



What's Up? is a newsletter of the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care. It provides A GLIMPSE of recent, current and forthcoming events in multicultural and cross cultural pastoral care in the Archdiocese of Brisbane and beyond. P: (07) 3324 3451 | E: cmpc@bne.catholic.net.au  
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# What's Up?

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## New CMPC Director All are welcome. All are included.



Peter Pellicaan

Multicultural pastoral care in the Archdiocese of Brisbane is now under the capable leadership of **Peter Pellicaan** who was recently appointed Director of Evangelisation Brisbane.

Peter was previously Executive Director of the Office of the Archbishop.

Peter succeeds Clyde Cosentino as the 7th Director of the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care (CMPC).

The rest of the CMPC Team – Tuesday Volunteer Tricia Dakin, Cultural & Administration Support Percy Pamo Lawrence and Multicultural Projects and Research Officer Jessica Laidler, continue to look after the various aspects of multicultural pastoral care in the archdiocese.

CMPC is an ecclesial agency of the Archdiocese of Brisbane tasked to provide pastoral care to Catholic cultural communities, migrants, refugees and people on the move. This ministry operates within the structure of Evangelisation Brisbane.

The power of the gospel is that it is not merely something that “works” for a particular group of people in a specific context. Its power is that it is not merely a European or Mediterranean or American thing. It’s not a rich people’s thing or a blue collar thing. The gospel is the life of the world, and our Lord’s invitation is for all to encounter him – every tribe and every nation. Indeed the Church that Jesus instituted, began with one of the most spectacular examples of multicultural inclusion.

On the day of Pentecost, “All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability... and those who were there asked: “how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? (See Acts 2:1 – 11)

The great gift of Pentecost was that the gospel didn’t require anyone to learn a new language. Instead, the Holy Spirit enabled everyone to hear the word of God in their own tongue. And this is at the heart of multicultural pastoral care. Here we

find ourselves, some 2000 years after that first Pentecost moment, all together in one Archdiocese, but with many cultures and languages – just like that gathering in the first century. And in the same way, all are welcome and all are included. We share a common humanity, and as Catholics, one baptism in Christ which transcends all human limitations and unites us across all boundaries.

All of that is to say, it is such a blessing to be united with you in Christ. We have so much to learn from one another, and so much to gain from walking together. So “let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24 – 25). I look forward to journeying with you in the coming years.

In Christ,  
**Peter Pellicaan**

We have so much to learn from one another,  
and so much to gain from walking together.

Let us consider how we may spur one  
another on toward love and good deeds.

## Snapshots : Catholic Cultural Communities

Our various cultural communities are forever bitten by the *busy bug*. The building of shrines at Marian Valley in Canungra, in particular, seems to be one of the main pre-occupations of a number of Catholic cultural communities in the Archdiocese.

### Timor Leste Community: **Our Lady of Aitara**

Members of the Timor Leste Brisbane and Queensland Catholic community have been busy holding fundraising activities to cover building costs of their most recent venture – their very own Our Lady of Aitara shrine at Marian Valley in Canungra.

Construction of the shrine started in late 2018. Since it is a smaller community compared to the one in Darwin, building is taking a longer time, and fundraising continues.

Those who wish to give donations towards the shrine may do so by visiting the [GoFundMe](https://www.gofundme.com/f/lady-of-aitara) platform and using the search word 'Lady of Aitara' or copy and paste link <https://www.gofundme.com/f/lady-of-aitara>

The community held a pilgrimage and festivities at the unfinished site in October this year. Future pilgrimages will be held on the 10th of October each year.

The Shrine will be officially opened and blessed in January 2019.



Timorese community working bee.



Chapel is nearly done.

### PNG Community: **Blessed Peter To Rot**

The Papua New Guinean Catholic community Brisbane and Gold Coast have also been busy with various fundraising activities to fund the building of their very own shrine that will house the statue of Blessed Peter To Rot.

