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PPC moves on review of volunteering to better support administration and liturgy

By Fr Fred

Volunteering is a great way to get plugged into your church, feel like part of a community and serve Jesus, all at the same time.

God has uniquely equipped every person in the Church with specific skills and gifts. As Christians, we are tasked with utilising these gifts in our community and within our local church.

Using your God-given **skills as a volunteer** is a fantastic way to **serve the church** while simultaneously lightening the load of a church's staff.

Volunteering has a spiritual benefit as well. By volunteering, an individual will often want to dive deeper into the life of the church. At the same time, they serve not only as a helping hand but also as a witness of the Gospel message within the community.

However, while many may want to give their time, it can be difficult to align schedules and balance other obligations. So, while the desire to volunteer may exist, people often run into roadblocks that prevent them from giving their time.

Many people travel for work, some live far from their church and still others have families who claim their time during the week. But as everyone has unique God-given gift, it is critical for churches to be inclusive and provide a **variety of opportunities to volunteer**.

So, what makes volunteering an amazing journey for people to undertake? It's a great way to get out and get involved in our community. It's a journey where one can meet new people and discover talents that one may have never known one had.

Continued on page 2



St Matthew's
Bridgewater



St Joseph's
Lobethal



St Matthew's
Birdwood



Our Lady of the Rosary
Stirling



St Catherine's
Stirling

Volunteering in the spotlight

Continued from page 1

This journey is designed to help anyone prepare and take the first steps on their volunteering journey. At the last few Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) meetings, volunteering has prompted a deep discussion about how the parish currently can support me in both liturgical and administrative areas.

The PPC acknowledged that while the current structure has served the parish well in the past, it needs to look if it is still fit-for-purpose in its present form. The growing complexity and volume of responsibilities, along with changes in volunteer capacity, requires a thoughtful and forward-looking approach.

At present, I carry a significant administrative load which is time-consuming and often managed informally or through goodwill. In the PPC, I noted that sometimes I find myself requesting or chasing tasks unless something is out of the ordinary or has gone wrong.

This is especially true in the Bridgewater community as we currently lack a contact person – and this, in turn, contributes to communication gaps and uneven support in this community. The PPC recognised that the challenge is not simply about

who is doing what, but about the structure itself – for example, how tasks are defined, how roles are assigned and how accountability is embedded.

The PPC has thus recommended an overall review of volunteering by identifying the full scope of jobs that need to be done, defining the roles required to support those tasks, matching people appropriately to those roles and clarifying expectations and desired outcomes.

However, for this review to work, it must be supported by clear, transparent processes and systems, enabling a more efficient and sustainable framework.

General agreement across the PPC was that a principle of ensuring people are placed in roles that align with their gifts, strengths and capacity, allowing the parish to move forward with confidence and reduce the risk of burnout or confusion.

As part of this review, the annual parish calendar should become a formal and recurring item on the PPC agenda. Regular discussion of the calendar will enable better forward planning, improved coordination and more timely delegation of responsibilities.

The PPC also explored how to utilise multiple technology method which can significantly improve both transparency and engagement. The Parish Pastoral Council has now progressed to an action plan to meet outside the Council to review.

Sacramental Programme concludes with First Communion



Above left, the 18 candidates in the Class of 2025, with Fr Fred and St Catherine's Mark Simpson and Clara Thomas; while right, APRIM Carla Thomas guides candidates through Prayers of the Faithful

The 2025 Sacramental Programme, with 18 candidates on the journey, concluded in front of a packed St Matthew's Bridgewater on Sunday 10 August with the children receiving Holy Communion for the first time.

In his homily, Fr Fred recalled his own experience when he fell ill shortly after receiving his First Holy Communion and the next week at Mass – he was at the tender age of six at the time – he didn't go up to receive the body of Christ. Asked by his mother why, he simply said, "Mum, I forgot."

That was his message to the children – don't forget, know what it is to receive the body of Christ, be aware of the importance of the Sacrament in our faith.

Our congratulations to all candidates and their families.



Thanks, Neil, for your love, support and kindness

Neil Osborne's loving companion of more than 35 years, Paula Zanchetta delivered the eulogy at his funeral Mass at St Matthew's Bridgewater on Thursday 10 July, sharing insights into a kind and gentle

Thank you for coming to celebrate Neil's life.

