

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

26<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2015

### ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH STANTHORPE

PARISH PRIEST: Fr. Brian Connolly Ph. 46812157 Fax 4681 4107

RETIRED PRIEST: Fr. Lino Valente Ph. 4681 365

RETIRED SISTER OF MERCY: Sr. Esther Dowling Ph. 4681 2137

PARISH EMAIL: [stjosephsparish@halenet.com.au](mailto:stjosephsparish@halenet.com.au)

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Dr. Michael McCarthy

TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBERS: Ph 46815900 Fax 46815909



**52<sup>ND</sup> WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS**  
**World Day of Prayer for Vocations to Ordained Ministry (Priesthood) and Religious Life is held on the Fourth Sunday of Easter each year – Good Shepherd Sunday. The World Day of Prayer for Vocations was initiated by Pope Paul VI in 1963 during the Second Vatican Council.**

This day offers us an opportunity to remember and pray for those who have already responded to God's call to the Priesthood and Religious Life, and to encourage and pray in a particular way for those men and women God may be calling to service as Priests or Religious.

On this day let the focus of our prayer be for Priestly and Religious Vocations for our Australian Church. The Priests and Religious of the future are in our Parishes today. We pray for those the Lord may be calling and we try to create the conditions in our Parishes and homes that will encourage young people to respond generously to God's loving call to service of God's people as Priests or Religious.

#### **PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS**

*God our Father, You made each of us to use our gifts in the Body of Christ.  
We ask that You inspire young people who You call to priesthood and consecrated  
life to courageously follow Your will.*

*Send workers into Your great harvest so that the Gospel is preached,  
the poor are served with love, the suffering are comforted,  
and Your people are strengthened by the Sacraments.*

*We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

#### **NEW ROSTER FOR READERS and MINISTERS OF COMMUNION:**

Please collect your new Roster in the foyer this weekend.

**QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** for the January - March quarter are available again this weekend in the foyer. If you did not collect your Statement at Mass last weekend, please remember to collect it before or after Mass this weekend.

Parishioners or new parishioners who are not part of the Planned Giving Programme are invited to join by speaking with Dorothy, the Parish Secretary who can arrange for you to receive envelopes or contact the Parish Office during the week.

**As the distribution of the Quarterly Statements is a big task, and to avoid the unnecessary expense of posting them, please remember to collect your Quarterly Statement in the foyer before or after Mass. Thank you.**

**PASTORAL STATEMENT FROM BISHOP McGUICKIN:** Copies of the Bishop's Pastoral Letter for the Day of Prayer for Vocations are in the foyer. Please take a copy home.

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Richard (Dick) Gacia, Enrico (Rick) Michelin, Betty Briskey  
**TO REMEMBER:** Fr. Leo O'Donohue, Fr. John Concannon, Fr. Reginald Prior  
**FOR THE SICK:** Marie Hindmarsh, Svetlana (Debbie) Pettiford, Frank Sciuto, Karen Anderson, Juan Pereira, Lisa Hopgood, Greg Keen, Trish Hancock, Julia Johnstone, Sarah Leonardi, Mario Costanzo, Marlene Holmes, Joe Costanzo, Danny Mahoney, Ken McQualter, Cathy Sullivan, Linda Vinciguerra, Debra Micallef, Stella Bayley, Ev Hayes, Rosemary Paget, Marie Keen, Bridey Kelly, Enid McCarthy

**A PARENT NIGHT FOR CONFIRMATION** is being held **tonight Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> April at 7PM** in **Library/Administration Building St. Joseph's Primary Campus**, High Street for the **parents of the children who soon begin preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation.** (This is a parent night and the children are **not** required to attend.)

#### **THIS WEEK:**

**MASSES: MON:** 7AM; 10.30AM **MASS & ANOINTING OF SICK** at BLUE CARE;  
**TUES:** 7AM; **WED:** 11.45AM; **THURS:** 9.15AM; **FRI:** 5.30PM; **SAT:** 7AM  
**SATURDAY VIGIL :** 6.30PM **SUNDAY:** 8.30AM

**FEAST DAYS: TUES:** *ST. PETER CHANEL*; **WED:** *ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA*;  
**FRI:** *ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER*; **SAT:** *ST. ANTHANASIVS*

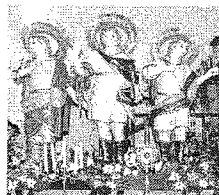
**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:** Prior to Sat. Vigil Mass and Sunday Mass or anytime by contacting Fr. Brian 4681 2157 or Fr. Lino 4681 3653.

#### **NEXT WEEKEND:**

### **THREE SAINTS CELEBRATIONS SUNDAY 3RD MAY 2015**

**THE PROGRAM for the FESTIVAL** is as follows:

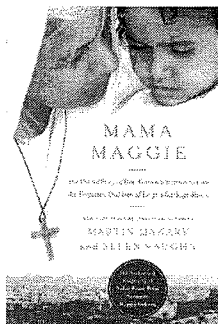
- **Bar-B-Que & Stalls** open from 10.30AM-12.30PM
- **Rosary** in the Church at 12.30PM
- **Concelebrated Mass** at **1PM** with Fr. James Spence from Brisbane and Fr. Brian and Fr. Lino
- Following the Mass there is the **Procession** with the **Three Saints Statues & Acoustic fireworks.**
- **Veneration of the Relic** of St. Filadelfo
- **Social celebrations** from 3.30PM into the night
- **Fireworks** spectacular at 6.30PM



Fr. Brian especially invites **ALL PARISHIONERS of ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH** to **join in the Mass, Procession, and festivities** to follow. It is not just a Festival for those of Sicilian descent, but a celebration for the whole parish family. I hope to see you there.