Pope John Paul II confirmed that Peter To Rot was killed 'in odium fidei' (in hatred of the faith) and was beatified on 17 January 1995 during his visit to Papua New Guinea. Blessed Peter To Rot's feast day is celebrated on 7 July.

#### Next....

The **Chinese Catholic chaplaincy** is keen on finalising plans for the building of their shrine that will house their statue of **Our Lady of China**. They have made their pilgrimage that there will be more shrines that will be built in Marian Valley next year. The Feast of Our Lady of China is on the 2nd of May.

Our Lady of China



The **Iraqi Catholic community** in Brisbane which receives much support from the more established Melkite parish in South Brisbane is also making plans to build the shrine of **Our Lady of Iraq** at Marian Valley. The community plans to go on pilgrimage there on the 2nd of May each year.



PNG community fundraising event 'Walk for To Rot'.



PNG women check out building progress.

## Catholic Cultural Communities : Snapshots

In addition to Lent and Easter, Advent and Christmas, the various cultural communities are big on anniversaries, feast days and devotions. Observing faith practices that have religious significance for individual communities increase community bonding and sometimes even give reason for some disengaged members to reconnect. For a list of these celebrations visit the CMPC website page <http://multiculturalcare.org.au/diversity/days-of-religious-significance-catholic-cultural-communities/>

### Latin American: Celebrating feast days and a nomination :)

The Latin American Community in Brisbane celebrates around 15 feast days each year. The four main ones are – Jesus Divine Saviour of the World (3 August, El Salvadoran), Our Lady of Chiquinquirá (9 July, Colombian), San Juan Diego (9 December, Mexican) and Our Lady of Guadalupe (10 December) patroness of Latin American Chaplaincy.

Catholic Leader's Community Leader Awards. Marina is a former staff member of the Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care (1994-2003) and a dedicated member of the Latin American Community in Brisbane.

Marina did not win, but to CMPC and the Latin American Community in Brisbane, she is already a winner.



Meanwhile, Marina Castellanos (photo on right) was one of the finalists in The

The Latin Americans gather for Mass in Spanish at St Finbarr's Church in

Ashgrove. Latin American Chaplain Fr 'Nacho' Rodriguez is also Parish Priest of Holy Spirit New Farm.

### Celebrating Italian and South Sudanese Friendship: 20th year reunion

Twenty years ago, in 1998, members of the Italian Catholic Federation (FCI) of Aspley Geebung (*Federazione Cattolica Italiana*) committed to welcoming a number of refugee families fleeing civil unrest in Sudan.

assisted in the resettlement of refugee families. These Italian and South Sudanese families have stayed in touch since.

With initial guidance from the Archdiocese of Brisbane's Centre for Multicultural Pastoral Care, the FCI group became one of several parish CRSS groups in the archdiocese that received orientation/training under the government's Community Refugee Settlement Scheme (CRSS) and

Monday the 7th of October was the day the South Sudanese and Italian families gathered for Mass at St Gerard Majella Parish Hall in Chermside West. Mass was celebrated by Italian Chaplain Fr Angelo Cagna cs followed by a sumptuous morning tea prepared by the Italian hosts.

While the CMPC leadership coordinated the welcome and settlement of refugee arrivals from 1998 onwards, I witnessed on the sidelines and documented the blossoming of nurture and friendship among these families. It was a privilege to be invited to their October gathering and witness once again this continuing friendship. Many thanks to Cam Impellizeri, Bianca Frangiosa and the organising group of FCI Aspley Geebung. More photos on the [CMPC Facebook post](#).

(Percy)



## Snapshots : Catholic Cultural Communities in the Archdiocese

### Bulimba : Last Mass in French

Mass in French has been celebrated every three months in the Archdiocese of Brisbane for almost 30 years, 15 years of which were held at Saints Peter and Paul church in Bulimba.

Parish Priest Fr Tom Elich recently announced that Mass in French will be discontinued due to a combination of dwindling number of Mass attendants and change in circumstances of those involved in organising Mass and fellowship.

