to help them.”*

Raised in a strong Catholic family, Fr Mick received all his sacraments at St Monica’s, Moonee Ponds, including his ordination. Influences along the way, notably his mother from Rushworth and family friend Fr Edward (Ted) Tehan, nurtured both his vocation and love for pastoral care.

Before entering the seminary, Fr Michael worked as an electrician for eight years. He credits conversations with his

non-religious boss for sparking early reflections on faith, which shaped his pastoral approach.

His seminary years, spent in Werribee, Kensington (NSW) and Sydney, offered academic formation, spiritual growth and enduring friendships; foundations that would underpin a ministry defined by presence, relational care and genuine pastoral sensitivity.

Fr Mick’s ministry has left a lasting mark on every parish he has served. From Tatura to Dhurringile Prison, he approaches everyone with the same principle:

***“Don’t judge, just walk with them.”***

Parishioners remember Fr Morley for reigniting faith, offering gentle guidance in difficult times, and being an authentic companion in moments of joy and sorrow alike.

Now retired in Yarrawonga, Fr Mick treasures unhurried time; for prayer, conversation and presence. Reflecting on five decades of ministry, he says simply: “God has given me so much. Every time you give, you get twice as much in return.” The motto he chose at his ordination, “To live justly and tenderly with your God”, remains a true reflection of his life and ministry.

*In Memoriam*  
**FR JOHN RYAN**

*Fr John Ryan, will be remembered as the priest's priest. A scholar, author and spiritual director who advocated for the human and spiritual nourishment of priests, transforming priestly formation*

**26 May 1936 ~ 23 January 2025**

**F**r John Edward Ryan died on 23 January 2025, aged 88, after sixty-one years of faithful service as a priest of the Diocese of Sandhurst. A respected scholar, counsellor and spiritual director, he was a man of vision whose work transformed priestly formation and wellbeing in Australia.

Born in Red Cliffs in 1936, Fr Ryan was educated by the Mercy Sisters in Red Cliffs and Yarrawonga and later boarded at Assumption College, Kilmore. While studying at the University of Melbourne, he discerned a call to the priesthood, later recalling, "Ever since age eleven, I knew that one day I would have to test the call."

He completed his priestly formation at Corpus Christi College, Werribee, and was ordained on 27 July 1963. He served as Assistant Priest in Yarrawonga and at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Bendigo, before undertaking postgraduate studies at the Collegio di San Pietro in Rome and the Jesuit University of St Louis, Missouri.

After returning to Australia in 1974, Fr Ryan ministered in Bendigo, Myrtleford and Wodonga. In 1977, he co-founded the Centre for Christian Spirituality in Randwick with Fr

David Walker (later Bishop David) a pioneering initiative that helped reshape the Church's understanding of priestly support and renewal.

Fr Ryan believed that priests, like all people, needed balance and rest to serve well. "If a priest has peace in his own life, it will flow out of him to others," he said. His advocacy led to the establishment of St Peter's Centre for Clergy Education in Canberra, providing ongoing formation and renewal for clergy across the nation. His later work with the Centre for Human Development, the Catholic Institute for Ministry and CatholicCare Canberra continued his mission to nurture the human and spiritual wellbeing of priests. In 1999, he co-founded the Humanita Foundation, promoting integrated Christian living.

In 2018, Fr Ryan published *A Priesthood Imprisoned*, a reflective and challenging exploration of the human dimensions of priestly life and the need for ongoing renewal within the Church. Fr Ryan retired in 2005, leaving an enduring legacy in the way priests are formed, supported and sustained in ministry.

A Funeral Mass celebrating his life was held at St Patrick's Church, Wangaratta, on 7 February 2025.



**Fr John Ryan on the day of his ordination  
pictured with his brother.**



*In Memoriam*

# SR KATHLEEN SLATTERY RSM

Sister Kathleen Monica Slattery, founding principal of St Peter's Primary School, North Bendigo, passed away peacefully on 11 April 2025, aged 94. A dedicated Religious Sister of Mercy, educator and quiet leader, she leaves a legacy of faith, creativity and compassion that continues to shape generations.

Born in Diggora in March 1931, Sr Kathleen grew up in a close-knit farming family and was the only one of her siblings to win a scholarship to St Mary's College, Bendigo, where she boarded from 1944 to 1948. It was during these years that she discerned her twin callings: to teach and to serve as a Sister of Mercy.