I met Neil Robert Osborne in 1990 in the Heritage Gardens of Loreto, where he was employed as a groundsman. He was a gentle and kind person, with a shy disposition, but a true gentleman. He had a great reputation at Loreto with the nuns who trusted him – and he loved them, would do anything for them, even filling their cars with petrol and washing the cars, too.

We clicked the moment we met and over our lunchtime meetings during the months that followed, we looked forward to seeing each other. Neil loved nature, particularly trees, his favourites being the great mountain ash, maples and tree ferns. He had at the back of his place a lovely collection of English trees, his little forest a favourite among visitors and the many birds it attracted.

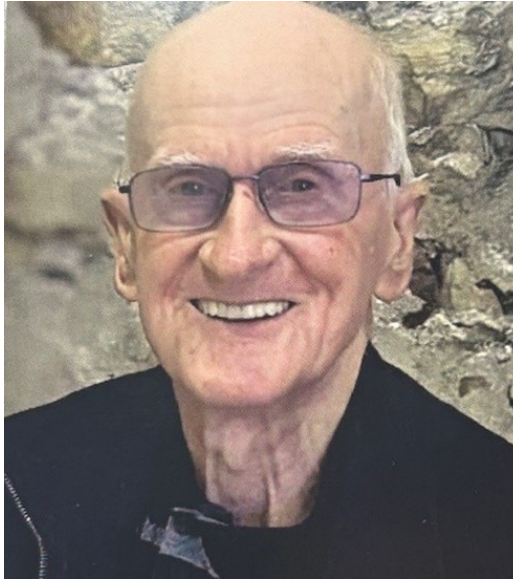
He loved native birds and fed a menagerie of them, including a family of magpies, blue wrens, his beloved family of five kookaburras, small finches, parrots, lorikeets and budgies. He would buy two packets of mince every week to feed his birds – and not surprisingly, the birds waited for him and their feed each morning.

Neil taught me the names of so many roses, trees and plants and I often thought how lucky I was to meet such a good man. I could see his excellent quantities, one particular trait being the pride he took in his work. He was not afraid of hard work.

One day while seated at our usual meeting place, Neil announced that he would like to be baptised. When I said, "what, in the Catholic church?" he immediately said yes. It was music to my ears. I approached Sr Leonie Petersen, the head of Loreto, and told her the news. She immediately rang around and was able to get Neil a place on the Annunciation Church, Hectorville's RCIA programme and its year of religious instruction.

Neil came into God's family at Easter 1992. He was baptised and given confirmation and communion by Fr Leon Czechowicz. I was Neil's proud sponsor.

The years went by with Neil and I supporting each



Neil Robert Osborne, RIP

other and taking trips to Victoria and NSW in our holidays. He was a great travelling companion and loved nature and bushwalking. One of our favourite places was the Flinders Ranges. He suggested climbing the 1,178-metre St Mary's Peak. Other mountains we climbed were the Pinnacle, Mount Rosea and the Chimney Pot in the Grampians.

Neil was great at building a fire when we went camping. I remember doing damper in the camp oven, along with chicken cacciatore, washed down with a good bottle of wine. We would never run out of things

to talk about. I even read him a snippet of the story of Catherine Hepburn from the Women's Weekly – and he loved it!

It was wonderful being out in the quiet of nature, under the stars, in good company and with good food. These are the moments I won't forget.

We went to the snow with my sisters Rosa and Clara and my brother-in-law Elio, and had great fun throwing snow at each other, not to mention plenty of laughs, good food and good wine. We also had a wonderful trip to WA with Neil's brother Barry, his wife Evelyn and their son, Scott.

Neil and I loved gardens. We went to camellia shows, garden shows and garden centres and bought many trees, plants and roses together. He planted up my place with trees, camellias, plants, roses and fruit trees – and I can still hear him saying: "She puts too much manure on them!!"

I was a lucky lady to have Neil as a companion for 35 years. To tell you the truth, I always felt God had a hand in all of this. He knew we needed each other for support and a shoulder to lean on. Thank you, Neil, for your love and support, all the work you did for me over the years, the happy moments we shared and the lovely meals we enjoyed with family and friends.

You will be sorely missed by all my family and friends – and particularly me. I know you are in the greatest hands now and I don't need to worry anymore. I thank God for you, Neil. May you be in His love, light and peace.