**PET OWNERS ARE ADVISED TO KEEP THEIR PETS SECURE AND SAFE** during the **acoustic fireworks** at approximately 2.30PM and the **fireworks** at around 6.30PM.

## THE 'ANGEL' AMONG THE GARBAGE-PICKERS



The following is an extract from a much larger article which appeared in ZENIT last weekend entitled "The 'Angel' Among The Garbage-Pickers". It is about an Egyptian lady they call the 'white angel' and her ministry to the poor. Some of those young men executed by ISIS in Libya in mid-February were nurtured in their faith through her ministry. Be touched and moved by the inspiring story. The author is Ellen Vaughn. Parts of the article are from her book "Mama Maggie: The Untold Story Of One Woman's Mission To Love the Forgotten Children of Egypt's Garbage Slums". The article appeared in the Catholic Herald (UK) Magazine 3/4/2015.

***Amid the filth and despair of Cairo's worst slums, a middle-class 'lady in white' feels called by God to protect the children who must sort rubbish to stay alive.***

This is the place where the "garbage-pickers" live. Fifty thousand of them. They pick up and sort greater Cairo's waste – the rubbish of 22 million people – and recycle what they can for a few coins a day.

I first met the person they call "lady in white" (she dresses in a white T-shirt, plain white skirt and white scarf) in the early Autumn of 2013. She is Maggie Gobran, an upper middle-class Egyptian businesswoman and university professor who felt called by God to trade her upwardly mobile lifestyle for a life of helping, protecting and energising the poorest of the poor.

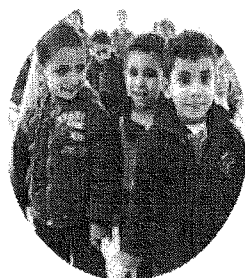


Years ago, as a socially conscious Christian, Maggie had visited



Cairo's garbage slums at Christmas and Easter with other friends from her church. During one such visit, she saw movement in a pile of shredded paper and plastic. She gently dug in the rubbish, and found a tiny child. Her heart broke. She began to spend more and more time in the slum, building relationships with children there. They started calling her "Mama Maggie" – and Maggie's comfortable, conventional life began to change.

In the late 1980s, Maggie and her husband, Ibrahim, started a ministry called Stephen's Children, named after the first martyr recorded in the New Testament. Today, Stephen's Children helps poor children in the garbage slums of Cairo and far beyond, bringing spiritual and physical food, education, training, medical services, love and care to children, kids who had never known hope before. Today, Stephen's Children has helped more than 30,000 children and families. Twenty per cent of the ministry's 1,500 workers and volunteers were served by the ministry when they were young.



When I first met Mama Maggie, Egypt was in turmoil. President Mohammed Morsi, who was tied to the Muslim Brotherhood, had been removed by an incredible outpouring of 30 million Egyptian citizens demonstrating on the street. A temporary government was in place.

Egypt is about 90 per cent Muslim and 10 per cent Christian. Those proportions were represented in the demonstrations against Mr Morsi's government. But in the chaos after his departure, it was Christians who took the brunt of his extremist supporters' rage. Christian churches, schools, convents, bookshops and businesses in Cairo and other cities were attacked, looted and burned, including one of Mama Maggie's kindergartens.



But something remarkable happened in the smoldering ashes of Egypt's burned churches. In one town after another, banners were raised over the ruined buildings. Charred walls were scrawled with messages for the attackers.

The messages? *"We forgive!" "We still love you!"* And on the burned wall of the ruined orphanage: *"You meant to hurt us, but we forgive you. God is love. Everything works out for the good."*

Mama Maggie believes that if you train up a child in the principles of the Scriptures, the Word will stay with them for the rest of their lives. All the children in her schools memorise Bible verses, with great fervour.

I heard classrooms full of children shouting out, first in Arabic, and then in English, lifelong truths such as: *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me! Philippians 4:13!"*

Many around the world have now heard about some of her boys. Of the 21 young Coptic men who were murdered by ISIS forces on the beach in Libya in mid-February, seven were loved and trained by Mama Maggie's ministry when they were young. They learnt the great, ancient truths of the faith. They learnt about dignity, hope and forgiveness. They learnt about the love of God. They memorised Philippians 4:13. Two of the martyrs went on to teach in Mama Maggie's schools when they got older.

So, when their time came, on that beach in Libya, they did not cower in fear before the black-garbed cowards who would kill them. They looked up, their eyes on heaven, and died whispering the name of Jesus. And in that moment, they learnt the utter, enormous reality about how human beings can indeed do all things, through the eternal power of Christ who strengthens us.

As the mother of 29-year-old Samuel Abraham said: *"We thank ISIS. Now more people believe in Christianity because of them. ISIS showed what Christianity is. We thank God that our relatives are in heaven."*

Mama Maggie came to Washington DC in March. She described the 21 young men who died because they would not deny Christ, and gave a challenge to us all.



*"It is not the length of our days that matters,"* she said in her characteristic soft voice. *"We have no control over how long we live. No, it is the depth of our days ... and we do have control over that, as we decide to truly follow Jesus."*