Sr Kathleen began teaching in 1951 and became known for her commitment to helping children discover their own worth and potential. In 1971, she was appointed founding principal of St Peter's Primary School, North Bendigo. When the school opened in 1972 with 72 students, she was its sole teacher. With limited resources but abundant faith and energy, she and her colleague, Christine Gardiner, built a thriving community grounded in care



and respect. "The school was just a dust bowl and nothing else," Sr Kathleen later recalled. "We didn't have any money." What they did have was vision – a belief that education could transform lives. The school's enduring values — care for self, others, learning and the environment – remain a living reflection of her leadership.

Beyond her work at St Peter's, Sr Kathleen was deeply involved in the wider Mercy community. She maintained strong ties with Catherine McAuley College and delighted in connecting with students through the iGEN program, where she shared her stories and wisdom with characteristic warmth and humour. Gifted in many ways, Sr Kathleen also expressed her faith through art and creativity. At her 90th birthday celebration, Fr Rom Hayes described her simply as "beauty" — not only in presence, but in the grace with which she lived her life.

For more than seventy years, Sr Kathleen gave her gifts generously to the Church and to Catholic education. Her legacy lives on in the classrooms, chapels and communities she helped shape.

*In Memoriam*

# SR HELEN DUFFY RSM

Remembered for a Life of Faith, Wisdom and Service. Sister Helen Duffy RSM, a beloved member of the Sisters of Mercy, died peacefully on Tuesday, 6 May 2025, at Mercy Place in East Melbourne. She was 83 years old and in the 63rd year of her religious profession.

Raised in Bendigo and educated at St Mary's College, Helen grew up in a household where faith and service were woven into daily life. She entered the Sisters of Mercy in 1960, following a path of deep faith and service that ran through her family. She was the sister of the late Mary Duffy RSM, who died in September 2024, and of the late Fr Maurice Duffy, a respected priest who served as Rector of Pius XII Seminary in Brisbane. Also a twin to her brother Terry, who died in 2004.

Throughout her ministry, Sr Helen served in education, chaplaincy, parish life and



spiritual direction. She worked at the Catholic Education Office in Melbourne, where she became known for her inspiring and practical approach to religious education. She later specialised in contemplative prayer and spiritual formation, leading retreats and workshops across Australia.

Helen lived with significant physical disability following several strokes but never allowed her condition to define her. Her life was marked by resilience, creativity and a contemplative spirit. Those who knew her remember her generosity and her deep love of scripture and poetry.



The Sisters of Mercy and the many people whose lives Helen touched give thanks for her witness and her enduring legacy of quiet strength and spiritual depth. Many celebrated the life of Sr Helen at her Funeral Mass at Mary Immaculate Catholic Church, Ivanhoe, on 15 May 2025.

*In Memoriam*

# MONSIGNOR FRANK MARRIOTT

*For more than six decades, Monsignor Frank Marriott strengthened parishes and institutions, championed education, social cohesion and interfaith dialogue, and offered generous pastoral care to people of every background*



**18 January 1938 ~ 23 November 2025**

**M**onsignor Francis Kelly Marriott was born in Bendigo on 18 January 1938 to Frank and Rita (née Kelly). His father, a baker and pastry cook from Shepparton, and his mother, from a farming family near Narrandera, NSW, raised Frank alongside his sister, Ruth. He was a devoted brother, brother-in-law to Richard, and a much-loved uncle to John, Paul, Tracey, Wayne and their families.

Educated at St Mary's College, Bendigo, Marist Brothers' College, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, Elmore, and Assumption College, Kilmore, Frank entered the seminary in 1956 at St Francis Xavier, Adelaide and was ordained a priest of Sandhurst by Bishop Stewart at Sacred Heart Cathedral on 29 June 1962 – a cold, wet day in the same church where he had been baptised.

For 63 years, Monsignor Frank served the Diocese of Sandhurst with distinction. His ministry included appointments to Cobram, Rushworth, Beechworth, Shepparton, Heathcote, Nagambie, Kennington and Wodonga. Elevated to Domestic Prelate in 2000, he was appointed Parish Priest of Wodonga in 2003, before

returning to Bendigo in 2008 as Administrator of Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Following the death of Bishop Joe Grech, he served as Diocesan Administrator until the appointment of Bishop Les Tomlinson in 2012. That year, Pope Benedict XVI conferred on him the rare honour of Protonotary Apostolic. He also served as Vicar General, Chancellor, Director of the Sandhurst Youth Ministry Team, as a long-standing member of the College of Consultors. He retired as Cathedral Administrator in 2015.