It's a privilege to be so involved in our grandchildren's lives

*Nanna **Deb Stapleton** did the honours on Grandparents' Day in late July, sharing the joy and blessings of a life surrounded by 16 energetic grandchildren aged from 20 months to 17 years...and in the photo above, the entire clan is there but for one – and she was in utero!*

Des and I are the proud parents of five children and the even prouder Nanna and Granddad to 16 grandchildren – 12 boys and four girls – aged from 20 months to 17...and nine of them are here today.

Yes, it can be hectic! Just for context, I was an only child! We are very fortunate that four of the five families live in the Hills and Rachel's family are only 40 minutes away, so we see them all regularly.

On being a grandmother, I love their enthusiastic welcomes when we meet, I love their hugs, I love the feeling of a little hand in mine, and I love how they are growing to appreciate family and to realise how important we are to each other.

I love the chaos (in small doses) when we are all together, I love that the three older grandchildren are going to Mercedes – my alma mater.

I love attending class liturgies and Masses at St Catherine's (particularly seeing Rufus execute his take on a liturgical dance), I love watching them participate in the Nativity Play at the Christmas Vigil, and I love that four of the boys are expanding their faith and taking part in the Sacramental Programme this year.

I love their developing senses of humour, I (secretly) love how a couple of the boys get great satisfaction out of calling me a boomer, I love the spontaneous anecdotes they come out with.

Take Wilbur (5), walking to the carpark after a rehearsal for his brother and cousins' Confirmation on a Tuesday evening, and muttering: "We didn't get a chocolate".

Fr Fred, you've set a precedent!

Then there's Harry's "I go to kindy and I know everything." Imagine now that he has just started school!

And Stella when asked if she could walk a short distance: "No, I'm still pretending to have a sore ear." Or Conor, when told to stop annoying Zara: "But she's not crying yet."

Xavier: now a teenager, told Zara when he was eight, "Respect your elderly", and Rupert at two-and-a-half just wanted "peace and quiet."

James, now 11 but when six and at a swimming lesson, advised Stephanie that there was a problem. "What's that, James?" she asked. "I'm getting wet."

Our main responsibilities are school drop-offs and pick-ups and getting boys safely across to the Stirling Oval for footy training. We have them for the occasional sleep-over and emergency care for whatever reason.

I wouldn't dare count how many peanut butter sandwiches, slices of cinnamon toast and cups of Milo I have made. In this cold weather, the favourite after-school snack is hot chips or dumplings. Anything to fill the hollow legs!

Grandad is a sucker for providing ice-creams, often just before a meal. Conor agrees that Grandad is a soft touch and adds, "But he's loveable". I'm the disciplinarian, just ask any of them (even the baby), "What does Nanna say?" and you will get "uhh, uhh, uhh".

It's a privilege to be so involved in the lives of these grandchildren. Des and I are truly blessed.



From Lobethal to Bridgewater, parish recognises and celebrates gift of elderly and grandparents



Northern end parishioners, above, and their southern neighbours, below, were recognised and celebrated on World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly

The fifth World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly was celebrated by the Catholic Church on Sunday 27 July.

Established by Pope Francis, the day falls on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the feast of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus, and across the Adelaide Hills Catholic parish, from Bridgewater to Lobethal, our more 'senior' parishioners were recognised and celebrated.

Indeed, Fr Fred made a point at both morning Masses at St Joseph the Worker in Lobethal and St Matthew's in Bridgewater of calling all grandparents and elderly to the altar, for a special blessing and group photograph.

An interesting point of parish life is that many of the volunteer roles which are invaluable to the smooth running and wellbeing of our parish are largely performed by our 'elderly' members.



God clearly at work among the people we encounter

*The parish's **Nathan Sachse**, currently serving with the NET Ministries in the Diocese of Rockhampton, keeps us abreast of his work in an update to **The Bridge**.*

What a year 2025 has been thus far!

Many new things have come about, especially in our church. A new Pope, a few new saints, and God is certainly doing many new things in the Diocese of Rockhampton, where I am serving with NET Ministries this year.

With 2025 bringing a new year of mission for me, it also brings a new round of thanks to you all for continually supporting me in my mission. I feel so blessed to know that there are many people out there from all around South Australia and beyond who are praying for and supporting this mission.