Fr Tom thanks all those who have prepared the liturgy and led the music over the years noting that theirs have been a 'wonderful and generous contribution'.

**Mass in French on 8 December will be the last.**

It is hoped that there will still be opportunities for Mass in French in the Archdiocese, one of which would be participation and involvement in parish Multicultural Sunday.

### LAST MASS IN FRENCH

**8 December 2019**

**3.00pm**

**Sts Pierre et Paul**

**25 Main Avenue**

**BULIMBA**

### Burmese representation at Ignite youth event

Nine Burmese and two Sri Lankans joined a group of young and 'young at hearts' from St Paul's Woodridge parish and participated at the recent Ignite Conference held at Mueller College in Rothwell (26-29 September).

Cross Cultural Pastoral Minister St Rosa Vazzano was pleased to report that all in the group enjoyed the conference and found the speakers and sessions insightful and encouraging.

Burmese and Sri Lankans are one among a number of emerging Catholic communities in Woodridge parish. Many thanks to Sr Rosa Vazzano for photos and information.



### Simbang Gabi in various parishes

What's more exciting than going to Mass at 4am for nine consecutive days until Christmas, singing Christmas carols and enjoying community breakfast afterwards? For some communities such as the Filipino and some Latin American countries, the *Simbang Gabi* (Mass at dawn) is one of the biggest perks in the liturgical year. This unique cultural faith expression is slowly being welcomed in the Archdiocese, thanks to the accommodating openness of parish priests and parishioners. While traditionally held at dawn, some parishes in Brisbane celebrate *Simbang Gabi* at night. Mass is celebrated in English; Christmas carols in English and Filipino languages. For a full list, see 'Christmas Mass Times - Catholic Cultural Communities newsletter insert or visit the [CMPC website](#).

Christmas Simbang Gabi 2019



**Celebrating the Power of Love, Friendship & Family**

**St Michael's War Memorial Church**  
 250 Banks Street Ashgrove QLD 4060; Sunday 22nd December 2019  
 1pm Christmas Carols; 1.30pm Mass; 3pm Afternoon Tea  
 BYO afternoon tea to share

## Catholic Cultural Communities : *Snapshots*

### *St Bakhita South Sudanese* : **Women's trip to Toowoomba**

I enjoyed the bus trip to Toowoomba with the women from St Bakhita South Sudanese group. It was a privilege to be able to provide this opportunity for them. Even though it was a long trip for some of them they were very happy to be with each other and able to share so freely. No kids and husbands. They hardly ever get a chance to be away for a whole day to enjoy this freedom by themselves.

Meeting with the women's group in Toowoomba was a new experience for them. Seeing Toowoomba was another new experience. This trip was to encourage social activity among the women, expose them to a different environment, sharing culturally, praying in their own language and exchanging experiences of preparing South Sudanese food. There were about 20 women who enjoyed the



trip, singing and praying and talking in their own language during the trip. Meeting with other women allowed them to exchange stories of their experiences of settling in Australia. Their hearts are full of pain and worry for their country of South Sudan and the families they left behind who are not safe there. They always bring this

worry to their time of prayer. After receiving positive feedback from the women, I was delighted to know that this trip to Toowoomba was worthwhile. They requested to have an experience of the beach next year and enjoy the beauty of the ocean.

**Sr Odete Moreira ssp**  
Cross-cultural Pastoral Minister

### *St Clement's Melkite Parish* : **90th year anniversary celebrations**

On the Feast of St Clement (23 November), parishioners and friends of St Clement's Melkite Parish celebrated the 90th anniversary of the parish as well as the establishment of the first Eastern Catholic Church in Brisbane.

St Clement's church, when it was established in 1929, also served the Maronite and Orthodox churches until they established their own. Archbishop Mark Coleridge joined the eastern bishops and priests from various eastern churches in the celebration of Mass. More photos visit [St Clement Church Facebook](#).



### *Indonesians Catholic Family* : **Retreat in Mt Tamborine**



Photo courtesy of Fr Martinus Situmorang and ICF Brisbane Gold Coast.