His service extended well beyond parish life. Monsignor Frank chaired the National Council of Priests (1976–1982), was an inaugural board member of St Peter's Centre for the Renewal of Priests, and helped establish the Priests' Retirement Foundation. Deeply committed to youth, he served as chaplain to the Young Christian Workers, an experience he described as "the greatest learning experience of my life", and introduced Teams of Our Lady to the Diocese, remaining chaplain until his death.

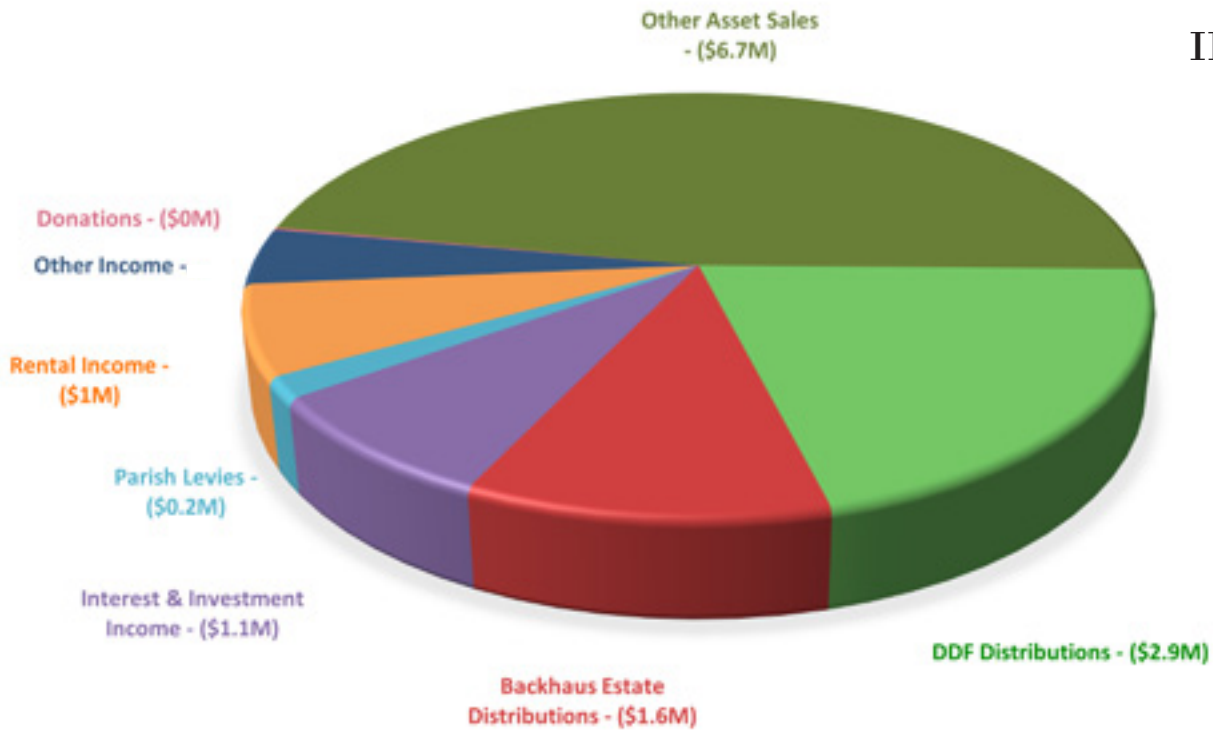
A pioneer in Catholic education, he appointed the Diocese's first lay school principal and established its first Lay School Board at Holy Rosary Primary School, Heathcote. He was a founding board member of the Victorian Catholic Schools Association and served on industrial conciliation and arbitration boards. Civically, he co-founded a Citizens Action Committee that successfully opposed a proposed toxic waste site near Heathcote, and in 2014 co-founded and chaired the Bendigo Interfaith Council.

At the diocesan level, he chaired the Finance Council, helped establish the Aspire Foundation, and served on numerous boards, including the Roman Catholic Trust Corporation, the Professional Standards Committee and the Diocesan Development Fund.