The first half of our year in the Diocese has brought many joys and many opportunities to minister over an area that stretches north to Mackay, south to Bundaberg, and west all the way to Longreach and the NT border. This covers 414,400 square kilometres! We have done plenty of travel so far and every time we go to a new place, we are blown away at how God is so clearly working among the people we encounter.

Whether we're running a Youth Group, going to a Sunday parish Mass or spending a week in a high school, God keeps on showing us His love through the people we encounter, and a conviction that young people across Australia really do have a desire for God.

It is our mission to be courageous enough to share His love through our words and the way that we live. The Diocese has 12 parish communities and 40 Catholic schools. It is our goal to reach each of these communities throughout the year. Sometimes

that looks like a retreat day for a year level at a school, and others it is simply meeting the wonderful people in the community and sharing a conversation.

A very special moment from the year so far was the diocesan 'Jubilee of Families' weekend. It was a chance for families from around the diocese to come together in community and to seek encouragement and wisdom from one another about living the Catholic life as a family (as well as from our guest speaker, Brendan Malone!). The NET Team had the privilege of running the high school sessions, assisting with music ministry and being a part of the event's core planning team.

This event reminded me of the need for authentic community, and the call that Jesus has put on our lives to draw us into communion with Him and to then be Jesus to others by showing that He has that same love for every person that we encounter. That is our mission, to invite others to find friendship in Christ, the one who loves us with an everlasting love.

Thank you again for partnering with me in this mission. With your support, I have raised the \$6,900 minimum target for the first year. I could not have come this far without you. With another year, I have the opportunity to fundraise another \$6,900. If you are in a position to offer further financial support of my mission with NET, it would be greatly appreciated. But thank you so much for what you have already given so generously and for your continuous prayers. We certainly do not take it for granted.



The NET Team, from left: Craig from Brisbane, Kali from Lismore, Sarah from Michigan in the US, fellow South Australian, Hannah, and me



St Catherine's Catholic School News

*It's August and, as is the case each year, time to celebrate the feast of St Dominic. School **APRIM Carla Thomas** reports on what was a big week, culminating in a whole-school Mass on 8 August. Carla also shares developments around the Kitchen Garden and a most educational and enjoyable marmalade- and lemon curd-making session*



Celebrating St Dominic

We devoted Week 3 to celebrate the feast of St Dominic through our Dominican pillars. As a school, we gathered in prayer and community to celebrate whole-school Mass, said by Fr Fred, and on St Dominic's feast day, Friday 8 August, we shared in the joy of community with celebratory Dominican Donuts and coffee provided by our wonderful Parents and Friends. Students also participated in classroom activities to deepen their understanding of St Dominic's life and legacy. These celebrations offered a meaningful opportunity for our community to grow in faith and be inspired by St Dominic's example.



Watercourse Restoration

Thanks to a generous grant from Catholic Education South Australia (CESA), students assisted in an exciting new project to restore and revitalise the watercourse in the Kitchen Garden space.

At the end of last term, students and staff came together to connect with nature and plant a selection of native rushes and sedges, chosen for their ability to stabilise the soil and support the natural flow of water into the wetland catchment area.

With the recent rainfall, there has been excitement about the idea of developing a frog pond at the first water catchment point. 1/2NB have taken a keen interest and have already started moving the old scoria from the reception deck area and repurposing them to build the banks of the frog pond. We're hoping this will help create a more sustainable environment that supports biodiversity. Our students love feeling connected to nature and always take their responsibility to care for our common home to heart. We look forward to seeing this project unfold.



Making Marmalade and Lemon Curd

Oranges and lemons As part of our Kitchen Garden program, we try to cook with the gifts given to us each season, and you may have noticed how full citrus trees are right now. We asked members of the community to donate any extra oranges and lemons they had growing on their trees and, on receiving an abundance, we had to preserve them by making marmalade and lemon curd. Students in 3/4JC and 1/2NB managed to make 15 jars of marmalade and 17 jars of lemon curd! The students enjoyed being involved in preparing the fruit and watching the process.





The inspirational Sr Jenny Seal

CWL Reflection Day a must for ALL parishioners

By Pam Broadbridge

The 16 ladies from our parish who attended the CWL Adelaide Archdiocesan Day of Reflection at the Cathedral Hall on 5 August were rewarded with an enormously enjoyable, reflective, thought-provoking and educational day led by the energetic Sr Jenny Seal of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart order, who provided insights into her call of faith.