The Indonesian Catholic Family of Brisbane and the Gold Coast held their annual retreat this year at the Queensland Conference and Camping Centre in Mt. Tambourine.

The retreat ran from 22 to 24 November and focused on managing the challenges of modern family life and balancing responsibilities to family, career, church and society. More photos on [CMPC Facebook](#).

# Advent Is a Season of Exiles

Advent is a season of exiles. It is a time of waiting, a time of yearning for light to dispel the darkness. The Advent atmosphere is rooted in the experience of exile described in the Hebrew Scriptures. The people were far from their homeland. The people cried out for a saviour to deliver them from a great darkness. The Messiah would light their way home.

Advent expresses this yearning to return home to a secure place of peace. Every Advent we are invited to get inside these ancient people, to hear their cries. Their longing for home reminds us of our own inner places of exile, which also cry for a place of inner peace.

Our exile can be a spiritual or psychological separation, which keeps us from being home with our true selves. In some churches people have been sent into exile and forbidden a full participation. Ethnic groups are exiled because of their skin colour or

creed. Refugees are exiled from their homelands. Some people are in exile from themselves, mentally anguished or emotionally unable to understand or to accept who they are.

Our God says "I shall bring you back to the place from which I exiled you" (Jer 29:14), and offers hope and welcome to the homeless.

Take time now and reflect on the inner homelessness in you, the parts of you that wait in lonely exile and yearn to come home....

We are like people in exile when:

- All our time is taken up with ourselves and is not balanced with a concern for others.
- We give in to the expectations of others.
- We do nothing to change the systems that oppress others.
- We push others aside or ruin their reputation or bring them great pain in order to elevate ourselves.



- We harbour intolerance and bias towards others who might be different.
- We are in a place that is alien to the person we are meant to be.
- We feel that we do not fit because of our views, attitudes and beliefs.
- We are discouraged and in great physical pain.
- We experience deep alienation.
- We cannot accept our imperfections and limitations or befriend our shadow.
- We lose patience with ourselves or with others in our effort for growth and change.

(Author Unknown)

## Overcoming Christmas Blues

(Continued from page 8)

- Leave "yesteryear" in the past and look toward the future. Life brings changes. Each season is different and can be enjoyed in its own way. Don't set yourself up in comparing today with the "good old" days."
- Do something for someone else. Try volunteering some time to help others.
- Enjoy activities that are free, such as driving around to look at holiday decorations; going window shopping without buying.
- Be aware that excessive drinking will only increase your feelings of depression.
- Try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a new way.
- Spend time with supportive and caring people. Reach out and make new friends or contact someone you have not heard from for awhile.
- Save time for yourself! Recharge your batteries! Let others share responsibility of activities."

<http://www.mhawisconsin.org/holidaystress.aspx>

Another resource suggests:

- Recognise the sadness of absent loved ones instead of denying the sadness.
- Set reasonable financial goals based on what the budget can afford.
- Be especially mindful of diet during the holiday season. High sugar and carbohydrate laden foods typical of the holidays will only make depression matters worse. Allow indulgences during the holidays, but with limitations.
- Put old issues aside when dealing with family. If that is not possible, consider limiting the time spent.

Indeed, some of us Christians will feel blue this Christmas, and it is important not to deny but to acknowledge this very human behaviour, and then take mindful steps to overcome it. I myself do a bit of self-talk. Whenever I feel I don't belong, or feel certain people have let me down, or when Christmas lights and decorations suddenly fail to amuse me, I could always give prayer a try, or strum my guitar.

I found a beautiful piece of writing titled *Advent Is a Season of Exiles* (see above article p6). We give due acknowledgment to the unknown author.

Happy Christmas. Those who are not feeling 100%, let us tell ourselves: "It is better to feel blue than not feel anything at all".