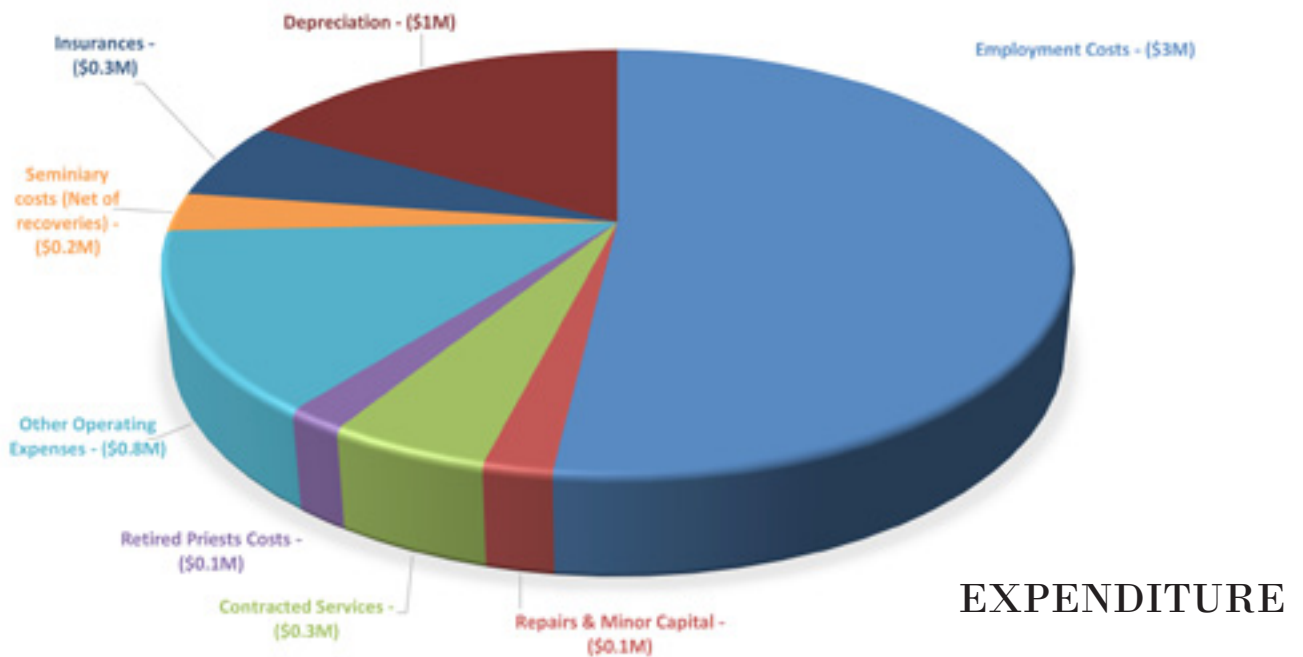
In retirement, Monsignor Frank continued prison ministry in Loddon and Middleton, served on the boards of the Sandhurst Priests' Retirement Foundation and Sandhurst Solidarity Fund, and accompanied people in need with humility and humour. His lifetime of service was recognised in 2022 with the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM).

For more than six decades, Monsignor Frank Marriott strengthened parishes and institutions, championed education, social cohesion and interfaith dialogue, and offered generous pastoral care to people of every background. Remembered for his sharp mind, love of history, deep curiosity, distinctive humour, and his unwavering support for the Collingwood Football Club, he was, in every sense, a man for all: a steadfast priest, principled advocate and unifying presence. He gave his life in faithful service to Christ and his Church, and he will be deeply missed.