Indeed, I left thinking this is a day for ALL parishioners – and I will definitely advertise this very worthwhile event next year.

At the outset, we were asked what hope means to us and the responses and ideas were wide-ranging. Pope Francis' "Jubilee 2025 – Pilgrims of Hope" banner provided an insight into sailing into the unknown, with the cross anchoring us, just as we are anchored in Christ as individuals and community. We are never alone, the church is a family of families, we all come with our own story as a pilgrim.

Sr Jenny re-affirmed that every single person is important, that every life matters. We need to keep love alive and growing, integrate faith and life, trust in God and move forward in the Journey of Hope.

Thank you, Sr Jenny, for spreading joy!



Barb Mott, left, in her capacity as vice-president of CWL Adelaide Archdiocese, presents Sr Jenny Seal with a thank you gift

Ben's designs as new school board chair

New St Catherine's Catholic School board chair, Ben Clements, describes his management style as relaxed, engaging, fun and inquisitive – and these are the very traits he aims to bring to the mix during his tenure.

"We're ultimately a team, and I hope to ensure that all my fellow board members feel valued and confident enough to contribute to any discussion," he says, adding that the diverse skills set the board enjoys is sure to serve the school well.

"I hope, too, that during my time, we can further strengthen the already vibrant and always important parish-school partnership."

An architect by profession, Ben runs a small Stirling-based residential design firm. He brings an alternative viewpoint to the board on the back of some two decades in the world of building, architecture and local government.

Married to Lucia, the couple lives in Crafers West and have three children, James, Mary and Jack, all of whom have attended St Catherine's from the Bambini programme. Adding to the family's strong association with the school, Lucia runs the Parents and Friends (P&F) committee.

A product of the Barossa Valley, Ben, (pictured below) attends Mass at St Matthews Bridgewater, where two of the couple's children have completed the Sacramental Programme. Away from business, Ben enjoys playing piano, travelling, theatre, gardening, playing computer games and finding a sunny spot to dissolve into a book.





Pope Leo reminds us of urgent need for environmental and social justice

By John Leeton

Pope Leo XIV celebrated the first-ever Mass for the Care of Creation on 9 July, his words echoing into the hearts of all who labour for justice, peace, and the healing of our common home. In a world trembling from storms both environmental and spiritual, he reminded us that true change begins within. And yet he also reminded us that we are not alone. We are part of the living Body of Christ, called to respond with courage, humility and love.

The message was clear: whether we are planting seeds in a parish garden or simply trying to live more gently, our work matters, it's seen by us and, we believe, by the One who calms the storm.

As the Church prepares to mark the 10th World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation on 1 September 2025, the Pope's message urges Christians and all people of goodwill to recognise the urgent need for environmental and social justice in a world scarred by climate change, conflict and inequality.

Linking environmental destruction to the exploitation of the poor and marginalised, he highlights the disproportionate suffering of indigenous communities and the widening gap between rich and poor as hallmarks of a system that treats nature as a commodity when it should be seen as our common home.

While hard not to get despondent when faced with all this, we must not lose hope and do every little thing we can. The best way is to live simply, consume less, buy more local products, recycle rather than buy new, limit unnecessary travel – especially air travel – recycle and appreciate nature. Escape from distractions, find a quiet place to appreciate God's creation and invite the Holy Spirit in. Might I add, be a part of your parish and local community, be a giver, not a user.

The Ecology Group is always seeking new members with fresh ideas and share some upcoming events you might wish to get involved in. We're planning a spring lunchtime trip to the Mount Pleasant Natural Resource Centre, we also hope to create a sacred reflection place on the Bridgewater parish grounds, along with a resting spot in the garden adjacent the path leading up to the carpark.

Among the dates to diarise during the Season of Creation, which runs from 1 September to the Feast of St Francis on 4 October and this year adopts the theme of 'Peace with Creation', are the Christian Life Communities' prayer and a walk at Mount George on Saturday 27 September. It will conclude with a shared lunch and reflection at the

parish hall in Bridgewater.

The Ecology Group meets next on 28 September after the 10.30am Mass at Bridgewater, while we celebrate the Feast of St Francis on 5 October with the 'blessing of the pets' Mass at St Catherine's and a sausage sizzle.

If you have time, look at Nate Hagens' seven-minute video entitled 'The Superorganism'. Visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5VWZm7ESfk>.