**Percy Pamo Lawrence**

Cultural and Administration Support

**Mental health and well being services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse background (CALD):**

**My Mental Health**

**Australian Red Cross**

**(help for migrants in transition)**

**Beyond Blue - 1300 22 4636**

**Lifeline - 13 11 14**

**Senami Counselling (For Migrants and Refugees, South Australia)**

**Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT)**

# What's On and Around: Events and Resources

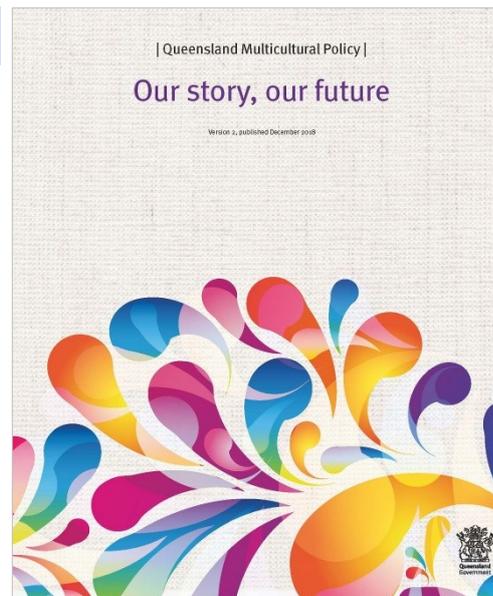
## Queensland Multicultural Action Plan

Queensland Government's [Multicultural Policy](#) (PDF, 2.8 MB) titled 'Our story, our future' documents the government's commitment to promote an inclusive, harmonious and united Queensland.

The Multicultural Policy focuses Queensland Government commitment for people from culturally diverse backgrounds and for Queensland as a whole across 3 priorities:

- achieving culturally responsive government
- supporting inclusive, harmonious and united communities
- improving economic opportunities.

For more information, visit the website of the Multicultural Affairs section of the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs. This page is a minefield of information on various initiatives, programs and activities that seek to improve outcomes for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and assist in building safe, caring and connected communities. Copy and paste or click on link <https://www.dlgrma.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/multicultural-affairs.html>



## No Friend But the Mountains

*No Friend But the Mountains* is a book written by Behrouz Boochani while imprisoned in the Australian government immigration detention facility on Manus Island.

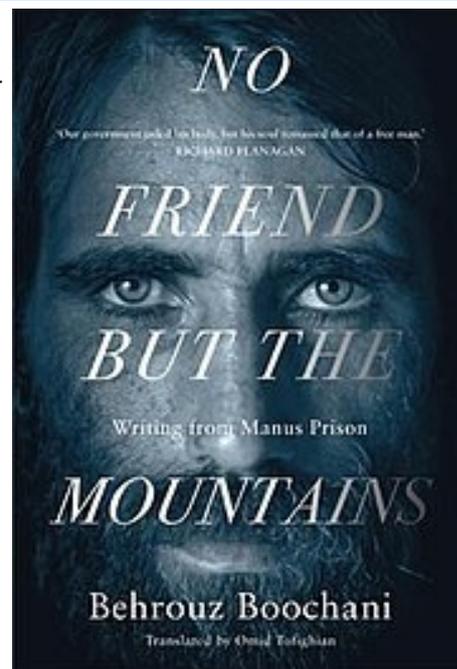
Behrouz, a Kurdish journalist, used WhatsApp on a smuggled mobile phone in writing his personal accounts of the dangerous journey to Christmas Island and his experience of imprisonment for six years in the detention centre.

Dr Omid Tofighian translated Behrouz' writings from Persian into English. The book was published by Picador in late 2018.

*No Friend But the Mountains* has since won a number of literature awards:

- Victorian Prize for Literature and Victorian Premier's Prize for Nonfiction awarded by the Wheeler Centre, 31 January 2019.
- A Special Award in the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards, April 2019.
- Australian Book Industry Award (ABIA) for General non-fiction book of the year, 2 May 2019
- Australian National Biography Award, 12 August 2019

Recently freed from imprisonment, the Kurdish journalist and refugee is still deliberating on whether to seek asylum in New Zealand or resettle in the United States. Behrouz continues to advocate for the many asylum seekers who remain incarcerated in detention centres.