INCOME

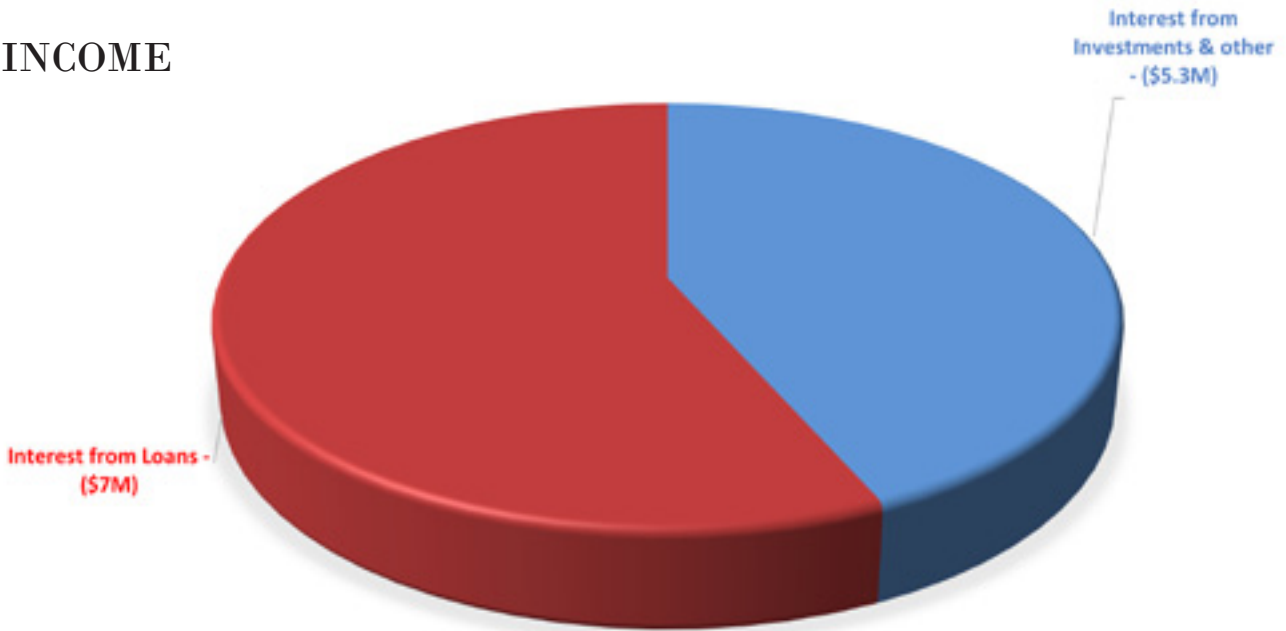


CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SANDHURST

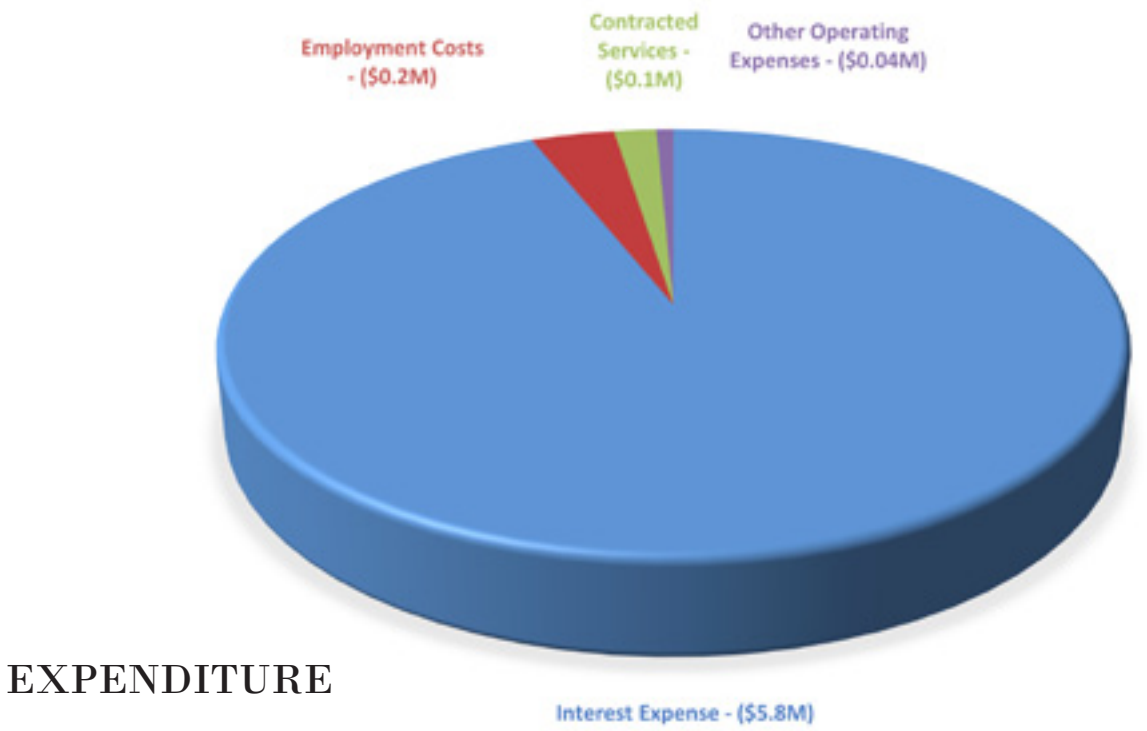


EXPENDITURE

INCOME

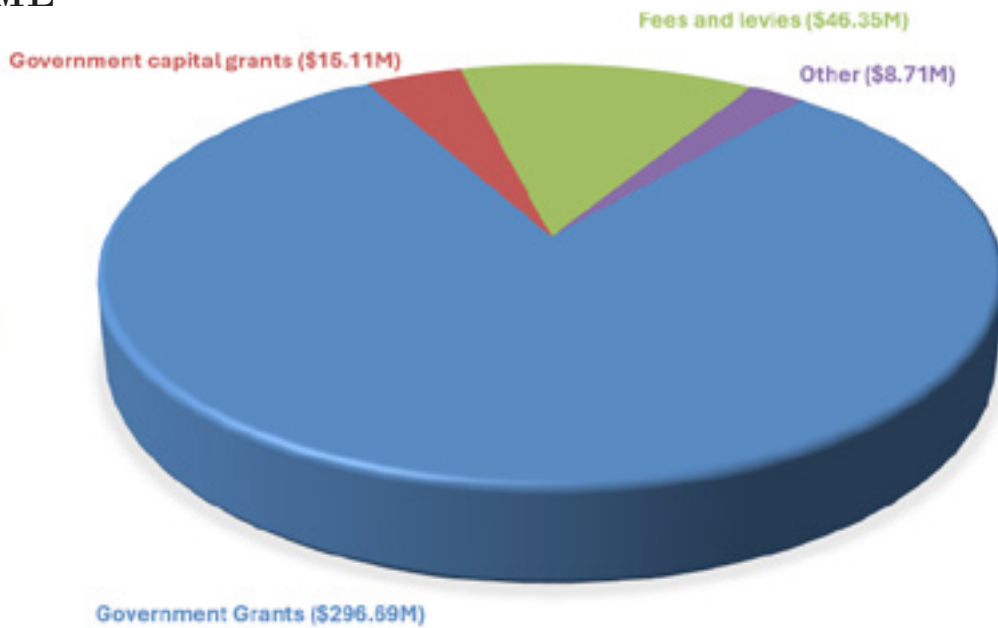


DIOCESAN DEVELOPMENT FUND

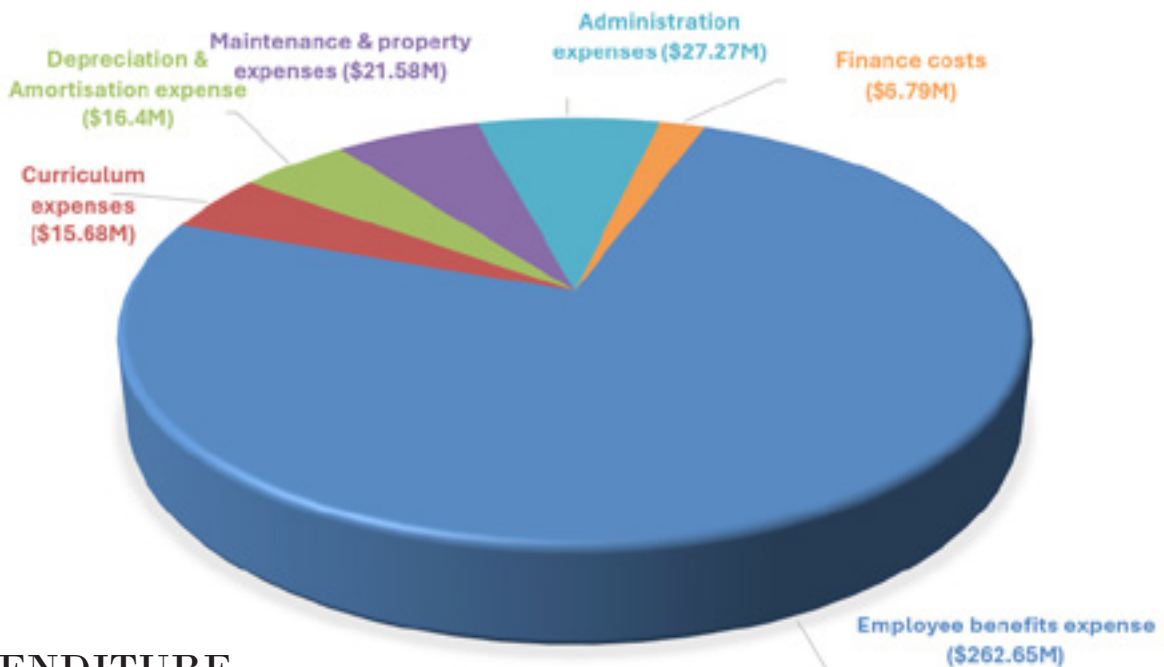


EXPENDITURE

**INCOME**



**CATHOLIC EDUCATION SANDHURST LTD**

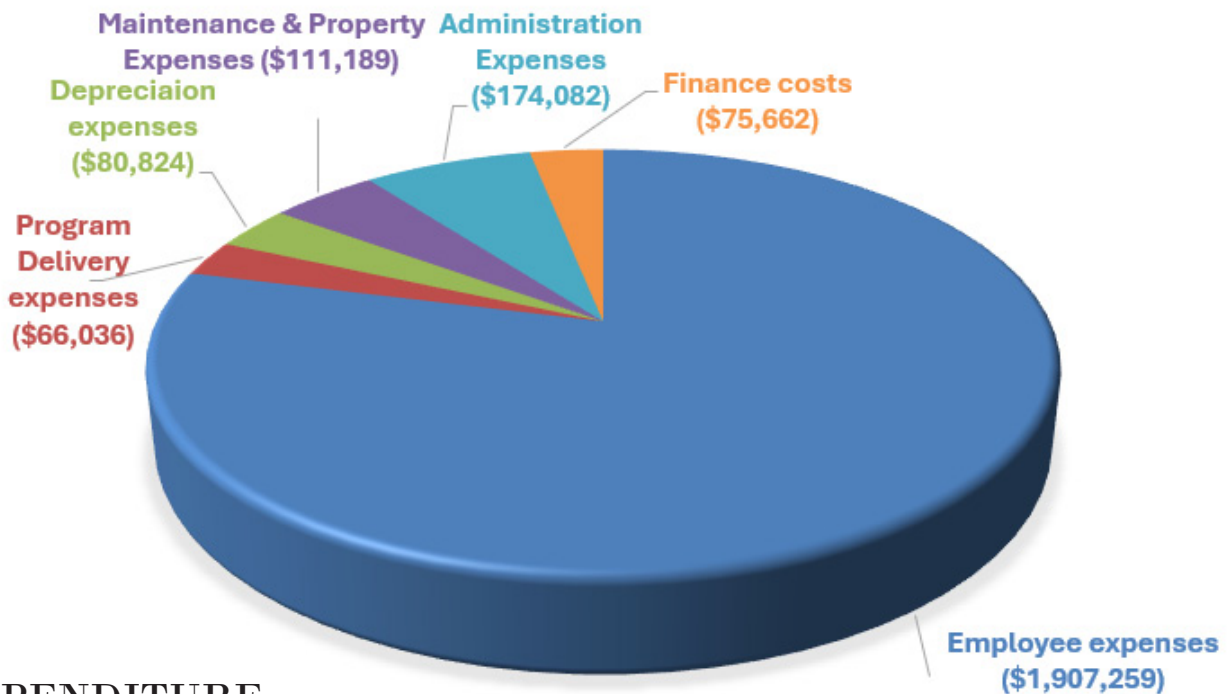


**EXPENDITURE**

INCOME



# SANDHURST CATHOLIC EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION & CARE LTD



EXPENDITURE

# *Prayer for the* **NEW BISHOP OF SANDHURST**

Almighty Father, knower of all hearts, grant that our brother, your servant, who is to be chosen for the office of Bishop of Sandhurst, may be a true shepherd of the flock entrusted to his care.

Pour out now upon this chosen one that power which comes from you, the Holy Spirit, whom you gave to your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, that same Spirit which Christ bestowed on his own apostles.

May this chosen one fulfill the ministry of shepherd of your people of our diocese.

May he please you by the sincerity of his service, the purity of his heart, the humility of his interactions, the simplicity of his demeanour. May he direct by word and example the people of Sandhurst entrusted to his care.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever, Amen.

Our Lady of Good Counsel, Patroness of our Diocese, Pray for us.



**BISHOP SHANE'S FAREWELL MASS WITH THE SANDHURST DIOCESE CLERGY**





CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SANDHURST