**PEACE
WITH CREATION**
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

Preparing for Season of Creation

By Paris Huffman

The Season of Creation will again be observed from 1 September to 4 October. This ecumenical celebration is a time for Christians to pray and reflect on how they can care for creation. It is marked by special services and events globally.

The dates are consistent each year, commencing at the start of the Orthodox ecclesiastical year and World Day of Prayer for Creation and closing on the feast day of St Francis of Assisi, a saint revered for his love of nature. This period is a time for Christians and all people of good will to celebrate God's creation, lament its brokenness and commit to action for its restoration.

The *Laudato Si* Movement invites you to prepare and engage in the Season of Creation – see www.seasonofcreation.org for more information.

This year's theme is Peace with Creation, rooted in Isaiah 32:14-18. It paints a stark image of a world wounded by human injustice; a creation crying for peace. Our call is to be active agents of change – praying, acting and transforming our way of living in communion with creation, each other and the Creator.

As Pope Francis reminded us: "In the deserts of poverty and loneliness, all those small gestures are helping to make a new humanity blossom in the garden that is God's dream, always and everywhere, for all of us."

Working Bee at Birdwood



Parishioners from the northern end gathered at St Matthew's Birdwood earlier this month for a late winter Working Bee, where cleaning up vegetation and burning it ahead of the looming fire danger season was a top priority.

Our thanks to all who helped on the day.

Your efforts have certainly made the church grounds cleaner and safer.



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Please take note of the deadline for our next three issues:

September – 4 September
October – 3 October
November – 6 November

Your contributions can be emailed to me at paul@wordcafe.com.au.

Alternatively, they can be handed to me at Sunday Mass or dropped off at the parish house.

Thank you.

Paul Robinson (editor)

ADELAIDE HILLS PARISH MASS TIMES

St Matthew's Bridgewater
11 Wembley Avenue
Saturday Vigil – 6pm
Sunday – 10.30am

St Matthew's Birdwood
Lot 95, Shannon Street
First & Third Sunday – 8.30am

St Joseph the Worker Lobethal
38 Ridge Road
Second, Fourth & Fifth Sunday – 8.30am

Our Lady of the Rosary Stirling East
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Sunday – 5.30pm



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As this directory changes from time to time, anyone wishing to volunteer for any of the parish activities listed below is asked to please contact the parish office.

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Fr Alfred Farrugia 8359 0674

Parish Pastoral Coordinator

Cathie Oswald 8359 0674

Parish Secretary

Judith McPhee 8359 0674

Baptism Teams

Helen Cantwell 8390 3290
Maria Thompson 0408 898 357
Anne Moore 0417 861 373
Eric Toome 0418 896 695
Deb Stapleton 0408 835 990
Pam Broadbridge 8339 5013

Catholic Women's League

Barbara Mott (Bridgewater) 8339 1083
Lea Crosby (Birdwood) 0431 092 725

Child Protection

Mark McGeough 0491 150 758

Children's Liturgy

Jane van Mierle 0438 723 259

Choir

Damien Mansfield 8339 4133

Christian Life Communities

Paris Huffman 0400 283 683

Ecology Group

John Leeton 0419 243 814

Faith Formation Team

Fr Fred (Chair) 8359 0674
Paris Huffman (Secretary) 0400 283 683

Finance and Maintenance (F&M) Committee

Paul Howe (Chair) 8388 5281

F&M Birdwood Contact

Gayle Raven 8389 8410

Hills Combined Christian Churches

Maria Thompson 0408 898 357

Liturgy

Birdwood and Lobethal - Fr Fred 8359 0674

Men's Spirituality Coordinators

Paul Somers 8339 5118
Dan De Fazio 8339 3393

Our Lady of the Rosary Community Representative

Debbie Somers 8339 5118

Parish Atrium

Sue Sachse 0431 117 840

Parish Facebook Page

www.facebook.com/adelaidehillsparish

Parish Pastoral Council

John Leeton (Chair) 0419 243 814

Rosary Group

Paul Anderson 0416 032 925

Sacraments

Call Parish Office 8359 0674

Baptisms
Weddings
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Communion to the Sick
Religious Education

St Catherine's Catholic School

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School Board Chair - Ben Clements

St Matthew's Sewing Group

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St Vincent de Paul Society

Dan De Fazio 8339 3393
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Social Justice Group

Cathie Oswald 0428 244 958

The Bridge

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