## Supporting Women's Employment and Economic Participation

Supporting Women's Employment and Economic Participation (SWEEP) is a program initiated by the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland (ECCQ) to assist women to strengthen employment Opportunities and Connection in the Community.

The SWEEP program seeks to assist women who have not received settlement support and are:

- looking for employment and need information or support
- would like to increase confidence

- in applying for work
- speaks English as a second language
- feeling isolated or alone
- needing more information about other support available in the community

More information can be found on the ECCQ website [www.eccq.com.au/](http://www.eccq.com.au/) Media Centre tab.



Contact ECCQ by phone 3844 9166, email [administration@eccq.com.au](mailto:administration@eccq.com.au)

## OVERCOMING *Christmas Blues*

Each one of us, at various points in life, may have fallen under the spell of this strange 'bug' we sometimes call the 'Christmas blues'.

In the northern hemisphere where Christmas coincides with the onset of cold months — shorter days and longer nights, winter blues at its worst become a form of depression called Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

But SAD in Australia (and in the southern hemisphere) in the humid summer months of Christmas? Whatever it is, there is a need for an awareness about this form of depression that may affect the vulnerable during this time of the year, including migrants and refugees.

Counselling services are usually busy with calls about loneliness and relationship difficulties during the months of December and January, months that are assumed to be quiet, months spent mostly with families and close friends. This 'free time' tend to become the perfect atmosphere for old and unresolved issues to resurface.

But why 'the blues' at Christmas when everyone is supposed to be happy — Christians and non-Christians alike? 'Happy holidays' is the language of the secular Christmas. Indeed, it is misguided societal pressure that drives some people to even call Christmas (much to my dislike) -- 'the silly season'.

To some, Christmas does not usually bring joy, but instead, sorrow. Around this time of the year, some people try to cope with society's expectations on how they are supposed to behave, what they are supposed to have and what they are expected to do.

December, being the last month of the year also ushers in the need to self-evaluate. To some, it brings feelings of rejection, loneliness, past failures and anxiety about an uncertain future.

Some Christian families are not spared from these festive pressures, particularly those who closely follow tradition, and in doing so, place unrealistic expectations on each other. Trouble begins as soon as someone falls below this expectation.

With the build-up of emotions leading to that special day, the joyful news of the birth of Jesus is overshadowed by a preoccupation with the need to 'have', 'show' and 'perform'. Instead of focusing on our relationship with God through the nurturing of our relationships with families, friends and community, we focus on brand names, food, fashion, routine, tradition.

Migrants, even those who have lived in a country for a long time, are still particularly vulnerable to secular and religious pressures of the Christmas season. It is 'the' time of big family gatherings, yet some are alone and do not have enough funds to travel overseas to see their loved ones.

The National Mental Health Association (US) website provides helpful resources that promote mental health and well-being. A resource on the website lists five things to do 'when the holidays aren't exactly uplifting':

1. Say "no" if you feel overwhelmed
2. Be kind to your wallet.
3. Know when to end unwanted conversations.
4. Honor those who have passed on.
5. Don't be alone if you don't



**“Migrants, even those who have lived in a country for a long time, are still particularly vulnerable to the hidden pressures of the Christmas season.**

**Christmas is 'the' time of big family gatherings, yet some are alone and do not have enough funds to travel overseas to see their loved ones.”**

want to.

<https://www.mhanational.org/>

The Mental Health Association of Wisconsin provides a slightly longer list:

- Keep expectations for the holiday season manageable. Try to set realistic goals for yourself. Pace yourself. Organize your time. Make a list and prioritize the important activities. Be realistic about what you can and cannot do. Do not put entire focus on just one day to lessen stress and increase enjoyment.
- Remember the holiday season does not banish reasons for feeling sad or lonely; there is room for these feelings to be present, even if the person chooses not to express them.

*(Continued on page 6)*